

drain the water out of the main shaft. The company has retimbered the upper part of the hoisting shaft, also raised and repaired and put a new foundation under the tower.

There have been some improvements in the general condition of many mines during the year, especially in ventilation, and the safety of traveling roads. The operators as a rule have shown a disposition to live up to the requirements of the law, when attention has been called to anything that was contrary to its provisions; in only one instance was it necessary to resort to extreme measures; that was in the case of the Muncie Coal company, Muncie, Vermilion county. This mine was in a very poor and dangerous condition. The management, after repeatedly promising to put the mine in shape, failed to do so, until "forbearance ceasing to be a virtue," I then instituted proceedings in the circuit court of Vermilion county to close the mine, until the company was willing to comply with the law. An injunction was issued against the company by Judge Thompson of that court, Nov. 19, 1902, and the mine was closed. After a few days the company asked permission to reopen the mine and resume work, promising at the same time to comply with all the requirements demanded if allowed to resume work; permission was given, conditional, that the mine be put in good shape and that the company report progress of work being done to the county mine inspector, once every week; this was done for some time when the company again became dilatory and neglectful; however, a letter issued by the court, cautioning the company as to the provisions of the injunction, had the desired effect, and repairing was resumed. The injunction is still in force, but in a short time the condition of the mine will be such that it can be dissolved.

BUSINESS CHANGES.

Jan. 1, 1903, the Himrod Coal company, Danville, disposed of its two mines in Vermilion county, the Pawnee and Himrod, selling the same to the Kellyville Coal company, of that city.

The Taylorville Coal company, Taylorville, has disposed of its mine at Taylorville, selling to the Springfield Coal Mining company, Springfield, Sangamon county.

The Weaver Coal and Coke company is now operating the Springside mine of the Springside Coal Mining company, of Pana, Christian county.

The North mine of the Pana Coal company, after being abandoned for eight years, has been reopened and is being operated by the Newbent Coal company, of Pana, Christian county.

FATAL ACCIDENTS.

The number of fatal accidents has increased in this district from 20 in 1902 to 30 in 1903; about two-thirds of the whole number are from falls of rock and coal. This increase can be accounted for in several ways—first, the increased activity in the mining business over the preceding year; second, the failure of the miners to properly secure their working places, and taking unwarranted risks in order to get a few more tons of coal; the failure of the oper-