

Evidently, we have forgotten the starving children, the wrecked lives, slums, brothels, and prisons—fruit of the feudal land system—which only the Enactment of single tax can abolish.

Probably Mr. Towne will not contend that his vast scheme of single tax education, which he is now beginning to prepare to organize, with "facilities for all our best writers to be well and happily employed"—will feed any slum children this year or the next.

Evidently, we have forgotten the food famine that threatens the world, the need of the Allied armies and peoples for food Today—that "food will win the war!" and its lack will probably lose it, or at least cause it to end in a draw—an armed truce, leaving German junkerdom free to recoup itself and remain a menace to the world!

Probably Mr. Towne will not contend that his program for "an active single tax journalism at strategic points" will increase the food supply this year or the next.

Yet food is the world need—and twenty mil-

lion idle fertile acres in California can be opened to its production, twelve months of the year, by an overwhelming majority vote of an aroused and patriotic electorate, on the 5th of November of this year, provided enough money is forthcoming to enroll 100,000 signatures to secure the initiative demand a place on the ballot, and to keep the issue bold and frank before every voter.

The need of the hour is not education, of any sort—but Food—and the single tax campaign vigorously, universally waged in California at once will throw open millions of acres of good land months before election day. The speculators will rush to improve or release their holdings the moment the single tax campaign is known to be capably financed. The great vote of 260,332 in 1916 was gained at an average expense of Four Cents per vote!—and against single tax opposition, secret and open!

This year there is no single tax opposition. The logic of world events killed it. As announced in *The Great Adventure* weekly of February 9th:

California Battle Line Closes

With the election of Judge J. H. Ryckman to the executive committee of *The Great Adventure* in California, at the meeting of February 2d, there came to a happy ending (so far as human vision can foresee) that contentious book of "Doctrinal Differences" whose first chapter began with the birth of *The Great Adventure's* single (one) tax measure early in 1916.

Against great odds, poorly financed, openly opposed by former singletaxers, the one tax proposal won a place on the state ballot against the opposing home rule measure and at the election gained the surprising large vote of 260,332. In 1917 the Equity Tax League and its tax elimination bill took the place of home rule in opposition to *The Great Adventure* measure.

Came the nation's part in the world war and the Allies' need for food and supplies—singletaxers know the Source of them!

World events have closed the ranks and shown unmistakably the line of least resistance against the common enemy—Land Monopoly!

The fighting forces are united. On the 28th of January the Equity Tax League withdrew its initiative measure and vacated its offices. Its former president, H. W. McFarlane, has authorized G. J. Johnson and Judge Ryckman to announce that the Equity Tax proposal is out of the field and all efforts to place it on the ballot have been abandoned.

In formally re-joining *The Great Adventure*, Judge Ryckman assured the campaign committee that not only was all opposition withdrawn, but in light of recent world happenings he felt sure that the entire radical, labor, and liberal forces of California were now in spirit and would soon be in actual working harness behind the one political revolutionary demand of the hour—to Change the Land System!

It was Judge Ryckman who went to Atlantic City as the representative of the Equity Tax League and at the organization of the National *Great Adventure* for Single Tax opposed the California single tax amendment, urging endorsement of the Equity's tax elimination bill.

Personally the Judge made a good many friends in the Atlantic City convention and his witty remarks at the inevitable succeeding banquet (for even the militant single taxer eats—occasionally) are still pleasantly remembered. In returning to the single tax position he offered no apology for changing his mind—and if he had, would have been answered with Emerson's famous passage in *Self Reliance*: "A foolish consistency is the hobgoblin of little minds . . . Speak what you think now in hard words and tomorrow speak what tomorrow thinks in hard words again, tho it contradict everything you said today . . ."

The Great Adventure owns no patent on single tax. In California any group or person may initiate a constitutional amendment, send it to the attorney-general for a ballot title, print it in legal form, and go out and ask the voters to sign it. If eight per cent of the qualified electors sign, the secretary of state must place the issue on the ballot at the next election.

The Great Adventure executive council (originating in the Los Angeles Single Tax League, the largest single tax body in the state) put forward the single tax amendment—because no other group or individual did or would. Similarly, the management of the 1916 campaign, very largely, fell to the hands of those, not most competent, but whose feeling in the matter and their positions in life enabled them to give themselves most unreservedly to

the work. Not one of them cared for "leadership" or the limelight, or any of the things prized so highly by the publicists and politicians, and none of them was so situated that they had to have a salary for their work. These (from sheer force of circumstances—because no one else did or would do that which they deemed most essential) were: Mrs. Lona Ingham Robinson, president of the Los Angeles League, long known in the midwest as a single-taxer, a regular contributor to the Fels Fund,

formerly associate editor of *The Public*, a woman of sufficient means and of life-long devotion to the human cause; Herman Kuehn, thru whose early espousal of *The Great Adventure* in his own publication "Instead of a Magazine" came its second substantial subscription of \$1000 from Henry Bool of England (Otto Werner of Ocean Park, Cal., having supplied the first); and your unworthy servant, Luke North, for the last dozen years or more editor and owner of *Everyman*.

Obvious Public Need for Open Earth

Most intimately and helpfully associated with these were Edgcomb Pinchon (at different intervals) writer and lecturer, co-author with the late L. Gutierrez de Lara of Mexico and the Mexican People, and continuously down to the present moment, Thomas W. Williams until recently state secretary of the Socialist Party.

Not less than three hundred other valued, active, zealous workers in all parts of the state, were equally responsible for the surprisingly large vote. It would be invidious to name one and not all. But those already named were—because no one else was so situated that he could be—most largely responsible for the conduct of the campaign. And of these the first three must be credited with all its errors and shortcomings, because they alone were able to give all their time and attention to the work.

However faulty on our part was the 1916 campaign it proved our faith in the people—that they would embrace a full measure of justice—vote for a change in the land system—when the same was frankly presented to them—that the full measure of single tax could be enacted!

For the "success" of that election we claimed no uncton. We did not call it successful, but many other singletaxers did. Dan Kiefer wrote that we had done more for single tax than all the other political effort and agitation combined since the days of the Anti Poverty Crusade—or words to some such effect, as equally complimentary—and it is true that the California campaign did wake up both plutocracy and the single tax world, polled a larger vote than all the other votes cast for single tax everywhere in the United States; resulted in the birth of the first national militant body for immediate political action to secure the full single tax, with an alive membership in thirty states and the sympathy and endorsement of ninety-seven per cent of the singletaxers of this country and Canada.

Yet it did not feed a single child, or lessen

human misery by a hairsbreadth, or abolish one title to idle land, or begin to end the cause of war, or increase the food supply—and in that respect, for which alone it had enlisted our energies, it was a Failure—another lost battle against Privilege.

To "achieve something for Single Tax" was no part of our purpose. Single Tax is not human—it is like a chisel to a stone-cutter or a saw to a carpenter. We tried to apply it to human society—and lost—because we did not gain the interest and the money of that three per cent of the single tax world which (as everywhere in life) controls the means of life. That was our failure. Something lacked in us that we could not inspire confidence in the rich men and women of the single tax world who would gladly give of their abundance to exemplify single tax somewhere, so that the whole world might quickly learn the true way of social development and human suffering be stayed.

It is fair to say that only the poor and those of limited means contributed to the 1916 campaign. Two men gave practically their last thousand dollars. Three or four of the rich gave a few hundred each. The rest of the totally inadequate ten thousand dollar campaign fund came from a thousand different sources and included what might be classed as *Everyman* receipts.

Yet there are men and women high in the single tax world with great fortunes at their command, and not a few moderately wealthy ones, who have given generously for the theoretical propagation of single tax. It seems inconceivable that they would not give even more generously for its Practical Application—were they assured the money would be wisely spent and the campaign properly managed.

Such assurance can be easily given. Let them send a man of their own choice out here—or select one already here, anyone suitable to them—to manage the campaign and disburse every dollar of their contributions.