

This will be a great coal carrying route as it is the most direct route to the northwest. It will be a boon to the LaSalle and Streator coal fields, and doubtless will stimulate the opening of other mines along the route. The C. W. & V. Coal Company has sunk and equipped a new mine one and a half miles north of Streator, which is probably the most complete plant in the State. They finished the escapement before starting to operate the mainshaft. It will be run entirely with the Harrison mining machine, and the workmen will be paid entirely by the day. The Star Coal Company has sunk a second shaft at Ripley, but has not opened it up yet. The coal is nine feet thick and of good quality. Their escapement is promised to be finished this fall. The Chicago, Joliet and Streator Coal Company has been under financial embarrassment ever since it was organized, and the property has now passed into the hands of a receiver. It is likely to be brought to sale in October, when the escapement will be immediately started.

In Will county the C. W. & V. has sunk a new mine and in this case will also put down the escapement before beginning to develop the hoisting shaft. The "H" shaft is abandoned and the Allbright Coal Company has also gone out of business.

In Kankakee county, James Kerwin & Co's. mine is abandoned, and the Taylor Williams mine has been proportionately increased in capacity.

There have been no strikes in the district during the year, and the relations of employers and employes have been harmonious with the exception that for a few days in the beginning of May the operators discarded the Columbus scale for the reason as they claimed, that the mines of Southern and Central Illinois had not been brought up to the scale during the previous year. There was, however, no cessation of work and very little acrimony engendered.

#### FANS.

The following companies or proprietors in this district have erected ventilating fans during the year, where there had formerly been none or very imperfect ones.

The Oglesby Coal Co.—fan 13 feet in diameter; the LaSalle County Carbon Coal Co.—fan 14 feet in diameter; the Seneca Coal Mining Co.—fan 10 feet in diameter; the C. W. & V. Coal Co.—fan 10 feet in diameter; Walton Brothers, Fairbury,—fan 10 feet in diameter; the Chicago, Joliet and Streator Coal Co.—a Champion fan 4 feet in diameter; R. Evans—fan 5 feet in diameter; and the Star Coal Co.—fan 4 feet in diameter. These latter fans range from 3½ to 4½ feet in width and generally render effective service.

Accidents and their causes are set forth in the statistical table so that it would be superfluous to say more, than that 95 per cent. of all all accidents have happened at the miners' working face where the companies have no responsibilities except to furnish the proper materials to keep the person or persons safe. On the miner devolves the duty of applying them to that purpose. Doubtless more accidents occur through hurry than from any other cause. A great deal of this hurry comes from the system of contract or piece work, but

this would be difficult to change and it is not certain that a change would reach the desired end. However this may be, a certain amount of personal care will always be necessary on the part of persons employed in hazardous occupations and without this there is little hope of materially reducing the annual death rate.

There has been no litigation during the year, but a complaint was entered with the State's Attorney of LaSalle county, against the Seneca Coal Mining Company for insufficient ventilation. They immediately proceeded, however, to erect a ventilating fan and the prosecution was allowed to drop. This has been the policy generally pursued and it has been uniformly successful, so much so that there is now only one railroad mine in the district which has not fair ventilation. This is a state of affairs highly gratifying, and one in which I am satisfied to leave the district.

Thanking all those with whom I have been brought in contact for their uniform kindness and courtesy during the four years of my service as inspector, I have to announce that with the expiration of my present term I shall retire from the service.

Very respectfully yours,

ALEXANDER RONALD,  
Inspector First District.

#### Fatal Casualties in the First District.

Date.	Name.	Place.	Age	Married	Single	Children	Cause of Accident.
1886.							
Aug. 16	Jacobs, Alexander	Streator	61	1			Falling coal in mine
Oct. 18	Brazapski, John	"	20		1		"
" 20	Morison, Robert	Braidwood	36	1		6	Falling stone in mine
Nov. 18	Kakara, Andre	Streator	48	1		8	Falling coal in mine
Dec. 21	Shephard, William	"	28		1		Falling rock in mine
1887.							
Jan. 14	McMahan, John	Braceville	65	1		2	Falling coal in mine
" 16	Stanley, Charles	Braidwood	48	1		7	Falling rock in mine
" 17	Baldi, John	LaSalle	23		1		Unknown, found in cage in morning.
Feb. 28	Anderson, Fred	Braceville	59	1		3	Injured by pit-car
April 16	Brawn, Robert	Braidwood	38	1		3	Fell down shaft
June 8	Hazlett, Francis	Braceville	60	1		2	Riding on car in mine
" 9	Brawn, John	Braidwood	41	1		6	Falling stone in mine
" 28	Peters, Joseph	Streator	42	1		2	Falling rock in mine entry
	Totals			10	4	39	

3.9 children to each family.

#### RECAPITULATION OF FATAL CASUALTIES.

Cause of Accidents.	No.	Per cent.
Falling coal	5	35.71
Falling rock	5	35.72
Falling down shaft	1	7.14
Pit-cars	2	14.29
Unknown	1	7.14
Totals	14	100.00