

AVALANCHE.

Scores of Miners Buried Under
a Snow Slide

Which Swept Down the Mountain
Near Telluride.

BELL SHAFT HOUSE

Was Crushed by Onrush of Ice
and Snow.

Estimate of Dead Runs From
10 to 70.

Telluride, Col., Feb. 28—Between sixty and seventy men are reported dead beneath a snow slide which wrecked the Liberty Bell mine shaft house. The slide came down at 7:30 this morning. It is reported there were between sixty and seventy men in the bunk house at the time it was carried down into the gulch below.

Communication with the mine is shut off and the names of the victims can not be ascertained.

Fred Clemmon, boss of the boarding house, and Charles Hall, a well known miner, were killed.

The present storm is the worst since 1895, and slides are expected any minute at Ophir and other places.

The mine buildings bunk house of the Liberty Bell mine were completely buried under an avalanche of snow and swept into the gulches, hundreds of feet below, at 7:30 o'clock this morning.

At this hour (12 o'clock) it is impossible to ascertain the number of lives lost, but it is estimated to be from ten to sixty or seventy. The bunk house, which was crushed like an eggshell by the mountain of wet and frozen snow as it came tearing down the steep mountain side was crowded with miners at the fatal moment.

A few of these, by almost superhuman efforts, managed to extricate themselves from among the broken timbers and dig their way out of the snow. Many however, who were not killed outright, were maimed into a state of helplessness and carried down in the awful maelstrom of debris, snow, earth and ice to a horrible death in the gulches below.

At 12 o'clock a courier arrived from the scene of the accident with the news that many bodies had already been recovered and were being carried down the mountain sides upon the shoulders of those who escaped, to the morgue at Telluride. Of the dead, two only have been identified. They are:

FRED CLEMMONS, boarding house keeper.

CHARLES HALL, a well known miner.

Communication with the mine is entirely cut off and until the messengers who were hastily sent to the mine upon receipt of the first news of the accident return, the full details of the awful catastrophe will not be known. The trail leading to the Liberty Bell mine is nearly three miles long and is one of the most difficult to ascend in the entire San Juan country. Especially hard is the trail to climb at this season of the year when the snow is deep and the weather severely cold.

At 1 o'clock this afternoon a powerful glass was directed toward the trail leading up to the Liberty Bell. Squads of miners carrying bodies of their unfortunate fellow laborers could be seen coming down. It required from two to four men to convey each body and the descent was necessarily slow. Every now and then one of the men assisting in this gruesome task could be seen to lose his footing, stumble and fall, carrying those near him down. The body bearers would pick themselves up, raise the lifeless form and again start down the dangerous trail. It was a scene never to be forgotten by those who witnessed it—the risking of life, to bring back to their desolated homes the bodies of those who a few hours before had been full of life and hope.

Several Finns, who were not caught in the slide, reached the city at noon, but were too excited and frightened to give any details. The foreigners are superstitious and believe that accidents like that of this morning are preordained and come as a punishment. Today's catastrophe, following so soon after the terrible fire at the Smuggler-Union a few months ago, in which a number of lives were lost, has unnerved them.

The first news of the snowslide reached Telluride shortly after 10 o'clock and was brought down by a messenger. He did not wait to learn the full extent of the damage done, but knew that help must be summoned.