ELECTRIC COMPANY PAYS UP.—On Tuesday last a special telegram to the New York "Journal of Commerce" announced the triumph of the fire underwriters in a very remarkable action. The result is thus recorded:—

The seventeen suits brought against the Edison Electric Light Company by the residents of Upper St. Charles avenue for recovery of losses sustained in the fires of Feb. 26, 1899, have been compromised out of court and dismissed. The losses occurred from over-charged electric light wires. The suits aggregated $126,000, and were brought jointly by the policy-holders and the insurance companies. The basis of the compromise is not given.

The seventeen suits which were brought by the residents of St. Charles avenue and Calhoun street and in that vicinity in New Orleans several months ago to recover damages from the Edison Electric Light Company, for property destroyed by the disastrous fire which occurred on Sunday morning, February 26, 1899, have been compromised for cash. It is understood that the sum is practically the amount sued for by the property holders and the insurance companies, which was $126,000. The property holders did not bring suit against the Edison Company collectively, nor did they bring suit jointly with the many insurance companies that sought to recover. But three firms of lawyers represented all the complainants, the property holders and the insurance companies. These firms were Farrar, Jones & Kruttschnitt, Howe, Spencer & Cocke and Boatner & Dodds. From the first it was more than certain that the electric company would lose, and when the cases were finally set for a hearing on the 14th of this month, it seemed that the big electrical concern lost all heart and immediately began to talk compromise. The most conservative estimate of the loss at the time of the fire was $150,000, and the amounts ued for was only $126,000, so there was no ground for parley, even before a jury.

At the time of the fire every one was at a loss to understand its cause. The best explanation probably given was one published on the morning following the disaster. This explanation was the one given by the Edison experts, and was as follows: "A wire charged with about 2,000 volts of electricity, called a high potential wire, crossed the secondary or low potential wire," This explanation, coupled with two or three others of a similar nature, was amply sufficient for the occasion. At any rate, for some reason or other the electric wires became so intensely charged that they set fire to everything they touched. Fully twenty fires broke out in the many big residences in the most select residence portion of the city. The residences of Mr. Maurice Stern, J. B. Hobson and James Legendre were entirely destroyed. The home of Mr. Robert J. Wood was considerably damaged. Thirteen or fourteen others were slightly damaged. The principal insurance companies represented in the suits were the Sun Mutual, the Liverpool & London & Globe, the Transatlantic, the Scottish Union, the Royal of England, the Providence-Washington and the Home Insurance.

THE SILVER QUESTION.—The cause of 16-to-1 must indeed be dead when Gen. Warner says it is dead and should cut no figure in this year's campaign. Gen. Warner was an apostle of the mystic ratio when Mr. Bryan was still playing marbles, and his capacity for talking about free coinage and the woes inflicted upon the world by the gold standard were never surpassed by any man unless it were Senator Stewart of Nevada. The advocates of that ratio are quite right in assuming that it is the whole of the silver issue. To depart from that is to confess that Congress cannot make one article equal another in value, and the moment that is admitted the whole case of the free coinage men is gone. The issue was originally stated with exceptional clearness by Mr. Jefferson, who said that the ratio was a commercial question altogether. The silverites have insisted that it was not a commercial question at all; it was a legal question altogether. And now Gen. Warner, who was the colleague of the late Mr. Bland as a champion of the latter proposition, confesses that it has been completely defeated.—N. Y. "Bulletin."

WHAT WE WANT.—Events in South Africa have brought about a widespread interest in rifle practice, and what is wanted is some system of closed safety short ranges, such as are so much used on the Continent, so that the members of the rifle club can attend them. The firing point is usually closed in, and on the inside is a sloping bullet-proof pent house roof, which effectually prevents any accidental shot flying off into the street. High walls with cross screens at gradually increasing distances, in which are openings corresponding to the targets, provide for the safety of the neighborhood, while a further precaution is provided in the shape of sloping screens above the targets themselves. These could be self registering, or a covered way to a marker's butt might be easily made from the firing point. An illustration of such a daily range is given in a recent number of the "Daily Graphic." In France shooting at a mark forms one of the lessons taught at the primary schools, and there are in that country 1,800 shooting clubs, with a membership of 14,000. Switzerland has 3,300 rifle clubs, with nearly 20,000 members, out of a population of nearly 3,000,000.