

of the crew were saved. Captain Johnson of the Monroe and all of his officers but one, were among the saved. At the time the collision took place the passengers were asleep in their berths. Reported interviews with the rescued indicate that discipline was not what it should have been. With the exception of the wireless operator and one or two seamen, none of the crew seemed prepared to act in such an emergency. The survivors were taken to Norfolk on board the Nantucket.



A Federal investigation of the disaster was commenced on January 31, by Captain Robert E. Tapley of the Steamship Inspection Service, but the testimony will not be made public for several days. In the meantime a suit for one million dollars damages was filed on January 31, in the United States District Court at Norfolk, by Captain Johnson of the Monroe against the Nantucket, on the alleged ground that the disaster was due to carelessness of the latter vessel.



Tax Reform Happenings.

A banquet of the New York Society to Lower Rents and Reduce Taxes on Homes on January 31 numbered among its attendants twenty-six members of the legislature. Among the speakers were City Chamberlain Bruere, representing Mayor Mitchel, Tenement House Commissioner John J. Murphy, Mrs. M. Simkovitch, representing various settlement societies, Walter L. Durack, president of the League of Savings and Loan Associations, Amos Pinchot, Abraham Gruber, Charles T. Root and Frederic C. Leubuscher. John J. Hopper, Register of New York County, presided. A letter was read from Governor Martin Glynn commending the object of the society to reduce taxes on improvements and increase them on land values at the rate of ten per cent a year. In addressing the assemblage President Leubuscher, of the society, referred to the number of unemployed in New York City estimated by the Mayor at 300,000. He called attention to the thousands of vacant lots in the city and vacant acres in the State, the opening of which to labor would solve the unemployed problem. Yet the only remedies actually suggested for unemployment were charity and palliatives. The tax books of the city showed a few years ago that eight families, estates and corporations own one-nineteenth of the land of Manhattan, and about one-twenty-fifth of the assessed land of Greater New York; twenty-three families, estates and corporations own one-ninth of the Bronx, fifty-seven families, estates and corporations own one-sixth of Richmond borough. The Astor estate owns 500 acres of unimproved Bronx land on which it has a large sign reading "Astor Estate. Not For Sale." During the past ten years land values in the city had increased at the

rate of \$150,000,000 a year. The ground rent of the city is about \$300,000,000 a year. If this \$300,000,000 would all be taken for public expenses, \$190,000,000 would suffice to carry on the government, leaving more than \$100,000,000 a year to build subways and perform similar work. The Astors and other large land owners would be obliged either to improve their lots or let others do so. The demand for labor would be so great that the city would have to call on the rest of the State, with the result that wages would rise and production could be more cheaply carried on. But the society is not revolutionary and only recommends a mild step in that direction. It only asks an increase of \$20,000,000 in taxes on land values, and does not ask it at once but only about four million a year for five years. Taxes on buildings will be accordingly reduced, thus encouraging instead of discouraging the erection of more buildings, and the employment of more men and women. With more buildings there will be greater competition for tenants and rents will be reduced, while more employment will cause increased wages. [See vol. xvi, p. 986, 1113.]



A State conference on taxation will be held at the Indiana State University at Bloomington on February 5 and 6. Governor Ralston will preside. Invitations to participate include all interested in the subject. A number of authorities on taxation of national fame will speak, including Lawson Purdy of the New York City Tax Department.



The New Voters of Chicago.

The women's organizations of Chicago have taken very active part in the preliminary campaign for the aldermanic elections on April 7, and for the preceding primaries. Their immediate object has been to get the women to register as voters on February 3. House-to-house canvasses covering many of the wards have been conducted, and numerous local meetings held. On Sunday afternoon, February 1, these efforts culminated in an enormous "Registration Rally." Four thousand persons filled the Auditorium, 2,500 attended overflow meetings and many hundreds more were turned away. Jane Addams presided, presenting fifteen speakers in two hours, among them being Catherine Waugh McCulloch, Ella Flagg Young, Margaret Haley, Sophonisba Breckinridge, Mrs. Joseph T. Bowen, Mrs. Raymond Robins, Mrs. Grace Wilbur Trout, Mrs. Harriet Taylor Treadwell and Mrs. George Bass. Father Ross, Catholic suffragist, Anthony Czarnecki, election commissioner, and Judge Joseph Uhlir were among the men who spoke. The affair was strictly non-partisan. All the aldermen of the city had been invited to be present, but only nine were reported as occupying seats on the platform. The