

a mile. Its proximity, however, to the towns of LaSalle and Peru, with their established interests, mercantile and manufacturing, precludes the possibility of it ever becoming more than an extensive mining village.

A branch from the Chicago and Northwestern Railroad is being built to the mines, commencing at Belvidere, Boone county, and running south to Earlville, where it intersects the main line of the Chicago, Burlington and Quincy road, and crosses the Illinois Central between Mendota and LaSalle. The most of the coal produced will probably be shipped over this road.

Charles J. Devlin, Superintendent and General Manager.

Michael Murphy, Underground Manager at Shaft No. 1.

LOCEYVILLE.

The mine at this place, owned and operated by George H. Locey, has undergone some important improvements during the year. Especially is this true in regard to the ventilation; the escapement shaft is being used as a downcast and the fan changed to a "blower." By this arrangement the ventilation has been changed from defective to first-class. The engine and boiler house has been rebuilt; it is now roofed and sided with fire-proof material.

Safety catches have not yet been put on the cages, but a set has been ordered that will—it is thought—suit the peculiar construction of the cages. To avoid accidents, however, from the cable breaking, a pair of new ropes are put on every year. The shaft is 300 feet deep. The coal is nearly $3\frac{1}{2}$ feet thick, seam No. 2 of the general section, and is fully up to the standard of excellence usually attained by that seam. It is worked on the long-wall system, and is well adapted to this method of mining. The underground workings are in good condition, and bear witness to good management. If the hoisting machinery and shaft were equal to the capacity of the underground workings, the present maximum out-put could be doubled.

Edward Lewis, Mine Manager.

SHEFFIELD.

The mine at this place, operated by the Sheffield Mining Co., continues to supply locomotives on the C., R. I. & P. R. R. The opening is a slope; the coal is brought to the surface by mules, and the underground haulage is quite extensive. The coal is mined on a kind of "block" system. Entries are driven around a square block of coal, and rooms can be opened from any side of the block. This method is adopted on account of the numerous "clay slips" that run through the coal, making the usual "room and pillar" method impracticable. A furnace is used for ventilating purposes, and the mine generally is in good condition.

A. W. Boyden, Superintendent.

Robert Jones, Mine Manager.

Five other mines are in operation at Sheffield, and two at Mineral. They are all local custom mines, and, as a rule, are in fair condition for mines of this class, and have complied with the most important requirements of the mining law.

PRINCETON.

Five local custom mines are in operation five miles east of this city, and give employment collectively to about fifty miners during the winter months, and in summer from fifteen to twenty are employed. The shafts range from 140 to 200 feet in depth; the coal is $4\frac{1}{2}$ feet thick, and is seam No. 6 of the general section. At four of the mines the coal is raised by horse power, and at one steam power is used. Three of the mines (Hill's, Nichols' and Walton's) are connected underground. Fletcher and Heathcock have each constructed escapements during the year, Heathcock's being 200 feet in depth. Small furnaces are used for ventilation, and the mines generally are in fair condition.

The shaft at Hollowayville, owned and operated by Seaton Bros., is 400 feet deep. The coal is over $3\frac{1}{2}$ feet thick, and is seam No. 2 of the general section. The mining is conducted on the long-wall system, and coal is raised by steam power. The mine is ventilated by a small fan, and is in fair order generally. An escapement shaft was commenced in connection with this mine in 1884, and carried down to a depth of 200 feet, when operations were suspended for the winter. Sinking was resumed this summer and the shaft is now down 375 feet, and has only 25 feet more to go. When this escapement is completed, it will probably be the costliest in the State, considering the amount of coal produced.

A new shaft has been sunk by Elisha Beadle during the year. It is located about three miles northeast of Buda. The shaft is 90 feet deep, the coal $4\frac{1}{2}$ feet thick, and is seam No. 6 of the general section. The mine went into operation in April, 1885. E. Beadle, Manager.

The mine operated by V. H. Weissenburger, on Spring Creek, was closed in July, 1884, for non-compliance with the mining law relating to escapement shafts.

The mine formerly operated by James Wood, northwest of Buda, has been abandoned.

HENRY COUNTY.

The mines in this county show a falling off in the amount of coal produced, of about seventeen thousand tons, compared with the last annual report. This decrease may be attributed to the suspension of A. W. Perry's mine at Briar Bluff, which was closed in February, 1884.

KEWANEE.

The mines operated by the Lathrop Coal and Mining Company continue to be the most important in the county. Shaft No. 6 is