AWARD SWITCHMEN AN EIGHT HOUR DAY

Arbitrators Compromise, However, on All Issues Debated Since August.

WAGES ON 9 HOUR BASIS

Thirteen Railroads to Be Affected by Decision—Joy in Brotherhoods.

The Board of Arbitration which since August has been considering the demands of the Switchmen's Union for an eight hour day, punitive overtime and increases in the wage scale yesterday filed an award which compromises on all the requests.

It decided that eight hours or less constitutes a day's employment. The actual operation of this does not carry with it the pay for ten hours—the prevailing day heretofore—but gives the compensation on a basis of nine hours.

Time and a half for overtime was denied; the board decided that overtime work shall be paid at the normal hour rate.

The switchmen had asked that helpers be paid 47 cents an hour and yard foremen 50 cents an hour. The board granted an increase of five cents an hour to both. The highest pay for switchmen heretofore was 40 cents an hour.

Dissent from the final award on the eight hour day was recorded by the road's representatives in the arbitration, E. F. Potter, assistant to the general manager of the Minneapolis, St. Paul and Sault Ste. Marie Railway, and T. W. Evans, assistant general manager of the New York Central.

Award Affects Only 13 Roads.

Protest was made by the switchmen's union members, J. B. Connors, assistant president, and W. A. Titus, vice-president, against the denial of the full demands on overtime and wages. The other members of the board are Prof. Jeremiah W. Jenks of New York University and Charles B. Howry of Washington, chairman.

In its application the award affects only thirteen roads—the Michigan Central, New York Central, Lehigh Valley, Bessemer and Lake Erie, New York, Chicago and St. Louis, Lackawanna, Cincinnati, New Orleans and Texas, Rock Island, Chicago and Eastern Illinois, Baltimore and Ohio, Minneapolis, St. Paul and Sault Ste. Marie, Chicago Great Western and the Peoria Railway Terminal Company.

The award is the largest given in any arbitration that involved switchmen. It is expected to cost the roads $250,000 annually in the aggregate.

Comment on Eight Hour Plea.

On the question of the eight hour day—the point which has been the focus of general railroad interest—the arbitrators made this comment:

"Although it has seemed wise to award an eight hour day as the standard minimum day, the overwhelming weight of testimony shows that the conditions of the various kinds of railway work are so different that only trial can determine just how far eight hour shifts can be worked without prohibitory cost to the roads and undue disturbance of the work of their patrons.

"It seems to be clearly established that under existing conditions, and probably even under conditions of traffic less strenuous than the present, it will not be possible to make the actual working eight hour day effective in the case of more than a small percentage of the switching crews, not more than 10 per cent. during the first year.

"While, therefore, it is urged that the eight hour day be established, its introduction must be gradual. The percentage, therefore, of the switching crews that will be directly affected during the period of this award must of necessity be small. Most crews will work ten hours or more.

"Moreover, owing to the increase in pay awarded to the switchmen, those who seriously desire to shorten their work day two hours for the purpose of employing the added hours of leisure in ways distinctly beneficial to themselves will be able to secure this leisure by the exercise of their seniority rights. Those who prefer the added wage will generally be able to secure that. The seniority rules will enable the men longest in service to take their choice.

"If the older men in service should all prefer the added daily wage coming from the long hours, the eight hour shifts must be taken by the younger and less experienced men. But, with so large an element of choice and so small a number of positions to be filled, the award will enable employers, employees and the public to determine the extent to which the switchmen desire the shorter hours."

The importance of the arbitration has increased since the passage of the Adamson law and because of the present negotiations between the "Big Four" brotherhoods, with which the Switchmen's Union is not allied, it has become crucial.

Brotherhoods Are Exultant.

When it was made public representatives of the brotherhoods exulted in the grant of the eight hour day. It upheld, they said, the principle for which they contended until the Adamson law was enacted. They earnestly expect that because of this award the roads will take a strong position in next week's negotiations toward repealing the Adamson law while leaving the principle intact.

The "Big Four" felt no great dismay in the denial of the punitive overtime. They were compelled to forego the same advantage until the President's commission, empowered to observe the operations of the Adamson law, reports on its merits. If the situation arrives at a point when the Adamson law goes into force they believe the commission will decide in favor of the time and a half rate for overtime.

They expressed jubilation, too, that the arbitrators had given such substantial increases in pay, despite the heavier burdens of the railroads. All in all they believe the award gives them ground for sound argument when they meet the national conference committee of managers next week.

Managers Less Jubilant.

The managers refused to believe that the eight hour principle had been fully vindicated by the switchmen's arbitrators. They pointed out that it is applicable to only a small percentage of railroad workers.

In giving only nine hours pay for ten hours work, one railroad man pointed out that many of the men will suffer financially.

"The highest hourly pay now earned by these men is 40 cents," he said. "In ten hours they earn $4. The award raises the hourly rate by 5 cents. For eight hours the switchmen will get $3.60 instead of $4."

With the solace derived by each side from yesterday's award it was prophesied by a student of railroad affairs who will not be a participant in next week's discussion that the discussion will widen the gap.

T. R. AND WHITMAN TO SPEAK TOGETHER

Burial of Political Hatchet Expected at Scientists' Meeting Next Friday.

ALBANY, N. Y., Dec. 23.—Another political hatchet will go under ground—so far as the public eye can see—when Gov. Whitman introduces Col. Roosevelt at the convocation of scientists in Chancellors Hall in the New York State Museum next Friday.

Time was when neither the Colonel nor Whitman could hear the name of the other without a rush of blood to the head and a flow of hot language to the lips. That was in 1914, when they had their famous controversy over a letter. It resulted in the nomination of Harvey D. Hinman to defeat Whitman at the Gubernatorial primaries that year. No record exists of "pax vobiscums" being exchanged since.

When the programme for the scientists' meeting was drawn up it was arranged at first that the Governor and the Colonel would not have to come into contact with each other. The Governor was to speak in the afternoon and the Colonel at the night meeting after being introduced by Dr. John H. Finley, State Commissioner of Education. Somebody has changed the programme so that as it stands now the Colonel will deliver his talk on "Productive Scientific Scholarship" after a eulogium from Gov. Whitman.

TWO DIE IN FIRE ON JERSEY PALISADES

Seventh Regiment Member and His Niece Trapped in Blaze.

Harold Powell, a member of the Seventh Regiment, who returned from the Mexican border a few weeks ago, and his niece, Margaret Brewster, 10 years old, were burned to death yesterday morning when the home of the child's mother, Dr. Margaret Brewster, was destroyed by fire. A nurse in the house who jumped from a third floor window of the burning house with her own child in her arms was injured so badly that she is expected to die, and no hope is held out for the child.

The house is on the top of the Palisades, opposite Grant's Tomb. Dr. Brewster was away for the night, visiting friends in Manhattan, to have an early start for Christmas shopping yesterday. The house was a mass of flames when outsiders discovered it. The firemen were summoned, but with one line of hose and a few buckets they could make no headway against the blaze.

Margaret Brewster appeared at the second floor window. Flames were behind her, and she was about to jump. Before she did and before anything could be done she fell back, apparently overcome by the smoke.

A few minutes later the nurse, Mrs. Mary Smith, came to the window with her child Ethel, 2 years, in her arms. She jumped, and at Englewood Hospital it was said her spine was fractured and she will probably die. The child's injuries will also prove fatal, it is believed.

The frame building was in ruins half an hour after the blaze was discovered. Powell, Mrs. Brewster's brother, was found dead in his bed, apparently suffocated while asleep.

STRIKERS WIN ANOTHER FIRM.

Two Thousand Clothing Workers Back in Places Tuesday.

Another large manufacturer, member of the American Clothing Manufacturers Association, has given in to the demands of the striking clothing workers, it was announced yesterday at strike headquarters, in order to avoid the loss of business a continuation of the battle would entail during the new season. This firm, which is the fifth of the association to capitulate, is Friedman Bros. of 628 Broadway and employs 2,000 workers. These will go back at work Tuesday.

"The pressure on the other members of the association is so great that we expect most of them to seek peace about the middle of next week," declared Sidney Hillman, president of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers. "This strike will have practically dwindled into insignificance next week and the victory will be ours."

TORREON CAPTURE IN DOUBT.

Carranzistas Believe Villa Is Now Marching on Chihuahua.

EL PASO, TEX., Dec. 23.—Persistent rumors that Torreon had been captured by Villa were in circulation here to-day, but Carranza officials here and in Juarez insisted that nothing had been received from the Coahuila metropolis. One report was that Villa's forces are marching on Chihuahua city and that the fighting had started south of that city.

None of these reports could be verified from Carranza sources here or in Juarez. As the reports originated from sources known to be strongly pro-Villa, Government agents and military officers here refused to accept them until something more definite could be obtained.

A message from Gen. Francisco Murguia, military commander at Chihuahua city, denying that Torreon has been captured by Villa's forces was received to-day by Eduardo Soriano Bravo, Carranza Consul here. Gen. Murguia also denied that Jose Ynes Salazar had attacked Chihuahua city from the south.

SERVICE FOR JACOB RIIS.

Songs on New Year's Eve in Memory of "Foremost Citizen."

The memory of Jacob A. Riis is to be honored at a big New Year's eve public song service to be held at the north end of Madison Square under the auspices of the Citizens New Year's Eve Celebration. Music will be furnished by a great chorus under the direction of Dr. Archer Leslie Hood, by the thirty-five piece band of the United States army training school of Governors Island and the Policeman's Quartet.

The celebration will begin at 11:30 and will close at midnight with the singing of "America," following a moment of silence in honor of Mr. Riis.

300 CHRISTMAS TREES FREE.

Thousands of Others Sold at the Buyer's Own Price.

The Jacob Hamburger Company, a commission house, which took 22,000 Christmas trees off the hands of a railroad last week, gave away trees in response to 300 requests from charitable institutions, churches, neighborhood organizations and the like.

The "Christmas Tree King," who expected to make a big clean-up, didn't come out as well as he expected. Prices broke badly and holders of trees were willing to take almost any offer within reason.

POLICE PLAY SANTA TO 25,000 KIDDIES

Heaps of Candy, Brick Ice Cream and Lots of Mighty Fine Presents Too.

BIG TREES ALL AGLITTER

Celebrations at Stations to Continue To-day, To-morrow and Tuesday.

Little Giuseppe Nicolo of Mulberry street had a sad awakening to all this rotund, bewhiskered Santa Claus and reindeer business yesterday. And the next innocent party that tries to tell "Joe" that old Kris has long white whiskers and rides in a sleigh and slips down chimneys will be dealt with in a very summary manner.

"Go on wid ya," he will probably be told. "Whacha tink I am? I'm onta dis Santa—he ain't notin but a cop and he rides in one of them patrol whiz wagons. But say, mister, he's all right—you otta seen what he gave us kids—candy and shoes and everything. Gee whillikens! mister, ya otta been at our party over at the police station—big Christmas tree and singin' and—and say, some swell time."

There are about 25,000 little Giuseppes scattered over the city to-day who are singing the praises of their former traditional enemies—the police. Many of them have on new shoes—maybe the first real for sure new ones they ever had in their starved, hungry little lives; and other thousands are wearing fine, warm underwear in place of the thin, holey ones that Big Brother really wore out and discarded last year.

Heaps of Candy.

And all of them have trifling aches down the regions where they are supposed to deposit three meals each day—but mostly don't—for they had more candy to eat yesterday than they ever even dreamed before was in the whole world.

It was a great day for a lot of people. Just ask any one of New York's 10,000 policemen if it wasn't. And after you've interviewed the kids and the cops, if you're still doubtful, just speak to some East Side mother. She'll tell you all about it in broken English or straight Italian or any of a score of tongues—and there'll be tears in her eyes half as big as the orange that Rosa is keeping for her sick little brother.

There were fourteen of the police stations that had big Christmas trees and held celebrations yesterday, and to-day twenty-four more will keep open house for the poor children of their neighborhoods. On Monday an additional fourteen will give out presents and on Tuesday a single station will complete the great work. From the Battery to The Bronx and from the lower end of Brooklyn to the furthest reaches of Queens not a child was permitted to be cheated out of one of his most precious heritages—a Christmas tree and presents and candy. For weeks hundreds of policemen have been giving their off duty time, and even turning over parts of their vacations, to the work of classifying the needy children in their districts, obtaining donations and preparing presents.

Music and Brick Ice Cream.

The Adams street station in Brooklyn was typical of the others. Just a few less than 700 kiddies were divided between the big upstairs courtroom and the squad room, where a glittering Christmas tree stood. Two big melting pots the rooms were—crucibles into which were poured all the tongues and races and nations of the world—and everywhere about the walls were American flags and Santa Clauses in blue and gold uniforms. Little Normie and Penrose Washington—seared and colored—sang "Don' You Cry, My Honey," and every grownup in the hall tried to laugh right out loud and chase away the tears these hundreds of poorly clothed, underfed kiddies brought to their eyes.

Then there was music and singing by all the tots—in which "America" had a hard time competing with "Take Me Back to Tennessee"—and then, well nothing less than brick ice cream and real cake. And then came the climax when they marched out in a long file and Capt. William A. Coleman handed each a big paper bag—really taller than half of them were—chock full of toys and candy and warm underwear and probably with an order for a pair of brand new shoes tied on to the tag. More than $1,500 worth of gifts were thus distributed during the afternoon.

Woods at Festivities.

At the Alexander avenue station Commissioner and Mrs. Woods and Deputy Commissioner Lord participated in the festivities. Inspector Walsh introduced the Commissioner to the hundreds of children present as the real Santa Claus, but the Commissioner gracefully refused the compliment. "No, the real Santa Claus is the policeman you meet in the street," he said. "He's the fellow who is your real friend, and don't you forget him."

"Did you hear that?" a fine upstanding young rookie whispered. "This Christmas spirit just naturally gets into a fellow's blood, don't it? You're hep, aren't you—the Commissioner's the real guy, you know, and he figured this thing all out himself."

HOLIDAY POLITICS IN QUEENS.

Citizens Prepare to Elect Sheriff On January 2.

Queens county is to devote its Christmas holidays to its favorite pastime of politics as a result of the call issued by Gov. Whitman for a special election January 2 to fill the place of Sheriff. Sheriff Paul Stier was slain by a lunatic inventor he tried to arrest October 23.

The Democrats have not selected a candidate for the position, which pays $10,000 a year, but Samuel J. Mitchell, Under Sheriff, is being boomed as the logical man. Dr. Arthur F. Keating was out of town yesterday, so his choice could not be confirmed.

Among the aspirants in the Republican camp are Henry Doht, former Sheriff; Theron H. Burden, Charles A. McCardle and William H. Wade.

A doubt exists as to whether independents under the present election law can enter the field.

ENDS 3 YEAR CONTEMPT TERM.

Even Then Elderly Man Had Refused to Obey Court's Edict.

PITTSBURG, Dec. 23.—Christian Liberum, an aged resident of McKeesport, Pa., was released from jail here to-day after serving almost three years for contempt of court.

Liberum's house stood on ground which the county authorities decided should have been occupied by a road. He refused to move it on the ground that to do so would "violate his conscience." Recently it was decided to have the county move the house. The work was commenced to-day and Liberum was released a few minutes later.

MARIE DOUBLES AS ANGEL AND SANTA

Miss Dressler in New Role Has Whole East Side for Audience.

YOUNGSTERS APPLAUD

Actress Carries Christmas Cheer Into Homes of Trouble.

The Christmas Angel; or, Marie Dressler Succors the Starving.

All day performance yesterday of Miss Dressler's latest play, in Father Knickerbocker's popular open air theatre, bounded by Lexington avenue and the East River, 110th street and the Battery. The cast:

Mrs. Assistant Santa Claus, Marie Dressler

Mr. Assistant Santa Claus...John Smith

Several hundred hungry, ill dressed men, women and children; three chauffeurs, reporters, &c.

Miss Dressler's little play, presented for the first time yesterday, proved a welcome relief from the high cost of living tragedies which have held the stage of the theatre in question for so many months and with such unending regularity that they had become very monotonous, to the actors especially.

Marie made up her mind that it was time to change the character of the performance, and with her to think a thing ought to be done is to do it. The week's elapsing since the Russian bazaar, her activities in connection with which brought her the money with which to stage this performance, were spent in energetic preparations, and the scene was an impressive one when the curtain rose promptly at 10 A. M. on Marie's apartment in the Dorilton, Broadway and Seventy-first street, where the prologue took place.

In the foreground Marie, in street clothes, an immense hat with purple feathers, &c., was discovered surrounded by crates of flour, beans, sugar, tea, oranges, apples and other staples, hundreds of dressed chickens, dolls, horns and other toys, shoes, stockings, underwear and Christmas greens. Mr. Assistant Santa Claus, a small man with a graying mustache, feverishly stuffing dolls, and the three chauffeurs with huge boxes on their shoulders disappearing puffingly through the door at the right. Helping them on their way with resounding whacks on the shoulder, the heroine spoke the monologue which opens the play.

Thought of the Youngsters.

"Yes, when I found I'd made $214 for some charities out of my concession for movies at the Russian bazaar I said to myself, said I, 'Marie, here's where you make some home folks happy.' Aiding war victims is all very well, but it's the kiddies right here without any Christmas that make me want to register grief. Never had any Christmas myself when I was a child, y' see. Went on the stage at 12, and before that I was always worrying about my mother because she didn't have what she ought to have. Yes, little Marie didn't have a gay childhood, and now she's going to get somfun out of being Mrs. Santa to other kids.

"Mrs. Flora H. McGraw butted in with $150 to add to the Christmas fund, and then John Smith dropped from the clouds——"

Here John Smith tried to speak for himself.

"Been trying to do some good for years—got all tangled up in red tape when I tried to help—heard about Miss Dressler's plans for Christmas and said to myself: 'Here's a person with red blood in her veins and no red tape——'"

Her Pal Aids Her.

"Darling," interrupted the star with an affectionate pat that sent Joan Smith crashing among the dolls, "Marie is doing this monologue. I'll respect your wish to remain incog. Much as I love the press it shall not tear your name from me. Santa Claus, alias John Smith, you shall be. I'll simply relate how you have tied bundles, investigated the cases of the destitute brought to my notice, answered the pathetic little letters children wrote to me when they read in the papers that I was going to play Santa Claus with the money I made at the Russian bazaar, and sustained me through the three weeks of unceasing labor."

The monologue ended, Mrs. Assistant Santa Claus hoisted a ten pound box of candy to her shoulder, took a bunch of twelve chickens in the other hand and plunged down the nine flights of stairs to the automobiles, with John Smith and the reporters gasping after her and the negro elevator boy crying aloud from his cage at each floor:

"Ah, git on the car, missy, and I'll take you down!"

Simply remarking "You're too slow for me," Marie precipitated her bundles into car No. 1, poured ginger by her own peculiar methods into the three chauffeurs until they got the rest of the gifts down from her apartment, and the real play began with Act I., staged in a dark East Side tenement, where fifty-seven heads belonging to the tenants of the first, second, third, fourth, fifth and sixth floor fronts projected from the windows to watch the arrival of the two automobiles and the huge motor truck furnished by the World Film Company which conveyed the Santa Claus cast from act to act of the play.

Lightened Dark Tenements.

Marie's and John Smith's support in this act consisted of two child actresses out of a job, their sick mother and baby sister. The oldest child actress, who is "going on 12," found her memories of plaudits won when she was in "Chin Chin" poor sustenance for the family of four, and so she wrote to Marie Dressler to ask if she couldn't have some of the Christmas from the bazaar movie money.

Happy and grateful smiles were registered on the four faces when three fat chickens, Miss Dressler, a bundle of toys, two dolls, a big box of groceries, John Smith, shoes, underwear and reporters burst simultaneously into their bare room. All tried to grab speaking parts, but Star Actress Marie would have none of that. She began her monologue, which she repeated with variations so insistently at every place visited that it would have looked as if she was trying to grab the centre of the stage if it hadn't been obvious that her object was to avoid thanks.

"Now here," she would utter rapidly, prying off the top of the box with one hand as she pinched the children's chins with the other, "here in this box are three chickens, seven pounds of flour, five pounds of potatoes, two and a half of granulated sugar and the same of oatmeal, two of coffee, one of tea, two loaves of bread, two cans each of corn, tomatoes, condensed milk, two packages of macaroni, two pounds of mixed nuts and two of dates, twelve oranges, twelve apples, a package of hominy, toys, shoes, underwear, and—that's all. Now are you fixed over Christmas, eh? Well, you just have a good time, and after Christmas I'll come around and see how you're getting on."

Meantime Mr. Assistant Santa Claus would tend to the children. He sure loves children, that John Smith, or else he is a mighty good actor. The distress of that man when it was found that through a mistake in their preliminary census the package of toys was short one doll melted the audience of hardened reporters to tears. Surreptitiously he would introduce a dollar bill into the left out little girl's hand and tell her to buy herself a doll. "Sure, sir, that will buy her a pair of shoes," the mother would say, whereupon out he would whip another dollar, and no one could tell where it would end if Star Marie hadn't remarked that there were shoes for the whole family in the box, and would John Smith please remember, my dear man, that little Marie was running this show, which John Smith did, and retreated, crushed but beaming, down the dark tenement stairs.

Act 2 was staged on First avenue in three cold rooms, with a father out of work, a discouraged mother and seven children as support to Marie. Father was discovered trying to mend a broken doll's bedstead he had found as a present for the children, and mother displayed three little dresses she had sat up nights making for them, for Christmas, out of some cloth a kindly fellow tenant had given her. Three of the children were in bed to keep warm, but swarmed out, in abbreviated shirties, when Little Brother blew the horn Miss Dressler gave him. Father, it developed, was a painter who couldn't paint because it gave him colic. Miss Dressler administered three chickens, the big box of groceries she gave each family, and pairs of shoes all round. But scarcely had the visitors got down to the waiting autos when two of the kiddies came tumbling after, in ragged stocking feet, and sobbing despairingly over the new shoes, which they carried.

Shoes Didn't Fit.

"They don't fit. Please, Missis Dressler, they don't fit," shrieked the two.

"What do you know about that," mourned the star. "That shoe firm down town was so good, giving me $175 worth of shoes for $65, and I just didn't have time to get the right sizes for each family. Never mind, kiddie, Miss Dressler will come back after Christmas and change every pair of shoes that don't fit."

Well, the play had many other acts, but after the first two or three there was a certain sameness. The main characters, Miss Dressler, John Smith, the box of groceries, the chickens, etc., remained the same, only the supporting cast varied. Sometimes there was a father out of work, or sick, or in the hospital, or on the Island. Sometimes father had died or deserted. Sometimes there were more children, sometimes less. Sometimes there was an aunt with a cancer, or grandmother with the asthma, or an old neighbor that the family had taken in to starve with them because they wouldn't let her go to the Island. It was a great play, all right, and Miss Dressler at the end of the day, dead tired but joyous, announced that she would be glad to book for an indefinite number of returns if she could grab the price necessary to fit out the company.

MOUNT VERNON DEFENDED.

Chamber of Commerce Stirred to Reply to Criticism.

State Comptroller Travis's criticism of the financial management of Mount Vernon as extravagant, and as a similar attack by a New York newspaper, have stirred Mayor Edwin W. Fiske and the executive council of the Mount Vernon Chamber of Commerce to reply.

"Taking only the healthfulness of a city and comparing it with the cost of government, which is to be preferred," the Chamber of Commerce asks, "a city like Troy, in which the cost of government is $13.88 per capita and the deaths 216 a year out of every 10,000 inhabitants, or one like Mount Vernon, in which the cost of government is only $12.47 per capita and the number of deaths only 194 a year out of every 10,000 people?"

The Chamber of Commerce wishes it distinctly to be understood that Mount Vernon is a live city and not moribund, as are some others. Also Mount Vernon's problems, financial and otherwise, are made complex because of nearness to New York.

DIES DRESSING TREE FOR BOY.

Fire in Garage Kills Woman and Injures Her Son.

Mrs. Anna Delaney, 22 years old, wife of a chauffeur employed by Grant B. Schley, of 2 East Sixty-sixth street, a banker, was killed and her son Harold, 14 years old, was injured in a fire yesterday morning in Mr. Schley's garage at 108 East Sixty-sixth street which destroyed the banker's eight automobiles.

Mrs. Delaney lived with her husband and son on the third floor of the building. Delaney and his wife were dressing a Christmas tree for their son when they heard an explosion below. Delaney went down to see what was the matter and found the garage in flames. He ran back for his wife and son and found that the spring lock on the door had latched it and he couldn't get in. He summoned firemen, who entered the rooms by ladders from the street and found Mrs. Delaney dead at the foot of the Christmas tree and the boy in his bed. Dr. Flint of Flower Hospital tried to restore Mrs. Delaney with a pulmotor, but was unsuccessful after an hour and forty minutes work. The eight automobiles were valued at $25,000 and were completely wrecked. The boy was taken to Flower Hospital.

FEDERAL ROPE WORKS BURNED

Patients in St. Catherine's Hospital Near By Almost in Panic.

The Federal Rope Works, Morgan avenue and Ten Eyck street, Brooklyn, were devastated by fire last night. Nothing but the walls of the one story brick and frame building that has stood for seventy years remained when the firemen extinguished the flames. The blaze started at 7 o'clock, several hours after 1,000 employees had vacated the building.

Spontaneous combustion is given as the cause. The blaze fed on hemp, fibre and oil that sent a stream of sparks through the roof before the engines arrived on a two alarm summons.

Four hundred feet from the scene of the fire is the rear of St. Catherine's Hospital. Many patients were approaching panic until the nuns and nurses quieted them. The shades were drawn to shut out the glare, while porters and orderlies sprinkled the roof and sides of the hospital to quench sparks.

The loss to the Federal company is estimated at $25,000.

PENNA. BREWERS TO BE TRIED.

Federal Court Holds U. S. Corrupt Practices Act Is Valid.

PITTSBURG, Dec. 23.—Judge W. H. S. Thompson in the Federal District Court late to-day handed down an opinion holding valid the Federal corrupt practices act, under which indictments were found against seventy-two brewery corporations of Pennsylvania and the United States Brewers Association of New York.

Basing his decision on the proposition that the United States Government has equal concern with the different States in preserving the freedom of the voters and the purity of the ballot, Judge Thompson directed the indicted corporations to stand trial on 101 indictments for alleged corrupt use of brewery funds in the 1914 election of a United States Senator and members of Congress in Pennsylvania.

The decision resulted from a motion of the defendants to dismiss the indictments on the ground that the Federal corrupt practices act was unconstitutional.

OLD TIME PARTY ON STOCK EXCHANGE

Santa Claus Scrambles Down Chimney at a Merry Afternoon.

RIOT OF FUN FOR ALL

Two Thousand Persons Saw Brokers' Party to Employees.

When an opulent and bountiful Santa Claus scrambled riotously down an improvised chimney in the trading room of the New York Stock Exchange yesterday afternoon the joy of a whole roomful of boys and girls, big and little, knew no bounds.

The arrival of the patron saint of Christmas ended one of the happiest afternoons that members of the Stock Exchange have had this year. Staid business men chuckled and bustled about, helping Santa Claus distribute gifts and seeing that the 2,000 guests felt perfectly at home in their strange surroundings.

It was the first time a party has ever been given by the exchange to its employees; in fact, the first time that a semi-public meeting has been held on the floor of the famous old Broad street building. It was such a complete success and the members and guests alike enjoyed themselves so heartily that it probably will be repeated in the years to come.

Whole Families Attended.

Several days before tickets had been distributed by the members to employees, one for each member of the family, from the smallest baby up. They were instructed to call at the Broad street entrance at 2:45 o'clock. They needed no second bidding, for 2:45 o'clock found the doorway fairly clogged with boys, girls, mammas and papas, struggling to make their way inside. One-half of the floor clerks had been divided up into a corps of ushers, and they surrounded the crowd and shooed everybody inside and into one of the chairs that had been placed in long orderly rows over the entire floor of the exchange.

When all had been seated George L. Humphrey, who had his Seventh Regiment Band concealed in a balcony facing the audience, stepped to the front, tapped his music rack with his baton and swung into a quickstep that set the feet of boys and girls tapping the floor. Then there was a fanfare of trumpets, and 200 boys and young men employed in the exchange trooped on to the balcony and sang "O Come, All Ye Faithful."

Songs and Gifts.

There were more numbers on the programme, including "Jingle Bells" by the boys of the exchange, a cornet solo by S. Finkelstein, "The Christmas Tree" by William T. Boyton and chorus, and the recitation of that old poem, without which no Christmas entertainment would be a regular one:

'Twas the night before Christmas,
And all through the house
Not a creature was stirring,
Not even a mouse.

The recitation was interrupted, for old Santa Claus himself came tumbling out of the chimney corner and took charge of the party. Of course he had a gift for everybody arranged in the telephone booths that were numbered to correspond with the tickets held by the guests. Every person present was given a big box of candy. I or the little folks there were toys of all kinds, books, skates, candy and other fine presents. Then Santa Claus, like the Pied Piper, led the army of boys and girls to another section of the floor, where every one, from the tallest to the smallest, was given absolutely all the pink ice cream he or she could hold!

Everybody Had Good Time.

They had a great time, those boys and girls, as did Blair S. Williams, who was in charge of the arrangements, and his helpers, E. T. Tom, Dexter Blagden, Graham F. Blandy, George B. Buchanan, W. A. Green, Herbert T. B. Jacquelin, C. E. Kindbaum, Peter J. Maloney, W. H. Potts, George M. Sidenberg, E. H. H. Simons, Richard L. Smith, Max Siegel and many other exchange members who attended with their families to watch the festivities from the balcony. The entire floor as well as the balcony was draped in Christmas greens, holly and red bells. A big spruce tree held the presents.

All employees of the Stock Exchange will share in a generous Christmas profits, which will be distributed later the amount of which has not been yet decided. Its size, however, has never been exceeded. In addition, elevator men, telephone boys, clerks and messengers who have rendered personal service to members of the exchange during the year, were fairly showered with gold pieces and bills yesterday.

On the Broad street curb market a large fund was subscribed and distributed among the employees of the secretary's office, the street cleaners who work up after the curb has closed daily, and others who render assistance to the traders on Broad street. No announcement was made of the amount, but it was considerably larger than the $2,000 distributed last year.

NEW BANK FOR ORANGE.

Quarters of Wrecked Mutual Trust Co. Will Be Utilized.

Orange is to have a new bank in the quarters of the Mutual Trust Company, which was closed by the New Jersey Banking and Insurance Department on July 24. It was announced yesterday that Gordon B. Phillips, who was chairman of the depositors committee in the Mutual Trust liquidation proceedings; George E. Spotswoode, Peter J. Feltner, John D. Everitt, president of the Orange National Bank; John K. Gore, Irving K. Taylor, J. N. Lindsay, Henry L. Holmes, Fred L. Williams of Orange and Charles M. Decker of Madison have raised the capital to start the new banking concern, which will be called the Orange Valley Bank. It will open for business January 10.

The State Banking and Insurance Department will be ready on January 15 to pay dividends to the depositors in the Mutual. The dividend, it is rumored, will amount to 40 per cent.

SADDLE FOR COL. HAYWARD.

Associates in Public Service Board Equip Regimental Commander.

Members of the Public Service Commission yesterday presented to their colleague Col. William Hayward a Christmas present in the shape of a regulation army saddle with an engraved silver nameplate. Chairman Straus, who made the presentation speech, told Commissioner Hayward that the gift was in recognition of Mr. Hayward's services in recruiting and becoming commander of the Fifteenth Regiment for volunteer service if required.

Although the regiment, which is composed of negroes, was not called upon for duty on the Mexican border it is ready to be called into action within short notice.

NEW YORK ONE BIG CHRISTMAS PARTY

Thousands of Dinners, Gifts and Festivities To-night and To-morrow.

LIGHTED TREES IN PARK

Hotel Astor Gives $1,000,000 Insurance to Employees—Church Services.

The whole city is united in one vast Christmas party. Like a vast wave the spirit of Christmas has come over the metropolis from the Battery to the Bronx, from Staten Island to Far Rockaway.

New York, enriched by bonuses, is to give expression to the warmth of its generosity. Hundreds of festivities are to be held during Christmas week, and thousands upon thousands of dinners and gifts are being given to the poor.

The "Tree of Light," 75 feet high and radiating with 3,000 electric lights, will light up Madison Square Park at 5:45 o'clock this afternoon. Its illumination will be the cue for the call of four trumpeters, who will be answered in song by Osiomenion, the Mohawk Indian. A chorus of men led by Arthur Farwell will march down the steps of Dr. Parkhurst's church at 9 o'clock in the evening.

On Monday evening there will be a band concert, and Tuesday evening the chorus of one thousand voices will sing. At 8 o'clock this chorus will march from the tree to Madison Square Garden, where the "Messiah" will be sung.

Tompkins Square Park, at Tenth street and Avenue B, will have its first tree this year. The lights of the tree are lit this evening. The colored folks from Lincoln House are again to have their community tree on wheels.

Mme. Paderewska's bagpipe at the Hotel Gotham to-day and Wednesday will benefit the children of Poland.

The Waldorf-Astoria will dine the 1,600 employees on its payroll. The Hotel McAlpin, the Claridge and others will do the same. William C. Muschenheim gave out life insurance policies in value amounting to $1,000,000 to the employees of the Astor. The big dining room and other rooms were used last night for Christmas festivities. Two hundred West Point cadets were among the guests.

Great Parties for the Poor.

Nine Christmas parties will be given this year by the New York Association for Improving the Condition of the Poor. The donations began Friday. Yesterday morning eleven tons of dinners were distributed. During the afternoon the Old Men's Toy Shop workers were presented with winter clothing and given a luncheon.

Mrs. William K. Vanderbilt, Sr., will provide presents and an entertainment for eighty families in the association's home hospital for tuberculosis at 522 East Seventy-eighth street. The association hopes to give dinners to 640 destitute families in their homes.

Reviving the Saxon Christmas waits of the middle ages, bands of children marched through the narrow streets of Greenwich Village last night, singing Yuletide ballads. Lighted candles in windows designated the houses in front of which they were to stop. They began their march at 7:30 o'clock in the evening and returned to the Greenwich House Music School on Barrow street, where food and music were on the programme.

The community Christmas week celebration arranged for by people of Harlem, headed by J. Gardiner Smith and the Harlem Board of Commerce, begins at 5 o'clock tonight in Mount Morris Park. Borough President Marcus M. Marks will press the button that turns on the lights of the large Christmas tree. Community singing will follow the assembly of children. A feature will be the pageant of nativity, representing the shepherds, the wise men, Joseph and Mary.

A procession of children will enter Trinity Church with the choir and clergy at 3:30 o'clock this afternoon. After the service they will proceed with lanterns and two trumpeters around the church to visit the manger.

Christmas Carol Service.

The famous Christmas carol service will be held at St. Paul's at noon Tuesday, instead of on Christmas Eve. A procession led by a trumpeter will move around the churchyard.

At Roman Catholic churches will hold midnight mass by special permission of Cardinal Archbishop John J. Farley, who has issued the announcement that he feels the need of uniting his people in prayer at that hour in which the Prince of Peace is commemorated to implore Him to end the fratricidal war which is debasing the entire world in sorrow.

The Bowling Green Neighborhood Association gave a community Christmas party last evening to 1,500 children of that section of the city. A Christmas tree lighted the neighborhood playground, the Peoples Music League Orchestra played carols, and red stockings packed with nuts, candies, fruits and useful articles were distributed.

A number of Wall Street men contributed toys their own children received at last year's Christmas. The association enlisted the help, too, of Henry Holt & Co., C. S. Hammond & Co., Doubleday, Page & Co., John Wanamaker's, Gimbels, Rueckheim & Eckstein, Anderson & Co. and F. S. Zaloon & Co.

Fifteen thousand dinner baskets, over fifty thousand toys and a number of tons of candy will be presented to the poor to-day by the New York American Christmas Fund. The distribution will take place between the hours of 10 A. M. and 6 P. M., at the Sixty-ninth Regiment Armory, Lexington avenue and Twenty-fifth street.

Park Commissioner Cabot Ward gave a Christmas party yesterday noon at the Arsenal to 314 employees of the Park Department. Each man received a ten dollar gold piece donated by Mrs. Russell Sage. The men lined up to receive the gold pieces in order of their ages. Andrew Baiss, head gardener in the Central Park conservatories, who is 84 years old, headed the line.

The annual Christmas dinner given by the late William M. Fliess to the newsboys for many years past at the Brace Memorial Lodging House will be given by his son, William M. Fliess, Jr.

The Bowery Mission has prepared for Christmas Day a distribution of dinner baskets in the morning to poor families and a dinner to 1,000 homeless men in the evening. Also a religious service and social entertainment will take place.

A festival at the Elks Club, Manhattan, at 6 o'clock Christmas evening will provide for 2,000 poor children. The children will come to the club in buses provided by William Hunter. Mr. and Mrs. Augustus F. Groll conceived the idea. The Elks Club in Long Island City also gave a celebration to 1,000 children. Here Borough President Connolly spoke.

Aboard the superdreadnought New York, which will be at the navy yard by Christmas, 100 poor children will take dinner Christmas Day.

Christmas is to be observed by many of the city institutions. The City Hospital, The Home for the Aged and Infirm, the Metropolitan Hospital and the Cumberland Street Hospital will give special Christmas parties for the benefit of the patients and nurses. The Municipal Lodging House is giving an entertainment on Christmas. At the City Farm Colony, representatives of the New York City Federation of Women's Clubs and other organizations will distribute presents.

Joy for Prisoners' Families.

The family of every prisoner in the State of New York which may be in need will receive either a Christmas dinner or its money equivalent. This was made possible by public contributions and the sanction of Gov. Whitman. The same plan will be carried out by the Salvation Army throughout the country. It was stated at Salvation Army headquarters that while more money has been collected this year from the kettles the increase is not sufficient to make up for the increased cost of living. More than 50,000 people in the metropolitan district will be aided.

Mgr. Luke A. Evers, who inaugurated the night workers' mass for newspaper men and others employed in the downtown section at night, will be the celebrant of the solemn high mass for night workers which will take place at 3:15 A. M. on Christmas in the Roman Catholic Church of St. Andrew, Duane street and City Hall place.

At St. Brendan's Roman Catholic Church, 207th street and Perry avenue, The Bronx, the midnight mass will be out of the ordinary. The rector, the Rev. William A. Courtney, has announced that it will be a military mass.

The old French custom of having a reception and midnight mass Christmas Eve will be instituted in this country this evening at Fordham University.

The Rev. Joseph A.