

THE GREAT CALAMITY.

The General Apprehension of Disaster Confirmed.

Every Living Creature in the Mine Suffocated.

The Dead Miners Found in Heaps in the Gangways.

Attempts of the Doomed Men to Save Their Lives.

Barricades Erected by Them to Shut off Gases.

The Scenes Presented in the Recesses of the Mine.

Special Dispatch to the New-York Times.

SCRANTON, Penn., Sept. 8.—The terrible calamity at Avondale was proven to the most doubting at the dawn of morning, when the eastern gangway was penetrated 1,200 feet from the bottom of the shaft, and the explorers came to a barricade that had been securely placed across the gangway. Tearing this down, a horrible sight was encountered. The lamp shone upon a heap of dead. A pile of human beings choked the passage, as though they had fallen together in the last agony. Even HUGHES, the inside Superintendent, lay but little apart from the mass. He had been resting on his hands, and there was a look of placid content upon his rigid features. This was true, too, of nearly all in the great heap. Some few had abrasions of the skin, as though they had been injured in falling down, and some had an expression of horrified supplication, as though their last of earth had been an agonized protest against their fate. These were exceptions. The vast majority looked like men who were rather sleeping than dead, or like men who accepted the inevitable with dignified resignation; but none had died until they had exhausted all means of saving life.

WHAT PROBABLY OCCURRED IN THE MINE.

As had been premised, it was found that at the first alarm of danger these brave men had not been appalled, but, taught by instinct and experience, and knowing the horrible fact that there was no means of egress from the mine except by the shaft, then choked with fire, they had fled to the furthest parts of the mine. They had not fled in panic, but had gone back in order and with full knowledge that their lives might depend upon their actions, for they had but closed all the air-tight doors behind them, and thus kept the fresh air already in the mine and the foul air out. When they had retreated behind the last door, and found poisonous vapors still following them, they had then hastily thrown up the barricade and filled the interstices with clothing, which they had stripped from their persons.

THE WORK OF REMOVAL.

When this mass of dead had been carefully examined it was found to contain sixty-three persons, and without exploring the mine to discover the spots where the others met their fate, the work of removing them to the surface was begun. The air in the mine was still very bad, and the horrible heap was necessarily very slowly diminished. The raising apparatus had been destroyed by fire, and an improvised platform and rope and tackle was a poor substitute. The actual raising of each corpse from the bottom of the shaft to the tunnel consumed eight minutes, and the horse in winding the rope upon the drum traveled something over a mile. Only one body could be brought up at once, and with the time occupied in getting it to the bottom of the shaft and bringing it out through the tunnel, it can be readily understood that the work is not to be completed in a day, or even two.

AT THE MOUTH OF THE MINE.

The scenes outside the shaft were scarcely what were anticipated. The crowd was as great as on the previous days, and hardly more in keeping with the scene. As each corpse was brought out upon a stretcher, and covered with a coarse canvas cloth, it was placed under a tree, and the cloth removed. Mr. PHILLIPS, the outside Superintendent of the mine, then stepped to identify the dead. The Coroner's jury viewed the body, and it was carried to the temporary dead-house. The name and residence of the deceased was then announced to the surrounding crowd by JAS. GEORGE. Very rarely did a violent outbreak of feeling follow. The friends of the dead came forward, claimed the body and it was removed. In some cases wail of woman's anguish was heard, in others a low cry of woe rippled through the crowd, but generally the dead were received without audible sorrow and hurried away with decent ceremony. In every case a coffin was on hand, provided by the Delaware, Lackawanna and Western Company, and it was decent, being of polished wood and mounted in imitation silver.

PREPARATIONS FOR INTERMENT.

In consequence of the slowness with which the bodies are removed, the idea of a great public funeral of all together has been abandoned. The bodies are delivered to friends for immediate burial, most of these, however, will occur on the 9th and 10th, and Mayor HALL, of Scranton, has requested a general suspension of business on those days. SAMUEL BLOAN, President of the Company owning the mine, has also telegraphed orders for a general suspension of work and free trains on these days. The flags on all depots and buildings generally are now displayed at half mast.

THE CORONER'S INQUEST.

Justice WADHAM, of Plymouth, Acting Coroner, has issued notices to the Miner's Union and the railroad company owning the mine that testimony as to the calamity will be taken on Saturday, at 10 A. M., at Plymouth, and requesting both to be present with evidence as to the cause of the disaster. It is intended to make the investigation thorough and searching, and to put the blame of the disaster where it belongs. The inquest will occupy several days, and the testimony will touch the whole question of mining.

A Sadder Phase.

Later explorations of the mine have developed a sadder phase of tragedy. Many of the chambers have been entered and miners found in them dead, the breast of the mine showing they had been stricken down by poisonous gas in a moment and without a warning while they were at work. Roadmen, roofmen, doormen and others were found dead in different gangways, showing that the destruction had come swift and sudden.

BITTER FEELING OF THE MINERS.

The spirit evinced by miners to-day has been bitter in the extreme, and not assuaged by the offers of assistance and sympathy flowing in from every side. ASA PACKER has telegraphed that he offers \$2,500 to the bereaved; Governor GEARY \$5,000. The railroad company make all exertions possible, and the wishes of the miners in every respect are consulted; but they remain obdurate. The more reasonable are ready to listen to reason, but they are in the minority. Many are refractory and vicious. Trouble is

apprehended, and has been avoided only by consummate tact.

The tragedy continues the absorbing topic, and will to the conclusion of the inquest.

The Fatal Mistake of the First Day—The Effect of Forcing Air into the Mine—The Terrible Reality Known at Last—The Miners Found Heaped Upon Each Other, Dead—Barricades Against the Gases Discovered—Removal of the Bodies.

Dispatches to the Associated Press.

SCRANTON, Sept. 8.—The *Republican* is in receipt of the following additional bulletins from the scene of the great colliery accident at Avondale:

CONDITION OF THE FURNACE.

SEPT. 7—3:30 P. M.—Another relay of four men next went down the shaft. They proceeded along the gangway through the first door and about seventy-five feet further, when they opened a door leading to the furnace. It was found to be full of burning coal, and that the fire had communicated with a heave of coal near by, which was also a blazing mass. One of the party becoming overcome with the gas, the rest retired quickly, and barely reached the platform in time to succor three of the number. On reaching the mouth of the shaft one of them was carried out bodily by four men, and the other two assisted out to the open air, where they were resuscitated with great difficulty.

A CONSULTATION.

SEPT. 7—4 P. M.—A consultation was now held. The deliberations were serious. All efforts, so far, to relieve the men or get at them to-day have been worse than fruitless. The air has been forced into the mine all day through the gangway in which stands the furnace. It has been understood since last night that the coal in this furnace had been drawn out and extinguished upon the first alarm of fire. Such was the report of those who first entered the mine on Monday night. It now seems not, and that the volume of air sent into the mine has swept over the burning furnace, and carried all the gases and smoke therefrom into the inner recesses of the mine. This alone continued, as it has been all day, would be enough to cause the death of every inmate of the mine, even if any had been fortunate enough to have been alive this morning.

INTRODUCTION OF WATER.

Hose is being let down the shaft, as the fire must be extinguished before any further progress can be made. At 8:25 P. M., JOHN WILLIAMS, JOHN HOPKINS, H. W. EVANS and D. W. EVANS went down, and stayed twenty-five minutes, causing considerable anxiety among those above. The hose was carried forward to the furnace thirty feet. They reported that there was no fire, except in the grate, which seemed to be dying out. At 9:05 o'clock, WM. J. PRICE, LEWIS DAVIS, G. DAVIS and WM. MCGREGOR went down, but after remaining twenty minutes, reported no new developments. At 9:40 o'clock, THOMAS M. PRICE, MARK EVANS, WILLIAM BRAY and D. W. REESE went down, and after a lapse of fifteen minutes returned, and reported the hose placed in position for the water, the idea being to throw the water against the roof at a pressure of 200 feet and let it fall on the furnace. While these men were down those who anxiously awaited the result of their descent were considerably frightened by the cracking of the roof of the tunnel and the falling of part of it, caused by the cooling of the surface rock. Fortunately no one was hurt. The water was turned on at 10. At 11:15 D. W. MORGAN, R. H. WILLIAMS, A. PHILLIPS and WILLIAM J. PRICE went down and stayed fifteen minutes, had air coming up the shaft. The hose was pouring water upon the fire and doing good execution. No further advance than the furnace.

BLUE DAMP.

At 12 o'clock DAVID S. JONES, HENRY ATHLETIC, SAMUEL MORGAN and JOHN WILLIAMS went down, and after twenty-five minutes came up in a very bad condition; the blue damp, that now commenced arising, making them quite sick, but not insensible, as the others were affected. They threw water upon the fire, and think it is out. At about the time this gang asked to be hoisted, GEORGE MORGAN, who was watching at the opening of the shaft, had to be removed, and all, except four or five, were driven from the tunnel, the "blue damp" that was coming up the shaft making MORGAN sick, and placing all who might be in the tunnel in a very perilous situation. No further attempt will be made to go down for an hour. Water is going down.

A LULL.

Things at this time, 2:05 A. M., are at a standstill, except as regards the water going in upon the furnace, and the rising of the blue damp. No one has been down since the gang last reported, and, although an effort is making to get another gang to go, and although there are those who have not yet been down, and are ready, those in authority are afraid to run the risk, unless some one who has been down goes along. Observation thus far convinces us, as it also does all who express an opinion, that the 202 men are beyond all hope of rescue, and that some time must elapse before another gang will be ready to venture down, as they are all worn out; that the air in the mine is gradually becoming more foul and dangerous; that some considerable time, probably days, will elapse before there will be a chance to get at the men; before any of the heroic men who venture will be able to withstand the fumes of the gas long enough to learn anything definite.

LATER—THE FIRST BODIES FOUND.

Two men have been brought up by a gang that went down since the last telegram. The excitement is great; the bodies are in a bad condition, and not recognizable.

2:55 A. M.—The air is getting better in the mine. Two bodies, badly bloated, were found in the stable—one a young man, probably 18 years of age; the other of a middle-aged man; they are not recognizable at present. There is blood, in clots, about their mouths; they are terrible objects to look upon.

THE WORST KNOWN AT LAST.

At 5:15 o'clock A. M., G. D. DAVIES, THOMAS WILLIAMS, S. DAVIES and WM. SMITH went down the shaft, and were gone thirty-five minutes, and discovered dinner cans and cups.

At 6:30 A. M., R. WILLIAMS, D. W. EVANS, JOHN WILLIAMS and WM. THOMAS went down, and were gone thirty minutes. They discovered the whole company of miners dead on the east side of the plane. Preparations are making to send down six gangs of four men each, and the bodies will be brought out as rapidly as possible. The foul air does not interfere to any great extent.

BARRIERS BUILT BY THE DOOMED MEN.

At 7:30 o'clock, one of the gangs just returned report that they went up the plane, just beyond which a barrier was met, consisting of a car packed around with coal "culm" and clothing. This was cleared away, and proceeding a little further another barrier was met nearly completed and constructed as the first.

THE DEAD PILED UPON EACH OTHER.

One man was found upon the outside, where he had been at work laying up the wall. All was completed save a small aperture just sufficient to admit of the passage of a human body, and it is inferred that he had just finished his task, and was preparing to join his companions on the opposite side by crawling back. This barrier was found congregated and piled one upon another, dead.

REMOVAL OF THE BODIES—A CORONER'S JURY.

Active preparations are in progress for the immediate removal of the bodies, which work will consume a greater part of the day, owing to the lack of facilities for hoisting. The condition of the mine is improving. At 8:15 o'clock Coroner ENO, of Plymouth, who is on the ground, convened a jury of inquest, as follows: W. J. HARVEY, foreman; Samuel Van Loon, Martin McDouglas, James George, Chas. Hutchinson and

Thos. Patton. They will view the bodies as they are brought out.

8:40 A. M.—The body of JOHN BOWEN, of Plymouth, a miner, was the third one brought out. He was aged 31 years. His left eye is partially open, but otherwise his countenance is placid. JOHN BOWEN formerly lived in Providence. He leaves a wife and one child in Plymouth. He was found outside the barricade behind which were all the other bodies. He was evidently overcome before he could get through. Mr. E. C. WADHAM says the names of the dead men will be announced as fast as they are brought out, and the relatives will be allowed to enter the lines. The Coroner's jury have just viewed the bodies of STEELE and SLOCUM. The men engaged in bringing out the bodies are required to be sworn to the facts in each case. E. L. MERRIMAN and H. B. PAYNE, lawyers of Wilkesbarre, are attending the jury. Father O'HARRA, of Wilkesbarre, is present.

THE PROCESSION OF THE DEAD.

9:10 o'clock.—The fourth body exhumed was that of WM. P. EWELL, of Plymouth (Turkey Hill). His eyes were both open, and his head turned aside. His wife and several children are in the old country, one daughter lives in Plymouth, and he had a son in the mine. The fifth body removed is that of a boy named WM. WILLIAMS, aged 14 years, of Hyde Park. He had worked only one day. The sixth body is that of MATTHEW EVANS, of the Steuben Colliery. He appears to have died in great agony. His hands were clenched.

The seventh body was WILLIAM EVANS, a brother of STEUBEN. His hands were also clenched. WM. HOLLIDAY reports that each of these boys was found in the arms of his father.

The eighth body was that of EVAN HUGHES, "inside boss." He was found sitting down with his head forward on his knees. His watch had stopped at 5:15. This is supposed to have been Tuesday morning, as the miners usually wind their watches at night. Mr. EVANS' watch had stopped at 4:42.

At 11 o'clock a barrel of lime was sent down to mark the pathway to the chamber where the men lie, for the reason that two men had lost their way this morning.

The boy supposed to be MATTHEW EVANS turns out to be WILLIE PHILLIPS, cousin of Mrs. Captain BLAIR, of Hyde Park.

The ninth body, that of an unknown man, was found three hundred or four hundred yards in the west part of the mine, a long distance from the rest. He was lying on his face which had apparently been forced into the ground, and was much disfigured. He has a black moustache and also a new pair of shoes.

11:30 A. M.—The tenth body is that of an unknown man supposed, however, to be PETERS, of Upper Plymouth. He has on a blue shirt and new shoes. His face is at rest; he was lying by the ninth man and also with his face down.

Up to 7:15 this evening the work of bringing the dead bodies to the surface proceeded steadily. Sixty bodies has been raised and their funerals will be held to-morrow from Avondale. A dispatch has been received from President SAMUEL SLOAN, of the Delaware, Lackawanna and Western Railroad Company, ordering all the shops of the works of the Company to be closed and free trains to and from Avondale and all prominent points on the road. The stores in Pittston were closed to-day, and a meeting was held to raise funds for the relief of the sufferers. Mayor HILL, of this city, will, in the morning, issue a proclamation ordering places of business to be closed on the 9th and 10th inst. Relief subscriptions have been received as follows: \$5,000 from the New-York Board of Brokers, \$2,500 from ASA PACKER, and \$500 from Governor GEARY.

At 8 o'clock sixty-six bodies had been raised. Acting Coroner WADHAM will take testimony as to the cause of the disaster at 2 o'clock P. M., Saturday, at Plymouth.

9 o'clock.—All of the 63 bodies first found together are up. A doctor has been called for to attend the men about to go into parts of the mine yet unexplored, in search of men yet unaccounted for, but there is no response from the doctors. There is a terrible outbreak at this time from the women in the nearest miners' houses. Heaps of coal left in the chute and screens are blazing high to-night. The line extends from the railroad track to 150 feet up the hill.

9:30 o'clock.—Six bodies have been found together in one chamber, making 72 in all.

Relief for the Avondale Sufferers—Magnificent Action of the New-York Stock Exchange.

The New-York Stock Exchange, at a meeting held yesterday afternoon, generously subscribed the sum of \$6,000 for the relief of the families of the dead miners at Avondale.

The following anonymous note, enclosing \$1 for the same use, was received at the *Times* office last evening:

New-York, Wednesday, Sept. 8, 1869.
To the Editor of the *New-York Times*:
 Hoping that you will receive and forward contributions for the sufferers by the late and continuing Scranton mining calamity, I enclose a small sum, regretting it is not larger, but trusting that other amounts will come in to a serviceable degree. Yours respectfully,
A POOR MAN.