

JURY'S VERDICT IS STARTLING

DECLARES HORROR IN ZEIGLER
MINE A CRIME.

FIND FORTY-THREE SLAIN

Says the Disaster Was Due to Af-
terdamp Caused by Explosion
of Powder Set Off by
Unknown Persons.

Ziegler, Ill., April 6.—Unknown parties are declared to have caused the explosion in the Leiter mine last Monday by which 43 miners lost their lives. This is the verdict of the jury impaneled by Coroner J. M. Adams of Franklin county, after an investigation covering two days. The bulk of the testimony tended to show that the deaths were due to afterdamp following an explosion of blasting powder, which was set off by some miscreant whose identity it has not yet been possible to trace, though it is probable that he perished with the victims of his crime. There were 43 kegs of powder and two boxes of miserite, a low grade of dynamite, in the mine. The mine is believed by the jury to have been practically free from gas and perfectly safe for working purposes at the time the double explosion sent the more than two-score miners to their end.

Finding of Jury.

The text of the verdict is as follows:

"We, the undersigned jurors, impaneled to inquire into the cause of death of William Atkinson, John Graham, John Lindsay and others, hereby find that the said William Atkinson, John Graham and John Lindsay came to their deaths in the Zeigler Coal company's mine at Zeigler, Franklin county, Illinois, on the 3d day of April, 1905, by being overcome by afterdamp caused by a powder explosion in said mine on the morning of April 3, 1905, and we believe that said explosion was caused by parties unknown.

"And we further find that Joseph Geisler, William Baxter, Everett Jones, Rolla Campbell, Robert Davis, Jerry O. Woods, Gustave Brumlik, Charles Robinson, Robert Hare, Harry Withrow and 30 others, whose names are to us unknown, came to their deaths in said mine on the 3d day of April, 1905, as a result of the aforesaid explosion.

Declare Mine Safe.

"And we further believe that said mine was in good and safe condition for working purposes, as far as gas was concerned, on April 3, 1905."

The motive for this awful crime, which made scores of women widows and children fatherless, is, of course, unknown, but naturally there are plenty of theories to fit the case. The probabilities, however, are that the identity of the criminal who fired the charge and the reasons which inspired him to commit the outrage will be buried in the grave with his remains.

Verdict Denounced.

Chicago, April 6.—Labor union leaders in Chicago denounce the verdict on the disaster at Zeigler as unwarranted by the evidence, and intimate that the decision of the jury was influenced by Joseph Leiter, who otherwise might get some of the blame for the horror. It is argued by union leaders that owing to the employment of incompetent and untrained men the conditions in the Zeigler mine were serious, and the accident was a result of careless management of the ventilating apparatus. For months, since the strike was declared, nonunion men have been employed, and union men say they long ago predicted an accident.