

NEWSPAPER dispatches report that Clay county, Ga., owners of cotton have burned a number of bales in proof of their readiness to join in the destruction of cotton in amount equal to the estimated surplus of the crop. Referring to these reports, Martin B. Calvin, of Augusta, writing to the Atlanta Constitution, says: "There is in such a course a suggestion of demoralization. The situation which is today engaging the active attention of the civilized world is not new; it is not without precedent. In 1894 the crop was increased over that of 1893, 2,351,431 bales, aggregating 9,901,251 bales. The price went from 8 to 5 cents. Financial embarrassment was everywhere present. But the cotton producers extricated themselves from that dolorous condition. How? They reduced the acreage in 1895 by 3,503,142 acres, and marketed a crop of 7,161,094. This was a reduction of 2,740,157 bales. What was the result? Prices became normal and remunerative. The farmers are in much better condition in every respect than they were in 1894. Georgia farmers, particularly, are in excellent condition. On the floor of the convention at Shreveport I mentioned the fact that there were 200 country banks in Georgia and that \$3 of every \$4 in those banks belonged to farmers. The statement was received with a round of applause. I am not tendering advice, but submitting indisputable facts for the encouragement of the brethren. You can easily and safely hold your cotton."

THE "burned cotton" question is attracting wide-spread attention. Writing to the New York World, L. J. McIntyre of New York says: "Can the human mind conceive of a more atrocious act than that of the Georgia cotton farmers in deliberately burning up millions of bales of cotton so as to create a scarcity of that universal necessity? Today there are hundreds of thousands of people in this prosperous (?) country who are without sufficient clothing, and yet the cotton raisers conspire to destroy that which a bountiful nature has provided and for which so many are suffering. Is not that act a restraint of trade? Is it not a wilful and malicious destruction of property and contrary to all law, human and Divine? And yet it is the logical consequence of our present anarchical system of free competition, on a par with the adulteration of food and medicine and the restriction of the output of coal when thousands are nearly perishing with cold. If Southern farmers may thus destroy their crops, what is to prevent northern farmers from burning the contents of their granaries or a manufacturer from throwing the product of his mills into the sea? Well may one ask, 'Does civilization civilize?'"

THE preliminary figures on the production of gold and silver in 1904 presented to the director of the mint show large gains over the preceding year. The Washington correspondent for the Associated Press says: "Nearly every state of important yield has increased its output. The Colorado yield is about \$26,000,000 as compared with about \$22,500,000 in 1903 and its best record, \$28,800,000 in 1890. California has made the best output for many years, due to a good supply of water and the work of dredges. Nevada and Utah have made notable gains. South Dakota and Alaska have beaten their previous best records. The Appalachian region shows improvement. The Klondike shows a loss of about \$2,000,000. The total production of gold in the United States, \$84,551,300; silver, \$53,603,000."

MAJOR GEORGE O. SQUIRES of the United States Signal Corps has, according to the San Francisco correspondent for the New York World, reached by his series of experiments, the original conclusion that living vegetable organisms may be used as a part of a circuit for electrical oscillations, which in turn suggests the possibility of using living trees as substitutes for masts and towers in the operation of wireless telegraphy. To use a tree instead of a mast a balloon or a kite for wireless telegraphy it is only necessary, according to Maj. Squires, to drive two ordinary iron nails into the tree, one near its base and the other where the main branches of the tree divert from the trunk, and to connect the receiving apparatus between the two nails. With this simple arrangement the messages from a distant wireless station are read by means of a telephone.

REPRESENTATIVE BAKER, of New York, has introduced a resolution reciting that Traffic Manager Biddle of the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe, according to his testimony before the inter-

state commerce commission, permitted a secret rebate to the Colorado Fuel & Iron company; that after that admission Morton said that Biddle was exactly right. Baker wants to know, according to the resolution, why Morton was not guilty in allowing the rebate and why steps should not be taken to prosecute him for the act. Mr. Baker introduced another resolution asking the president if it is in keeping with his message of Dec. 6 denouncing the rebate system and also conducive to public interests that Mr. Morton be retained in the cabinet.

THE BAKER resolution is likely to attract considerable attention. It seems that the Atchison road, of which Mr. Biddle was traffic manager, charged the Colorado Fuel and Iron company \$1.10 per ton for carrying coal from Trinidad, Colo., to Deming, New Mexico. Other shippers were charged \$2.25 per ton. Referring to this transaction, C. A. Prouty of the interstate commerce commission said: "In all my experience with railway operations I never saw such barefaced disregard of the law as the Santa Fe railroad and the Colorado Fuel and Iron Company have manifested in this coal case. For years the railroad company has received less than its published rates from the Colorado Fuel and Iron Company, while its competitors have paid higher rates—but not always the published rates. The evidence in this case will be presented by the commission to the Attorney General."

REFERRING to this expose the New York Times says: "Mr. Paul Morton, now secretary of the navy in President Roosevelt's cabinet, was for six years after 1890 president of the Colorado Fuel and Coal company, afterward reorganized as the Colorado Fuel and Iron Company. He then became third vice president of the Atchison Company, and was in general charge of the traffic of the railroad. There appears to have been a close financial or personal relation between the coal company and the railroad company. When Secretary Morton was questioned concerning the granting of this forbidden rebate to the coal company of which he was formerly president by the railroad of which he was third vice president, he said: 'What Mr. Biddle did was exactly right, in my judgment, and if I had been in his place I should have done the same thing. I had nothing to do personally with the matter.'"

THE TIMES maintains that there must be some mistake about Mr. Morton's defense and justification of the unlawful secret rate. He declares that it is incredible that a cabinet member would knowingly, intentionally and publicly commend an act in violation of law. While expressing the hope that Mr. Morton will be able to set the matter right by some further statement the Times adds: "Mr. Morton was called into Mr. Roosevelt's cabinet in order that the president might have at hand a man of experience in railroad traffic, a subject which greatly interests him. It is understood that he has asked Secretary Morton to give a good deal of attention to this branch of administrative policy, in order that he may be ready to give advice when the President requires it. Of course a defender of illicit secret rebates would lack the moral qualification demanded of those who give counsel to the president of the United States."

GEORGE H. WILLIAMS, mayor of Portland, Ore., was indicted Jan. 4 by a Portland grand jury on the charge of malfeasance in office. It is charged that Mayor Williams refused to enforce the statutes regulating gambling. Mr. Williams has a national reputation. At one time he was chief justice of Oregon territory, another time he represented Oregon in the United States senate and he served as attorney general during the second term of President Grant.

THEODORE THOMAS, the famous orchestra leader, died of pneumonia at Chicago. He was 69 years of age. Mr. Thomas was born at Esens, Germany, Oct. 11, 1835. He was educated in music by his father and other New York musicians. He made his debut as a violinist in Germany at the age of 10. He came to the United States in 1845, and played for some years as a solo violinist in New York. After making a two years' tour of the south he returned to New York and played in concert and opera. He inaugurated orchestral concerts in 1864 and founded the Thomas

orchestra in 1867 and maintained it until 1888. In 1891 he moved to Chicago and had since been conductor of the Chicago orchestra. He was musical director of the World's Columbian exposition in 1893.

AFTER his brave fight General Stoessel will be required to undergo a court martial. The St. Petersburg correspondent for the Associated Press, under date of Jan. 5, says: "Few instances of the whole war have aroused more bitter criticism than the blunt announcement, officially issued by the general staff, that General Stoessel will have to come home and stand court martial for surrendering the fortress of Port Arthur. While this is an incident regulation and quite according to law it is bitterly resented on all sides that such an announcement should have been gratuitously made in the same bulletin containing General Stoessel's appeal to the emperor for 'lenient judgment on a garrison reduced to shadows who have done all that was possible for human beings to uphold the honor of Russia in the face of her enemies.' Street sales of the Russ have been suspended by official order, owing to the tone of its editorial articles since the fall of Port Arthur. The Narshadney has received first warning. The Novoe. Vremya, despite the example made by the suspension of the Russ yesterday, says: 'By all means, let us have a court martial and make it, if possible, severe. The cruel judge will, perhaps, deal leniently with those who have given their blood and lives for their country. Perhaps, also, the court will determine why a fortress known to be threatened with blockade is not supplied with necessary food and munitions to enable it to hold out. Perhaps such a court will bring to light the creeping, underground enemies of Russia who are infinitely more dangerous to the nation than the foe who fights in the open.'"

SOME interesting statistics concerning the defense of Port Arthur are presented by the Cnefu correspondent for the Cincinnati Enquirer. This correspondent says: "Originally the army numbered 35,000. Eleven thousand have been killed; 16,000 are wounded or sick, and 8,000 remained in the forts, of which, however, 2,000 were unable to fight. It was learned that when General Stoessel wrote to General Nogi regarding the surrender of the fortress, he said: 'I have 8,000 men in the forts, and 6,000 of these are able to fight. If you do not accept my proposal these men will die fighting, but it will cost you three times their number to kill them.' During the siege, 26.5 per cent of the garrison were put out of action. This remarkable fact was due to wounded men returning to the front. Cases have been recorded where men have gone to hospitals four times, returning convalescent to the forts. The number of officers killed was proportionately greater than in any battle known in history. This was due to the frequent lethargic condition of the men, who, without food and without sleep, moved only when ordered by their officers. The Russians estimate that the taking of the fortress has cost Japan \$100,000,000."

AFTER being unable to speak for fifteen years, Miss Emma Rogers of Indianapolis, suddenly recovered her voice Dec. 27. The Indianapolis correspondent for the Chicago Record-Herald tells the story in this way:

"Miss Rogers had an attack of the grip and became very nervous, with the result that she lost her voice. She learned the deaf-mute alphabet and for years communicated with members of the family in that way.

"The recovery of speech, according to the family, was the result of nervous shock. For several months a young man has been boarding at her father's house, becoming attached to the young woman. Yesterday another man, who had had trouble with the lover and had made threats against him, applied to Mr. Rogers for board. Mr. Rogers was inclined to take him as a boarder, but Miss Emma heard the conversation and protested violently by gestures and use of the sign language against his admission.

"The parent grew more determined, and, it is said, spoke disparagingly of the daughter's lover. This excited her greatly, and she suddenly began to protest with her voice. She was so much affected by the recovery of speech that she became ill, and a physician had to be called. An aunt of the young lady lost her voice several years ago, and six months later recovered it as suddenly as it had been lost."