

FOURTH INSPECTION DISTRICT—1898.

Counties: Cass, Logan, Mason, McLean, Menard, Tazewell, Vermilion.

JOHN E. WILLIAMS, *Inspector.*

HON. DAVID ROSS, *Secretary,*

State Bureau of Labor Statistics, Springfield, Illinois:

SIR:—Statutory provision makes it obligatory upon the State Inspector of Mines to keep a detailed record of his services during the year, and to transmit the same to you in the form of an annual report. I herewith have the honor to submit the fifteenth annual report for the Fourth Inspection District for the fiscal year ending July 1, 1898. This report gives tabulated statements, by counties, of the number of mines operated during the year, giving the number of miners and other employés, the total output of all grades of coal, the average value of coal at the mine and the aggregate value of the total product, the number of shipping mines and of those operated for local trade only, the casualties in and around the mines, the average number of days of active operations, the quantity of powder used, the number of machines in use and the amount of coal cut by such machines, the estimated capacity of existing mines, assuming that they are operated full time: also, the geological number of each seam of coal.

I would suggest that there be a thorough revision of the present mining law, as the present one is ambiguous, contradictory, and defective in many respects. I desire to say that I have been very ably assisted in the performance of my duties in Vermilion county by the assistance of Mr. Daniel Reese, the county inspector of Vermilion county. He has faithfully carried out my instructions, and, as a result, the mines are in a safer and better sanitary condition than ever before. I am pleased to say that so far I have not been compelled to resort to litigation to enforce a compliance with the law. On the contrary, I have been treated very courteously by the miners and operators alike. Any suggestion I saw fit to offer for the health and safety of the workmen has been generally very readily complied with.

Abandoned Mines.—Mine No. 1 of the Kellyville Coal Company, which is situated midway between Westville and Grape Creek, on the Chicago & Eastern Illinois Railroad, was worked out and abandoned the 1st of May, 1898.

Mine No. 4 at Grape Creek, the property of the Grape Creek Coal and Coke Company, which has been in litigation for a number of years, was leased to