

generally run parallel with the hauling-way, there is no bottom raised; the bottom of itself will in time, through the action of the atmosphere, have a tendency to heave at least one foot of the original four, in height, thus leaving an air-way which will possibly not exceed twenty feet in area; and, to get a large volume of air through an air-way of this dimension means a larger amount of resistance to the air-current, and the result is but a small quantity of air for the power expended.

The Whitebreast Fuel Co., at Dunfermline, has put in two Murphy fans, six feet in diameter, on the air-shaft sunk at this mine last year. This additional ventilating power will give each side of the shaft separate air currents and a larger volume.

The Consolidated Coal Co., of St. Louis, has erected a fan ten feet in diameter on their coal mine located at Fairmount, which will greatly improve the circulation of air in volume.

James Law, at Cuba, has renewed the cribbing in his hoisting shaft with stronger timbers, which was in an unsafe condition, the timber being too light when put in, some seven years ago. He has also put in a pair of hoisting engines geared 1 to 3. These improvements will greatly add to the safety of the mines and enable him to do a larger business.

*New Openings.*—The number of new openings in this district this year, compared with former years, is small. The most extensive opening which, at this writing, is prepared for shipping coal, is the Chicago and Kansas City Coal Co., at Petersburg. The shaft is located on the C. & A. R. R., one mile southwest of the town. A favorable seam of coal five and one-half feet in height was struck at a depth of 180 feet. The equipment of the mine, when completed, will rank among the best in the district. A pair of the Litchfield Manufacturing Co.'s engines, 16 by 30 inches, direct acting, have been put in, with an eight-foot drum, and four cylindrical steam boilers. The foundations for the engines, boilers, towers, scales and engine-chutes are substantial and well laid, something that is very often overlooked when companies are erecting extensive equipments. The tower and frame-work is strong and well arranged for the handling of coal in large quantities. The hoisting shaft is properly sunk and of ample area, and the cribbing is strong and in line. The escape and air shaft is also sunk and well fitted up with a ventilating fan.

The Muncie Coal Co., at Muncie, Vermillion county, has sunk a coal shaft on the C., C., C. & St. L. R. R. close to the town. The coal was found at a depth of 200 feet, and is five feet in height. The general equipment and construction of the top part of this mine is light and poorly arranged for business. Up to date the company has failed to have a switch put in; all the coal hoisted in the past year has been hauled in wagons from the mine to the railroad depot and then loaded into cars.

*Change of Ownership.*—The changes of ownership within the past year have been considerable. The Consolidated Coal Co., of St. Louis, which operates a large number of mines in this State, purchased in December, 1892, the drift mine formerly owned by Millard & Wolschlag, at Peoria. This mine is located three and one-half miles west of Peoria, and is so

located that they can ship via either the Iowa Central or C., B. & Q.R'y. The same company, also, at the same time, bought the coal shaft owned by Pfender Bros. This shaft is seven miles west of Peoria, and is located on the Iowa Central R'y. The same company also purchased the Fairmount mine, in Vermillion county, formerly belonging to A. C. Daniels, who had purchased the mine six months prior to this sale; during this time he was busy remodeling the works and buildings on top, putting in stronger machinery, steam boilers, etc., and also improving the hauling ways underground.

Graham & Murdoch have leased the mine formerly operated by John Emans, at Farmington, Fulton county; this mine is located one and one-half miles west of the town, on the Iowa Central R. R.

Dickason & Frazier, of Danville, have leased and are operating the mines at Grape Creek, formerly owned and operated by the Grape Creek Coal Co.; the company becoming financially embarrassed, necessitated the appointing of a receiver, who leased the coal property to Dickason & Frazier.

The Illinois Coal & Coke Co., at Wolcott, in Peoria county, also became financially embarrassed, and the property being put up at sheriff's sale, was bought by a company doing business under the name of the Peoria Coal & Mining Co., who are at present operating same.

The Sholl Bros., Peoria, have become the operators of the mine formerly operated by their father, Adam Sholl.

*Labor Difficulties.*—The miners employed by the Whitebreast Fuel Co., which comprise the mines located at Dunfermline, St. David and Bryant, in Fulton county, and in which are employed about 400 men, came out on a strike November 1, 1892, demanding a higher rate than the district rate, which was 55 cents per ton, gross weight; this the company refused; after five weeks of idleness the miners accepted the company's final offer of 75 cents per ton for screened coal in winter, and 67½ cents per ton in summer. The men have also been required to sign a contract with reference to semi-monthly payment of wages, and allowing deductions to be made from pay for orders given, etc., also agreeing to leave the company's houses when quitting its employ.

The miners employed by the Consolidated Coal Co., of St. Louis, at Danville, suspended labor February 26, 1893, until August 1, 1893. The cause of this suspension of labor was that the company paid weekly; on Monday evening of each week payment would be made to company men only, for the week previous; Tuesday evening miners working on check from "1" to "50" were paid, and Wednesday evening the miners from check "51" to "100"; this necessitated about five pay nights every week. The miners made a demand that all men employed be paid at the same time, but the company refused and the miners stopped work until August 1, the final conditions of agreement being semi-monthly pay. Three-fourths of the miners concerned in this strike found employment in other mines around Grape Creek, Westville, Oakwood, etc. Quite a number of other