

# KING HUNGER'S THRONE TOTTERS

**T**HE Great Adventure in California operates under charter of "The National Great Adventure for Single Tax," whose sole and simple declaration of principle reads: "For immediate political action to secure at once the primary condition of human freedom: that the land and its resources shall be open to all on equal terms, by taking ground rent for public purposes, thru the single tax on land values."

There is nothing uncertain or ambiguous about that. It is as clear-cut and straightforward as the English tongue could make it—as the single-hearted purpose of its originators and workers could well be expressed in words.

The Great Adventure in California is no less clear, definite, explicit, in word and deed. It stands, works, moves!—exists—for the single purpose of opening the land to the people by enacting a single tax amendment to the state constitution. This proposed amendment reads:

*The People of the State of California do enact as follows:*

A new section to be known as Section 15 is hereby added to Article XIII of the Constitution, to read as follows:

On and after January 1, 1919, all public revenues, state, county, municipal and district, shall be raised by taxation of the value of land irrespective of improvements thereon; provided, that war veteran, college and church exemptions in Sections 14, 14½ and 1a, Article XIII of the Constitution, are not affected hereby.

The intent of this Single Tax amendment is to prevent the holding of land out of use for speculation and to apply the land values which the community creates to community purposes.

All constitutional provisions and laws in conflict herewith are hereby repealed.

At no time since its inception (in the spring of 1915) has The Great Adventure in California advocated anything but this amendment, or had any other purpose than its immediate enactment—not, however, as an end in itself, but as merely the beginning, the First Necessary Step, of an orderly and harmonious economic revolution that should change the base of civilization from its present class, national, and individual antagonisms to universal fellowship and cooperation.

In more specific and immediate terms, this amendment is advocated as the means of changing the land system, of denying the "right" or power of anyone to hold land and resources idle; to open the earth and its raw materials to All on equal terms; to abolish privilege at its source—to the end that hunger, idleness, poverty and the fear of it should be banished, industrial slavery, military warfare, and every other form of human exploitation ended, and the better nature of man left free to assert itself.

Never for a moment has there been absent

from the intense purpose of The Great Adventure, the starving slum babes, the toiling children, the sweatshop, the prison tortures, the battle trenches, the brothels, disemployments, and degradations of human beings—to end all these and Quickly! and recast society without them.

The hour that The Great Adventure forgets this objective—may its hand be palsied, its sword pierce its own heart! That it should not be forgotten, the engrossing mechanisms of intricate organization have been eschewed, political forms and methods avoided. These, in the present state of society, are for personal uses; for salaries, ambitions, offices, honors—and lead to internal dissensions. The Great Adventure has nothing to offer anyone but a chance to Give, himself or his means, for a virile movement to change the land system.

The value of organization as a means of attaining revolutionary ends is greatly overrated. Some orderly formation is necessary, of course—the spirit can only express itself thru a tangible form; but the moment the form becomes rigid and cumbersome the spirit is unable to function thru it. We are told that great power lies in organization. Power for what? For coercion, of course. Organization is the strength of military movements, political parties, and industrial profiteering—in which the prizes are for the generals, the candidates, the owners, and the aim is conquest, offices, dividends. If the economic revolution is to be accomplished by bullets—

Why, not even then, as events in Russia show, is a powerful, coercive organization necessary or advisable. We are told that efficiency results from organization—but efficiency in what? In gaining profit, political offices, and military battles. But in none of these is the economic revolution interested. Its heart is centered on feeding human beings—All of them!—and in ending the power of anyone to exploit and enslave them.

Only power wins in this world. Right or wrong, it wins—but what is power? In the last analysis it is intelligence, or rather the intelligent employment of force. The highest intelligence in this respect lies in selecting and using the most powerful force best adapted to accomplish the end sought.

A pile driver is the best force for sinking underpinning to bedrock. The sword is a fitting instrument for establishing and holding the dominance of an aristocracy or a plutocracy over the people. To propagate a new faith, theologic or political, preaching and teaching

are the most effective forces—greatly heightened by persecution and martyrdom.

To win the economic revolution and stop the dominance of man over man, leaving the peoples free to evolve social institutions in harmony with environment and racial characteristics, requires the intelligent employment of some other force than the machine, the sword, or the written and spoken formula. By all these men are coerced and driven; by these they may not gain freedom from Hunger.

King Hunger is the tyrant of tyrants, ruling, despoiling the lives, of all in his kingdom, whether rich or poor. None evade his cruelties, for if one escape penury, the fear of it will flay him. All is ashes at last, one way or another, in his broad domain—now called Christendom!

Only the greatest of all human forces, raised to its highest power, will unseat King Hunger—for he is not a flesh and blood being, but a monstrous creation of human superstition. He is the embodiment of a very crude idea that some men are made of finer clay than others and therefore have the "right" to live in idleness on the toil of others.

This idea is not very strong in the world to-

day. It remains only among the most ignorant and most arrogant—a negligible quantity as to numbers and influence. But the many institutions that have grown out of it are rigid and sacrosanct even to some of the radicals. Thus to suggest that human society might be conducted without money, provided those who composed that society preferred that method of life (as in southern Mexico under the leadership of Emiliano Zapata, as related in these pages last month) raises a storm of protest from seven or four singletaxers who seem to reason that single tax is the goal of progress.

Gadzooks! brethren, it is only the beginning. Since the feudal system of land tenure gained such ascendancy as to obliterate the "commons" of Europe and the accessible free land of America we have been de-voluting. To break that ancient system and make unused land as free as air and sunshine (or words to some similar effect) will only be to release the Prisoner from his dungeon. He will be dazed by the sunlight. He will rub his eyes in amazement at the breadth and brilliance of the horizon—and maybe dash off at some tangent entirely unforeseen at present.

## The Inopportunist Reappears

The limits of attainment have not yet been prescribed on a printed page, and of all men I have read Henry George was least inclined to prescribe them. What he sought was a tangible, economic freedom—the overthrow of King Hunger. As to what might lie beyond that he was the least dogmatic of all the great economists—and the most truly religious. Among many things he wrote this:

Give labor a free field and its full earnings; take for the benefit of the whole community that fund which the growth of the community creates, and want and the fear of want will be gone. The springs of production will be set free, and the enormous increase of wealth will give the poorest ample comfort. Men would no more worry about finding employment than they worry about finding air to breathe; they need have no more care about physical necessities than do the lilies of the field.

I call the gods to witness that the lilies of the field have no money, nor any need for a medium of exchange. But you who want money, I doubt not that you will have your way in these United States for several weeks yet—nor is there anything in The Great Adventure demand to say you nay. Read its legal, technical proposal—for a single tax on land values and no other tax. In essence this has never varied. It says nothing about the circulating medium, one way or another. Money is an issue of secondary importance that will settle itself on a free earth, or be ad-

judicated by a free citizenry far more intelligently than we denizens of the feudal system could deal with it. On a free earth the monetary problem will take on quite different aspects, no doubt. We need not worry about it now, until the land is free—but what unconscionable tyranny it is that presumes to forbid anyone the expression of his heart's desire that society might reach such a state of amity as to make money negligible.

Herman Kuehn stated the case succinctly in a recent letter to J. R. Hermann, when he wrote the following:

I see you refer to some of the contents of Everyman as possibly inciting hostility. We are urging the enactment of a constitutional amendment. It speaks for itself. We have no other object than to write this amendment in the constitution of California. We expect the help of every person who is in sympathy with that purpose. We are not claiming the endorsement of any one for any of the personal views of the editorial staff of Everyman. If any person wants to oppose our effort to make single tax the law of California we are not interested in his reasons for his opposition and I suspect you feel the same as I do about that. The philosophical views entertained by any person have no bearing whatsoever on the main issue and I suspect that no one will withhold support from our movement on any other ground than that he does not want single tax to win in November 1918.

Or is this only the reappearance, in a new guise, of the Inopportunist? We have heard a good deal of the opportunist, who lays in wait for his chance and will not strike until the