

Various improvements have been made by the Carbondale Coal and Coke Co., Murphysboro, such as retimbering the shaft, putting new ladders in the escapement, erecting a 12-foot fan, and splitting the air currents. Lumber is now on the ground for a new head-frame.

The Enterprise mine, at Belleville, has undergone repairs, putting up a new head-gear and adjusting safety catches.

Freeburg Coal Co., Freeburg, have constructed a new head-gear, sunk a new air-shaft, erected a fan and new boiler, and put in steel ropes.

Bessemer Coal Co., Summerfield, have just finished sinking their escapement shaft a depth of 300 feet, completing their new head-frame, putting in new cages, and making all buildings fire-proof.

They are now sinking the escapement shaft at the Oakland mine, Belleville, and the Kloess mine has just finished putting in a new boiler.

The Northwestern mine, owned by the Consolidated Coal Co., and leased by Frank Kerchner, Belleville, has undergone repairs. A new head-frame has been built and other improvements made.

Valuable assistance has been rendered by the following County Mine Inspectors: Thomas Lloyd, Renschler, St. Clair county, (whose commission has expired); A. L. Haig, of Caseyville, the present County Inspector of St. Clair county; George Gilleger, Jackson county; and Wm. Knight, of Perry county.

STRIKES.

At quite a number of mines the relations of operators and miners are far from being harmonious, and both parties seem unwilling to yield a point before the test of strength has been made. After a strike has occurred, the conclusion generally reached is that a settlement might have been attained beforehand had the parties come together in a business like manner.

It is to be hoped that in the future when misunderstandings arise, both operators and miners will be inclined to come together and adjust their differences in such a manner as to prevent the topping of the works for a single day.

On February 1, 1888, the miners employed at the mines of the DuQuoin Coal Co., The Illinois Central Coal Co., and the Enterprise Coal Co., at DuQuoin, came out on a strike, to retain for February, March and April the 62½c per ton of 2,000 pounds which they had received during the months of October, November and December, 1887, and January, 1888.

The operators claim that on October 1, 1887, they entered into an agreement with the miners to work one year for the following prices: 62½c per ton of 2,000 pounds during the months of October, November and December, 1887, and January, 1888, and 56½c

per ton of 2,000 pounds during the months of February, March and April, 1888, and 50c per ton of 2,000 pounds during the months of May, June, July, August and September, 1888; all coal to be weighed after passing over the companies' 1½ inch screen. The miners worked the first three months at 62½c per ton, claiming that no contract had been entered into, and that they were at liberty to quit work at any time. The operators, on their part, claimed that there was a contract, which would have to be complied with before entering into any other agreement.

This state of affairs continued until about the first of May, 1888, at which time the miners went to work at 50c per ton, having been out on strike for three months.

April 20, 1888, the miners of the St. Louis Ore and Steel Co., the Carbondale Coal and Coke Co., and the Gartside Co., at Murphysboro, came out on a strike against a reduction of 10 per cent.

The companies claim that on November 1, 1887, by request of their employes, they adopted the Consolidated Coal Co.'s scale of prices; that the Consolidated Co., on April 2, 1888, reduced all machine miners 10 per cent., thereby necessitating the same reduction being made in the Big Muddy coal field.

The miners state that they did not accept the Consolidated Coal Co.'s scale as a basis of settlement, but that the Columbus scale was the basis.

After a strike of 20 days, the miners resumed work at a reduction of 12 per cent.

At the Crystal Plate Co., Fredonia, there have been various strikes, lasting from two days to two weeks, on such questions as laying point rails in the rooms, loading coal, etc., etc. On April 25, 1888, the miners at this mine came out on a strike against a reduction of 10 per cent. The strike was declared off June 8, 1888, the company having in the meantime commenced operations with Italian miners.

The miners of the Carterville Coal Co., at Carterville, came out on a strike against a similar reduction as the above. After being out a few days they compromised the matter and resumed work.

The miners of the Bryden Coal Co. instituted a strike June 1, 1888, against a reduction of 10 per cent. After being out for 40 days they accepted the reduction and went to work.

FATAL AND NON-FATAL ACCIDENTS.

Following are tabulated lists of the accidents during the year: