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Continued on page eight.

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late in the afternoon they entered a mons today Premier Balfour said there was no such thing as a "pacific blockade," that a state of war actually existed with Venezuela and an intimation of the blockade would shortly be given to the powers.

Nothing definite had occurred with reference to arbitration proposals since his previous statement on the situation.

He could make no announcement as to whether the offer of arbitration from Venezuela would be accepted by Great Britain. The statement was made in reply to the desire of the liberal leader, Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, for information on the Venezuelan situation. After reiterating Lord Lansdowne's brief statement in the House of Lords yesterday, the premier continued:

"The blockade will be carried out by Great Britain and Germany along different portions of the coast and though the two fleets will have the same objects they will not act as one force. We never had any intention of landing troops in Venezuela or of occupying territory even temporarily. We do not think it desirable on either military or other grounds.

"All conditions governing such blockade have been carefully considered and will be published in due time for the information of the neutrals. The government is most anxious that these operations, the necessity for which we deeply regret, should be as little inconvenient to neutrals as they can possibly be made. No difference will be made between the vessels of various neutral powers. I think it is quite likely that the United States will think there cannot be such a thing as a "pacific blockade," and I, personally, take the same views. A blockade involves a state of war." The premier also said the operations were reluctantly undertaken, not to recover debts, but after a long and patient delay, to recover compensation for assaults on British subjects and the seizure of British vessels.

He believed that the Germans also had claims besides the financial ones. Mr. Healy, Irish nationalist, aske if the United States assented to a blockade which would exclude the United States vessels.

Mr. Balfour replied: "Neutrals are is a long ways off. You not consulted when you are in a state of war with a third party." "Is war declared?" asked Mr. Healy. The premier replied: "Does the honorable member suppose that without a state of war you can take vessels and have a blockade?"

Replying to further questions, Mr. Balfour said he had nothing to add re-

STRIKE COMMISSION

Scranton, Dec. 17 .- The miners today put on the witness stand before the coal strike commission the fathers of two of the little girls who had

testified on Monday that they worked all night in silk mills.

operators' attorneys, on cross-examination, tried to show that this was

not the case. Both men promised to take the girls out of the silk mills. After the witnesses left the stand, Chairman Gray asked for an explanation of the Pennsylvania Coal company scales, which is controlled by the Erie road, regarding the wages of men. The wage scales mentioned by the company were handed to the commistwice. sion some days ago and did not indicate that more than two persons

figured in the distribution. W. A. May, general manager of the Pennsylvania Coal company, was called to the witness stand and explained that because of the system in vogue in the company's mine it would be difficult to show in every case how many men shared in one pay.

DIVORCED HUSBAND MAY MARRY FORMER WIFE

Freehold, N. J., Dec. 17 .- J. Mc-Conville of Wisconsin, the divorced husband of Laura Biggar, and father of her young son, was a witness at the Bennett will conspiracy trial today. He testified in his wife's behalf, saying Bennett had told him he had made the actress his wife. McConville and his former wife were together at dinner tonight, seemed much devoted in each other's society, and a complete reconcilliation and another wedding is predicted. Other witnesses also testified that Bennett said the actress was his wife. The Bennett fortune has dwindled from millions to \$750,000 with \$450,000 debts.

A TERRIBLF EARTHQUAKE

Ashkabad, Russian Turkestan, Tuesday, Dec. 16 .- The town of Andijan. Ferghana government was totally destroyed by an earthquate today. The number of fatalities is not yet ascertained. The people are threatened with

Shocks were felt in New Marghelan and the surrounding villages, and a railway at Andijan was destroyed for

YOUNG WOMEN THUGS SANDBAG AND ROB

Baltimore, Dec. 18.-Two women highwaymen attacked Barney Abrahamson when he was going home early this morning and robbed him of all the The operators yesterday submitted money he had, \$30. One of the women wage statements showing that one of hit the victim a violent blow on the

these men and his laborer received \$1.- head with a sandbag, knocking him 681 and the other and his laborer were down. When in a dazed condition the paid \$1,400 last year. John Domko, man's pockets were turned inside out father of one of the girls, said that and his property taken. The women four and sometimes six men figured in then fied. Subsequently Cora Fuller the division of the \$1,400. The other and Mary E. Queen were arrested and miner claimed that four men divided identified as Abrahamson's assailants. the \$1681. Everett Warren, one of the The prisoners are young and good looking.

> NEW TRIAL GRANTED TO JAMES HOWARD

Frankfort, Ky., Dec. 17 .- The court of appeals has granted James Howard a new trial. Howard is under sentence of life imprisonment for the murder of Goebel and already has been tried

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passed without division. It carries \$139,897,000 and is the first of the regular appropriation bills to be passed by the senate at this session.

A number of minor bills were passed. including one to make Wilmington, N. C., a port through which merchandise may be imported for transportation without appraisement, and the senate then resumed consideration of the militia bill.

Mr. Bacon (Ga.) continued his remarks begun yesterday in opposition to the section of the bill regarding a reserve force of trained men.

The president today sent the following nominations to the senate: Navy-Brigadier general, Command-(Continued on page four.)

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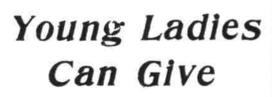
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