

tangible personal property in behalf of the Federation's bond-brokerage clientele.



Here are the circumstances. Woman Suffrage organizations are circulating petitions for a popular vote on woman suffrage under the "public policy" law. The number of signatures of registered voters needed exceeds 100,000, and it isn't easy to get that many for any purpose. But the brewery ring is evidently frightened, and has arranged with the Civic Federation as noted above. To secure the help of the Federation it agrees to the Federation's tricky taxation amendment. In return, the Civic Federation agrees to two proposals of no special interest to either party to this delectable combine. The object of both parties is to file a petition with three demands, before the woman suffragists get their 100,000 signatures. This would head off the suffragists, for the "public policy" law allows only three proposals to be voted on at an election.



In themselves, the three proposals of this combine relate to desirable reforms—taxation, direct primary, and short ballot. But democratic advocates of those reforms will be wise to refuse their signatures to the petition. The primary reform and the ballot reform are therein proposed only to head off the suffrage petition. The tax reform is a La Salle street "fake." It proposes an amendment to the State Constitution providing for "classification of property for purposes of taxation, with taxes uniform as to each class within the jurisdiction levying the same." Properly safeguarded, this would be a good amendment. Without safeguards, it would permit "jackpot" legislatures to exempt stocks and bonds, while more heavily taxing such property as vehicles and houses. And *that is the intention*. No such amendment ought to be tolerated by the people of Illinois until it can be safeguarded with the Initiative and Referendum in good workable form. No legislature of Illinois ought to be allowed to classify property for purposes of taxation until the people are given power, through the Initiative and Referendum, to prevent Big Business favoritism.



Catharine R. Gilbert.

In the death of Mrs. Catharine R. Gilbert of New York, The Public loses another long-time friend; the social movement that is identified with Henry George's memory another useful, weariless and unostentatious worker. To this

cause she was one of Thomas G. Sherman's converts,—he whose earlier perceptions of the far-reaching evil effects of our unscientific methods of taxation were confirmed and developed by Henry George's writings until he came into substantial accord with George's remedial philosophy. All the rest of her life their cause was also hers. It offered to her vision the solution of the mystery of the greatest part of human suffering,—the mystery of the stagnation of human progress in the midst of marvelous progress-serving achievements, the mystery of the blight upon human faith in Creative beneficence. Mrs. Gilbert died on the 14th. At the burial service in Grace Church, New York, on the 17th, Lawson Purdy made the address, concluding it with reading from the last chapter of "Progress and Poverty"—"The Problem of Individual Life." The Public is especially indebted to Mrs. Gilbert for inspiring those fine editorials by her sister, Mrs. Lizzie Nye Northrup*, which gave its earlier readers so much satisfaction; but her friendship and service through all these years were of a quality and constancy which admit of no enumeration.



THE NEGRO CONSCIOUSNESS AND DEMOCRACY.

The thirteenth annual session of the National Negro Business League, held under the presidency and chairmanship of Booker T. Washington, has just adjourned.

The meetings were held in Chicago in a Negro church building, before practically exclusively colored audiences, only a few months after a very different series of meetings had been held in the same city for the same purpose—the uplifting of the race. This other series of meetings was, of course, the convention of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People.

The one convention reminds the observer irresistibly of the other; the success of either movement depends upon the success of the other. The gospel preached by Mr. Washington to his colored business men will yield fruits to be sure, but bitter ones, if the gospel preached by Burghardt Du Bois and Oswald Garrison Villard is ignored by either Negroes or whites.



Lest this observation be taken as an adverse criticism of the National Negro Business League, let us hasten to indicate the admirable work it is doing.

*See The Public, volume vi, pages 276, 435, 564, 580.