

A MINE INSPECTOR, like every other man who is appointed to a responsible position, is expected either to know all about his duties or else to make himself acquainted with them without delay. The more responsible the position, the more important it is that such officials should do their full duty. The verdict of the Coroner's jury who investigated the disaster at the West Leisenring mine goes to show that Mine Inspector Augustus Steiner did not live up to the above proposition. Six months ago he was appointed mine inspector in a certain mining district in the Western part of the State, and yet he testified he had never done that duty toward the West Leisenring mine. He went there, but being told by the mine boss that the mine was all right, he accepted his statement without making an investigation for himself. He neglected the very duty which he received a salary of \$3,000 to do. He admits the mine boss was entirely unfit for his position, an opinion the public will no doubt also reach so far as he himself is concerned. It is not easy to imagine a more responsible position than that of mine inspector. The lives of thousands of men are virtually dependent upon the fidelity with which he performs his work. This consciousness should make even an indifferent man cautious. He can so direct and order that their duties are made safe, while he can also doom them by his neglect. No wonder the Coroner's jury attributed the deaths of the West Leisenring miners to the negligence of the two men, the inspector and mine boss, who were expected and paid to stand between them and death. The application of a little wholesome law might perhaps bring these men to a sense of their duty. It should be tried.

1884 West Leisenring Mine explosion NEWS

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