

bility for unnecessary loss of life was declared to be shared by Captain Lord of the neighboring steamer Californian, through his disregard of the distress signals from the sinking Titanic. The committee, through its chairman, Senator William Alden Smith, further declared that responsibility also rests upon the British Board of Trade, "to whose laxity of regulation and hasty inspection the world is largely indebted for the awful fatality." Punishment for failure of duty is left to the British government and public opinion. The committee has busied itself chiefly with discovering the factors which contributed to the disaster, and suggesting remedies. As enumerated by the press dispatches, the following were the causes of the disaster as noted in the report:

Before the Titanic departed on her maiden voyage there were not sufficient tests of boilers, bulkheads, equipment or signal devices.

Officers and crew were strangers to each other and not familiar with the ship's implements or tools, and no drill or station practice took place and no helpful discipline prevailed.

The speed of the Titanic was twenty-four and one-half miles an hour at time of the accident, although officers of the Titanic had been advised of the presence of icebergs by the steamships Baltic, Amerika and Californian.

Passengers were not advised of danger, although President Ismay of the White Star line, who was taking the vessel's maiden voyage, was informed. No general alarm was given, nor any organized system of safety undertaken.

Of the 1,324 passengers and 899 members of crew on board, there was room in the lifeboats for only 1,176 persons, and because of lack of orderly discipline the boats took off only 704 persons, twelve being rescued from the water.

A further point of criticism was that—officers of the White Star line "battled with the truth" after receiving information from their Montreal office on the Monday morning following the accident.

Senator Smith proposed in two bills a thorough regulation of navigation by steam vessels along lines taught by the disaster, proposed enacting into law a variety of rules and regulations, and embodied in the measures the numerous recommendations for safety made in the official report of the committee. One of the most important recommendations was for stricter inspection of vessels by the Federal steamboat inspection service and the meeting of all requirements of American navigation laws by every vessel clearing from an American port. [See current volume, pages 420, 443.]



The Senate passed, on the 28th, a joint resolution extending the thanks of Congress and appropriating \$1,000 for a medal to Captain Arthur H. Rostron of the steamer Carpathia for his effective rescue of such of the Titanic passengers

and crew as had escaped in boats, and also a vote of thanks to the Carpathia's crew.



An all-inclusive bill, to be denominated "The Ocean Safety Act of 1912," designed to cover all the navigation lessons drawn from the Titanic disaster, was introduced in the Senate on the 3d by Senator Knute Nelson of Minnesota, chairman of the Commerce Committee. The bill includes stringent regulations for better wireless equipment, continuously operated, on ocean and great lakes vessels carrying fifty or more persons, as provided in a bill which passed the House on the 3rd, and almost identical with a bill already passed by the Senate. This wireless section vests control of the apparatus in the Master of the vessel, and, to avoid the wireless communication being shut off by failure of the vessel's engines, requires a powerful auxiliary power supply that can communicate 100 miles at all times. The Nelson bill would recognize foreign steamship laws whenever they are as effective as American laws and regulations. The bill also would equip every passenger craft leaving an American port with sufficient lifeboats to accommodate everybody aboard, together with other safety equipment, and would create a commission of five persons to investigate here and abroad merchant marine construction. It would require rigid port examination and boat drills, define qualifications of seamen, penalize failure to assist any person in distress at sea, and make criminally liable any master, managing owner, steamship director or principal resident agent of a foreign steamship for sending from an American port a vessel so unseaworthy as to endanger life.



#### Work of the Ohio Constitutional Convention.

The Constitutional Convention of Ohio, which has been in session since January under the presidency of Herbert S. Bigelow, adjourned *sine die* on the 1st after fixing September 3, 1912, as the day for a popular vote on its work. Instead of proposing a new Constitution, the Convention submits to the people of Ohio several alterations of the present Constitution. They are embodied in 42 formal amendments. Among these amendments are the following:

Initiative and Referendum for both legislative and Constitutional measures—the Singletax being prohibited from the former but allowed for the latter.

Allowing three-quarters of a jury to return verdicts in civil cases.

Woman suffrage.

Permitting appointments of women to State institutions in which women or girls live.

Making decisions of intermediate courts final in all cases except those involving the death penalty, life sentence or a Constitutional question; and requiring a vote of five-sixths of the judges of the Supreme

Court to decide that any legislation is unconstitutional.

Eliminating the word "white" from the elective franchise clauses of the present Constitution.

Abolishing capital punishment.

Allowing legislation regulating hours of labor, fixing minimum wages, and providing for the comfort, health and general welfare of hired workers.

Establishing rights of home rule in cities, including ownership and operation of public utilities.

Prohibiting injunctions in industrial disputes except to protect physical property, and providing that in contempt proceedings growing out of labor disputes the defendant shall have a trial by jury.

Prohibiting contract labor in prisons and the sale of prison-made goods, products of prisoners' labor to be disposed of to State and municipal institutions only.

These amendments, to be voted on at the election of September 3rd next, are separately submitted so that any one or more of them may be defeated though the others be adopted. If adopted the Initiative and Referendum amendment will take effect October 1, 1912; the municipal home rule amendment November 15, 1912; the others January 1, 1913. A majority of the popular vote is required to adopt. [See current volume, page 441.]



#### Convention of Women Singletaxers.

The eleventh annual convention of the Women's National Singletax League, held at Washington, D. C., on the 27th, 28th and 29th of May, is reported in our column of Editorial Correspondence. Preceding the convention Miss Charlotte O. Schetter of New Jersey spoke at the People's Church on the 26th on "The Truth Shall Make Us Free." Miss Grace Isabel Colbron of New York spoke on the same evening at the Socialist local organization on "The New Morality." [See current volume, page 399.]



#### Land Value Taxation in Great Britain.

Under the auspices of the United Committees for the Taxation of Land Values and in conjunction with local associations of the Liberal party, petitions are in circulation in Great Britain in favor of the taxation of agricultural land values. The petitions are addressed to the Chancellor of the Exchequer. Of those in circulation in Wiltshire, the London Daily News of April 27 says that—

it is pointed out in the petition that the wage of the Wiltshire agricultural laborer is a miserable pittance, that his cottage is often damp, dismal, and even hard to obtain, that the land is monopolized and withheld from full use, and that the census of 1901 showed that during the previous ten years 22,000 people had migrated from the rural districts of the county. Finally the petitioners pray that such a tax should be levied on the value of all land, whether in town or country, as would compel its

full use, so that a demand for labor may be created that will ensure a just wage both to town and rural workers.

The object of these petitions, as stated by the News, is "to show that rural England, like rural Scotland, is preparing to support the industrial centers in their demand for a national land value tax."



#### The Negro Uprising in Cuba.

The status of the Cuban insurrection seems to be in doubt. Newspaper dispatches are contradictory as to its strength and its suppression. The United States War Department on the 3rd sold the Cuban government 5,000 rifles and 1,000,000 rounds of ammunition, which are to be used to arm the volunteers and the guards organized by plantation owners to protect their property against the insurrectos. [See current volume, page 514.]



The question as to whether the President of the United States has authority under the Platt amendment to intervene in Cuba if the Island government cannot maintain order, has been under discussion in the United States Senate. The Senate on the 25th adopted a resolution introduced by Senator Bacon of Georgia calling upon the committee on Cuban relations to report what legislation is necessary to enable intervention under the Platt amendment. Senator Bacon declared that the resolution was not designed particularly in reference to the present situation. He felt that there should be some official definitely clothed with the authority of determining the necessity of intervention. The Platt amendment, which governs the United States in its relations to Cuba, does not provide this in the opinion of the Senator. In the past this office has been arbitrarily assumed by the President because his was the only available decision to appeal to in a case of intervention. Senator Bacon wants the committee to recommend legislation which will remedy this. President Taft holds the view that the Executive, without further legislation by Congress, has ample authority for intervention in Cuba when necessary. He so advised the Cuban relations committee of the Senate on the 31st in connection with the Bacon resolution.



#### Progress with the Chinese Republic.

Slowly orderly conditions are working out in China. The most pressing need is the financial one, and the Great Powers are deliberating the conditions upon which money will be advanced. For some years China has been financed by a syndicate representing the banks of Great Britain, France, Germany and the United States. Since the establishment of the Republic Russia and