

SIXTH INSPECTION DISTRICT—1896.

Mr. Geo. A. Schilling, Secretary Bureau of Labor Statistics, Springfield, Ill.:

SIR:—In compliance with section 12 of "An act providing for the health and safety of persons employed in coal mines," I have the honor to present the annual report for the Sixth Inspection District for the year ending July 1, 1896.

The following summary is for the fiscal year 1896:

Total number of mines.....	102
Shipping mines.....	74
Local mines.....	28
New mines.....	4
Abandoned mines.....	7
Estimated number of acres worked out.....	596.6
Number of miners employed during the winter.....	1,642
Number of miners employed during the summer.....	1,502
Others employed in and around the mines—winter.....	1,371
Others employed in and around the mines—summer.....	70
Boys under 16 employed underground.....	203.6
Total number of tons produced "all grades".....	3,676,164
Total tons of lump.....	2,888,372
Total tons of other grades.....	787,794
Number of fatal accidents to employes.....	4
Number of non fatal accidents to employes.....	87
Number of non-fatal accidents to others not employed.....	4
Number of tons produced for each fatal accident.....	919,041
Number of tons produced for each non-fatal accident.....	40,397
Number of persons employed in machine mines.....	1,269
Number of kegs of powder used.....	77,320

New Mines.—In Madison county, John James has opened a local mine at Bethalto; Sam McDonald, one about two miles from Moro, and Kanter Bros., one about one and one-half miles east of Wan; all are gin pits.

In St. Clair county, Conrad Reeb has opened a mine about one and one-half miles south of Belleville; it is also a gin pit for local trade; the shaft is 100 feet deep and the thickness of the vein is six feet.

At Smithboro, Bond county, the shaft there was sunk to the lower vein, but it was found too thin to be profitable, so the working of it was abandoned, and work in the upper vein was resumed, which had been abandoned some time previous.

Abandoned Mines.—In Madison county, the mines of J. J. Maloy and W. H. Schaefer have been abandoned.

In St. Clair county, the Reinecke mine of the Consolidated Coal Company is abandoned, at least for the present; it has only been operated a few days during the year. Dutch Hollow mine belonging to the same company and

the Abend mine operated by Brosius Bros., have been permanently abandoned. The Lenzburg mine at Lenzburg, and the John Kloess mine at Belleville are also on the list of abandoned mines.

Escapements.—The Massie Coal Company has connected mines No. 1 and 2 which furnishes escapement for the former mine. Crown Coal & Tow Company has sunk an escapement shaft for their No. 4 mine, it is equipped with a horse gin and new cage.

The Consolidated Coal Company has sunk and equipped with gin and cage an escapement at White Oak, near Marissa.

Con. Reeb has sunk an escapement which is used for an air shaft for his new mine near Belleville. The Superior Coal Company is sinking an escapement for their mine at Kinmundy.

The Summit is nearly done with their shaft.

The Kolb Coal Company at Mascoutah is sinking an escapement for their mine and experiencing a great deal of trouble in getting through the sand.

Fires.—On September 23, 1895, the whole of the top works of the Mentor mine belonging to the Consolidated Coal Company was consumed by fire. The fire occurred a little after two o'clock in the morning; an engine had stopped for coal at the chutes, and the watchman assisted in coaling it up; immediately after, he discovered fire in the shaft tower, which in a few minutes was communicated to the engine and boiler houses, and in a short time was reduced to ashes. The engine and boiler houses were rebuilt of brick and work resumed November 4, 1895. It was supposed a spark from the engine was the cause of the fire.

On April 10, 1896, the engine and boiler houses of the Knecht mine belonging to the Consolidated Coal Company were burned to the ground. It was supposed that a spark from the smoke stack set fire to the weeds and grass adjacent to the pit. The topmen fought the fire and believed they had put it out; sufficient care had not been taken, however, as some sparks had been left unnoticed near the back of the engine house, where there was considerable combustible material; the fire broke out at this point and in a few moments the engine house was in flames, the fire beyond control, and a short time sufficed to complete the destruction of engine and boiler houses. The men were at work in the mine at the time, and although there were four separate openings to the mine, none of them were equipped as an escapement, and the men had to be hoisted from the mine at first, by means of a windlass which proved to be too slow; then most of them were hoisted up by the men pulling on a rope over a pulley; there were 31 but all arrived on top safely.

Dutch Hollow mine which was leased by the company used to be the escapement for the mines when it was running, but, having been abandoned it left them without an equipped escapement. The company had been notified and had taken steps towards having an escapement, but the fire caught them before they had one equipped. The buildings destroyed by the fire have been rebuilt and the escapement shaft properly equipped.

On May 4, 1896, about 11 p. m., a fire took place at the bottom of the John James mine, Bethalto, badly burning the timber of the shaft. The fire