

continuance of power to exact from consumers all that the traffic will bear. It is due Senator Cummins to say that he is the only member of the Senate who has made a serious attempt, during the life of the present Congress, to strike at trust privileges. He offered an amendment to the Underwood bill, while pending, to place all trust products on the free list. The adoption of that amendment would have destroyed all tariff privileges, at least. But it was voted down by a combination of Democrats and standpat Republicans. Now nothing more serious against the trusts is in prospect than a lot of suits under the Sherman law and enactment of additional laws to regulate, to prohibit, to restrict and to punish. Until the underlying privileges are seriously attacked, trusts will continue to flourish.

S. D.



Safety at Sea.

Must the world have another marine disaster, before Congress yields to the obvious? Press dispatches quote Mr. Webb Balsinger, Vice-President of the Carnegie Steel Company, as saying that on a recent trip of the *Lusitania*, when a fishing crew was to be rescued, "it took at least forty-five minutes to lower a boat from the deck, and fully half an hour more before it was thoroughly detached from the falls." Such an incident emphasizes the contention of Andrew Furuseth in the London Safety-at-sea conference that there should not only be life boats for all on board, but that each life boat should be manned by at least two able seamen—that is, two fully qualified sailors—who understand the language of the officers. Because the committee on life boats, of which Andrew Furuseth was a member, refused to accept this minimum, and on the contrary persisted in reporting "two boatmen who understand the language of an interpreter," he resigned. The report of the committee allows, and was intended to allow the employment of Lascars and Chinese crews under the command of European officers, whose commands must be transmitted through interpreters.



It is needless to speculate upon the safety of the passengers on such a manned ship in the presence of disaster. And even when the provisions are applied to the trans-Atlantic liners that have so grudgingly increased the number of life boats, but insist upon manning them with porters, cooks, stewards, and bell-boys, the consequences may be no less serious. The life boat provisions of the LaFollette Seamen's bill, which has already passed

the Senate, provides for the minimum requirement demanded by the seamen; and it should under no circumstances be surrendered. It does not require the employment of a great crew of idle seamen, as the shipowners pretend, but merely a higher grade of men in some branches of the service than are now employed. It will be no hardship to the employers, because, applying to all alike, rates can be advanced a trifle if necessary to cover a living wage for a long abused calling. The LaFollette bill provides safety for the traveling public, and decent conditions for the seamen. It should not require another Titanic disaster to secure its passage through the House.

S. C.



The Jingo's Political Economy.

Criticism of President Wilson's Mexican policy is based on the notion that protection of foreign investments is far more important than all efforts to reduce the tariff, abolish trusts, cut down the cost of living, raise wages, or bother with similar trifles at home.

S. D.



Pennsylvania's Opportunity.

Senator Boies Penrose of Pennsylvania in opening his campaign for re-election, refers to the greatness of his State as a reason why he should be returned. Pennsylvania's greatness has not heretofore been evident in the quality of its United States Senators. That is one particular in which the State has an enormous amount of room to grow. Nothing will show more clearly true greatness in the State than its rejection, at the next election, of Boies Penrose and other servants of the privileged interests which have so long controlled the State.

S. D.



Taxation in the District of Columbia.

A misstatement concerning the American Civic Association was made on page 74 of the Public. The Association was not formerly the League of American Municipalities, as was therein stated. A protest has come from Mr. Horace McFarland, its president, against the criticism of its opposition to Congressman Crisp's bill to put an end to the federal government's policy of bearing half the expense of local administration of the city of Washington. Mr. McFarland dwells largely on the fact that the people of Washington are denied self-government, but comment was made on that in the editorial to which he refers. He does not say whether or not the Association would withdraw

its objections if self-government with universal suffrage should be granted.



Mr. McFarland holds that putting an end to the half-and-half system would double the rent of "every poor man living in the District of Columbia." He is mistaken. If rents could be raised, Washington landlords would not wait for the tax system to be changed to do it. Not only would rents not be raised, the tendency of the change would be to reduce them. Much of the land of the District is being held out of use by speculators. Doubling of the tax on this unused land would force some of these speculators to let it be built upon, thus increasing housing accommodations and tending to lower rents. If along with the change should come assessment reforms recommended by the George sub-committee, the taxes of these speculators would be even more than doubled, to the relief of the small home owner.



Of course the federal government should contribute in proportion to the value of the land it is holding in the District. The value of its improvements should not be taxed, neither should the improvements of private individuals. Mr. McFarland says: "All that Washington needs is absolute justice." It won't get it as long as speculators are allowed to hold large tracts of valuable land out of use while thousands of its citizens are forced by high rents to herd in the slums. The Crisp bill will make it somewhat easier for the city to get justice. To get it entirely the city must have local self-government, with universal suffrage and taxation of land values as its sole revenue basis. The American Civic Association is obstructing justice to Washington. S. D.



Taxation in Cincinnati.

"None so blind as those that will not see," applies to the individuals still endeavoring to find out how to get all taxable personal property on the tax duplicate. Cincinnati's Tax Board seems to be made up of such men. They went to the trouble to call a meeting of that city's most prominent—and in their opinion, most wise—business men. There appeared, according to the Times-Star of January 30, bank presidents, corporation heads, representatives of commercial organizations, etc. There were plenty of suggestions offered, but none that had not long ago proven a failure, or that offered any ground for confidence

in its success. In this whole assemblage there does not seem to have been a single individual sufficiently up-to-date to know that the question has been quite satisfactorily solved in Houston, Texas. There personal property is equally assessed in the only way that it can be done. It is not assessed at all—a back number constitution to the contrary notwithstanding. Among those present was Mr. Charles P. Taft, who is financially interested in two Texas towns, Taft and Sinton. These towns are quite close to Corpus Christi, one of the cities preparing to follow Houston's lead. If Mr. Taft has not yet heard of the Houston system, he probably will when Corpus Christi begins attracting population from his own towns.



But Mr. Taft allowed it to be known that he has heard of some progressive work. He has heard of Herbert S. Bigelow and he took advantage of the tax discussion to pay unintentional tribute to the effectiveness of Mr. Bigelow's work. He bewailed the fact that attacks on a stolen street railway franchise has resulted in depressing the stock of the corporation holding it. So one result of Mr. Bigelow's work has clearly been a lessening of confidence in franchises acquired as was Cincinnati's fifty-year street railway franchise. That is surely a distant public gain to Cincinnati, even if it is true, as Mr. Taft further bewailed, that the agitators "have not a cent's worth of property in Cincinnati." S. D.



The Profits of Charity.

Fifteen million dollars is the estimated annual amount paid in Chicago for charity. The amount looks big. But if it were not paid it would become necessary to stop the annual appropriation by private individuals of about five times that amount of socially created rental values of Chicago land, to say nothing of the tribute levied on Chicago labor by monopolies, whose predatory power is based on outside privileges. Is the fifteen million dollars a poor investment? Surely not for those who want Privilege to continue. S. D.



An Explanation Due.

Some day there will be a Congressional investigation of the manner in which telegraphic news is furnished the daily papers. It too often happens that after a conscientious correspondent has sent in a correct report it appears in type in an unrecognizable form. For instance, at the recent