

GREAT FIRE AT MALTON
PARTIAL DESTRUCTION OF THE
FARMERS' MANURE WORKS

At an early hour on Saturday morning, the extensive works of the Malton Farmers' Manure and trading Company, Limited, were partially destroyed by fire, and considerable loss will result to the company. The mill and works are situated near the Malton railway station, and were comparatively new buildings. The original foundation was made in 1862, when the late Mr. James Wise erected a mill for bone-crushing; but in January, 1874, the concern was taken over and registered as "The Malton Farmers' Manure and trading Company," and the business was extended by degrees to almost every branch of agricultural requirements in the way of manures and feeding stuffs. From time to time additions were made to the works, and under the supervision of the present energetic manager, Mr. William Hodgson, every modern scientific appliance that could aid in the production of high-class and pure feeding stuffs and manures was adopted; the result being that the company's business flourished and they held a high character in the agricultural world. The business proved a satisfactory one to the shareholders, too, the dividends paid having ranged up to 10 per cent in the good times of agriculture. The sad calamity which has befallen them is the more to be deplored, but it is satisfactory to learn from the manager, that though the destruction wrought is great the business will not be stopped, as he has already arranged for its continuance till the results of the fire can be obliterated.

The origin of the fire is not exactly known, nor at what hour it broke out. The premises were left all safe at six o'clock on Friday night, but about 11.30 the engine cleaners at their work in the shed at the railway Station saw flames and smoke bursting out of the windows, at the mill, and then immediately ran to Malton and alarmed the manager, who on reaching the works in about ten minutes found the top floor of the mill in flames and the fire spreading rapidly in all directions. The portion of the works in which the outbreak had occurred was a large three-storied coprolite-grinding-mill, which was fitted with expensive machinery and appliances. The mill was completely gutted, the roof falling in at an early period after the fire was discovered. On the top floor were 100 tons of coprolites, which were damaged by the water poured into the mill. Only so recently as January last the company had the works completely fitted with the electric light, and as the dynamo was in the portion of the mill burnt down, it was destroyed with all the connecting wires. The large engine belonging to the works is also under the ruins, and its condition, of course, may be imagined. The Malton fire brigade, with their steam engine, responded to the alarm made at midnight, but, owing to the long distance between the works and water-main, their services were of little avail in staying the progress of the flames of the mill. With their help, however, that of the company's employees, and some willing outsiders, the manager succeeded in confining the fire to the coprolite-grinding mills; and with the free use of hatchets, &c., cut off the connection between it and the storage warehouse, thus salvaging some valuable material, and besides saving the new gas apparatus recently put down by the company for making their own gas. The works are 500 or 600 yards away from the water-main and it was not until 2.15 in the morning, or fully two and a half hours, the manager states, before the fire brigade got their hose to work, and it was then too late to save the mill and machinery. The fire raged with fearful rapidity, and being in a tall building the flames could be seen for a long distance, the sky being brilliantly lighted up with the reflection therefrom. Hundreds of persons went down to view the spectacle.

We understand the mill was insured with the North British and Mercantile Insurance Company. The exact amount of damage done cannot as yet be definitely ascertained, but it is estimated to be not less than £1,500.

York Herald, 16th December 1893