

Ah! for men who, wrapped in greed,  
Care not for their neighbor's need—  
Have no broader horizon  
Than the muck-hill they rake on;  
Nor see in tale of Dunbar's mine  
Words of Christ personified!  
Self for man was crucified  
In the creed of love divine.

Be their names with chaplets hung  
Who that lesson bravely taught!  
Be their names with praises sung  
Who that brave endeavor wrought!

**A HORROR WITHOUT PARALLEL.**

"More volunteers to go down the shaft," yelled a grimy-faced man at the shaft entrance to the **Mammoth No. 1 mine**, as he flashed his torch in the countenances of the men who crowded around.

There was no lack of responses, for down in the bowels of the earth lay the bodies of over a hundred of their comrades.

At nine o'clock Tuesday morning, **January 27th, 1891**, occurred the worst disaster ever known in a bituminous coal mine in the State of Pennsylvania, if, indeed, it was ever equaled in this country. Mammoth was the scene of the catastrophe.

At this place on the Sewickley branch of the South-western division of the Pennsylvania Railroad are located the Mammoth mines and coke works of H. C. Frick & Co. There are two mines, No. 1 and No. 2. The former is entered by a shaft 107 feet deep, and the latter by a slope. The two mines are connected by interior workings.

Gas, or fire damp, the bane of a coal miner's life,

was remarkable here for its absence. No trace of it had ever been found, and for that reason the common coal digger's lamp was used.

Early in the morning the fire boss had made his tour of the mines, in accordance with the laws of the State, and had found everything apparently in the best of order.

The men were ordered to work—110 of them, and went down the pit shaft, where in so short a time they were to meet their death, with laugh and with jests.

A few minutes after 9 o'clock there was a dull rumbling sound like the dim mutterings of thunder behind distant hills, a cloud of smoke and dust shot up the shaft of Mammoth No. 1, 50 feet above the tall derrick and slowly settled down.

For a few moments there was silence, and then the workers from Mammoth No. 2 began pouring out of the slope and rushing toward the shaft of No. 1. Many of these men had been bruised and shaken up by the force of an explosion, but none were injured seriously.

The superintendent called for volunteers, and at once 20 men stepped forward and were lowered down the shaft in the cage, which had not been injured by the explosion. When the party reached the bottom of the shaft, one glance, and the odor of the deadly fire damp was enough. Death lurked in these underground corridors. He had seized all he found there and was clamoring for more victims.

The party returned to the top of the shaft and the ventilating fan, one of the most powerful in use at any coal mine, was at once started up at its utmost speed.

Again the superintendent and his party descended. The force of the explosion was visible on every hand. The coal wagons used in the mines were splintered to pieces in some cases. In other places several of them had been jammed together in a solid mass. Mules were seen which had been driven against the ribs of the workings with such force that their bodies had utterly lost all semblance to the living reality. Here and there lay human bodies.

Some were mutilated and all were blackened by the deadly flame which had swept through the works. The bodies of those who had been killed by the effects of the explosion lay in distorted attitudes, while others, who had apparently escaped the flame and concussion, but had rushed from the rooms in which they were working, into the flats, had succumbed to the stealthy, suffocating fire-damp.

There they were, some at full length with heads resting upon their hand as if asleep, others face downward with their heads in pools of water. One man had climbed into a wagon which had not been wrecked, and there, with his dinner bucket by his side, had laid down as if to dream of pleasant things.

Enough had been seen for experienced miners to know that all the men in flats Nos. 2, 3 and 4 of the No. 1 Mammoth mine had perished.

The General Manager at once notified the managers of the other coal mines belonging to H. C. Frick & Co., and sent messengers to Mt. Pleasant, Greensburg, Scottdale and surrounding towns for physicians. Several doctors at once responded and while they could render no aid to the dead, took charge of the arrangement of the bodies, attended the rescuers

who were overcome while working in the still foul mine, and helped in many instances to distinguish traces of humanity in the heaps of débris which the less-learned miners were passing unheeded. The physicians took their turns below nothing daunted by the unaccustomed danger and worked with a vim.

When General Manager Lynch came in from Scottdale he brought with him the Superintendent of H. C. Frick & Co.'s Standard Works, the General Manager of the Southwest Coal and Coke Company, the Superintendent of the Hecla Coke Company, the General Manager of the United Coal and Coke Company, and all the best men at their several works. Undertakers at Mt. Pleasant, Scottdale and Greensburg were notified, and 50 coffins were brought from Pittsburgh, with a similar consignment to follow.

When the news of the explosion came to the miners' families in the little houses dotted on the hillsides, mothers, wives, sisters, daughters and sweethearts rushed to the shaft. The story was soon told: "All the men in flats Nos. 2, 3 and 4 are dead. As fast as we get their bodies out and they are identified and fixed for burial we will send them home."

There was no loud emotion displayed. A dry sob could be heard here and there, and many a woman walked away with a bowed head, returning to her desolate home to await the arrival of her dead. At least there was no suspense. The women bore the news well.

As soon as the mine experts had arrived, a systematic plan for the recovery of the bodies was agreed upon. The first party went down the shaft to the Forrest flat No. 4. Three hundred feet from the shaft

they found a wall of earth, coal wagon and human bodies which blocked further progress. This was tunneled through, and the party turned off at right angles along a haulage road. At the extremity of this was found a man with his head completely blown from his body.

At this point several of the party were overcome by the after-damp, and had to be carried back to purer air. The entrance to each room opening into three flats was hastily closed with brattices to give a clearer sweep to the air being forced into the mine, and a few of them were explored.

In the haulage road of No. 4 flat, 35 bodies were found, and 15 were counted in one heap in flat No. 2. One man had both legs blown off. The body of a boy was found with a stick driven through his arm. The fire-boss was torn to pieces, and a rubber boot was found still encasing the foot and leg of a miner. The big pumps, which lift tons of water out at a time, were broken and scattered as if they had been made of straw.

It was but a few minutes after the explosion when the first body reached the surface. It was still warm, but life was utterly extinct. The next man brought up appeared to be still breathing, but the utmost exertions of the physicians failed to resuscitate the victim.

Then commenced the dismal procession of the dead, to which rank after rank was added as the cage came to the surface. All day long it moved across the open lot in front of the shaft, and as the daylight faded and the darkness of night settled down upon the frowning hills the line of stretchers, almost un-

broken, kept passing from the shaft to the building which had been hastily utilized as a morgue.

The morgue, a roomy two-story frame structure, was formerly used as a residence by a former superintendent. It is a roomy building, and the bodies were taken into what had formerly been the sitting room. Here the undertakers, with sleeves rolled up and swathed in aprons, endeavored to bring back to the maimed, scorched and blackened bodies some semblance of their former appearance.

Then they were garbed in black shrouds and laid out on the long back porch. The porch was soon filled with bodies, 20 lying in a row at one time. The caskets were brought up, and as soon as a corpse was identified, it was placed in a neat black walnut casket and the vacant place occupied by a new arrival.

The work of searching for the bodies was hard and dangerous. The after-damp still lingered in large quantities, and once or twice fires were discovered where the explosion had ignited small heaps of dry coal dust. For a while it was feared the horrors which attended the Dunbar disaster would be duplicated. Large quantities of water were turned on the flames and after several hours of hard labor they were extinguished.

Then a bucket brigade was organized and every little spark was promptly suppressed before it sprang into a flame. The rumor that the mine was on fire spread among the the miners at the mouth of the shaft and for a time there was a hesitancy in volunteering for the relief of the miners below. It was only for few moments, however, and then a big, burly fel-

low with scorched face and red shirt open at the throat sprang forward and exclaimed: "I'm one, where is another?" and a dozen men jumped out of the hesitating crowd, and from that time on a call for volunteers was no sooner made than it was answered. The terrible disaster cast a gloom over the entire coke region. There were nearly 100 wives and families that were left wholly dependent on the charity of the world for sustenance by the disaster. In fact they were almost penniless, as the plant had not been running full for some time and work had been exceedingly scarce since the dullness set in the demand for coke. Every means possible were resorted to to supply the widowed mothers and their children with the necessities of life. The Frick Company were liberal in this direction and a subscription paper was soon circulated to obtain money to support the unfortunate families. The District Master Workman of the K. of L. addressed the following letter to the miners and cokers of the region:

SCOTSDALE, Jan. 27, 1891.

To the Members of the Knights of Labor and Workmen of the Coke Region:

The sad news of a disastrous explosion at Mammoth mines has just reached me, and I fear many families have been left destitute. I therefore appeal to you to promptly render what aid you can to assist the families of your brethren who have been killed. The Master Workman and committees at each works will kindly take the matter in hand and act as a relief committee. Let the committees select a "check number" and each miner run as many wagons as he can under the circumstances contribute, and arrangements will be made with the companies to pay the amount, and thus prompt aid can be given. Drawers can adopt the same plan and day men can contribute from their day's work and have the same deducted in the office. This aid will be separate and apart from any

public contributions and will be forwarded to district officers who will apply it to the relief of those to whom it is contributed.

Signed,

District Master Workman.

Mammoth mine No. 1 had yielded up the bodies of 107 victims of the explosion and after-damp on Wednesday, and 79 were returned to the earth in the little cemetery at Scottdale. The work of the rescuers was continued with unflagging energy from within a few minutes after the explosion occurred on Tuesday morning until noon Wednesday. Then the superintendent came out of the mine and said:

"We can find no more bodies. I think we have got all of them out, with perhaps the exception of one or two which may be buried under the piles of débris piled together by the force of the explosion. It will take several days to clear this away. I am going home to sleep for a few hours."

During the day the mine was inspected by Mine Inspector William Jenkins, of the Second district, Davis, of the Pittsburgh district, and Blick, of the Fourth district, and ex-Inspector August Steiner, Captain Schoonmaker and General Manager Lynch. They arrived at the conclusion that the danger was over and that within a week or 10 days work would be resumed in the mine.

Mine Inspector Jenkins, within whose jurisdiction this mine comes, was asked for a statement in regard to the accident. He said, although with some reluctance: "We have carried out 107 dead men, and we can see no more bodies in the mine, still there may be some there yet, buried under piles of coal and earth caused by the explosion. I only know of one mine

explosion which equaled this in its fatal results, and that was at Avondale in 1869, when 109 men were killed. The mine is all right, and as soon as all the after-damp is forced out through the slope of No. 2, we can start work to repair whatever damage may have been done. I could not give an explanation of all the causes leading up to the explosion until after the official investigation into the accident is made. The investigation is required by the State mining laws and will be thorough. The immediate cause of the accident was discovered in No. 3 flat. In one place where the pillars have been removed we found a small quantity of the gas. The quantity of the gas was so small that it does not account satisfactorily for the fearful intensity of the explosion, except upon the theory that the air was full of fine, dry coal dust, which rapidly ignited and doubled, perhaps trebled, the force of the concussion.

"Still we found that very few of the miners were burned, showing that the majority were suffocated by the after-damp. This mine had been always considered a very safe one, and exceptionally free from gas. Still, wherever there are or have been coal mines, there is always more or less danger of an accident. I can't say that was an unavoidable accident. However, every usual precaution seems to have been taken. The fire boss had made his report a few hours before the accident that the workings were in good order and safe."

After Superintendent Keighley decided that no more bodies could be recovered, action was at once taken to put the mine into shape for work again. Men below were relieved by gangs who had rested,

and the latter bore picks, shovels and other tools for clearing away the galleries and making the necessary repairs. The mighty fan was kept running at highest speed and late Wednesday afternoon the result became apparent.

Out of the sloping entrance to the No. 2 mine, half way on the other side of the hill, but connected by underground working with No. 1, could be seen a thin streak of dark vapor emerging. Soon it began to come faster until at a late hour Wednesday it was pouring out in big volumes.

There is no question but that the ordinary naked lamps and not the safety ones were used by the miners in the Mammoth. The officials explained this by stating that the pit was believed to be entirely free from gas.

General Manager Lynch, who had been constantly on the move since the accident occurred, at noon Wednesday began the preparations for perhaps the largest funeral which ever occurred in the State of Pennsylvania. Seventy-nine of the victims had been recognized as belonging to the Catholic Church, and Father Lambing, of Scottdale, and Father Symigiel, the Hungarian clergyman, arranged the details of the funeral. Father Lambing telephoned to Scottdale and ordered graves prepared for 80 bodies. This necessitated the digging of a trench 6 feet deep, 7½ feet wide, and 250 feet long. As fast as the bodies were brought out of the pit they were carried in stretchers across a temporary bridge, thrown over the railroad track, to the temporary morgue.

Here were 30 men engaged in stripping and washing the bodies, embalming them and dressing them in

neat black shrouds, after which they were placed in caskets to await identification. When a corpse was identified the name was inscribed on the lid of the rough box, the casket was nailed down and it was tabbed with the name of the place of interment. Long before daylight Wednesday morning, the large lot in the rear of the morgue was filled with coffins, and the later arrivals had to be carried out to the side of the road near the house.

There were some sad scenes to be witnessed. A middle-aged, pleasant-faced woman leaned over the casket which contained the body of her husband. "Oh, my Peter, my Peter," she moaned as she clasped her hands and bowed her head. She jealously guarded the remains of her loved one. When anyone approached to raise the lid of the casket for the purpose of identification, she would push them aside and cry, "No, no; that is my husband, my Peter." She stood there for two hours in the drizzling rain until General Manager Lynch came up, when he immediately ordered the body removed to the little home, back on the hill, where the woman could be with her sorrow.

A Hungarian's body lay in the casket at the roadside for a long time before it was identified. The skin had peeled off the face, leaving a blood-red travesty on the human countenance. His wife finally came to the line of coffins, which were opened one by one for her inspection. She had a week-old baby in her arms and to her skirts clung two tiny toddlers, who were bewildered by the crowd and the strange scene. The sobbing woman closely scrutinized the set and sometimes disfigured face of each corpse, but passed along

the line until she reached the casket in which was the awfully mutilated corpse. The man was well-known and generally liked by his companions; he was a gay young fellow of 25 years. Not one of them had recognized the body, however, until the eye of love proved truer than that of friendship. No sooner was the face exposed than the woman gave a shriek and began sobbing bitterly. Other women pressed around her to give her consolation, but she heeded them not. She pushed them aside, and, pressing her babe to her breast, sped rapidly across the steep hill to Mammoth Station, nearly a mile away.

In an incredibly short time she returned, carrying with her a Bible, a little prayer book and a rosary. The casket was reopened, with the gentlest of touches the woman placed the sacred volumes between the cold, still hands, and placed the rosary on his breast. Then, bending low over the coffin, until her face almost touched the raw and blood-red face, she softly crooned a weird, Slavic melody, broken every few moments by fits of passionate sobbing. Her friends at last persuaded her to leave the corpse and return to her home.

When the funeral train passed Mammoth station later in the day, bearing among others his body, the grief-stricken widow, with her little ones, and surrounded by several score of sympathetic friends, was there to bid her husband a last farewell. She could not go to Scottdale, as her child was too young to leave behind, and she was denied the somber satisfaction of watching the remains committed to the grave. As the train stood at the station for a few moments the woman repeated the rude melody she had sung

earlier in the day, and it was taken up by the women standing near, all of whom were weeping. When the train passed away, she fell unconscious to the ground. She was borne to her home by strong and willing hands, where she received the ministrations of her sympathetic friends and neighbors.

She was not alone in placing in the coffin of loved one the emblems of religious belief. Not an identified Hungarian was buried to-day without these tokens of that affection which is stronger than death.

A train of three baggage cars and four passenger cars was brought up to the pit mouth, and the work began of loading up the bodies intended for interment at Scottdale. The caskets had to be brought from the morgue, 100 yards away, and although six teams and 50 men were pressed into service, it took an hour to perform this work. There were 79 bodies all told.

Just as the train was about to start a woman came in search of her husband's remains. His body had not been identified but she knew it was among the ghastly freight. General Manager Lynch put her on board the train and promised her that when she reached Scottdale she should be given an opportunity to see her husband's remains. When the train arrived at Scottdale the first casket opened proved to contain the body of her husband. The woman's grief was terrible, and she was so overcome that she was unable to be present at the funeral.

Six hundred persons accompanied the bodies to Scottdale, and when the train arrived there several thousand were waiting in silence to receive it. Many of the dead had worked in and around Scottdale and were well known by their fellow-countrymen there.

Enough hearses could not be secured to convey the caskets from the depot to the Catholic cemetery, over half a mile away, and wagons were used. Then the long sombre procession started on its way, preceded by Rev. Fathers Lambing and Symiegiel and followed by a vast concourse of people, the Slav race largely predominating. Many of the women were clad in bright hued dresses with brilliantly colored handkerchiefs tied around their heads, but those who were there to bury their dead were invariably dressed in black garments. As the procession slowly passed along the road to the cemetery, all the church bells in town tolled heavily and added to the deep feeling of sadness which oppressed the multitude. The day was gloomy, the clouds were shedding a fine, misty rain and night was fast settling down. The solemn words of the burial ritual alone broke the hushed silence, until the sound of the clods of earth falling upon the caskets of the victims of this great mined disaster loosened the spell.

Women rushed frantically forward, sobbing bitterly and calling upon their dead ones, and no one in that vast concourse thought it unmanly to shed a tear. Then in one part of the throng was heard again in a thin treble voice the strains of the slavic funeral dirge; it was taken up here and there until the accents of woe seemed to fill the air and appeal to the very heavens. The strains died away as gradually as they arose, night dropped her veil over the scene, and slowly and sadly the army of mourners filed out of the cemetery.

All Wednesday afternoon and night a woman stood at the pit mouth and implored the men to bring the

body of her husband. She says he was working in No. 1 at the time of the accident, and knows that he was killed. She can't rest or sleep until she has wept over his corpse. The mine officials promised that every effort would be made to bring up her husband's body at the earliest possible moment.

About two o'clock Wednesday morning there was a panic among the workers in the mine, caused by the terrible cry of "Gas, gas" from Flat 3. A miner and the Fire-Boss of No. 2 were working here and were overcome by the after-damp; they were taken to the surface. It was 30 minutes before the miner was restored. The Fire-Boss while terribly sick, determined, when he saw the panic among the men, to return to work, and it took the united efforts of half a dozen men to prevent him going into the pit again until he had recovered. The panic lasted but a few moments and the men went back to work.

As soon as the news reached Pittsburgh, the Inspector of Emigrants, for that District and the officers D. A. No. 3, K. of L., sent out the following appeals to the public and the local assemblies attached to that District. The officers of other labor organizations did the same and the delegates to the United Mine Workers convention of Pittsburgh district, held on Thursday, the 29th, donated something to the funds and passed resolutions. The general officers of the United Mine Workers of America and the officers of the coke region district united in sending an address to the Governor and the Legislature.

PITTSBURGH, Jan. 28.

To the Public:

The duty of every citizen toward the families thrown suddenly into destitution by the horrible catastrophe at the Mammoth

mines is plain. At the request of the District Master Workmen I will take charge of and promptly forward any contribution that may be made in behalf of the hundred or more families who have been deprived of their bread-winning heads. The circumstances are such that no appeal should be necessary to secure a bountiful contribution. The men living at Mammoth mines have not had steady work for some months. It is not natural to suppose their families had much, if any, money laid by for such an hour as this. Twenty-five thousand dollars will not more than provide temporarily for the actual needs of the people. It is to be hoped the citizens will turn aside from theorizing on the causes which led to the explosion, and render such assistance as may be in their power to give. This duty we owe to common humanity.

Contributions may be sent in my name to the United States Custom Office, Chamber of Commerce Building, Wood and Diamond streets, Pittsburgh, Pa.

HEADQUARTERS OF D. A. 3, K. of L., }  
101 FIFTH AVENUE, }  
PITTSBURGH, PA., Jan. 28. }

To All Local Assemblies Attached to this District:

BROTHERS—Another disaster has fallen upon our brothers in the coal regions. In an instant, for the want of an adequate law for the protection of those who are compelled to toil in the bowels of the earth to earn a livelihood for their helpless wives and children, more than 100 souls have been hurled into eternity. What is your duty now? You need not ask. These widows and orphaned children must be provided for and your duty is to give every cent possible for that purpose.

Not since the great Johnstown flood has the necessity been so great. Come forward and show your charity for your fellow workmen. Do not hesitate for an instant, but go to work at once; collect by subscriptions and draw on your treasuries. Send to

M. W. D. A. 3, K. of L.

SCOTSDALE, PA., Jan. 29.

To His Excellency, Robert E. Pattison, Governor of Pennsylv-

vania, and the Honorable Bodies, the Senate and House of Representatives, greeting:

Standing as we do by the open graves of our brothers, whose lives have been suddenly and violently taken in the frightful Mammoth disaster, our hearts bleeding and torn while we witness the interment of the fragments of what have but recently been bodies of our comrades, we hear the orphans' wail, the widows' despairing cry, and feeling our helplessness, as we do most keenly, we appeal to you to come to our aid. Many kind appeals for aid have been issued, and to all the generous souls who respond we feel the deepest gratitude. But while we fully appreciate the timely succor which comes with true American promptness and generosity, we are fully conscious that kindness and liberality on the part of a charitable public is not all that is necessary. We accept these offerings most gladly, but we appeal to Your Excellency and to the honorable members of the Senate and House of representatives to come to our aid and throw around our craftsmen the strong protecting arm of the great Keystone State, of which we are proud to be citizens, whose secret hidden treasures we cheerfully delve and dig in exchange for our daily bread.

"Prevention is better than cure" is an old axiom, and we firmly believe it was never more truthful than in our case. Over 150,000 of our brothers daily enter the respective mines of the State, and in addition to the hardships incident to working under ground they are in many instances in constant danger of meeting the same fate that has shocked the entire Commonwealth and the country. Many of the mines in this region are exceptionally dangerous, and as the workings are extended the dangers are multiplied, and the present methods to protect life and property are altogether inadequate and frequently unreliable. The defects in our mining laws make it difficult to locate responsibility, and it is to be feared that a certain amount of carelessness is the result.

In this hour of our sorrow, face to face with the dangers and misery to which our craftsmen are exposed, we invoke protection for the helpless and the suffering. We have just learned with pleasure of the prompt actions taken in the appointment of a commission to investigate this matter. We would respect-

fully suggest that in addition to the testimony of experts the testimony of those of long experience be taken. Theories sometimes need correction.

Hoping that such measures will be devised as will bring greater safety to the workmen of one of the greatest industries of this great Commonwealth, we are, in behalf of the miners of Pennsylvania, your obedient servants.

The following are the resolutions of the U. M. W., of Pittsburgh, condensed. The committee reported resolutions of sympathy with the widows and orphans of the Mammoth disaster; that it be made mandatory on all delegates on returning to their mines to call meetings to take action on the following propositions.

*Resolved*, That all unions in Western Pennsylvania be called upon to contribute such financial assistance as lies in their power, and that the funds so collected be forwarded to the proper authority. Also, indorsing the appointment of the legislative committee to investigate the State mining laws, the amendment and enforcement of the same, the cause of the mine disasters and to suggest means for their prevention; and that the commission be urged to visit the mining centers of the State to hear testimony and gather data from the miners and others qualified to give information pertaining to the same.

A telegram embodying these points was sent to the chairman of the investigation committee, requesting him to give them favorable consideration.

Twenty-three bodies were buried at Scottdale on Thursday, and others as they were recovered making the number buried there nearly 100. Others were buried at the various mining towns in the locality. Several funerals being held under the direction of the K. of P. on Sunday. The last bodies were taken out

of the mine Monday, February 8th, making a full total of 110 lives accredited to the Record of the Mammoth Horror.

A curious yet sad scene was witnessed Thursday afternoon in a barn near Mammoth station. When the bodies were recovered from the mines they were taken to the morgue, where they were stripped, washed and re clothed in black shrouds with white collars and ties. In the hurry the old clothing was thrown together in large piles. After the funerals were over several wagon loads of this clothing was taken to the barn, and the relatives of the dead men notified to come forward and claim that which belonged to their kindred.

A hundred women gathered in the barn in the afternoon. Many of them were there out of curiosity or in company with the bereaved. At first the women looked stolidly at the mountain of clothing, and then one by one they stepped forward and lifted from the heap a garment which, when they last saw it, encased the stalwart form of the provider for a happy home, and then they broke down and sobbed.

One woman, not handsome or young, but with lines traced on her face by hard work and care, and with rough, red hands, sank to the floor clasping to her breast a coarse, mud-stained coat. She rocked backward and forward, and while the tears ran down her cheeks she crooned a Slavic lullaby. Another woman who had looked upon the pile of garments with a cold, indifferent eye, suddenly saw a coat she recognized. Then, and for the first time since the explosion, she realized her loss and broke into a fit of hysterical weeping, which finally became

so passionate that she had to be almost carried to her home. It was not many minutes until every woman in the building was crying. It was a sorrowful procession which passed out of that old barn, nearly every woman clasping closely some memento of a love which once made life bright.

The owners of the mine set aside \$25,000 in aid of the victims' relatives, and private subscriptions were reported coming in liberally.

It was said the Brick Company would make another donation in addition to their \$25,000, if necessary. The United Mine Workers had a big defense fund on hands, and would divert a portion of these funds for the relief of the distressed, if necessary.

No accurate account of the number of men who descended Mammoth No. 2 on Tuesday morning could be ascertained. This is charged to be due to a habit, which is said to be customary among the Slavs, of a man bringing in one or two compatriots to assist him. The first man has the check, and the others assist and share in the value of the output. In this way more men than are represented by the checks issued may enter a mine, and some of them may never come out of it again alive. This matter, it was said, would be brought to the attention of the Legislative Committee of Investigation. The chief engineer of the Standard Works, made a quiet visit to the shaft Thursday afternoon and spent some time in examining the workings.

The Legislature, in obedience to the demand of the Labor Organizations and public opinion generally, appointed a committee to visit the mine and make a thorough investigation as to the cause and responsi-

bility for the disaster, and the following is a description of the trip into the mine. The committee men were all experienced and thoroughly practical miners, and bore themselves like men who would push the inquiry to its furthest limits.

After some conversation with Superintendent Keighley, in which they acquainted him with the authoritative nature of their mission, the committee held a short session, after which the visitors encased themselves in overalls and prepared to descend to the mine.

At the tippie they were joined by Superintendent Keighley, Inspector Austin King, of Clearfield county, and Inspector William Jenkins, of the First district, who with half a dozen of the mine bosses and leading employes, formed an exploring party which, at 12 o'clock was lowered into the Shaft mine. Each man carried a safety lamp, and naked lights were conspicuous by their absence. Two and a half hours were spent in the subterranean passages, and fully five miles of ground was covered during the trip. Steps were at once directed towards the "dip," that portion of the shaft mine where the explosion occurred. As near as could be gauged by the miners, this part of the mine is back of the hill which overhangs the shaft, and is about 150 feet deep, being distance from the tippie about 1,400 yards. Incursion along the first entry from the "mine bottom"—an entry about 15 feet wide and 8 feet high where the wagons are loaded onto the cage—for a distance of probably 300 yards, brought the explorers to the first vestiges of the accident. The heavy beams supporting the roof of the entry were lying on the track, and heaps of debris,

pilled up against either wall, showed how the solid masses of coal and slate had been torn asunder under the pressure from the exploding gas.

Proceeding further, at a necessarily slow pace because of the obstruction in the way, empty wagons, some torn in pieces, others displaced from the rails, were found, and once in a while a broken dinner pail, sometimes containing an untouched meal, bore sad testimony to some poor fellow's fate. Now and again gangs of three and four men were met with replacing the broken sills and posts, and doing so to the accompaniment of their jests and jokes with each other, illustrating—if illustration were needed—how usage and daily contact with danger so familiarizes the miner to it as to cause him to accept it as a matter of course, and give it little thought.

Tramping steadily along the silent, low and narrow passage, seemingly interminable, the vicinity of the explosion was reached. The doors of flats were seen wrenched from their fastenings and the brattices were strewn along the tracks. The committee gave everything the closest scrutiny, searching for the fireboss's marks and examining the matter in which the posts and sills were laid; looking for coked coal as indicating where the fire had been; and gazing closely at corners for evidences of the explosion through the soot on the coal.

"Those posts should rest on the bottom," said a committeeman. "See, the sills are supported from a short post resting on a place cut out of the wall above five feet from the ground. That is bad practice, as the wall might be forced from under the post and let in the roof. That is unsafe work."

After a time a heading was reached. Everything pointed to men having been at work very recently. A close examination failed to discover the fire-boss's mark of the 27th, which should have appeared if he had visited that particular heading. There was nothing to show that the explosion had eradicated it. On the other hand, the figure "30," the relief party's mark, was discernible. A committee man inquired from Inspector Jenkins as to the number of workings in the mine.

"I cannot say for certain, but I suppose there are 100."

"Is it the practice for the fire-boss to examine all the workings, or only those which are being worked?"

"I understand that it is usual for the fire-boss to examine only those which the men are working at."

"Then if a dozen or so headings only are worked, as in a slack time, the others might not be visited for some time?"

I believe that is possible, but when I was fire-boss, as I was for six years, I did not adopt that practice."

After a time the explorers had penetrated to within the "dip," and Inspector Jenkins went ahead to test the air for gas. That such was present was plainly discernible to the sense of smell, and more or less caution was used in pursuing a sinuous course through the butts, rooms, and flats, which abounded in this fatal section of the mine. Occasionally a call for the strictest silence would be made as the inspector listened to the crackling of the ceiling and tried for any inpouring of gas. At the entry to one flat the fire-boss's dates of inspection for 11 days, marked in chalk on a sill, were visible. A committee

man examined the character of the figures, and could not bring himself to believe that the date of the 27th—the day of the accident had been made by the hand that marked the others. There was a decided dissimilarity in the figures, and the “27” looked much fresher than the others. Only here and there could a “27” be seen, and it was observable that where the mark should have been it most decidedly was not.

In the third flat a pool of blood was found, and from it a broken oil can, cap and penknife were picked up as relics of the poor fellow who had perished there. Finally the actual place of the explosion was reached and located. This was in the third flat. One of the party scraped a few ounces of dust from the charred coal from the corner of the third butt on the third flat, and carried it away for analyzation. In the second butt on the third flat the posts supporting the roofs were plainly seen to be charred, and all around this immediate section were similar evidences of the gas having been fired.

An incident, which is given for what it is worth, occurred just as the party were proceeding toward this place. Superintendent Keighley was leading, and on reaching a flat, turned down another.

“What is up there?” inquired a committee man.

“Only some headings that have not been worked for some time. The fire did not extend there, and it is only waste of time to go through it.”

The party halted and were about turning aside, when three or four of the committee, on second thought, decided to go on and see for themselves, the others remaining. They were gone for a considerable time, when the superintendent and others, becom-

ing tired of waiting, followed. As they overtook a committee man, the latter took one man aside and said:

"I wonder what reason Keighley had for trying to mislead us? You heard what he said about abandoned workings? Why, here is where the men were killed," and the legislator pointed out the charred coal at the angles of the passages. In the rooms of the "dip" much criticism was made of the distance between the posts supporting the roof, and the width of the rooms, and again of the thickness of the ribs.

"Where there is a distance between supports, there is danger of the roof cracking," said a committee man. "Cracking may be followed by a fall of slate, holding a vein of gas. When that gas enters, it may be dissipated to a degree by the currents of air, but again, it may flow to a corner, or accumulate in a bratticed passage. Well; the result is that the miner's naked light comes in contact with it, and then——"

As the investigation proceeded the falls of slate became more frequent, and at one passage it was deemed advisable to turn aside. The visitors paid attention to every point; testing the roofs and examining the floors; the latter more especially in wide places, "because," it was explained, "the great weight overhead has a tendency to compress the ribs, which, yielding, do so by encroaching on the floor, and causing upheavals. In one or two places I have seen evidence of ribs bearing heavily on the floor space."

From time to time the spots where the men had

perished were indicated. Here four hardy men met their doom; at this corner another was picked up; and so on, was the mournful tale related. In this manner for two hours and a half did the party investigate for themselves into the cause of the disaster, and satisfied themselves as to how it was brought about. Concerning this very vital point what follows is said to be the result of to-day's inquiries.

"There was gas in the mine, and it was known to be there previous to the accident.

"Safety lamps were not used because naked lights were in vogue in the district.

"The committee men seemed satisfied that the mine was handled carelessly; that the presence of gas was sufficiently clear to warrant the use of safety lamps, and the mine practice might be improved upon."

The committee men's car was hitched onto a local train at 3:11 o'clock and drawn to Greensburg, where the party remained over Sunday.

In reply to a number of questions, Inspector Jenkins made the following statement:

"Gas is always present in mines which are below water level, as are those in this particular section. Whether it can be guarded against depends on how the mine is handled. It finds its way in through veins in the slate, and, when falls occur, they are just as liable as not to leave bare some vein of gas. There is always more or less danger in mining, and in very few cases does a miner enter a mine without taking, to a great extent, his life in his hand. If he is experienced and careful, he may avoid firing gas which has not reached sufficient volumes as to become danger-

ous, but the average miner is not careful. That is, he has become so accustomed to his life that he minimizes all chances of danger, and is apt to get off his guard."

"You give it as your opinion, then, that there was gas in this mine before the day of the accident?"

"I do."

"You think that safety lamps should have been employed?"

"I think that had safety lamps been used that the accident now being investigated would not have happened. Miners prefer naked lights, but that's no reason why they should use them. I think those lamps should have been used."

The mine disaster at Mammoth will have some good results, if the numerous schemes for revisions of laws amount to anything. A Representative of Pittsburgh, presented a bill in the House making employers liable for the loss of their employes' lives, or injury to them in any way. It provides that "all persons having control or direction of the services of persons employed about shafts, slopes, drifts or ways, shall not hereafter be considered a co-employee of the person injured or killed."

The Representative said this is practically the law of Kentucky, Ohio and Illinois, and several other States. The great trouble now is that the terms "owner," "operator," "superintendent," and similar designations, are used without the court or counsel having any definite knowledge as to what the term implies, and the meaning applied to the respective terms differ according to the interpretation put upon them by different persons under different circumstances,

and the miners claim that these interpretations are, as a general rule, against them.

It is needless to add that the bill was defeated by a large majority and though a commission was appointed to revise the mining laws, consisting of the Inspectors of all the bituminous districts of the State and a miner and operator from each district, their recommendations were voted down and the mining laws of Pennsylvania were not changed.

#### SPRING HILL, NOVA SCOTIA.

A tremendous explosion took place in the east side of the east slope of the Spring Hill mine, Nova Scotia, at 1 o'clock, Saturday, Feb. 21st, 1891, which resulted in a large loss of life and the destruction of the mine.

The Spring Hill mine is the most important in the Cumberland coal field. It employs 1,000 men. Its output is 2,000 tons of coal daily, and it is owned by Montreal and English capitalists. Hitherto it had been singularly free from explosions, and the cause of the disaster is unexplained.

The news of the disaster created the most intense excitement, and the whole population appeared to have gone wild. It was only Friday that the mine was examined by the deputy inspector and a few days previous by a committee of the men and found to be in a satisfactory condition. The news spread like wildfire and within a few minutes after the report was heard the mouth of the pit was surrounded by heart-broken wives and mothers whose

#### SHRIEKS AND CRIES OF ANGUISH

rent the frosty air as the dead and dying forms of