

FAINT HOPE ENTERTAINED BY RESCUERS

Thought That All Men Caught
In Darr Mine Explosion
Were Trapped Like Rats
And Life Extinguished.

LATEST ESTIMATE PLACES
LOSS OF LIFE AT 190.

Rescuers Are Working Night
And Day and the Big Fans
Kept Constantly Going That
Life May Be Sustained.

OFFICIALS' STATEMENT.

SAY IT IS WONDERFUL THAT THE
FORCE OF EXPLOSION DID NOT
EXTEND TO THREE OTHER
MINES CONNECTED.

Jacobs Creek, Pa., Dec. 20.—It is faint hope that any of the two hundred miners trapped in Darr mine are still living, but work is proceeding on the theory that some may be found in places of safety. The fans used to force air into the mine are working. This gives some hope. The most reliable information places the number in the mine at the time of the explosion, at one hundred and ninety, but there may be more. Thirteen mangled bodies have been recovered. If yesterday had not been a church holiday many more men would have been caught in the explosion. Officials say it is a miracle that the force of the explosion did not extend to the three other large mines connected with Darr mine.

As the case at Monongah, the explosion followed a brief shutdown, the Darr mine having been closed Tuesday and Wednesday. It was just 11:30 o'clock, when the tenth trip of loaded cars had been brought out to the tipple and there came an awful rumbling sound, followed immediately by a loud report and a concussion that shook nearby buildings and was felt within a radius of several miles. At the same time there came out of the mouth of the mine an immense cloud of dense smoke and dust that floated across the Youghiogheny river.

Intuitively every one in the vicinity knew what had happened, and all started for the one place, the mouth of the mine. The river separates the mine and homes of many miners so that only a portion of those who started for the scene were able to reach it, there being scant facilities for crossing the stream. To those who could not cross the water the smoke and dust pouring from the mine's mouth told a story of seething flames back in the workings and from this source came reports that were persistent until late in the day that the mine was burning.

The ventilating fans were kept in operation almost without interruption, however, the power plant having withstood the force of the explosion, and up to this time the rescuers have found no fire any place in the mine. As far as known, only one man who went to work this morning escaped.

Joseph Mapleton, a pumper, emerged from one of the side entries shortly after the explosion. He had left the part of the mine where most of the men were working and was on the way to the engine room for oil.

"I was in entry 21," said he, "when I heard an awful rumbling. I started toward the entry, but the next instant I was blinded and for a little time I did not know anything. Then I got to the side entry and worked my way out."

The main office of the company is in Pittsburg and immediately upon receipt of the news of the explosion the officers hurried to the mine and are leading and directing the rescue work.

About 1,500 feet from the mouth of the mine a heavy fall of roof was encountered by the rescuers. It is believed that most of the men will be found nearly a mile and a half beyond this point. How long it will require to remove enough of the fallen roof to make a passage to this remote workings can only be conjectured, as it depends upon how often these falls are met with. It is hoped from the progress made up to this time, however, that the farther section will be reached early tomorrow. There are several side entrances through which it is expected some men will be reached.

A remarkable feature of the disaster is the almost complete absence of the harrowing scenes usually enacted by women, friends and relatives of the victims on such occasions. Conditions preventing of easy access to the mouth of the mine are partly responsible for this and those in charge of the work are doing everything possible to keep the women and children away from the scene.

The blacksmith shop has been fitted up as a temporary morgue and a number of physicians are in waiting to render any services that may be required of them.