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FIRE DESTROYS BIG SKY-SCRAPER

New York Equitable Life Building is Complete Loss.

Six Known Dead; Many Injured—Money Loss \$8,000,000—Vaults Full of Wealth.

New York—The immense marble and granite home of the Equitable Life Assurance society, covering a block on Lower Broadway, a historic landmark of New York's early period of skyscraper buildings and one of the city's important financial centers, was destroyed by fire January 9 with a loss of at least six lives and probably \$8,000,000 in property. Twelve persons were injured.

The fire started in the kitchen of a restaurant in the basement of the building.

Valuable records, including the biography of E. H. Harriman, and two priceless libraries which cannot be replaced, went up in flames, and the fate of hundreds of millions of dollars' worth of securities, stored in safe deposit vaults, is in question, although it is believed that fireproof construction saved them from damage.

The great structure, which besides containing the main offices of the Equitable Life Assurance society, was the home of the Mercantile Trust company, the Equitable Trust company, the banking house of Kountze Brothers, August Belmont & Company, the Harriman railroad lines, the Mercantile Safe Deposit company, the Lawyer's club and many of the city's most prominent law firms, stands a shell of ice-coated stone.

The intense cold caused a thick coating to form on the facades of skyscrapers adjacent and on the pavement for blocks around. The bulwark of modern fireproof structures nearby, according to Fire Commissioner Johnson, protected the entire financial district. The damage, except by water, was confined to the Equitable structure.

Of those who lost their lives, three employees of the building were killed by jumping from the roof to which they were driven by the flames.

Battalion Chief Wash dropped in a whirl of smoke and flame when a cave-in occurred on the third floor. Two other men, William Campion, captain of the watchmen in the Mercantile Safe Deposit company, vaults, and Frank J. Neider, a special officer, whose bodies have not been recovered, complete the list of dead, so far as known.

Several persons, watchmen and others, who were in the structure when the fire broke out, have not been accounted for, but are believed to have escaped. The death total, however, may not be fixed until the fire has been entirely extinguished and the ruins have had time to cool.

Among the injured is W. J. Giblin, president of the Mercantile Safe Deposit company, whose rescue from the basement vaults, where he was imprisoned, after two hour's work by firemen, was one of the most sensational episodes of the fire. He had gone into a vault to save securities and accidentally locked himself in with an employe who had accompanied him.

Their cries were heard by the firemen, who had to saw through the steel bars of a door leading to the street before they could rescue the imprisoned men. Mr. Giblin was taken to a hospital suffering from the effects of the smoke.

One man in another vault of the Mercantile Safe Deposit company, believed to be Campion, could be seen from the street with his legs pinned down by a mass of debris, but could not be rescued because steel doors barred the way. Through the smashed windows of the doors the last rites were administered by Chaplain McGean, of the fire department just as he was swallowed from view by the dense smoke.

Candidates Engage Rooms.

Baltimore—Within an hour after announcement was made of the selection of Baltimore as the meeting place for the Democratic National convention, requests for the reservation of rooms at hotels began to pour in by telegraph. Representatives of Governor Woodrow Wilson, of New York, and Governor Judson Harmon, of Ohio, engaged rooms soon after the announcement was made. Massachusetts and Vermont were the first states to secure reservations for their delegations.

People Acclaim Rebels.

Guayaquil, Ecuador—After a battle which ended in favor of the troops from this city who are supporting the provisional government proclaimed at Guayaquil December 23 by General Pedro Montero, the inhabitants of the province of Canar announced their adhesion to General Montero's cause. The troops from Quito under General Plaza continue to occupy the heights near Alausi and Garanda, and a battle with the revolutionists is imminent.

Judge Boon to Leap Year.

Bakersfield, Cal.—Leap year weddings got decided encouragement here when Justice of the Peace Marion, of East Bakersfield, announced that he would marry free of charge all couples when the bride had made the proposal of marriage. Several such weddings are in prospect.

CHICAGO FOR PEACE.

Hamilton Club at Mammoth Meeting Upholds Taft.

Chicago—Chicago's voice was raised for international peace at a mammoth meeting held here under the auspices of the Hamilton club in the Auditorium theater. Ex-Vice-President Fairbanks, Colonel Henry Watterson, of Louisville; Representative Foster, of Vermont; Jane Addams and Dr. Emil G. Hirsch, of Chicago, made appeals for the ratification of the general arbitration treaties now pending in the United States senate.

Such ratification, advocates of peace declared, will mean the abolishment of implements of war in favor of the dignified councils of peaceful arbitration.

President Taft was praised for his advocacy of the treaties which, if ratified, it was said, would insure world peace and the United States was declared to be the first nation really to announce itself as in favor of arbitration of international differences. This was in the treaty between this country and England, the early part of the last century, to settle boundary disputes on the border line of Maine and Canada.

Mr. Fairbanks defined the treaties advocated by President Taft, and which the senate is asked to ratify, as broader in scope than any previously considered treaties.

"These treaties," said Mr. Fairbanks, "if ratified by the senate, will become a fixed feature of our international policy, and the policy of two of the other leading world powers."

DOUGLAS FIR OIL GOOD.

Students at University of Washington Make Discovery.

University of Washington, Seattle—Discoveries that will place Douglas fir oil on a par with that extracted from pine, will utilize the millions of feet of fir stumps, roots and tree limbs, representing one-half of the standing timber, and will provide for the manufacture of fine paper from the waste after the oil has been manufactured, have been made by students of the chemistry department here, who, under the direction of Dr. H. K. Benson, have been experimenting on 29,000 pounds of fir stumps received from Linden, Or.

"Our discovery of the oil of Douglas fir came as a result of studying the oils of four cords of wood sent through a wood distilling plant at Anacortes," said Dr. Benson. "Commercial turpentine of a high grade and the new oil were found by the students. When the tar obtained from this fir wood was refined it yielded three products—a very light oil, used in the manufacture of shingle stain; a heavier oil of tar, which, I believe, can be used for linseed oil, and a tar residue or pitch, which, we believe, can be used successfully as a protective paint for iron, steel and metal surfaces. Now, the resin in the wood renders it useless for white paper, and it is available only for the cheaper grades of colored paper, but by using our apparatus we can extract this resin.

"Other experiments deal with the value of the tannic acid of the fir bark and the oil distilled from fir needles."

Poindexter Makes Choice.

Washington, D. C.—Senator Poindexter came out in favor of the nomination of J. C. Lawrence, ex-Railroad commissioner, as the Republican candidate for governor of Washington, and expressed the opinion that Lawrence not only will be nominated, but elected.

Poindexter comes to Lawrence's support, he says, because Lawrence is "progressive" and has demonstrated, while railroad commissioner, that he is not subservient to the power of the railroads or other great interests.

"Haystack" Mast Failure.

Seattle—Naval officials have made the discovery that the "haystack" military masts recently installed on the vessels of the Pacific fleet vibrate too much to make the observations of the fire control officer in the top sufficiently accurate, the fault being placed on the height of the mast. It is now planned to shorten the new masts recently constructed on the armored cruiser Pennsylvania and workmen are preparing to take off ten feet.

New Mexico is State.

Washington, D. C.—New Mexico, the 47th state to enter the Union, ceased to be a territory at 1:35 p. m. Saturday, when President Taft signed the proclamation of statehood.

Four members of the president's cabinet, the two congressmen-elect from New Mexico, a dozen prominent citizens from the new state, several White House employes and three photographers witnessed the ceremony, which took place in the president's private office.

Tons of Tea Protested.

Washington, D. C.—Declaring 6,000,000 pounds of colored and adulterated tea which does not comply with treasury regulations, or with the pure food law, will be admitted and sold in this country within a few days unless the government acts quickly, Senator Root and a delegation from the New York Tea association have appealed to President Taft.

Dangerous Shells Sunk.

Brest, France—One of the cruisers attached to this port sailed out to sea and threw overboard into deep water 67 tons of melenite shells. The shells were condemned after the explosion on the battleship Liberte at Toulon last September, when 235 men were killed.

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You will find our company doing its full share in the work of municipal development. If we all pull together success is bound to be our reward. The success of each will redound to the success of all. Our company wants no revenue that it does not earn.

We believe that any public utility corporation can be conducted to the satisfaction of the public and the stockholders and be fair to both. No individual nor any corporation can be absolutely perfect. The best we can do is to make an earnest effort always in the right direction. We are anxious to investigate errors and apply correction.

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