

safety lamp. The statement made by Parks does not agree exactly with that of the boss, in that particular, although agreeing in the main.

It was a very careless act, on the part of both men, to say the least. The fact of their having discovered the broken down brattice and door, ought to have been enough to have awakened them from their dreamy state of mind, as they must have been in some strange mood to have went, in the manner they did, into a mine on a Monday morning. And the man Parks at least knew, and the mine boss ought to have known, that the fan had been stopped the day previous; and even had it not been so, they had not used the most ordinary precaution in entering the mine. This is another example of the standard of our mine management, and until something is done to change our present system of appointing mine officers, fire bosses, and mine bosses we can but expect, occasionally, such suicidal occurrences, classed, wrongfully, under the head of mine accidents.

ACCIDENT No. 26.—**William W. Williams, J. J. Lewis, George Tasker, and James Rowlands,** working in the Prospect colliery, were fatally injured by explosion of gas. I would here state that this explosion occurred in the same place that Benjamin Price was burned, only that the place had been driven further up the pitch. The mine boss, William Samuel, had been with these men, at the face of their work, about ten o'clock, A. M., on the day of the explosion, and ordered them to square up the coal in the cross-cut, which they had just made, immediately in the faces of both places, and to suspend further work there for the time. About one o'clock, P. M., Jenkin Lewis, a fire boss, belonging to said section, went in there to put in a stopping in the cross-cut below the one they were then completing, so as to force the air altogether through the new cross-cut at the face, and thus do away with about fifty feet of wooden brattice, built on either side of the pillar, between the two places. Shortly before three o'clock, P. M., the gas was ignited in the face by the explosion of a blast in the cross-cut. Three of the four men working there and the fire boss went down to the gangway and took up a few pails of water, and, as they supposed, extinguished the fire. When they commenced again to work, removing loose coal in the said cross-cut, and building up the stopping in the cross-cut below, the gas was again ignited, causing this time a heavy explosion, whereby the four men above named were fatally injured, having been very badly burned each of them. One of the men belonging to the outside of the two places, happening to be down loading a car, was the only one saved; he was badly frightened, but not much hurt. At the time of the explosion the upper or new cross-cut was nearly completed, there being only a bench of bottom coal, two feet thick, to lift. It was eight feet wide at the narrowest point, and was four feet high on top of the said bottom coal. The men were working immediately in the face, by their safety lamps, having suspended their naked lamps quite a distance down the pitch, upon the wooden brattice, near the middle cross-cut. It is very evident that considerable gas had accumulated there, from the concussion,

and it is clear, to my mind, that the accumulation could not have been in the inner one of the two places, otherwise the men could not have worked there; and, again, the foul air found, by the men working in the adjoining place, outside, proved the same thing. Hence, the gas must have been accumulated in the outside of the two places, caused by the great heat from the fire that had been, and was then in the loose and bottom coal in the aforesaid new cross-cut.

The men working in the main air-way and gangway, just a short distance inside, in the same air-current, as, also, the men working in the next place on the outside, in a chamber, all declared that the air current was just as strong and steady as usual, and did not observe any defect in it all day. The air current is kept steady by each section having been provided with double doors, at proper distances, so that no more than one door need be open at one and the same time. On the 11th of the same month, I measured the air at the inside place of the two, on the gangway, and found twenty-five thousand eight hundred and seventy-five cubic feet passing.

In my opinion, the gas was caused to accumulate in the outside of the two places, from the heat caused by the fire, causing a larger discharge, and that the brattice must have been cut in the outer place of the two to get material to build the stopping up that Lewis, the fire boss, was at, as there had not been any other material taken in there for that purpose this day. The latter act would naturally have left the outer place be deficient of sufficient air to force the warm air and gas down, so long as the air had an easier passage.

Falls of Roof and Sides.

ACCIDENT No. 1.—Michael Murray, a miner, working in the Nottingham colliery, on the 5th day of January, met his death by a piece of slate from the roof falling upon him while working a chamber. The thickness of the seam in this locality averages over twenty feet, and whenever that the upper bench of coal—called by the miners, for some reason, the devil's tier—is taken down, then the roof is not as safe as if the said bench is kept up as a roof, and many accidents occur from the treacherous slate or fire-clay lying between the upper coal of the seam and the regular rock top. I am rather inclined to think that outside of the matter of the safety of the men—which ought to be the first consideration—that it would be as cheap, if not cheaper, to leave the said upper bench up for a roof. It would save considerable expense from falls. At various times and places the height would be less, which would make it easier to timber and take less labor and materials. The pillars would be much stronger and could be left proportionally less than when the seam is cut to the top; and whatever accidents that might thus be avoided would also help to pay for the lost coal, in being able to work more steady.

ACCIDENT No. 2.—James Brislin, a miner, working a chamber in Sugar Notch slope, on the 5th day of January, was killed, and his laborer slightly injured, by a fall of a small piece of fire-clay which immediately overlies