

MINERS' LIVES LOST AT STONE CANYON

SHEER RECKLESSNESS OF EXPERIENCED MAN CAUSE OF THE DISASTER.

Paid the Penalty with Instant Death,
While Five Others Were Suffocated and Eight Burned.

The latest and most accurate report of the explosion at the Stone Canyon coal mines, by which six men lost their lives and eight were injured, was brought from the scene today by Coroner H. V. Muller. The explosion occurred Tuesday morning, shortly after the day shift reported for work.

The killed were Joseph Flor, a native of Italy, age 30; David McKrewe, native of South Wales, age 29; August Vazsaddi, native of France, age 32; August Magnes, native of France, age 42; John Nabal, native of Italy, age 27, and George Baccerrinni, native of Italy, age 30. The first named, Joseph Flor, had his head crushed by being hurled to the ground by the force of the explosion. The other five were suffocated by the afterdamp. The explosion was caused by the carelessness of Flor, who disregarded the warning of the mine inspectors and entered a room in the shaft in which gas had been discovered. The mine is inspected morning and night by three men, in the interval between the change of shifts. In room 27, in which Flor and another miner worked, the inspectors found gas, and gave him instructions not to enter the room unless he had his safety lamp. Flor, who was an expert miner and was earning large wages by piecework, disregarded the instructions and entered the room with his miner's torch in his hat. The gas ignited and an explosion followed, which hurled him down and crushed his skull.

Of the 107 men in the mine at the time all escaped death but the five who were suffocated by the afterdamp. Eight others were burned and blistered by the blast of hot air that followed the explosion. Some of these men are seriously hurt, but none fatally.

A peculiar feature of the explosion is related. A number of miners were at work in rooms adjacent to No. 27, where Flor was killed, but did not know that anything unusual had occurred until they were called out of the mine by the superintendent.

As soon as the explosion was reported Superintendent Thompson went to the mine and took charge of the work of rescue and did not leave until every man was taken out. To this fact is attributed the difficulty of obtaining definite news of the explosion. With Thompson absent from the company's offices, no one but the bookkeepers was left to answer inquiries, and their information was quite as meagre as that of persons at a distance. The mine was not injured by the explosion in the least, and work has been resumed as usual. Persons returning from there state that the company's rules to insure the safety of their employes are very strict. Besides the daily inspections there are other safeguards against accidents. No miner is allowed to fire a blast. This is done systematically by three sets of men, one of whom does the drilling, another handles the explosive, and another fires the charge by electricity after the mine has been entirely emptied of employes.

Coroner Muller held inquests over the bodies of the dead and the jury found that Flor came to his death by accidental violence, having his head crushed by a fall caused by the force of an explosion. The others were found to have come to their death by suffocation from afterdamp following an explosion of gas.