

## THE BRAIDWOOD SUFFERERS

Governor Hamilton's Message and the Adjutant General's Report.

Between Thirty and Forty Families and Nearly One Hundred Little Children Entirely Destitute.

Special Dispatch to the Globe-Democrat.

SPRINGFIELD, ILL., February 22.—The frightful disaster recently at the Diamond mine, Braidwood, proving fatal to so many miners, has aroused the sympathy and indignation of a majority of the people of Illinois, and during the past week has claimed much of the attention of members of the General Assembly. Bills in both houses have been presented providing for an appropriation for relief. As noted last night, the bill came up in the House yesterday, and was considerably crippled by amendments. In this matter the Republicans took the lead, and fearing that it would help them politically, the Democrats are seeking to kill the bill. The more wise ones on the Democratic side claim that such a procedure will do the Democratic party more harm than the passage of the bill will do the Republicans good.

In regard to the subject Governor Hamilton to-day sent to both houses of the General Assembly a message, accompanied by a report of the Adjutant General, who had visited the scene of the terrible misfortune.

### GOVERNOR'S MESSAGE.

STATE OF ILLINOIS, EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT.  
SPRINGFIELD, ILL., February 22, 1883.—To the Honorable the General Assembly: On Friday, the 15th day of February, 1883, a great calamity occurred at the Diamond coal mine, near Braidwood, in the County of Will, in the State of Illinois, by which about eighty men suddenly lost their lives. The disaster seems to have been caused by the sudden sinking of the ground above the mine by which an opening was made from the surface to the cavities of the mine and a vast amount of surface water, accumulated from recent snow, ice and floods, unprecedented in quantity, rushed through the opening thus formed into the mine, and suddenly overwhelmed and destroyed many of the miners working therein before they could escape.

From latest advices the mine is still flooded with water and none of the bodies have been recovered.

A great majority of these miners who thus lost their lives were married men and poor men, having wives and children absolutely depending upon the daily labor of the husband and rather, in the mines, for scanty subsistence. Their support being thus suddenly taken from them they must necessarily be in a very deplorable and destitute condition.

Upon learning of the disaster, and the loud cries and appeals of the stricken and suffering ones, I desired for my own information and that of the Legislature and the public to learn in a reliable and semi-official manner the facts regarding the disaster, and the extent of the loss of life and the suffering of the surviving people, as well as their necessities, and I, therefore, on the night of Sunday, the 18th inst., requested Gen. J. H. Elliott, Adjutant General of the State, to proceed at once to the scene of the calamity and make such full investigation as he could on the points above suggested. He immediately went and made such examination, and made report to me in writing, a copy of which report I have the honor to herewith transmit to the Legislature, accompanied with a petition on behalf of the citizens of the vicinity of the Diamond Mine, signed by their local Relief Committee, and addressed to me and to the General Assembly, asking aid.

I have caused this examination to be made, and I transmit these papers to the General Assembly, simply from a sense of duty.

I have no desire to advise or direct the General Assembly as to legislation on this subject, and, not having time to fully examine the question, I am in doubt whether it is in the constitutional power of the General Assembly to make any appropriation for relief of the sufferers; but the calamity seems so extraordinary that I feel warranted in calling your careful attention to it, that you may, through your Judiciary Committees, and by personal examination, determine for yourselves this question of constitutional power by legislative action, as well as the wisdom of making an appropriation for this purpose only.

I have only to add further that whatever action may be taken should be taken promptly, and if it should be considered that the framers of our Constitution have in their wisdom prohibited the General Assembly from making appropriation to relieve these people, I hope and trust that such action as has been taken by us will call from the charitable and kind hearts of the people abundant support for the poor sufferers of the Diamond mine disaster.

JOHN M. HAMILTON,  
Governor.

# ADJUTANT GENERAL'S REPORT.

SPRINGFIELD, ILL., February 20, 1883.—Hon. John M. Hamilton, Governor of Illinois: SIR—In obedience to your direction that I should proceed to Braidwood and make full investigation of the extent of the calamity, the suffering and the immediate necessities of the people occasioned by the recent disaster at the Diamond mine, I have the honor to report that I reached Braidwood early on Monday morning, the 19th, and immediately proceeded to Diamond, a mining village, three miles distant. The town generally is in a lake of ice, and as soon as there is a thaw a vast number of the houses can only be reached by wading. The buildings are slight frame structures, costing, perhaps, \$250, generally owned by the company and rented to the miners. I visited a large number of the desolated homes and witnessed such scenes of pitiable suffering and woe as I hope never to see again. In house after house are found mothers, surrounded by a swarm of little children, grieving the loss of husbands and sons; some were sitting in silent despair, others were frantic in their grief. These poor women and children had no support except the daily wages of the husbands and fathers. This being taken away, and not even owning the houses in which they live, they are absolutely dependent upon charity.

I visited the store of the Diamond Company and was informed that supplies would be temporarily advanced to the suffering families. I also attended a meeting of the citizens of Braidwood on Monday afternoon at which a permanent relief committee was appointed and steps taken for a permanent relief fund. It seems to me that the disaster is of such extent and character as not only to claim the assistance of the city and county in which it occurred, but also the substantial assistance of the State.

Enclosed I hand you a list of the wives and children residing at Diamond who have been left husbandless and fatherless by the Diamond mine disaster. Many of the men had families in other countries, some of whom are supposed to be on their way to join them here.

I also inclose an address, signed by prominent citizens of Braidwood, which I was requested to place in your hands.

Before closing this report I deem it proper to inform you that the universal demand of the bereaved women is that the water be taken out of the mine and the bodies of the lost recovered. They seem to care for and think of nothing else, and it is most deplorable to see them moving about making this inquiry of every one they meet. I can realize the magnitude of removing some hundreds of acres of water, and can only give you the benefit of an inexperienced observation in everything pertaining to mines and mining, but it is my opinion that, unless more effective measures to this end are taken, it will be months before the bottom of that mine is seen. I am, Governor, very respectfully,

J. A. ELLIOTT,

Adjutant General.

## WIDOWS AND ORPHANS AT DIAMOND.

1. Mrs. John Huber, 3 children, aged 9, 7 and 4 years; German.
2. Mrs. Fritz Kea, 1 child, a baby; German.
3. Mrs. John Anderson, no children; Scotch.
4. Mrs. Saml Wilkins, 6 children, under 10 years; English.
5. Mrs. John Wilkins, no children; English.
6. Mrs. P. C. Readmond, 3 children, aged 14, 9 and 7 years.
7. Mrs. Adam McQuiston, 5 children, under 10 years; Scotch.
8. Mrs. Joe Mattern, 2 children, aged 11 and 8 years; German.
9. Mrs. Wm. Seveckora, 2 children, aged 2 and 1 years; German.
10. Mrs. John Nell, 6 children, under 9 years; Scotch.
11. Mrs. I. Pearson, 1 child, aged 2 years.
12. Mrs. Robert Harper, 3 children, aged 6, 4 and 1 years; Scotch.
13. Mrs. Martha Meycki; Pole.
14. Mrs. G. Balokowski, 5 children, aged 5, 3 and 1 years; Pole.
15. Mrs. Outchenock, 2 children, aged 9 and 1 years; Pole.

16. Mrs. Klasser, 2 children, aged 17 and 5 years; German.  
 17. Mrs. Joe Smith, no children; German.  
 18. Mrs. A. Damm, 5 children, under 11 years; German.  
 19. Mrs. E. Damm, 1 child; German.  
 20. Mrs. John Dinbroski, 3 children, aged 7, 4 and 2 years; Pole.  
 21. Mrs. Alex Orr, 3 children, aged 7, 4 and 2 years; Scotch.  
 22. Mrs. John Culloch, 6 children, under 10 years; Pole.  
 23. Mrs. David Goeter, 3 children, under 8 years; German.  
 24. Mrs. Wm. Scholtz, 4 children, under 14 years; German.  
 25. Mrs. Calaber, 3 children, under 7 years; Pole.  
 26. Mrs. August Haca, 2 children, under 10 years; German.  
 27. Mrs. August Rambert, 1 child; German.  
 28. Mrs. B. Schizel, 3 children, under 5 years; German.  
 29. Mrs. John Brohman, 4 children, under 17 years; German.  
 30. Mrs. Frank Matto, 2 children, under 12 years; German.  
 31. Mrs. Herman Unger, 1 child; German.  
 32. Mrs. Henry Edle, no children; Scotch.  
 33. Mrs. James Carroll, no children; Irish.  
 34. Mrs. Thomas Rogers, no children; Irish.

PETITION.

To His Excellency, John M. Hamilton, Governor, and the General Assembly of the State of Illinois: We, the undersigned committee, duly appointed by the citizens of this coal mining district, would most respectfully and earnestly petition your honorable body to make an appropriation of \$25,000, or such an amount of money as your honorable body may see fit, to aid and assist the forty-five widows and 100 orphans caused by the late Diamond mine disaster.

WM. MOONEY,  
 JAMES J. BENNETT,  
 F. W. ADAMS,  
 ALER PATTERSON,  
 HENRY LE CARRON, M. D.,  
 ROBERT HINSTON, P. M.,  
 N. GOLDFINGER,  
 F. E. MUNN.