

The counties of Bureau, Henry, Knox, Marshall, Mercer and Rock Island combined show an increase over the year 1901 of 339,894 tons. The counties of Stark and Warren together show a decrease of 5,791 tons. This leaves a net gain for the district for this year over the previous of 334,103 tons.

*New Mines.*—Two mines of the shipping class have gone into operation during the year. The Kewanee Coal and Mining Co. of Kewanee, Henry county, completed the construction of a branch track from the C., B. & Q. to their mine, which gives the company shipping facilities, although at present the total product of the mine is consumed in the homes and factories of Kewanee.

The Atlas Coal Co. of Galva, Henry county, sunk a shaft during the summer of 1901, and made railroad connections with the C., R. I. & P. R. R.

*Mines Abandoned.*—One mine only of the shipping class has been abandoned during the year. The mine operated by the Sheffield Mining Co., at Sheffield, Bureau county, went out of action in May, 1902. This mine has been classed as a shipping mine, although no coal was loaded on cars for shipment, a large percentage of the coal being disposed of in coaling engines on the C., R. I. & P. R. R. The coal in this mine is not exhausted, but the distance from the face to the tippie was too far for mule haulage; besides an endeavor to enforce the gross weight conditions may have had something to do with the closing of the mine.

*Fires at Shaft Buildings.*—About 10 o'clock Saturday evening, November 9, 1901, the escape shaft at mine No. 1, operated by the Spring Valley Coal Co., Spring Valley, was discovered to be on fire, and before it could be gotten under control the shaft lining, stairway and engine room on the surface were destroyed.

The burning timbers falling down the shaft set fire to the timbers around the bottom, and for a time became quite threatening. By hard work, however, the bottom of the shaft was walled off with air-tight stoppings and the top of the shaft sealed over. The fire was thus confined to the interior of the shaft and around the bottom. The escape shaft was a neutral one, neither upcast nor downcast, and did not, therefore, interfere with the ventilation of the mine.

Shafts No. 1 and No. 2 of this company are connected underground, so that No. 1 still has an escapement, although the shafts are fully one mile apart, too far apart, in fact, for the safety of those employed in the mine in case they have to use the escapement as a means of exit from the mine.

A fire broke out in the tower of the shaft operated by the C. W. & V. Coal Co. at Seatonville, Bureau county, on the night of Dec. 22, 1901, which threatened for a time to destroy the whole top works of the mine. By prompt action, however, on the part of the local fire department, with a good fire pump and plenty of hose and water, the fire was gotten under control and the tower saved. The mine was idle one day in making temporary repairs. The fire probably started from a large torch that was left burning on the tower while the top men were engaged with other work on the ground landing.