

VICTIMS OF FIRE-DAMP.

Five Men Killed and Others Badly Injured by a
Coal Mine Explosion.

GHASTLY SIGHTS AT THE MINE

Bodies Charred Beyond Recognition—List of
the Dead and Wounded.

Special Dispatch to THE TIMES.

SHENANDOAH, May 24.

One of the most fatal explosions that has ever occurred in the Schuylkill district took place to-day in the new slope of Richard Hecksher & Co.'s Kohinoor Colliery, situated on the outskirts of this place, the cause of which, it is believed, has been a fall of top-rock and earth, thus forcing the foul air into that portion of the mine where the miners were at work, and resulted in the instant killing of five men and the serious injury of several others. The names of the dead are as follows:

MARTIN MULHALL, miner.

JAMES MULHALL, laborer, son of the former.

OWEN GALLAGHER, miner, married, has a wife and three children.

JAMES McDONNELL, door boy.

SAMUEL HUGO, driver.

The injured men are as follows:

JOHN LEE, fire boss, whom, it is believed, cannot recover.

MATTIS MATTENYNOWICZ, a Polander, married, with four children.

HOW THE ACCIDENT OCCURRED.

It appears that the men had been generating gas during the night, and this morning at the time the day men were to enter the mine the lower lift was full of the foul air. Notwithstanding that there was two fans kept constantly going all the time John Lee, the fire boss, went into the mine at an early hour this morning and was astonished to find the accumulation of such a large body of gas as he discovered. Without further hesitation he warned the miners who worked breasts in that vicinity and ordered that all the men should be furnished with safety lamps, after which all went to work and continued on until the fatal explosion took place at noon, at which hour the gas was mysteriously forced in among the men. Some entertain the opinion that the miners must have returned to their old custom of using the naked lamps. The explosion occurred with terrible force, dealing death and destruction to everything in its course. Props were hurled with lightening rapidity in every direction, and mine doors were blown to atoms. The victims of the terrible disaster were horribly mutilated and burned beyond recognition. Young Mulhall was burned to a crisp and his body cut and bruised so frightfully that some trouble was experienced in recognizing him. James McDonald, a mere boy, employed as door tender, was blown along the gangway and dashed against the side of a gangway and terribly disfigured. The others met a similar fate.

GHASTLY SCENES OF DEATH.

At the time of the accident there were probably one hundred miners inside. Those who escaped tell a frightful story of the noise of the concussion. As soon as they could realize that they escaped the awful death of their companions they proceeded to the bottom of the shaft, and on reaching the surface gave an account of the terrible event that had just taken place. The news was quickly heralded throughout the town, and in a short time men, women and children arrived in droves from Shenandoah and the neighboring places. Women screamed and swooned away and the stoutest heart quaked at the appalling sight. The victims were brought to the surface one by one and were laid side by side near the mouth of the ill-fated mine. The features of each were eagerly scanned; several of the dead were headless and beyond all recognition. Two of the men were brought out in an entirely nude state, and upon the recognition of an affectionate father or husband the lamentations of the female portion of the excited crowd were sad in the extreme. Those who escaped injury stood aghast at the awful scene and were visibly affected by their safe delivery, while others hurried to and fro with stretchers stained with the blood of the victims, some laden with the inanimate forms. Those who had been released from their burdens were hurrying back to the shaft to render further assistance. The Kohinoor Colliery is the largest in the Schuylkill region and has a shipping capacity of four hundred cars daily, employing four hundred men and boys. Business was entirely suspended and everything was done to alleviate the sufferings of the injured and relieve the distress of the widows and orphans. Later reports say that there is still one unfortunate imprisoned in the mine. Arrangements are now being made to effect his release.