

DROWNED LIKE RATS.

The Michigan River Pours Into a Michigan Mine.

WEAK SUPPORTS CAUSE A DISASTER.

Workmen in the Mansfield Mine Near Crystal Falls Engulfed Without Warning. Twenty-eight of Them Perish.

AN AWFUL MINE HORROR.

CRYSTAL FALLS, Mich., Sept. 30.—With a roar and crash the waters of the Michigan river broke through the Mansfield mine shortly after 9 o'clock Thursday night, drowning twenty-eight of the employees at work directly under the stream. The eighteen men who escaped were employed in the lower levels. The accident occurred between 9 and 10 o'clock but did not become known until later. None of the bodies have been recovered and it is believed it will be necessary to divert the channel of the river before they can be secured.

The Victims.

Following is a correct list of the dead: Sam Peters, married; James Simonson, married; W. H. Peters, married; Sam Johnson, Mike Harrington, Frank Bacon, Al Turcotte, Frank Johnson, Sam Johnson, William Davis, Peter Terry, Nels Poutas, Charles Post, married; John Regis, Ole Carlson, married; Joe Kila, married; John Hesterman, Bess Forinane, John Kiese, John Rauska, John Warner, Oscar Lundquist, Chris Arcanotto, Antio Striano, August Gossens, O. Christall, Yulio Zadra, Gilbert Neri.

Mine Has Under the River.

The Mansfield mine is situated on the banks of the Michigan river about 4 miles east of Crystal Falls, the county seat of Iron county. It has been working between three and four years and has shipped about 50,000 tons of Bessemer ore. The ore lenses dipped rapidly beneath the stream and for more than two years the chief workings have been directly under the bed of the river. There has been much trouble with water and predictions have not been wanting that the river would some day break through the roof of the mine. The depression in the iron trade has closed practically all the mines in the Crystal Falls district, and the Mansfield was almost the only one from which any ore was being raised, the fine quality of the product enabling it to keep on working.

Caused by Weakened Timbers.

The first level was 35 feet below the bed of the river. The lower levels, five in number, ran parallel with the first, the sixth, or bottom level, being 425 feet below the surface of the water. In the process of mining all the levels save the sixth have been stopped out, leaving only timbers and pillars of ore to bear the weight of the floors of ore above. The generally accepted theory as to the cause of the disaster is that the timbers on the fifth level gave way and allowed the levels above and at last the river to crash down upon the fatal men.

The night shift had gone down, and though some one noticed that more water than usual was coming into the mine no special alarm was felt, as the pumps seemed to be able to keep the drifts free. So the work went on in its usual course until the roar of water made the first announcement of danger. So fast came the flood that it is doubtful if the men in the upper levels were able to reach the shaft at all.

The scenes of horror and death in the upper levels can only be imagined, for no one escaped to tell the tale. Had the men been able to reach the shaft death would still be certain, for the old, or No. 1 shaft, the only direct means of reaching the upper levels, collapsed and fell in about 9:30, cutting off all escape that way.

How the Survivors Escaped.

Most of the survivors were at work on the bottom level, which was not stopped out, and therefore did not cave. Andrew Sullivan, a night boss, was on this level and heard the crash above. He divided what had happened and called to his men to follow him up the ladder-way. The draft caused by the cave extinguished their lights and the men were compelled to feel their way through the darkness. All but four men on this level reached the ladder-way in safety and the ascent was begun. When the men reached the fourth level a torrent of water poured down the shaft. The men could proceed, but could breathe only at the landings as the several levels were reached, so great was the pressure caused by the influx of water. They were nearly dead when they reached the surface. Their four comrades remained on the sixth level, their avenue of escape having been cut off by the water.

A Hero Perishes.

Tony Baletto, the skip-tender at the fourth level, was standing near the shaft with Frank Rocco, a night boss, or foreman, when the first crash came. They knew what had happened and anticipated the result, but Rocco heroically refused to go up in the skip until he had warned his men of the danger imminent. He went back into the drift and perished with his comrades. Baletto came to the surface in the skip and is the only man who went to tell the fourth level last night left to tell the story.

Heartrending Scenes.

The scene at the mine location has been heartrending. Weeping women and crying children have crowded up to the gaping pit to view the last resting place of husband and father. The spot has been visited by thousands of curious people throughout the day, and the tragic event is the one topic of discussion in the Lake Superior country. No specific censure of the mining company is being manifested.

Not until after daylight did the river complete its work and resume its normal course. The mine workings had been tilted to the river level and the fatal stream began to crawl down its dry bed once more. The death of twenty-eight men marked the end of the Mansfield mine, for unless the river be forced to seek another channel this rich

deposit of iron ore can never be worked again. Eight of the victims leave families of children fatherless, and about half of the remaining twenty men were the support of parents.

Can't Recover the Bodies.

The recovery of the bodies of the lost men is out of the question. The work would entail a deviation of the river from its course and the outlay of hundreds of thousands of dollars. No loss of the company operating the mine is manifested. The mine inspector has fully vindicated the company and says that the system of mining employed in this section of the country, the timbering system, is alone to blame for the disaster.

Fault of the Miners.

MARQUETTE, Mich., Sept. 30.—John M. Longyear, of this city, is one of the chief owners of the Mansfield mine property. He said that the land had been leased to Calhoun & Tenney, of Chicago, and that they had formed the Mansfield Mining company. Mr. Longyear's belief is that the disaster was caused by "robbing" the mine; that is, by working in a reckless manner and tearing down pillars of ore in the upper levels that should have been left to support the roof.

The mine inspector of iron county will conduct a most rigid investigation to ascertain the cause of the disaster at the Mansfield mine. The vein of ore was only 16 feet wide and the nature of the ground was such that experts say it was easy to afford an adequate support to the hanging wall of the mine.

The Drowned Mine.

The Mansfield mine is one of the Subitong group and is operated by Curtis Iron & Co. It is 7 miles from this city. The mine underlies the river, but the stream of earth between the water and the mine is not deep enough to withstand any pressure that could possibly be exerted by the water. It is found that the mine, which is one of the best in the range, is being undermined and it will be impossible to control the water.

The principal vein of the Mansfield mine is J. M. Longyear, of Marquette. It was the only vein in the Crystal Falls district and was only kept going by reason of the fact that it was producing a high grade of iron ore. It usually gave employment to about 20 men and had the accident happened two days ago the loss of life would have been greater. Mr. Longyear said that he had never before stated, the Mansfield has long been considered dangerous and a terrible disaster has often been predicted. Miners themselves have given it the go by whenever possible, but in the existing condition of the mining industry there were a hundred applicants for any kind of work that offered.

CURRENT EVENTS.

Paid admissions to the world's fair on Friday, 151,287; total to date, 14,501,838.

While talking to friends at Marshalltown, Ia. W. E. Sargent, an old resident, fell to the floor dead.

Senator John P. Jones, of Nevada, is said to have bolted the republican party and gone to the populists.

Judge Irwin B. Randle, a personal friend of Abraham Lincoln, died at Alton, Ill. He was 82 years old.

Forest fires are raging near Winchester, Va., and many residents have been driven from their homes.

At a New Orleans blaze which demolished \$25,000 worth of property two men died from suffocation.

Henry C. Whittier & Son, retail jewelers, Providence, R. I., assigned. Liabilities, \$50,000; assets in excess.

Dr. L. P. Dodge, a republican politician of Farmington, Minn., died from hiccoughs. He was 60 years old.

Frost has touched the flowers and foliage at Jackson park, and also the natives of far-away warmer climates.

Old liberty bell will be taken directly home October 21. Arrangements could not be made for a New England tour.

Swiss watchmakers received almost as many medals as all their rivals combined in the distribution of awards at the world's fair.

Texas state treasury is bankrupt. Bankers hesitate to cash warrants with which officials are paid on account of scarcity of funds.

The trials of six men supposed to have been implicated in the mob that hanged William Jackson, the negro, September 16 on one of the main streets of Rich Hill, Mo., ended with their discharge.

THE MARKETS.

Grain, Provision, Etc.

CHICAGO, Sept. 30.—FLOUR—In light demand, but rather easier at \$1.02 1/2 for Winter patents, \$1.02 1/2 for Winter straight, \$1.02 1/2 for Winter and one, \$1.02 1/2 for Winter or grain, \$1.02 1/2 for Spring patents, \$1.02 1/2 for Spring straight, \$1.02 1/2 for flax, and \$1.02 1/2 for Spring low grade.

WHEAT—Fairly active and steady. No. 1 cash, 65 1/2; December, 65 1/2; No. 2 cash, 64 1/2; No. 2 Yellow, 64 1/2; No. 3, 64 1/2; No. 3 Yellow, 64 1/2; September, 64 1/2; October, 64 1/2; November, 64 1/2; May, 64 1/2.

CORN—Fairly active and steady. No. 1 cash, 32 1/2; October, 32 1/2; May, 32 1/2; 2 1/2; samples in fair demand and steady. 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