

COAL BREAKER BURNED.

NARROW ESCAPE OF WORKMEN FROM THE SHAFT UNDER THE BREAKER.

SCRANTON, Penn., Sept. 11.—Henry Davis, fire boss at the Pine Brook Colliery of the Lackawanna Iron and Steel Company, was startled this morning, shortly before 5 o'clock, by the gong at the Dickson Works sounding an alarm of fire. He was at the foot of the shaft, which is 290 feet deep, when he heard the rude alarm, but he had no idea that the danger of which it was the signal was so close at hand. Presently a flaming piece of timber came hissing down the shaft and fell at his feet. Then he knew that the breaker over the mouth of the shaft was on fire, and he hastened to warn his fellow-workmen in the mine, William J. Reese, barn boss, and John Reese, pumpman, of their peril. The three men ran to the muleway, or second opening, and escaped without much difficulty. When half way out the slope they met Mine Inspector Blewitt and a party of men going in to rescue them. Meantime there was an exciting scene at the mouth of the shaft, around the burning breaker, which is situated in the heart of the city. The fire had gained great headway when it was discovered by the watchman, Theodore Zeigler, and flames were darting rapidly from floor to floor, among the inflammable timbers, until the entire pile was ablaze, and threatened the destruction of the surrounding buildings. Several fire companies were promptly at the scene, but found it impossible to save the breaker, which was a mass of cinders and dismantled machinery in less than an hour. Screens, engines, and hoisting machinery were reduced to a complete wreck, and the timbered carriageway was destroyed by the blazing débris that went down the shaft with a roar. The neighboring buildings were saved with considerable difficulty, and for a time panic prevailed in that vicinity. The burned breaker had a capacity for producing 700 tons of coal daily, and employed about 200 men and boys. It was used principally to supply the works of the Lackawanna Iron and Steel Company with coal, and will be rebuilt without delay. The loss is estimated at \$50,000, and the property was insured for \$25,000. The origin of the fire is unknown.

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