

The Sandoval Coal Co., Sandoval, Marion county, has put in tail-rope haulage at their No. 1 mine. The company has commenced operations putting up a steel tippie at its No. 2 mine, and a 20-foot fan has also been put in this mine.

The Oak Hill Coal Co., Belleville, St. Clair county, has rebuilt the top works at its mine.

The Dutch Hollow Coal Co., Freeburg, St. Clair county, has leased the mine of the Advance Coal Co. at Marissa, and bought the Oakland Coal Co.'s mine, Belleville. The mines are still known and operated under the old name.

#### NEW MINES.

The Staunton Coal Co. is sinking its No. 2 mine which is located two miles east of the No. 1 shaft.

The Lumaghi Coal Co., Collinsville, has sunk a new mine at that place. It is known as No. 3. The company contemplate putting up a steel tippie at this mine.

The DeCamp Fuel Co. of St. Louis, Missouri, is sinking a new shaft two miles south of Staunton in Madison county, located on the Wabash railway.

The old mine known as McDonald, located one mile north of Worden, Madison county, which was formerly leased by the Consolidated Coal Co. and abandoned five years ago, has been reopened by the Inter-State Coal Co., Worden. All the top works have been rebuilt; the old top works were burned down a few years ago. The company has installed mining machines operated by compressed air. J. E. Rutledge, president of the Trenton Coal Co., Trenton, Clinton county, is also president of this new company.

Joseph Taylor is sinking a new shaft one mile south of his Mentor mine, O'Fallon, St. Clair county, located on the East St. Louis & O'Fallon Electric railway.

The Kolb Coal Co., Mascoutah, St. Clair county, is sinking a new shaft one mile west of Lenzburg, located on the Illinois Central railroad; this makes three mines for the company in this district.

John Maule, Belleville, St. Clair county, has commenced sinking a new shaft near Shiloh, four miles east of Belleville, located on the Southern railway.

Mr. Meeker of Marissa, has commenced sinking a shaft two miles south of White Oak, St. Clair county, located on the Illinois Central railroad.

A new company known as the Buxton Coal Co. have commenced sinking a shaft at Buxton, Clinton county. If conditions prove to be favorable, the shaft now being put down will be used as the escapement shaft.

The Beatty Coal Co., Mascoutah, St. Clair county, has sunk a shaft on the Louisville & Nashville railroad, two miles west of Mascoutah; the depth is 90 feet, thickness of coal  $6\frac{1}{2}$  feet. It is intended as a machine mine. The company has installed new air compressors and have also put in three mining machines, one each—Harrison, Sullivan and Ingersoll.

#### BLAST EXPLOSION.

This explosion occurred in the mine of the Sandoval Coal Co., at Sandoval, Marion county, March 31, 1903, killing eight men. The explosion originated in the 5th west entry; the hole had been drilled, charged and fired by the night shift. When the shot was fired the tamping was blown out without bringing down any coal. John Gichino, one of the victims of this explosion, was on the day shift and was told by his partner about the shot; Gichino then drilled the hole deeper, making it six feet and seven inches in depth. The hole was charged almost full of powder, as a cartridge 12 inches in length was found in the cross-cut. It was estimated that nearly 12 pounds of powder was used in this shot, and it was charged in the solid coal. When the shot was fired it blew out the tamping and caused the explosion. The force of this shot did not make a crack in the coal. When it is considered that the potential energy of one pound of powder is equal to 480-foot tons, it can readily be understood the force and destruction that would follow the exploding of ten or 12 pounds of powder when fired out of a hole facing a roadway. All the men killed and injured by this shot were on the entry, in direct line of the force from the shot, which accounts for the large number killed; most of the men killed were on their way to the bottom of the shaft. Three of the men killed were sitting at the entrance of the entry where the explosion occurred, the stoppings on each side of the trap door were blown on to them, killing one instantly, one lived two hours, the other eight days; five were brought out dead. Three drivers were severely injured by this explosion, losing three months' time. Suits were entered against the company for damages, aggregating \$69,000, but agreements having been made all suits were withdrawn.