

500 miners held today in St. Etienne a resolution was adopted in favor of declaring a general strike in the coal basin of the Loire tomorrow. A similar movement involving 50,000 men is feared. The prosperity of the coal trade led the miners to demand an increase in wages, shorter hours and a formal recognition of the Miners' Federation by the companies. The latter made an offer of 5 per cent increase, but this was refused.

Today's decision was reached amid cries of "Vive la greve." Disorders are anticipated; already there have been slight disturbances, particularly last evening, when the miners went in procession through the streets of St. Etienne singing the "Carmagnole."

Twelve thousand five hundred lace workers are on strike at St. Etienne for higher wages. Their illness involves that of 35,000 other dependent workmen, making, with the miners, if the coal strike spreads as is expected, nearly 100,000. Moreover, a number of factories and works will soon be compelled to close owing to the coal shortage.

**STRIKE IS SPREADING.**

French Coal Miners Have Troubles of Their Own.

St. Etienne, France, Dec. 27.—The coal mine strikers marched in procession today to several mines where partial work is proceeding, but dragons stationed at the pit-heads protected the workers and so disorder has occurred. The strike has spread to the mines of Rive de Gier, a town 12 miles from this place.

**DEMOCRATIC HARMONY.**

Silver Will be Ignored in the Attempt to Get the Offices.

New York, Dec. 27.—Elliott Danforth, chairman of the democratic state committee, returned to New York today, after a trip through the south, during which he talked with Senator James K. Jones, chairman of the national committee, and most of the chairmen of the democratic state committees.

Mr. Danforth said: "In my trip through the south, I observed one thing which will be considered of particular interest in New York, namely, that none of the leading men disposed to insist on free silver as the main issue of the campaign next year. They did not say that they had abandoned the 16 to one idea, but they acknowledged that the situation had changed since 1896 and that the dominant issues next year were trusts and imperialism.

"That is to say, they are unwilling to repudiate the Chicago platform, but they see that new issues of far-reaching importance have come up lately and that these should be recognized. Even in states like North Carolina, I found that the anti-trust and anti-imperialism ideas engaged the attention of the people more than the free silver issues. In fact, I might sum up my observations by saying that the sentiment of democracy in the south is such that I am confident there will be little trouble in bringing about a union of the democracy of the whole country next year."

**BRAZNELLE MINE HORROR.**

Criminal Evasion of Mining Laws Result in Awful Loss of Life.

Pittsburg, Dec. 28.—A special to the Post from Brownsville, Pa., says:

"There is scarcely any hope that any man in the pit is now alive."

These were the words of Mine Inspector James R. Blick uttered by him at 10 o'clock tonight as he stood at the mouth of the Braznell mine, in whose depths 20 men are entombed. That they will get out alive is exceedingly improbable, and tonight, mothers, wives and sisters mourn them as dead. Since early this morning the imprisoned men have been without food or air. They are separated from eager searchers by walls of debris which fell when the explosion took place and blocked the road to liberty.

At 7:20 this morning the death-dealing blast was loosed. Owing to a shortage of cars, less than the usual number of men entered the pit. The mine is that of the Stockdale Coal company and lies four miles from Brownsville and 14 miles from Union-

town. It is known as the Braznell mine and lies near a station of that name on the Red Stone Branch of the Pennsylvania railroad.

At 5 o'clock this morning Fire Boss Radcliffe went through the mine as usual and found gas or "fire-damp" in two places. He detected about four inches of gas in the main entrance about 100 yards from the main shaft and about an equal quantity in a room on a side entry a short distance away. The fire boss reported the presence of the gas, but informed the superintendent that it was all right for the men to enter.

The men were lowered into the mine in the cage, descending the main shaft, which is vertical. From 40 to 50 men had entered the mine and dispersed through it when the gas was ignited in some manner not yet ascertained. A tremendous explosion occurred. Its force must have reached every man in the mine. The cage is the main shaft, which was at the bottom, was blown to splinters and the hoisting machine wrecked. About 100 yards from the main entrance was an air shaft, also vertical and brick lined. It was torn by the blast and the bricks were blown to the very top.

Altogether there were from 45 to 56 workers in the mine. The men descended in the cage of the main shaft from eight to ten at a time.

Brownsville, Pa., Dec. 24.—The horror of the Braznell disaster grows intensely with every hour. The number of dead is now estimated at 40 and may exceed that figure. At the same time there is a strong presumption that the laws regulating mining were carelessly and probably criminally disregarded.

Today the first bodies of the victims were brought out of the mine, and never in the history of mine disasters were human beings so horribly mutilated. It was nearly 11 o'clock before the first of the bodies were taken out, 28 hours after the explosion. At 5:30 three more were brought to the surface and again at 6:20 three came up in the cage of the main shaft.

The estimates of the dead are conflicting. A. B. Braznell, president of the Stockdale Coal company, this afternoon said he believes that but 20 to 25 men had been killed. Men who were working around the mine yesterday morning give different figures. They say 35 to 40 men were down the mine shaft in the cages, while about 20 climbed down the elevator shaft. From 55 to 60 men were in the mine and of this number but 12 have been recovered alive. All the rest, whatever the number, are dead.

Brownsville, Pa., Dec. 25.—The mine officials of the Braznell mine admit that two or more bodies are still in the mine, but representatives of the Slavonic society have made a house to house canvass and report that eight of their number alone are in the wreck and how many others they do not know. That naked lights and unlocked safety lamps were used in a lugeous mine was officially verified today by Pit Boss Thomas Jones, who made a statement to that effect.

Work at the Braznell mine is progressing very slowly. The county roads from Brownsville to the mine are almost impassable. There is no telegraph or telephone connections with Braznell, so all news from the mine has to be brought overland. Four more bodies have been recovered, but not identified. Some of the families of the doomed men are in a suffering condition and provisions are being sent out by Brownsville merchants as well as from Uniontown. The men who have been working since Saturday to recover the bodies are almost exhausted, yet they refuse to give up, and continue at the grim work doggedly, though more dead than alive.

The scenes about the morgue yesterday and last night were such as to bring tears to many a stout heart. As the burned and bleeding bodies were carried from the shaft wives and children would fight frantically to get to the corpse, and when held back by strong arms, weep pitifully and plead to be allowed to enter the morgue and find their lost ones. Some of the bodies have been removed to their homes and will be buried today.

The revised list of the recovered dead numbered fifteen and those missing and absolutely certain to be in the mine a round dozen.