

UNDER THE AVALANCHE.

Full Confirmation of the Mountain Horror in the Leadville District.

The Miners' Huts Swept Down and Buried Deep Under the Snow-Slide—Expeditions Visit the Scene.

Special Dispatch to the Globe-Democrat.

LEADVILLE, COL., April 26.—Before daylight this morning a special train left here having on board a large number of miners, whose destination was the Homestake mine, the scene of the snow-slide accident. Friends of the eleven men who are supposed to be buried under the avalanche, were also on the train. The train would proceed eight miles to a point known as the Eight-mile House, and thence the party would go on foot to the Homestake, six miles across the country. The men were armed with picks, shovels and axes, and would reach the buried men as soon as energy and muscle could do it. Another relief party left at midnight. They go via Sowbelly Gulch, and inform the miners there of the catastrophe, and together proceed in a body to the scene. A body of miners have also left Red Cliff, and the three parties would reach the Homestake about the same hour. How much work will be required before the remains are found can not be told. It is probable that the cabins have been swept down the little valley hundreds of feet, if this should prove to be the case a great amount of snow will have to be turned over before the bodies are all recovered. Many, however, think the snow came sweeping down the adjoining mountain, and lies almost where it fell. If this should prove to be the case it will not take long to recover them.

THE FIRST DISCOVERY.

M. F. Sweeny and Michael Conerty, two miners who made the first discovery of the accident, tell the following story: Many of the men working at the Homestake were intimate friends of these, and none of them had been in town since January. A considerable amount of mail matter had accumulated for them, and their friends in the city were growing uneasy at their long silence, although it was never for an instant supposed any terrible calamity had befallen them. At last Sweeny and Conerty concluded they would pay them a visit and carry up their mail to the mine. With this in view, they left Leadville day before yesterday morning, and, after a long and hard walk through snow, reached the place where the cabins ought to stand, which is a sort of basin on the mountain side. Their horror can be imagined when they found the cabins not in sight, and that the little valley, or depression in the surface, was completely filled with snow. The mine is worked by a tunnel, and, going up to it, they failed to find the least sign of life, and the big dump and the mouth of the tunnel were covered with many feet of snow. It is impossible to tell for what length of time these men have been imprisoned. It may have been for only a day or two, but it is feared it was weeks ago when the snow came down upon them. The young men fired their revolvers and made all the noise possible, but echoes alone broke the silence.

THE GLOBE-DEMOCRAT.

THE GENERAL ALARM.

Retracing their steps, they reached Sanderson's eight-mile house and told the story. The miners assembled there did not give credence to the story, thinking that the two men were mistaken as to the location of the cabins. A party, headed by Frank Sanderson, left at once for the purpose of verifying the report, and when they returned gave it as their conclusion that there was no room for doubting the catastrophe.

The Homestake mine is the oldest silver and lead-producing property in the Leadville district. It was located early in the seventies. The mine is situated at the timber line in a very rugged and almost inaccessible place, and several times it has nearly cost the lives of men who have gone there in the winter time. On one occasion Col. Thomas Smithan, an old Leadville miner, started with a companion from Oro City to take some provisions and medicine to the mine and, becoming lost and frozen with the cold, wandered for several days on the mountain. They were fortunately found by miners employed at the mine, who had considered themselves deserted in this lonely place and were making an effort to reach the settlement in California Gulch.

ALL DEAN.

The first rescuing party reached the scene of the disaster at 8:10 a. m. Nothing was visible except the snow, which had probably fallen and accumulated during the past two months, and which lay to a depth of forty feet over the cabins. The snow had settled and packed, rendering the progress of the rescuing party very difficult. Axes had to be used in cutting the way through. Three excavations were made before the cabins could be located. The first structure found proved to be the one in which provisions, feed and general stores were kept. No bodies were found there. From this point the position of the other cabins could easily be determined, and work was pushed vigorously. The bunk house was next reached after clearing away a space large enough a log was taken from the wreck of the cabin and the first body discovered. Although the building was crushed by the slide and subsequent pressure, this body bore no trace of injury, and was not encumbered by fallen timbers. Death must have resulted from cold or suffocation. The body stood erect, the head slightly thrown forward, as if listening. The arms were half raised, as if in defense. The whole position indicated apprehension. Near him lay one of his companions in a bunk, face downward, with his arms crossed under his head. Several large logs lay upon his body, and he was undoubtedly crushed to death. After three hours hard work the opposite side of the cabin was reached, where the bodies of three more men were found in an upper bunk clasped in each other's arms. These bodies, like the first, were free from overhanging timbers, and the attitude indicated suffocation. The limbs of the three were so strongly interlocked as to require the united efforts of six or eight men for fully half an hour to separate them. From here the workers tunneled to another corner, when one man was found beside a bunk in the attitude of prayer. Death came by freezing or suffocation. In the bunk lay two of his companions, showing no signs of having been disturbed from their slumbers. A tunnel was then made to another corner, where two men were found, the first with his nose scraped off and his head and body flattened sideways between two timbers, which lay about two inches apart. His companion was also crushed by timbers. His face and limbs were badly scratched. The snow around these bodies was profusely stained with blood. Owing to the fact that all of the faces were covered with half an inch of white mold, the features could not be recognized. All were in night-dresses. Their clothes were deposited near the bunks in which they slept. The color of their hair and their size furnishes a doubtful clue to recognition. Some friends and relatives of the dead men were on the ground and identified them as nearly as was possible. A clock and watch were found which had both stopped precisely at 3:30. The clock was an alarm clock and the alarm was set for 6 o'clock and went off when taken up. A *Police Gazette* was found dated February 14, also a letter from a lady friend in Ohio, dated February 10, to one of the men. The letter, with his answer, sealed, was found near the foot of the bed. The letter will be forwarded to-day, with a request that when opened the date of writing be given. In this way it is believed the exact date of the disaster can be determined. From the amount consumed of the twelve months' supplies taken to the mine on the 1st of January, and from the *Police Gazette* and the letter found on the bed, it is believed that the slide occurred between the 20th and 25th of February. The third and last cabin was the cook house and it was entered, but no bodies were found in it. The rescuing party left the mine at 4 p. m. and arrived in Leadville at 9:15 to-night. Another party leaves here to-morrow morning to bring the bodies to Leadville, where they will be cared for by their friends. It was reported that eleven men were missing, but there were ten bodies found in the cabin, and it is believed no more were there. Friends now say ten is all that were there. The names of the rescued are the same as those published yesterday.