

FREELAND TRIBUNE.

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FREELAND, PA., WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 10, 1902.

TRI-WEEKLY

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TESTIMONY OF EVICTED MEN

Local Witnesses Arouse the Commission's Sympathy.

Henry Coll, Whose Wife Died From Illness Due to Exposure, Tells His Pa- thetic Story on the Stand.

Ever since the hearings of the Anthracite Coal Strike Commission were resumed last Wednesday the miners' lawyers have been attacking the independent operators, but the latter have made little or no attempt to strike back or even to defend themselves. Coxe Bros. & Co. were attacked for three days, but did not even have a lawyer present. Part of Friday, all of Saturday, Monday and yesterday the miners devoted their attention to G. B. Markle & Co., but the two lawyers representing this firm, Samuel Dickson, of Philadelphia, and George E. Bedford, of Wilkesbarre, remained away.

The miners this week placed witnesses on the stand who gave testimony to show that Markle & Co. had refused to employ them because they belonged to the union; had evicted them from their houses for the same cause; that the docking system was intolerable; that the question of the men getting the 10 per cent in wages granted as a result of the 1900 strike is much in doubt, because the men got only 2 1/2 per cent more in wages, but were charged 7 1/2 per cent less for powder; that the size of the mine cars has increased, but the wages have not.

The very last bit of testimony offered on Monday was a charge against the Markle firm, but it was allowed to go unchallenged. The operators have claimed all along that they are willing and anxious to adjust all grievances between themselves and their own employees and that they stood ready to guarantee them fair treatment. The miners' contention is that the companies do not live up to this agreement and that the men who represent the employees on grievance committees are always discriminated against and oft-times discharged.

The first witness yesterday was James McMonigle, a miner, formerly employed by Markle & Co. He said the breast he was working in was so dangerous that he complained to the company officials that he might be killed. He was told if he worked any other breast he would not be given any cars. He went out on strike and after the suspension he was refused work and evicted from his house. B. D. Gallagher, another Markle miner, testified that the company charges him 35 cents a gallon for oil that sells in Hazleton for 18 cents, and 32 cents a quire for blasting paper that can be had for 15 cents. Andrew Hannik, a Hungarian, told how the Markles evicted him.

He was followed by Henry Coll, another Markle miner, who told how his family, including his mother-in-law, who was 100 years old, were turned out with their household goods. He gave a graphic description of how he was injured many times in the mines. He said one of his legs was no better than a wooden one, he only had one eye, his hands have been mashed, ribs broken, and skull fractured. The company gave him nothing until after the employees took up a collection for him, then he was given \$50 after being on the injured list for ten years. The company took out of the collection the rent he owed.

In answer to other questions he said that he was one of the thirteen evicted by the company. The only rent he owed was for the months during the strike. His son was an officer in Jeddo local union, and that may have been the cause of the eviction, he said.

Then the old miner, decrepit from many injuries, told under the examination of how the eviction was carried on. The wife was sick and her 100-year-old mother was blind and unable to walk. The day on which they were "thrown out" was rainy. He took them to Hazleton and placed them in a cold, damp empty house. His wife became worse. Medical aid was kindly furnished free by a Hazleton doctor, but it did not help her much.

"We were greatly worried because of our having been turned out of our house, and one night," the witness said, "between sobs, 'she died.'"

"She died?" exclaimed Judge Gray, who was pacing to and fro across the room and quickly turned when he heard the man's last words.

"Yes, sir, she died, and I buried her yesterday."

All the commissioners and many of

those in the courtroom were more or less affected by the old miner's story.

No one cared to cross-examine him and Judge Gray said: "That is all, Mr. Coll, and that's enough."

Two more witnesses told of how they were refused work by the company, and then Councilman P. G. Gallagher, of Freeland, national board member of the U. M. W. of A., took the stand and told of conditions as he found them at the mines of the company. The air in some of the gangways, he said, was so bad that miners' lamps would not burn. So far as he could remember not one man who was on any of the Markle grievance committee is now working for that company.

He said that in one mine one of the exits was barred by a locked iron gate, the remaining exit being under the control of the mining boss, so that it was impossible for the mine workers to get to the surface under stipulated hours, ranging from eight to fourteen hours. Attorney McCarthy, for the miners, elicited the fact that this was an extremely dangerous condition in case of an accident.

Mrs. Kate Burns, of Jeddo, told how she and her two boys worked thirteen years to pay off an accumulated bill due to Markle & Co., the narration of which deeply interested the commissioners. She said her husband was an engineer inside the Markle mines. He was killed underground, leaving her with four children, the eldest of which was a boy of 8 years. The company never offered her a penny, but the employees gave her about \$180 to defray the funeral expenses. After her husband had been killed, she took to washing, scrubbed for the neighbors and once in a while she was given work cleaning the offices of the company.

She added that the money she earned for cleaning the office was kept by the company for rent, and the commissioners looked at one another in surprise. The debt was cleared last August.

This concluded the mine workers' case against G. B. Markle & Co., except that Mr. Darrow read and had placed upon the records of the commission John Markle's statement to President Roosevelt at the time of the now-famous conference in the temporary White House. It is the intention of the lawyers for the miners to next take up the conditions at the collieries of the Lehigh Valley Company.

MONDAY'S TESTIMONY.

The first witness called was James Gallagher, of Jeddo, who was on the stand last Saturday. Mr. Gallagher said it used to be the custom of the Markle employees to contribute \$50 to the family of a man killed in the mines and the men working with the man would lay off until the dead man was buried. The Markles made a compact with the workmen that they remain at work and would pay the \$50. Mr. Gallagher also said that a miner had been killed through his own ignorance, and the mine inspector made a report that the man had committed suicide.

Paul Dunleavy, of Jeddo, testified to having been refused work and being evicted. His wife's parents were ill, but notwithstanding this the company gave him five minutes to get out. The day was rainy. He said he earned about \$450 a year, and out of his earnings he had to pay an assessment for services of the company doctors. Married men are assessed 75 cents a month and single men 50 cents.

Henry Shovin, another former Markle employee, said he was given six days' notice to leave his house. Two days after the time limit expired his goods were placed on the road. He was in arrears in his rent about five or six months during the strike. He was not asked to pay his rent nor were his goods levied upon. Since the 1900 strike, he said, the men have, through committees, often submitted grievances to the company. In accordance with the agreement made which ended the strike, but only one complaint, in the last two years, was satisfactorily fixed up.

Mrs. Andrew Chippie, the mother of the twelve-year-old breaker boy, who testified on Saturday that he had to work out the debt of his dead father, took the stand and substantiated all the boy had said.

She gave the additional information through an interpreter that the Markle Company wanted her to sign a paper waiving all right to sue the company for the killing of her husband in their mines. The company promised her rent and coal free for six months, but she refused to sign. Upon her refusal to do so she said they charged up rent and coal.

Another Hungarian woman, whose husband was killed at the same time Mrs. Chippie's husband lost his life, was called and she told a similar story.

The last witness of the day was Charles Helferty, another Markle employee and president of Jeddo U. M. W. of A. local union, who was evicted along with twelve other men. He said

ROUND THE REGION.

After an exciting chase, Charles Grether, the convicted murderer of Constable Adam Strunk, who escaped from Monroe county jail on Sunday, was captured Monday night in a barn near Fisher's Crossing, a short distance from Stroudsburg. Daniel Van Buskirk, who escaped with him, is still at large.

The United States court at Pittsburg has granted Charles W. Tammany, of Wilkesbarre, a new trial. The reason assigned was that the verdict was against the law and the evidence. The prosecutor was a man named Levy, who caused Tammany's arrest on the charge of using the mails for fraudulent purposes.

County Treasurer-elect John J. Moore has filed his bond, which is in the sum of \$150,000. His bondsmen are Abram Nesbitt, Thomas H. Atherton, John M. Ward, W. T. Payne, Dr. Levi Shoemaker, E. H. Jones and E. W. Mulligan. He will assume the duties of his office the first Monday in January.

The annual report of Dr. N. C. Schaefer, superintendent of public instruction, has been submitted to Governor Stone and recommends that the number of school directors in townships be reduced from six to five to avoid deadlocks in the election of teachers and the selection of text books.

Major Pond, who in his time has arranged tours for some of the greatest lecturers in the country, recently offered President Mitchell, of the United Mine Workers, \$1,600 for eight lectures, but the miners' leader declined to consider the proposition.

Dynamite Kills Four.

Four men were instantly killed and three fatally injured yesterday by the explosion of a box of dynamite in No. 5 mine of the Lehigh and Wilkesbarre Coal Company at South Wilkesbarre. These are the names of the dead: Robert Humblebe, 55 years old; Arthur Jones, 28 years old; Matthew Phillips, 36 years old, and James McGlynn, 35 years old.

George Knorr, Charles Stafford and Thomas Evans were fatally injured. Neil Sweeney, John Rustin, Dominick Hart and James Peckems also were injured, but will survive.

Store Tax Act Illegal.

Judge Simonton has handed down an opinion in a tax settlement case of the state against the Lehigh Coal and Navigation Company in which he declares the store order tax law passed by the last legislature is unconstitutional.

This was one of the acts demanded by the miners' union. Under it the companies issuing store orders or similar devices in lieu of cash were compelled to pay a tax of 25 per cent of their face value, and after several companies had made report to the auditor general and the tax settlement was made an appeal was taken by them.

Union Band Started.

The Union band, mention of which was made in these columns a few weeks ago, has been organized with fourteen members from Freeland and Upper Lehigh. The following officers have been elected:

President—William Mealing.
Vice president—Charles Bartosavitz.
Secretary—John J. Edwards.

Treasurer—Jesse Nichols.
The new band will rehearse two nights each week in the Third ward.

Drawn as Jurors.

The following citizens of this vicinity have been drawn to serve as jurors on the dates preceding their names:

January 12.—B. C. Laubach, Al Goepfert, Freeland; Thomas Malloy, Foster; Philip Brior, Hazle; George Knoll, Harvey Young, Butler.

January 19.—Frank Salmon, Freeland; Condy McGeehan, Foster.

that each one of the evicted men was at one time or another on a grievance committee which called on the company to adjust differences. The witness said that John Markle's reason for not employing him was because he had committed criminal acts. The witness denied that he ever committed any violence and added there was no reason for it, because the company did not attempt to start up.

He said Mr. Markle appeared before President Roosevelt and asked for military assistance to operate the mines and when the entire state militia was turned out, he did not make any attempt to start up his collieries.

Commissioner Parker asked the witness if Mr. Markle paid any attention to the grievance committees, and the witness replied: "He always listened, but that's all the further the matter ever went."

LOCAL NOTES

WRITTEN UP

Short Items of Interest to All Readers.

Happenings of the Past Two Days in and Around Freeland Recorded With- out Waste of Words.

The funeral of the late John McGeady, who met with a sudden death Monday morning, took place at 9 a. m. today from the family residence on Walnut street. Large numbers of friends, also delegations from Divisions 19 and 6, A. O. H., accompanied the remains to St. Ann's church, where a requiem mass was read, after which the interment was made in St. Ann's cemetery.

Notwithstanding the very cold weather, St. Ann's church was well filled Monday evening, when a large number of applicants were admitted to membership in the Daughters of Mary Sodality. Previous to the impressive ceremonies an appropriate sermon was delivered by Father Hefferon, of Hazleton.

John J. McNelis, who was suspended on June 3 last for refusing to take a striking pumpman's position at Drifton, was notified this morning that he has been reinstated as assistant foreman by Coxe Bros. & Co. He will resume work tomorrow in No. 2 mine.

John, a seven-year-old son of Mr. and Mrs. James McDermott, died at his home in Highland yesterday afternoon. Death was due to dropsy. The funeral will take place tomorrow afternoon at 2 o'clock. Interment at St. Ann's cemetery.

Isaac Fry, who at one time conducted the Cottage hotel here, had a narrow escape from death by asphyxiation Sunday night. Gas from a heater in the cellar nearly suffocated the entire family at their home in Tamaqua.

George Thomas, of Johnson street, one of the clerks who was suspended during the strike by Coxe Bros. & Co. and refused re-employment, has secured a position in Jeddo office.

The members of Council 348, Jr. O. U. A. M., will attend the Presbyterian church in a body on Sunday evening, the 14th inst., when Rev. J. W. Bischoff will deliver a sermon.

Bert Smith and sister, Miss Maggie, of Philadelphia, spent a few days this week with their parents, Mr. and Mrs. Gilbert Smith, North Washington street.

"Minnesota's Best" flour is sold by A. Oswald. There is none better made.

Miss Mame Brown, of town, has been appointed to teach a school at Derringer, to fill a vacancy in Black Creek township's corps of teachers.

Freeland and Hazleton basket ball clubs will meet this evening at Krell's hall for the first time this season, and an interesting game is looked for.

Guy Sensenbach has resigned his position in Felt's printing office, White Haven, to accept the foremanship of the Progress office.

Mrs. John Kester, of Adams street, has returned from Philadelphia, where she received treatment at a hospital.

The teamsters of town have increased the charge for hauling coal from Drifton from 50 cents to 75 cents per ton.

Police Officer William Mulhearn, of Philadelphia, paid a visit to Freeland relatives yesterday.

Miss Katie Lesser, of Wilkesbarre, is visiting her brother, August, on North Washington street.

William Weaver returned to Easton yesterday after spending a few days with friends here.

Miss Katie Goepfert has accepted a clerkship in Merkt's confectionery store.

Holiday novelties and candies, Merkt's.

Individuals May Sell.

Recent events have given ground for the belief that the result of negotiations now in progress will be the ultimate sale of the property of the individual operators to the large carrying companies. Although this is not probable now it is certain to come in the not distant future, because it is the only solution of the present situation and is the outcome which both the independents and the large companies desire.

It is estimated that the collieries of the sixty-seven independent operators can be purchased for \$145,000,000. These operations produce three-tenths of the total output of coal.

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All that's new in Neckwear is always here. Although we don't mention it sometimes, a gentleman told us, he tries here first. If he can't get it here, he can't get it in Freeland. Popular prices, 25c and 50c.

Hosiery.—That's our stronghold. Have you seen our extra heavy. The unusual kinds. Then we have cotton and cashmere from 1 1/2c to 50c.

Gloves from 25c to \$4.50.

Umbrellas from \$1.00 to \$3.50.

Collars.—The largest stock of Lion Brand Collars in Freeland, all sizes, all shapes and the one price, two for 25c.

Hats.—We have quality and style, and the price ranges from \$1.00 to \$4.00. But the \$2.50 and \$3.00 are most popular. Winter Caps a specialty.

Footwear.—If you want shoes that will fit and wear, here is where you get them. Our lines are so well stocked that we are prepared to equip every man, woman or child with the proper size, at the lowest price consistent with quality. Rubbers, Overshoes, Gum Boots and Felts of all kinds.

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Card of Thanks.

The undersigned extends her sincere thanks to her friends and neighbors for their kindness and favors rendered during her bereavement; also to the members of Division 19, A. O. H., for their assistance. Mrs. John J. McGeady.

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