

BRAVE MINE FOREMAN.

TOOK HIS LIFE IN HIS HANDS AND
SAVED FORTY MEN FROM
CERTAIN DEATH.

Scranton, July 28.—Forty men at work in the Richmond No. 3 shaft were saved from certain death this afternoon by the bravery of Hugh McCutcheon, an inside foreman. Fire broke out in the engine and fan houses at the head of the shaft. McCutcheon was lowered in the carriage 505 feet to the third and bottom vein, where the men were working, and gave them warning. He had only left the carriage at the foot when the fan house collapsed and fell down the shaft. Within five minutes gas filled the workings, but the men had reached the surface via a slope to the second and first veins and thence to the second opening, 1,800 feet from the main shaft.

To-night the gas is pouring from the openings and extreme care is being used to prevent ignition, which would blow the mine into a hopeless wreck. The loss by fire, which did not reach the breaker, is \$15,000.

the second outlet has been rendered unavailable by reason of the final robbing of the pillars, previous to abandonment, so long as not more than twenty persons are employed therein at any one time, and the working of any mine in which any person is employed or permitted to be for the purpose of working in contravention of these provisions, will be prohibited by injunction or otherwise.

NARROW ESCAPE AT RICHMOND MINE.

A Second Opening Saves the Miner's Lives Yesterday.

The fire at the Richmond No. 3 shaft of the Elk Hill Coal and Iron Company yesterday afternoon, exclusive mention of which was made in the extra edition of last evening's Times, did not prove to be as serious as was at first expected, owing to the prompt action of those who were engaged in looking after the welfare of the seemingly entombed miners.

The men all made their escape through the new second opening, which is 1,800 feet from the main shaft. The fire originated from a locomotive spark which ignited the fan house. In less than half an hour the place was reduced to ashes and went tumbling down the shaft. Smoke filled the gangways and only for the prompt notification which the miners received they would all have been suffocated before they could have escaped through the second opening. The engine house quickly succumbed to the flames and the only portion of the structure saved was the framework around the opening of the shaft. The North End fire department quickly responded to the alarm, but the combined hose of the three companies was not enough to reach the nearest hydrant. By the time the fire companies were ready both structures were a mass of burning ruins. Some of the men in charge refused to permit Chief Hickey to turn a stream of water on the embers, and as the fire had eaten up all it could except the bunting and beams around the shaft, the chief was not particularly anxious to ignore the command, but when Mr. Roderick came he found the shaft so full of gas that it was up within a foot of the surface. A spark from the embers could fly into the opening and there would be an upheaval which would bring great destruction. There was a crowd around the mouth of the shaft that numbered from 100 to 200 persons. Nothing could save the

majority of them if the gas ever exploded, and it needed only a spark of any kind to do it. Consequently Chief Hickey was notified to come up again. The chief got permission to use some extra hose. He took 500 feet from the Centurys, 150 from the Crystals, 350 from the Niagaras and 400 from the Libertys, and brought the Centurys up with their wagon in order not to deprive the North End of protection in case of fire. At 11 o'clock he had the last spark quenched.

As soon as the fire broke out Foreman McCutcheon went into the mines and claims he had but little difficulty in getting the men together. The mules balked when the smoke came down the shaft and they had to be left to their fate. After the men were rescued, Foreman McCutcheon and his assistant, M. Eckersley, went down the second opening to make an examination. They could not enter the Clark vein on account of gas. The fan and air passages will have to be rebuilt before another attempt can be made to enter the workings.

The men inside when the fire broke out were John Donnelly, of Oak street, a brattice man; John Dougherty, of Marvine street, a miner; Dennis Gallagher and John Bibbes, miners; James Hawley, a driver boy and 18 Polish laborers whose names could not be ascertained. All except two were in the bottom vein. They didn't have a minute to spare.

Indirectly all of them owe their lives to Mine Inspector Roderick. At his instance the mines were closed down last winter because there was not a second opening from the bottom vein, as required by law. The main shaft is situated in the angle formed by the Lackawanna river and the Ontario and Western Railroad, a few hundred feet north of Parker street. Its depth is 505 feet. Mr. Roderick had to go to court about it. By his attorneys, Willard, Warren & Knapp, he applied for an injunction to restrain operations until a second opening had been driven to the bottom vein, and also that the company be required to keep steam up at the second opening always when men were in the shaft. Attorney W. J. Hand appeared for W. H. Richmond, president of the company and the largest stockholder in it. Judge Gunster granted an injunction as prayed for by Mr. Roderick and the mine suspended operations. The company proceeded then to complete the opening between the Clarke and Dunmore veins. A slope was driven to connect them. On June 16th last Mr. Richmond's attorney petitioned court to dissolve the injunction on the ground that the second opening had been completed.

The persistent effort of Mine Inspector Roderick a few months ago is the only thing that saved the lives of the miners yesterday, who, to say the least, had a narrow escape.

March 15. Called by Mine Inspector Charles Connor to Uniontown, Fayette county, to consult with him regarding a fire in the