

Coal production by counties, with increase or decrease in each year for the years ending June 30, 1897, and 1898:

COUNTIES.	TOTAL OUTPUT OF ALL GRADES OF COAL—IN TONS.		Increase.	Decrease.
	1898.	1897.		
St. Clair .....	1,600,752	1,718,194		117,442
Madison .....	630,769	780,921		150,152
Clinton .....	417,584	328,184	89,400	
Marion .....	714,513	626,850	87,663	
Bond .....	96,314	104,256		7,942
Total .....	3,459,932	3,558,405	177,063	275,536
Decrease .....				275,536
Increase .....				177,063
Net decrease .....				98,473

The counties of St. Clair, Madison and Bond show a decrease of 275,536 tons from that of last year, 1897; Clinton and Marion show an increase of 177,063 tons in the same time.

This is owing to the fact that the mines at Centralia, in Marion county, only lost 20 days during the general strike, and that the Odin mine lost no time by said strike.

The Breese coal mine lost but 19 days and the Consolidated Coal Company, at the same place, lost 32 days. The same number of days was lost at Trenton mines, caused by the general strike.

Considering that the mines at Centralia, Marion county, have not been working, nor the mine at Sandoval, since the first of April, 1898, they have lost in the number of days a number equal to that lost in St. Clair, Madison and Bond counties during the long strike in the earlier part of the year. They worked during the period of the year when the demand for coal is greatest. As a rule, during the spring and summer months the work is not more than half time. Therefore, the strike at the above named mines at the present time has had very little effect on the capacity of the mines for the past fiscal year.

*Labor Troubles.*—Since the inauguration of the general strike July 1, 1897, the district has not been free from strikes at any one time during the year. My own observation is that strikes are a severe measure to accomplish any desired result; they involve great distress and hardship to all those interested, both directly and indirectly, in mining, and not alone to miners or operators, but to many others, owing to the close relation of the coal trade with the industrial and commercial world.

The results attained by the late general strike have been phenomenal. It has completely revolutionized the wage system in this district. All mines working in the district at the present time are paid by the ton, weighed before screening, with the exception of one mine, where machine men and shooters are paid by the day, the loaders only being paid by the ton.

The mines at which there are strikes at the present time are those of the Pittenger & Davis Mining and Manufacturing Company, and of the Centralia

Mining and Manufacturing Company, at Centralia, and the Sandoval Coal Company, Sandoval, in Marion county. They have been on strike since April 1, 1898.

The mine of the Sorrento Prospecting and Manufacturing Company, Sorrento, Bond county, has not been worked for the last two months.

Messrs. Tirre & Sons, Lenzburg, St. Clair county, have only been working a few men since April.

*New Mines in Contemplation.*—The Henriette Coal Company, Edwardsville, has sunk a new shaft at Edwardsville, on the C., P. & St. L. railroad. The coal was struck at a depth of 184 feet 6 inches; the thickness of coal is 7 feet. A nice tippie has been built with all the modern improvements.

A new shaft is being sunk at New Baden, on the L. E. & St. L. railroad, by the Muren Coal and Ice Company of Belleville. The expectations are that they will strike the Trenton seam.

A few of the citizens of Germantown have organized a stock company and are sinking a new shaft about half a mile east of the town on the L. E. & St. L. railroad. Much trouble has been experienced in sinking through quick sand, but they have got through it safely and are making good progress.

The Home Trade Coal Company of Edwardsville has sunk a shaft at Edwardsville, solely for local trade, as it is not located on any railroad.

A new shaft has been sunk at Marissa, by the Eureka Coal Company. The depth of the shaft is 114 feet; thickness of coal 6 feet; commenced sinking December 1, 1897; struck coal January 27, 1898.

*Improvements.*—The Mount Olive and Staunton Coal Company has completed its escapement shaft and has erected a new fan, improving the ventilation, which was needed very much. This shaft was formerly owned by Henry Voge, of Staunton, and was ventilated by the hoisting and lowering of the cages and the action of doors that were moved back and forward as necessity required. By this method the ventilation was insufficient for the number of men at work. The present company is putting in electric cutting and drilling machines, which are being installed by the Jeffrey Electric Company.

The Madison Coal Company has erected a new fan at the No. 4 Glen Carbon mine. The diameter of fan is 20 feet, built so that it can be used for either exhaust or discharge.

Electric drilling machines have been put in at the mines of the following companies during the latter part of the fiscal year: The Tirre & Sons Coal Co., Lenzburg, has put in two drills. The Johnson Coal and Manufacturing Company has put in one drill at the "O. K." mine.

The Hippard Coal Company, Belleville, has put in two drills.

These mines are the first in this district to put in electric drills to shoot off the solid, and they have given satisfaction up to the present time.

The Centralia Mining and Manufacturing Company has put in an electric plant installed by the Jeffrey Electric Company. The plant consists of five cutting machines, three drills and one locomotive which weighs eight tons, the whole making a complete outfit. This will make it one of the best equipped mines in the Sixth district.