

*Mining-Machines.*—Emerson & Co., of Dumfermline, Fulton county, who were reported last year as about to operate the Legg mining-machine, did so for a while but found that the under-mining was greatly mixed up with small boulders and sulphur, and that the machine bits could not stand the strain, so they concluded to lay them aside for a time.

The Menard Coal Co. of Greenview, are still running five Harrison machines; of late, however, the machines have been used for driving entries, for which purpose the machine is mounted on higher wheels, the height of which is governed by the thickness of the coal; the coal is cut from top to bottom in the center of the entries, to an average width of sixteen inches, and about five feet in depth; the coal is then shot off the sides, no under-mining whatever being done. The company claim to get better and straighter work done in entries at less expense than by hand-digging.

Millard & Wolschlag of Peoria, are still operating the Harrison machines; the price of hand-mining has lately been reduced in the vicinity of their mine to 65 cents per ton, which makes the margin of profit on machine coal small; this firm are in the meanwhile, experimenting with a compressed air-drill with a view of simply drilling holes and shooting the coal off the solid.

*Strikes.*—The relations between the operators and the miners have been very agreeable during the past year in this district. The strike in the northern coal fields of the State which commenced May first of this year, and is still pending, only affected two mines in this district; the Chicago and Minonk Co. of Minonk, and the Roanoke Coal Co. of Roanoke. The former company and its miners made an agreement, near the latter part of May, the understanding being that the miners were to be paid last year's prices pending the result of this strike. The latter company and its miners made almost a similar agreement as that made at Minonk but not until work had been suspended almost three months.

*Litigation.*—In March of this year, I found it necessary to apply to the Master in Chancery at Danville, the Court being adjourned, for an injunction, which was granted, to prohibit Robinson Cook of Fairmount, from operating the coal mine owned by H. B. Catlett, until such time as section 18 of the Mining Law had been complied with.

*Desired Legislation.*—As requested by section 12 of the mining law, I would earnestly recommend that the next General Assembly pass a measure similar to House Bill No. 70, introduced by the Hon. David Ross during the last session of that body. It was a great disappointment to a large number of pit-bosses and miners that the last General Assembly failed to pass this very important measure, which made it necessary for all mines where more than ten men were employed to be under the supervision of a legally qualified mine manager holding a certificate granted by a board of exam-

iners. I would also suggest that a law be enacted making it necessary for operators having shafts, where men are lowered into and raised from the mine by cages and steam power, that the cages, with their safety catches and cover, and also the hoisting cable, be properly examined daily and a report kept of such examination in a book at the coal mine.

*Accidents.*—The following is a summary of the fatal accidents for the year: following which will be found tabular forms of the fatal and non-fatal accidents during the year. I am glad to record that there has been quite a decrease in accidents compared with former years:

August 20, 1888, Joseph McVey, age 16 years, single, a laborer at the McLean County Co.'s mine, Bloomington, was instantly killed. He was assisting in cleaning up rock along side the entry when a large prop fell over striking him on the head.

October 23, 1888, Fred Colburg, age 54 years, a miner at the Consolidated Co.'s mine, Danville, while coming up on the cage, lost his balance and fell from the cage, and was jammed between the cage and the cribbing. He died two hours afterwards, leaving a wife and two children.

December 13, 1888, John Fisher, age 55 years, single, a miner at the Eagle Co.'s mine, Cuba, was mining a standing shot, when it gave way, falling over on him. He died the following morning.

December 31, 1888, Albert Johnson, age 23 years, single, a miner at the McLean county Co.'s mine, Bloomington, was taking down some loose rock from around a "slip," when a large piece fell on him injuring him so that he died February 10, 1889.

February 2, 1889, J. W. Wright, age 23 years, single, at the Consolidated Co.'s mine, Danville, while passing around a switch at a rapid speed, the last car of his trip jumped the track, jamming him between a pit-car and a prop. He died the following day from his injuries.

February 6, 1889, August Klinghed, age 34 years, a miner at J. Wilkens & Co.'s mine, Petersburg, had fired a shot the day previous to the accident, which knocked out some props in his room; he was told on going to work in the morning to put them up again, as his roof was bad; but he concluded to fill a car first, and while doing so the rock fell on him. He died next day from his injuries. He left a wife and three children.

Respectfully submitted,

JAMES FREER,

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Peoria.