

the old workings to a point 300 feet below the bottom of the present South slope. This slope will open a new lift in the South basin. Two rock planes were also driven, one from the No. 9 to the No. 10 seam in the South slope, and another from the 9 to the 9½ in the No. 1 slope.

At Hickory Ridge a slope was sunk on the No. 4 or Buck Mountain seam, a distance of 660 feet. The seam at this place is of the average thickness of seven feet and of a very good quality.

At Hickory Swamp the breaker was completely remodeled and its capacity greatly increased. Work has also been commenced on the new Scott colliery. Two shafts are being sunk, one of which is now down 100 feet. This shaft will be 31 feet by 12 feet in the clear, inside of the timbers, and will have four compartments 7 feet by 12 feet each. Work on the second shaft will be commenced shortly.

MINERAL RAILROAD AND MINING COMPANY.

This company completed a rock slope 1,400 feet in depth at the Cameron colliery, and is sinking a shaft at the Luke Fidler colliery, which is 27 feet 6 inches by 12 feet in the clear. It has three 7-foot and one 4-foot opening. Its total depth on January 1st was 340 feet. It will be sunk to the depth of 950 feet.

NEILSON DISASTER.

The accident, which was attended by the greatest fatality of the year, and in fact the greatest fatality which has occurred in the history of mining in this district, and in which ten lives were lost, occurred in Neilson shaft, operated by J. Langdon & Co., on the morning of April 1st. The shaft bottom being wet, kerosene is used for the torches. Whilst filling a torch, or in pouring oil on the wick to make a better blaze, a can of oil in the hands of the bottom-man on the No. 10 seam level, exploded, setting fire to the oil-shanty and timbers on the turnout. As the mine is very dry, with the exception of a few feet surrounding the shaft, the flames spread rapidly, and in a few moments the smoke had traveled up the No. 10 air-way, to a tunnel connected with No. 11 seam, cutting off and smothering ten men, who were working in this seam. Everything possible was done to rescue them, but when the bodies were reached, after two hours of hard and heroic work, life in each case was extinct.

The following is a copy of the verdict rendered by the coroners jury, which, as will be seen, exonerated the company from all blame.

"We, the jury empannelled to hold an inquest over the dead bodies of John Bart, Frank Shukes, Joe Bartoskie, Noah Geary, Ferdinand Ginter, Nicholas Dehouaint, John Vrabel, John Ryan, Patrick Brennan and Michael Brennan, miners and workmen who lost their lives in the No. 11 or Red Ash vein on the North dip, West gangway at

the Neilson colliery, Saturday morning, April 1st, 1893, between the hours of 7 and 8 o'clock on said day and morning, find from all the evidence and information gained from twenty odd witnesses, that the aforesaid men lost their lives from inhaling smoke caused by a fire in a shanty in the No. 10 vein at the bottom of the shaft, said fire having been caused by the filling of a lamp with torch oil, in the hands of John Orbitskie, from a can said to have contained from a half to a gallon of said oil, which by the dangerous custom of pouring or squirting oil from the can on the wick of the said lamp in his hands when lit, ignited fire in said shanty, and from all the evidence and the then existing circumstances, believe it was impossible to save their lives."

(Signed)

FREDERICK D. BAKER, Coroner,
 JOHN J. W. SCHWARTZ, Foreman,
 DANIEL EISENHART,
 ADAM F. SHUEY,
 JOHN B. LOVETTE,
 A. F. YOCUM,
 WILLIAM M'KECHNEY.

As soon as the bodies were recovered, in order to extinguish the flames, which were spreading rapidly, all the colliery openings were sealed, as it was thought that by such method the fire could best be extinguished. After remaining sealed for a month, and when all the indications seemed to prove that no fire remained, the main shaft was opened, but it was soon discovered, from some explosions which took place, that the fire was still burning. Preparations were at once made to flood the mine by turning a creek which is close by in to it and on May 6 this was done. The water was allowed to fill to a point 20 feet above the No. 11 seam, as it was supposed the fire had not reached above this point. After allowing the water to remain for about four weeks, it was lowered so as to permit an examination of this seam. On doing so, it was found that a "Feeder" of gas was burning in the roof of the No. 11 tunnel. The creek was again turned in and water allowed to remain until the eleventh day of July, when the work of removing water was again begun. When this was accomplished, it was found that the damage done by the fire and water was considerable. Operations were resumed at the colliery on November 6, 1893.

FIRE AT PENNSYLVANIA COLLIERY.

On June 15 a disastrous fire broke out in breast No. 26, East No. 9 gangway, counter workings, in Pennsylvania colliery, operated by the Union Coal Company. When first discovered, it was burning in the schute, and after considerable effort it was supposed to have been extinguished, as it was thought not to have gotten above the brattice separating the air-way from the gangway, but later it was found to