

A COLLISION OF BIG BATTLESHIPS

The Alabama Plunges Into the Kentucky.

THE LATTER SHIP WAS DAMAGED.

The Illinois Narrowly Avoids Getting Into the Tangle—A Series of Mishaps to Admiral Evans' Battleship Squadron in New York Bay—The Kearsarge and Kentucky Run Aground Off West Bank Light.

New York (Special).—The battleship squadron of the United States Navy got itself all tangled up in the lower bay. Before the tangle was straightened out the Kentucky and Kearsarge were aground and the Alabama had struck the Kentucky a glancing blow on the starboard quarter and damaging her so badly that she will have to go to the Brooklyn navy yard for repairs. The Alabama herself was damaged a little. The accident happened while the squadron was trying to get out of New York harbor on its way to Hampton Roads. The squadron, consisting of five first-class battleships, the flower of the Navy, left Tompkinsville at 11.10 o'clock Sunday morning for the Roads and a winter cruise. Rear Admiral Evans, on the Maine, was in command and Rear Admiral Davis commanded the second division. They proceeded in the following order: Maine, Kentucky, Kearsarge, Alabama and Illinois. The Maine, leading, was the only vessel that carried a pilot. She flew the signal "Follow the flagship."

In close formation, 400 yards apart, they turned into the main ship channel. There was an ebb tide, which raised the 12-knot speed of their screws to about 14 knots. A strong wind was blowing from the west. This gave them a tendency to swing toward the east bank, a rather sudden shoal, with a mud bottom. The end of this bank reaches into the channel at a point between Swinburne Island and Coney Island Point. The tail end of the squadron, extending out like a string of barges, had swung too far in toward this bank. The Maine passed it, but the Kentucky suddenly went aground and was jammed tight in the mud before her engines could reverse.

The Kearsarge, only 1,200 feet behind, saw the Kentucky stop suddenly and go aground. She herself was too far to the east to risk turning westward into the main channel. As the event proved, she would probably have struck the Kentucky had she tried to do so. Her navigating officer sheered her to port. She avoided a collision, but she, too, went aground.

Behind this tangle came the Alabama, Admiral Davis' flagship, Captain S. P. Comdr. in command. The Alabama's navigating officer saw the two vessels stop before him and saw that they were aground. He turned out into the open water to starboard, hoping to clear. The space was too short. Wind and tide were against him. He passed clear of the Kearsarge, which had gone further inshore before she grounded, but his port bow caught the starboard quarter of the Kentucky and raked it. Just the fraction of a second in the turn of the wheel prevented him from ramming the Kentucky at 14 knots. That would have been something to tell about.

As it was, the Alabama made the Kentucky look as though it had been in action. She carried away the Kentucky's port rail and all belonging to it from the stern to the superstructure—tore away the davits of the captain's gig, even to the heavy steel stanchions into which the davits were set.

BILLION FROM FACTORIES.

Immense Share of Americans in World's Commerce.

Washington, (Special).—Manufacturers participated to the extent of more than a billion dollars in the \$2,500,000,000 worth of commerce of the United States during the 11 months ended November, 1925.

Statistics announced by the Department of Commerce and Labor show that the value of manufacturers' materials imported was \$513,000,000 during those 11 months, and of manufactures exported \$20,000,000, against \$459,000,000 the previous year. The value of crude material for use in manufacturing imported in this time was \$369,000,000, against \$309,000,000 in the same months of the previous year. During those months there was a remarkable increase in the exports of agricultural products, especially of corn, the value of which rose from \$21,000,000 in the previous year to \$50,000,000 during the first 11 months of this year.

AGAIN SNUBBED BY CASTRO.

French Diplomat Not Invited to New Year Reception.

Washington, D. C. (Special).—Cable advices received here from Caracas bring the news that M. Taigny, the French representative at Caracas, was ignored by President Castro on New Year's Day and was not invited to the New Year's reception at which the Venezuelan President received the felicitations of the diplomatic corps. At Paris, in view of the withdrawal of the Venezuelan government of the objectionable note to M. Taigny and the promise of President Castro that relations would be resumed, M. Maubourget, the Venezuelan representative, was received with all the honors appropriate to his rank as if there had been no trouble between the two countries. This latest action on the part of President Castro has been communicated to the French government, but what course it will take is not known here.

Smallpox Ties Up Lines.

Fort Wayne, Ind. (Special).—Smallpox in the telephone exchange tied up the service for five hours. When Manager Mollering was informed that Lillian Walbolt had the disease he notified the health officers and they sent the five girl operators home. Before the girls left their clothing, heads, faces and hands were fumigated. When they arrived home each was examined by her family physician and vaccinated. The force reported again after the exchange room had been fumigated.

THE LATEST NEWS BRIEFLY TOLD.

DOMESTIC

In the 12 months just closed the railroads of the country have ordered 341,315 freight cars, 6,265 locomotives and 3,289 passenger cars. In 1924 the figures were: Locomotives, 2,530; passenger cars, 2,213; freight cars, 136,561.

A commission representing the State of Missouri began taking testimony from Standard Oil officials in New York in the state's suit to have the corporation declared a monopoly in the Western commonwealth.

An 18-ton flywheel at the Morgan Engineering Works, Alliance, O., burst, wrecked a part of the building, and a large piece falling on the railroad tracks blocked trains.

Attorneys for Johann Hoch, who is under sentence of death at Chicago for wife-murder, filed in the State Supreme Court of Illinois a motion for a rehearing.

Former Secretary of the Treasury Lyman J. Gage agrees with Banker Jacob H. Schiff that there will be a panic if the currency is not made more elastic. Dr. Harrison S. Hathaway, a Civil War Veteran and a prominent physician of Toledo, O., was struck by a train and killed.

Dr. Charles Eliot Morton, formerly of Harvard, is leading a crusade to chloroform the hopelessly insane and diseased persons. The express companies have joined with the railroads in refusing to issue passes for the carrying of business free.

Banker Jacob H. Schiff made an address before the New York Chamber of Commerce, stating that if the present stringency in the money market is not relieved there will be a panic, besides which other crashes will be insignificant.

Governor Higgins, of New York, denied an application for a reprieve for Albert T. Patrick, who is under sentence of death for the murder of William M. Rice, the millionaire.

The Massachusetts Savings Bank Commissioners have asked for the appointment of a receiver for the Provident Securities and Banking Company of Boston.

C. S. Guthrie, president of the board of the Republic Iron and Steel Company, died at Salisbury, N. C., after an operation for appendicitis.

Eight miners were burned, two of them fatally, in an accident at the Hazleton shaft of the Lehigh Valley Coal Company.

The Louisiana state division of the Southern Cotton Association approved the plan of holding cotton for 15 cents.

A number of collisions between ferries and other vessels occurred during the dense fog over New York harbor.

A total of 131,545,148 United States coins was struck off at the United States Mint during the past year.

Safe-blowers got \$11,000 in cash and government bonds from Albaugh's general store, in Shoals, Ind.

Dr. D. K. Pearson has given \$25,000 to Guilford College, of Guilford, N. C.

Curtis Guild, Jr., was inaugurated as governor of Massachusetts.

A bill has been introduced in the New York legislature, but withdrawn, asking that Chauncey Depew resign his seat in the United States Senate. Governor Higgins sent a message to the body, urging the passage of more drastic life insurance laws.

James W. Wadsworth, Jr., was chosen speaker of the Assembly. Plans are being made to extend the Valley Branch of the Baltimore and Ohio from Lexington to Salem, Va., in accordance with plans made 25 years ago. The city of Baltimore has over \$1,000,000 invested in the stock of the road.

Frank Wisniski, the stable boy witness in the hearing of Dr. J. W. Simpson, charged with shooting Bartley J. Horner, was unable to testify, being alternately stupefied or frantic from fright.

Charles Edwards, a wealthy chemical manufacturer of New York, was found flying with a bullet wound in his head, received in a mysterious manner while visiting relatives in Utica, N. Y.

John A. McCall has retired as president of the New York Life Insurance Company, and Alexander E. Orr will succeed him.

FOREIGN

The defeat of the Santo Domingo revolutionists before Puerto Plata was complete, and about 150 men were killed and wounded. Morales has been impeached as president, and Raymond Carceres is now president.

The second squadron of the North Atlantic fleet, in command of Rear Admiral Sigsbee, will be at Gibraltar about the time of the conference of the representatives of the powers at Morocco.

The herring fishing season on the west coast of Newfoundland has ended, but the American vessels have been badly handicapped through inability to have their fish frozen ashore.

During the past year there were 1,032 casualties resulting from the fighting in Macedonia between Turkish troops and Bulgarian revolutionary bands. The devastation of Russian estates in Estonia by the peasants continues furiously, and 20 buildings have been burned the past week.

The British steamer *Cortis* sank in the Saigon River, French Indo-China, and several of her crew are missing.

Great Britain does not consider the Franco-German situation as serious. While Germany may raise irritating questions at the Morocco conference it is believed a satisfactory settlement will be reached.

Captain J. Hopkins, quartermaster of the British Second Dragoon Guards at Pretoria, whose name was mentioned in connection with the war stores scandal, committed suicide.

British officials say that so long as Germany confines her demands at the coming conference to opening Morocco to foreign trade on an equal basis there will be no clash.

Armed clashes at Riga, Livonia, seized a rubber factory which the troops bombarded, and the strikers were finally forced to surrender. More than 100 killed or injured.

Dr. Stewart, of the Southern Nigerian government, was killed and his body mutilated and partially devoured by cannibals in Nigeria.

In a letter written by Admiral Rojstvensky, and published in the *Novoye Vremya* with official approval, the charge is made that the British fleet was ready to destroy the Russian fleet if it had escaped the Japs.

TWENTY-ONE PEOPLE DEAD IN MINE

Gas Explodes in the Large Workings at Coaldale, W. Va.

OCCURRED IN THE COOPER SHAFT.

Earth Shaken as by Earthquake for Miles Around—Those Who Were Not Killed Instantly Are Supposed to Have Suffered from the Gas That Soon Filled the Entire Mine—in the Heart of the Pocahontas Field.

Bluefield, W. Va. (Special).—Twenty-one miners were killed in an explosion of gas in the shaft of the Cooper Mine Company at Coaldale, W. Va. Up to midnight only one body had been recovered. Immediately following the explosion, which was heard for several miles, rescue parties set to work to explore the wrecked shaft.

Never but once before in the history of the Pocahontas coal field has there been such a fearful disaster, and the victims of that other disaster are in the cemetery at Pocahontas.

Before the detonations had died out Bank Boss Thomas Williams, who was a long distance from the explosion, staggered to his feet, and, feeling his way to a mine telephone, called to those on the outside that there had been a terrific explosion of mine gas and asked for help.

Gathering about the entries, hastening crowds urged by cool heads and anxious hearts hurried to prepare for the rescue of the missing ones and an exploration of the wrecked workings. At 4 o'clock one man was brought out. He was H. C. Conrad, and his body was literally torn to pieces. His clothing was hanging in shreds.

Up to a late hour no other bodies have been recovered. There was considerable smoke and gas in the entries and, notwithstanding the fact that the big fans were in good order and were working with full capacity, the gas and smoke were not being driven out very fast.

At noon, while the Coaldale mines were working a full force, there was a sudden and heavy rumbling a mile or more in the depths of the mountain and through the miles of passages and air shafts of the immense mine the shock was felt.

Coaldale is a mining town situated on the line of the Norfolk and Western railway, and is 15 miles west of Bluefield. It is in Mercer county and is difficult of access.

There were 3 white men and 18 negroes entombed and no hope is held out that any of them escaped death.

The explosion was of terrific force and caused intense excitement throughout the surrounding country, and many people believing an earthquake had occurred. The fans, mining cars and most of the property used in the mines are supposed to have been blown to pieces. At 5.30 o'clock P. M. the body of one of the miners was discovered some hundred feet away from the mine entry so mutilated that it is unrecognizable.

All hope of recovering the entombed miners has been shattered by the pouring forth of gases from the different entries. If the 21 were not all killed instantly by the explosion it is believed that they must have succumbed to the accumulation of gas following the explosion.

Great crowds were attracted by the disaster and a large rescuing party soon began work.

The Coaldale operation is mined and operated by Cooper Bros., who are also owners of the Mill Creek and McDowell Coal and Coke Companies. The Coaldale plant is considered one of the best operations in the field.

SEVERAL PEOPLE HURT BY EXPLOSION

Boy Throws Dynamite Package in Philadelphia.

Philadelphia, (Special).—Several persons were cut by flying glass and shocked by an explosion caused by a small boy throwing a package of dynamite up a court in the rear of 619 Fitzwater street. Those injured were members of Italian families who occupy 12 small houses facing the court. The explosion shook these tiny dwellings to their foundations, toppling chimneys into the court, and broke window-panes in every house. Those who were injured were in their houses at the time of the explosion. A few seconds before the detonation a youngster came by a package wrapped in a newspaper under his arm.

A man lounging on the other side of Fitzwater street noticed the boy and watched him as he took deliberate aim and threw his package up the alley into the court. Then the youngster took to his heels, and before the man could stop him the explosion occurred. The police think they have a clue to the identity of this unknown practical joker with anarchistic tendencies.

NO FOOD FOR 28 DAYS.

Allegheny Dentist Said to Have Abstained That Long.

Pittsburg (Special).—For 28 days, it is stated, Dr. S. M. Stauffer, a dentist, of Allegheny, has gone without food.

"Reform health methods" are said to be responsible for the starving of Dr. Stauffer. His physical condition was not badly handicapped through inability to have their fish frozen ashore.

When his health under the no-food treatment becomes what he desires, whether the time be long or short, he will start a campaign for the relief of an over-worked stomach.

Speyer Succeeds Yerkes.

London (By Cable).—At a meeting of the board of the Underground Electric Railways Company Edgar Speyer was elected chairman of the company in succession to the late Charles T. Yerkes, Sir George Gibb, general manager of the Northeastern Railway, was elected deputy chairman and managing director of the Metropolitan District Railway Company, vacated by the death of Mr. Yerkes. B. W. Perks continues as deputy chairman of the company. The board passed a resolution recording its deep regret at the death of Mr. Yerkes.

NEW YORK AS SEEN DAY BY DAY.

NEW YORK CITY, N. Y.

For the second time within three months, and the seventh time within three years, the jewelry store of Schwarz Brothers, at 1368 Broadway, in the heart of the "Tenderloin" district, was robbed, and about \$4000 worth of diamonds, rings and watches were stolen. The robbery was most daring, as this part of the city is the busiest and the most brilliantly lighted throughout the entire night. Working during a terrific rainstorm, when most pedestrians had sought shelter, the burglars gained entrance by cutting through a steel folding gate that barred the approach to the front door and through a heavy wire screen that protected the plate glass in the front door. They then smashed the half-inch thick glass to reach their plunder. They set off a burglar alarm, yet escaped with their booty before the police arrived.

Announcement was made by the leaders of the Housewives and Bridgemen's Union that the 400 members would strike for an increase of pay from \$4.50 to \$5 a day. This, the leaders declare, means that every big building in course of construction in this city and within a radius of 50 miles, on Long Island and in New Jersey, in which structural iron work is being done, will be tied up, and, indirectly, will throw out of employment about 75,000 men.

A memorial urn to contain the ashes of Anton Seidl has been placed, temporarily, in the Steinway Building in East Fourteenth Street, and there was a private view of the urn for subscribers. Former associates and friends of Herr Seidl may see it by applying to Steinway & Sons. The urn was designed and carved by George Grey Barnard. It bears sculptured figures of a dying youth with a harp and of Mystery, bearing the small urn of Life.

About 200 laborers in Central Park, who work along the east and west drives, were called to the office of Park Commissioner Parsons and \$5 was handed to each as a New Year's present on behalf of Mrs. Russell Sage. Mrs. Sage called upon the Commissioner and told him that she was very much interested in Central Park and was gratified to see the excellent condition in which the laborers had maintained the drives. She said she was desirous of making them a present to encourage them in the work they were doing.

Mrs. Catherine Stillman, though the heir of an estate valued at \$100,000, died in poverty in apartments at 64 Adams Street, Hoboken. Her husband, James Stillman, worn out by the litigation over the legacy, died three years ago. Mr. Stillman had been a man of means, but reverses came, and he and his wife were comparatively poor when they were in Washington. Mrs. Stillman's uncle had left her a fortune of \$100,000. They reached Washington only to learn that the bequest was being contested by an aunt. The costs of the litigation exhausted their resources and they had to depend upon friends to continue the contest. When Mr. Stillman died, his widow was unable to meet the demands, and of late she has been living partly on the charity of her neighbors.

Physician Ends His Life.

Alliance, O. (Special).—Dr. S. M. King, a prominent physician, committed suicide by shooting. Dr. King several months ago filed a sensational suit for divorce against his wife. Letters found among the belongings of the dead man indicate that a reconciliation was about to be effected.

LIVE WASHINGTON AFFAIRS.

Representative Reeder, of Kansas, introduced a resolution that the Attorney General investigate and report whether there exists a combination or agreement of the Pennsylvania, the Baltimore and Ohio, the Norfolk and Western and the Chesapeake and Ohio Railroads in violation of the antitrust law.

Champ Clark entertained the House with a three-hour speech full of wit and epigrams on the President, the tariff and the Philippines.

Ambassador White and Minister Gummers received their instruction as the American representatives to the Morocco conference.

Nearly 20 different railroad rate bills are before the Senate Committee on Interstate Commerce.

Eleven heroes of the gunboat Bennington have been awarded gold medals and \$100 each.

A woman who insisted on seeing the President created a scene at the White House, the officers being required to carry her out and send her to the House of Detention.

Director Walcott, of the Geological Survey, was before the Joint Committee of the Senate and House, explaining the printing that is done for his bureau.

The Philippine Commission has extended for five years the time during which the Spanish language may be used in the Philippine courts.

The question as to the power of Congress to control insurance corporations was referred to the Judiciary Committee of the House.

February 17 is the date set for the marriage of Miss Alice Roosevelt to Congressman Longworth.

Secretary Bonaparte has promised to attend the presentation by the citizens of Charleston of a silver service to the cruiser bearing that name.

Henry W. Furniss, of Indianapolis, minister to Hayti, was married in Bahia to a white woman of beauty and culture.

Paul Frederick called at the White House to get the President to collect a \$2,000,000 claim for him. He did not get it.

Associate Justice Peelle was sworn in as chief justice of the United States Court of Claims.

The Supreme Court affirmed the decision of the Court of Appeals of Kentucky affirming the conviction of Charles Howard for the murder of Governor Goebel.

Secretary Bonaparte has acted on the verdict of the court-martial in the gunboat Bennington case, which sentenced Commander Young to be reprimanded.

PREPARING FOR POSSIBLE WAR

Germany Placing Orders for Railway Cars.

ARMY NOW IN FIGHTING SHAPE.

The Step Taken as a Precautionary Measure in View of the Extensive Military Arrangements Going On in France—While War is Not Expected, the Outcome of the Moroccan Conference Cannot Be Foretold.

Berlin (By Cable).—The railway administration placed orders last week for 20,000 freight cars, at a cost of \$50,000,000, with manufacturers of five countries, stipulating delivery by the middle of February, besides utilizing the car works of Germany. These contracts were distributed among makers in Belgium, Holland, Switzerland and Italy, which would not have been done unless some reasons for haste existed. Inquiries made regarding the reasons for urgency resulted in obtaining the statement that the ordering of the cars was a precautionary measure, the general staff desiring to be ready to move troops, if necessary, by the first of March. This is only a proper measure of prudence, it was affirmed, in view of the extensive military arrangements going on in France, which, among other dispositions, include the movement toward the German frontier of six regiments of artillery, or 180 guns. The ordering of these freight cars, each of which would accommodate 40 soldiers, or would enable the authorities to transport material, is only in consequence of the French preparations, and must not be taken to indicate any hostile design on the part of Germany, whose peaceful intentions remain unchanged. The step taken is due to the conviction, long held and acted upon here, that the best preservative of peace is complete preparedness for any eventuality. The war is not used, because such a word in itself would be a provocative, and every interest, both in and outside the government, shrinks from such a possibility, unless it be a small group of military men. The government will probably regret the publication of this intelligence, but its transmission seems necessary to a proper understanding of the drift of events, and of how both their diplomatic position on the eve of their diplomatic position on the eve of the Moroccan conference by material preparations.

No doubt exists here that the French and German policies will differ in the conference on the question of policing the Morocco-Algerian frontier and on some less important questions. Under the terms of the agreement to hold the conference all the participating powers must agree to the conclusion of the conference or the situation reverts to the status quo. In other words, if at the conference all the powers except one agree to a plan for international control of Morocco, the conference will have been in vain, and if the situation becomes as it was before the powers assented to call the conference serious disagreements between those specially interested may arise.

Germany's book on the Moroccan question probably will be issued January 12, and copies will be supplied to the delegates at the conference, which it now seems will meet January 16. The energies of German diplomacy are now fixed upon various features of this pregnant event.

Madrid (By Cable).—Premier Moret, in the course of an interview printed is quoted as saying:

"The recent reports of a belligerent nature concerning the probable results of the Moroccan conference are unwarranted. My conversations with the ambassadors of various powers and communications received from the powers seem to show that a spirit of concord animates the nations, all desiring that the conference shall bring an amicable adjustment of the questions under discussion."

Cincinnati, O. (Special).—The United States Printing Company, capital \$3,376,300, one of the largest concerns of its kind in the country, will be leased to the United States Printing Company of New Jersey if the stockholders on February 1 ratify the action of the directors announced. The company has plants in Brooklyn; Montclair, N. J.; Norwood and in Cincinnati. The total output is estimated to be nearly \$2,500,000. The new holding company will take over all the plants of the company for a period of 99 years, the rentals being agreed on a scale which will give to the stockholders in the Ohio company 6 per cent.

To Anticipate Interest.

Washington, D. C. (Special).—Secretary Shaw announced that the Treasury Department will anticipate the payment of interest due February 1, 1906, on Government bonds. Coupons due on that date will be paid at once on presentation at the Treasury Department and the several Sub-Treasury offices. Interest checks on registered 3 per cent bonds of 1908 will be mailed within a few days and on registered 4s of 1925 within a day or two after the closing of the books on January 15. The amount of interest anticipated is about \$1,700,000.

Fire at Apalachicola.

Tallahassee, Fla. (Special).—A dispatch from Apalachicola announces that fire there destroyed the largest portion of the business district. The losses will aggregate \$100,000.

President Never Said It.

Washington, D. C. (Special).—Cable dispatches from London that President Roosevelt had expressed "his hearty sympathy" with the Liberal party in Great Britain to D. N. Mason, a candidate for Parliament, induce no direct statement from the President. The President makes it plain, however, that he gave to nobody an expression of sympathy with any political party of Great Britain or with the candidates of any party.

SAD HOLIDAYS FOR RUSSIANS.

The Poor Have No Money For Christmas Feasts.

St. Petersburg (By Cable).—The Russians love nothing so much as their holidays, but, depressed in spirit and purse in these revolutionary days, the celebration of the Russian Christmas, Sunday, was a sad one. The streets of the capital have put on a pitiful semblance of holiday attire, but none of the heavy buying characteristic of the prodigal Russians in former days is in evidence, while in the industrial sections the workmen, exhausted by a long series of strikes, are without money for Christmas trees. The green trees and gewgaws were brought into the city by the country people, but the trees remained unthought in the streets.

The holidays, however, promise, at least superficially, a period of comparative quiet, the proletarian organizations having decided to refrain from activity until they are ended.

The *Novoye Vremya* is printing a series of articles in defense of Premier Witte which are attracting much attention and are assumed to be inspired by the Premier himself.

The most important statement made is that Witte has taken a definite resolution to retire as soon as the National Assembly meets. With the turning over of the reins of power to the people's representatives he will regard his task as finished. The whole course of events since the reform manifesto was issued is attributed by the paper to the refusal of the conservatives to support the government.

It is explained that many of the reforms, which Witte and his cabinet have been continually berated for not realizing, were not promulgated because every bit of leeway given was seized upon by the "reds" to advance the cause of an armed revolution, until finally the government, being without the active support of the conservative classes, was forced in self-protection to adopt repressive measures.

Even then it refrained from taking action until the temporary laws had been promulgated, and during the interregnum there were no laws. While the government did not desire to act for fear of arousing indignation, the revolution gained headway.

The policy it is now following is solely for the purpose of making possible the holding of the elections and accelerating the convocation of the national assembly. Yet the government realizes that it is impossible to hold elections in the Caucasus and Baltic provinces, and does not believe that the national assembly can be convened before April.

A report prepared for the Emperor regarding the situation in the Baltic provinces declares that, though open revolt has been crushed in many parts of the provinces, and though the local authorities who were deposed by the revolutionists are resuming the reins of government under the protection of the troops, the situation is still a very serious one.

CLEVELAND GETS \$12,000 SALARY.

To Abolish Rebating in the Big Insurance Companies.

New York (Special).—An agreement to abolish rebating on premiums has been entered into by the New York Life Insurance Company, the Equitable Life Assurance Society and the Mutual Life Insurance Company. Announcement was made that Grover Cleveland has been appointed referee to decide all questions in dispute that may arise in such matters and that his salary as referee will be \$12,000 per annum, to be paid jointly by the three companies.

Mr. Cleveland has accepted with the understanding that the officers of the three companies are to second him in his efforts to stop rebating. A similar appointment was held by the late Thomas B. Reed. Any agent who gives rebates will be dismissed from service and will not be re-employed by any of the companies that are parties to the agreement.

It is the desire of the companies to secure the co-operation of all other life insurance companies in this agreement. It was said that if rebating can be entirely abolished first year's premiums can be reduced. It is understood that this agreement is the result of a suggestion by President Paul Morton, of the Equitable Life Assurance Society.

Persons familiar with the life insurance situation expressed the opinion that the naming of Mr. Cleveland as referee was only the first step in a movement which may result in making the ex-President a most powerful factor in the re-organization of the life insurance business. In their opinion an effort will be made before long to have the ex-President act as a general adjuster for the three big companies, that is as an arbiter of all life insurance questions between the three big companies. That there is in the present emergency a great desire on the part of the companies to stand together and present a solid front in the re-organization process is an admitted fact. There are a hundred and one different matters springing up between the companies regularly, which, if referred to an independent arbiter, would be quickly settled with satisfaction to the policyholders.

\$18,000 Package Taken.

Washington (Special).—It developed here that about \$18,000 was taken from an express pouch between Atlanta, Ga., and New York. The Southern Express Company received the package at Augusta; from there it went to Columbia, S. C., and it arrived in Washington early Sunday morning. The Adams Express Company then sent it to New York, and there the loss was discovered. Officials of the express company are making an investigation.

"Witches" Garroted.

Havana (By Cable).—Domingo Bo court, an old negro, and Victor Molina, a mulatto, were garroted at the prison here. Both men were regarded as "witches" by their associates. Their crime was a hideous murder of a white baby, Zoila Diaz, for the purpose of procuring the heart of a white female child, which the "witches" prescribed as a poultice for a certain woman as a cure for barrenness. The child's body was found, smoked and salted, weeks after the crime. The executions passed off promptly.