

early in the year, but the Cunard line, which was then named as part of the combination, has not been secured. The negotiations were interrupted in March by the British government on the basis of its subsidies; but on the 18th of April the accomplishment of the plans was announced. In addition to the lines actually in this combination, The Hamburg-American and the North German Lloyd have entered into a harmonious agreement, while maintaining their independent management. The capitalization of the trust as announced on the 22d is to be \$60,000,000 preferred 6 per cent. stock, \$60,000,000 common stock, and \$50,000,000 4½ per cent. bonds. Its general plan is to be similar to that of the steel trust, each line managing its own internal affairs and the general policy of all being directed by a central corporation organized in New Jersey and owning a majority of the stock in each of the subsidiary corporations.

American politics, in so far as the subject is of general interest, centers for the moment in Ohio, where the Republican majority in the legislature is passing what are known as "ripper" bills. The object of these bills is to limit local self-government as much as possible, especially in Toledo, under Mayor Jones, and in Cleveland, under Mayor Johnson. By this legislation Mayor Jones has been deprived of his authority over the police department and had his mayoral functions in other respects curtailed. Prior to the passage of the "ripper" bill he said in an open letter to the people of Toledo:

The people of Toledo have indorsed by their votes, as plainly as they can, the management of the police department, but it is not satisfactory to the machine politicians and the elementary school men of politics, and finding themselves unable to subvert the will of the people at the ballot box it seems that they now seek to do so by resorting to the legislature. But their efforts will fail there as they have failed at the ballot box, for if this bill becomes a law the people will see that the machine and the men responsible for it are incompetent to serve them in a public capacity and are therefore retired to the narrower walks of private life.

Upon retiring from police management after the passage of the "ripper" law, Mayor Jones addressed the police force. Referring to this law he said:

The statement that the change was made to take the department out of

politics is such a cheap bit of fraud that it will not fool anyone. But good will come out of this assault on the people's rights. Home rule seems to be dethroned, but it is only for a time.

Similar hostility has been displayed toward Cleveland since Mayor Johnson has been in office. That city is organized on the federal plan (vol. iv., p. 579), with a mayor and a cabinet of his own selection, all having a voice but not a vote in the city council, and each member of the cabinet being the responsible head of a city executive department. This system has been in operation for ten years or more, but now it is attacked in the Supreme Court by the attorney general, Mr. Sheets, as unconstitutional. The case has been advanced by the court and unless postponed will be argued in a few days. Collateral to this court proceeding are several "ripper" bills in the legislature, none of them introduced by a member from Cleveland or even of Cuyahoga county, in which Cleveland is situated. One of these bills aims to abolish the local taxation machinery, which the mayor now controls, and to place Cleveland taxation under the control of a board to be appointed by the state board of equalization, which is composed of the attorney general and other state officials. Another would take the city parks out of the hands of the city administration and place them in the control of a special board to be appointed by county officials. On the 16th the Democratic caucus of the lower house gave notice to the Republicans that unless the various "ripper" bills were withdrawn the Democrats would vote against the appropriation bills. As a two-thirds vote is required to pass the latter, this threat, carried out, would defeat them. On the 17th the general appropriation bill was so defeated; and to this the Republicans responded by passing the Cleveland park board "ripper" bill, refusing by a strict party vote to insert a referendum clause referring the question to the people of Cleveland. At present the contest has developed no further.

NEWS NOTES.

—Frank R. Stockton, the novelist, author of "The Lady or the Tiger," died on the 20th at Washington at the age of 68 years.

—It is estimated that 500 persons were killed in Guatemala last week by earthquakes which shook the whole republic.

—An explosion of tons of dynamite in a military barracks at Managua, Nicaragua, on the 20th destroyed the building and every officer and soldier in it—from 100 to 200.

—The Liberal Democratic Party has been organized in New York and is to hold a state convention at Cooper Union, New York city, June 7. It opposes the Democratic leadership of ex-Gov. Hill.

—Clarence Moeller, well known in Chicago for many years in connection with the single-tax movement, died on the 22d of blood poisoning resulting from the lancing of a carbuncle. He was 45 years old.

—The City of Pittsburg, bound from Cincinnati to Memphis, with 100 passengers and a crew of 75 on board, burned to the water line in less than half an hour on the 20th near Cairo. From 60 to 70 lives were lost.

—The annual conference of the Women's National Single Tax league of the United States is to be held in New York city June 12, 13 and 14. The preliminary arrangements are in charge of the president, Mrs. John S. Crosby, 7 West 108th street, New York.

—An immense Altgeld memorial meeting was held in the Auditorium at Chicago on the 20th. George A. Schilling presided, and the other speakers were Capt. W. P. Black, Bishop Spalding, Clarence S. Darrow, Lee Meriwether, of St. Louis, and John J. Lentz, of Ohio.

—The application of the state of Washington for leave to bring suit originally in the Supreme Court of the United States to restrain the merger of the northwestern railroads (p. 27) was granted on the 21st, and process will be allowed returnable at the opening of the next term, in October.

—The suit brought by the state of Minnesota in her own courts to restrain the merger of the northwestern railroads (p. 27) was removed on the 18th by the railroads to the United States Circuit Court. A motion to remand it is to be made by the state, upon which it is expected to secure a decision on some technical questions of jurisdiction and thus free the case of all obstacles to a trial on its merits.

—The statistics of exports and imports of the United States for the nine months ending March 31, 1902, as given by the March treasury sheet, are as follows (M. standing for merchandise, G. for gold and S. for silver):

	Exports.	Imports.	Balance.
M ...	\$1,090,596,263	\$678,361,132	\$402,237,131 exp
G	42,664,049	44,646,724	881,675 imp
S	38,384,206	22,421,043	16,563,163 exp
	\$1,163,246,518	\$745,327,899	\$417,918,619

—The Supreme Court of Nebraska sustained on the 23d a mandamus proceeding requiring the city council of Omaha, acting as the board of tax equalization, to increase the tax