

#### WHIPPLE MINE DISASTER.

Several newspapers in this section in their reports of the Whipple mine disaster ascribe the cause of the explosion due to the criminal negligence of two miners in firing a shot "off the solid."

We are not experts or authorities on mines and mining, but upon investigation and inquiry among the miners of years of practical experience and those personally acquainted with the conditions prevalent at the Whipple mine and other mines in that immediate locality we are compelled to take issue to the report. In the first place we learn that it is impossible for an explosion to occur in the absence of gas or dust, and, granting for the sake of argument, that the two miners did fire a shot "off the solid" there was either gas or dust in the mine which was ignited by the firing of the shot.

If the mine was in the best condition where did the gas or dust come from which caused the explosion? Why was the gas there? Is not the proper ventilation of the mines intended to remove the gases, and if the mine was properly ventilated there would have been no gas for a "solid shot" to ignite.

It has always been claimed by the miners and others who were in a position to know from personal observation that the Whipple mine was the driest and generated more gas than any other mine belonging to the White Oak Fuel Co., which bears out the assumption that gas existed in the mine at the time of the explosion and if the men who fired the shot "off the solid" (?) are guilty of criminal negligence, then those responsible for the existence of gas in the mine are likewise guilty under the state laws.

The disasters following so closely in each others wake in the mines of one particular company, is significant, to say the least, especially when you take into consideration that no general disasters have occurred in the other mines in that locality, which generate gas, but which are operated by other companies. There is something radically wrong somewhere and it is high time that State authorities do something beside "leave for the scene to investigate."