

SHOVELS, TEASPOONS AND TRAITORS

LISTEN to a fable, children: There was once a Manure Pile, breeding Flies. There were statesmen, politicians, philanthropists, even a few captains who called themselves radicals—making Fly Traps!

One suggested Quicklime on the Manure Pile. He was stoned by the statesmen. Reform politicians searched for a Slowlime.

It occurred to one to attack the Manure Pile with a Shovel. Seventeen Life-Long Singletaxers rushed out to wrest the Shovel from him and place a Teaspoon in his hand!

The Shoveler paid no attention to the Seventeen Singletaxers and dug deep into the Manure Pile. This angered the Singletaxers, who owned a patent on a Slowlime formula that was guaranteed to eat away the filth in not less than 1000 years without disturbing in the least the Fly Trap industry—and they would have coerced the Shoveler to inactivity, but for the Anarchist Policeman on the street corner.

"We must have Law and Order here," he said. "I don't approve his dirty work; no Respectable Person would do it, but this is a Free Countree, and you mustn't physically hinder him without an order of the court."

"But this is also a Democratic Countree," said the Seventeen, "and he's depreciating our Slowlime stock. It is not Fair!"

The Shoveler took no notice. Soon a few Intelligent Persons whose deep studies had gained them the profound knowledge that flies breed in moist filth, came with rakes and helped to spread out the Manure so the sun could cure it.

The Seventeen Singletaxers were heart-broken. Sobbingly they appealed to the busy Shoveler, "It is not Fair!"

The kind-hearted Policeman was deeply affected. "No, it is not Fair," he sobbed.

A few Idlers straggled along, and loitered. They knew nothing about the matter, how Flies originated or how they could be abolished, but they had soft hearts and tender ears for Words. Soon they were sobbing, too—"It's not Fair!"

The tears flowed, covering the ground with moisture that kept the spread Manure alive.

"O, Hell!" said the Shoveler in disgust, as he paused to wipe the sweat.

"Don't you want to be Fair?" wept the Seventeen Singletaxers.

"No, I don't want to be Fair—damn all that rot! I want to clean out this Manure Pile. Get away, if you can't help. Shoo! You're worse than the Flies."

"O! O! he doesn't want to be Fair!" gasped the Seventeen as they scampered off.

Next day they consulted a Nice Fat Office Holder who receives a Beautiful Salary for shooing Flies from the homes of the rich.

"Try him on Harmony," said the Fat One. "He'll fall for some line of Talk—they all do. Ask him to Get Together with you and make Harmony. Everybody wants Harmony—it's the stock-in-trade of the kingdom. We feed it to soldiers and criminals; it's the chief ingredient of powder for machine guns. He'll quit for Harmony's sake."

The Shoveler went back to the Shoveler, but he only grunted as he worked:

"There's no Harmony with these Flies buzzing and stinging. Get away. This isn't a symphony

concert, but a man's job to rid the neighborhood of Flies."

Quite a number of Helpers were now on the job and a big hole was being made in the Manure Pile.

The Seventeen Singletaxers sought the counsel of the Most Prominent person in Fly Trap City, who was named Palaver and kept an elegant pawnshop on Fairminded Street over which was a large sign "The Golden Rule."

"You must induce him to drop that Shovel and use a Teaspoon," said Mr. Palaver. "Promise him a silver spoon, or a gold one—any kind of a spoon he wants, so long as it is chosen at a Democratic meeting. Play up the Get Together and the Democracy stunt good and strong"—

"But he's too stubborn," said the Seventeen out of the fullness of experience. "He won't listen to Reason, but keeps on digging."

"Why—happy thought!—then he's an Autocrat. Go shout that at him. It will scare off some of the Helpers, anyway."

It did frighten away a few of the Helpers, particularly those with pledges in the Palaver pawnshop.

But now the People began to understand about the origin of Flies and how to stop their breeding. They soon came in crowds and worked like Men. At last accounts the Manure Pile was rapidly fading, the Fly Trap industry was waning, and the market quotations in the Morning Bunc listed Slowlime stock at 101 cents below par.

Is it not an interesting fable, children? But gather closer and let me whisper, "It is also true; it is current history, draped as diaphanously as a Newport belle."

The first obstacle to gaining the earth for the people is a hitherto-conspicuous Three Per Cent of Singletaxers—whose interests are bound up in a brand of Slowlime.

In the summer of 1915 the Single Tax Leagues of Los Angeles, San Diego, San Francisco, Stockton, backed by the Radicalism of the state, declared for the Immediate restoration of the earth to the people and with unparalleled temerity set about the enactment of its demand.

This was the birth of The Great Adventure which had been conceived in the pages of Everyman (issue of Jan.-Feb. 1915) not as a Single Tax movement, not in any doctrinaire way, but as a Base of Union upon which to focus the entire radical strength and Move it to the Immediate accomplishment of a definite fundamental issue—not by educating the people in the theories and subtleties of a taxation system, but by a direct appeal to their Sympathy and Manhood.

Its demand was, and is, variously stated: That land and resources not in Use shall be free and open to whoever will use them; that the private ownership of land, or its monopoly holding, shall cease; that the raw products of

earth, its coal, iron, oil, timber, etc., shall be public property in which all shall share on equal terms; that ground rent, or the rental values of land, shall be paid into the public treasuries instead of private pockets. State it otherwise, if you wish; there is to be no quarrel over phrasing. It is the real tangible earth that is demanded, all that is by nature alone placed on or under it, and all its site or population values. There shall be no Land Lord and monopoly shall be destroyed at its root. The cause of war, which is Monopoly and Privilege, shall be abolished.

We shall approach life from an entirely different angle, with different feeling and motive, that of the Golden Rule. We shall no longer grab-as-grab-can regardless of the weak and the unborn, but each take from nature's storehouse on the rule of fair play with due consideration for every member of the human family.

This is the demand of the Great Adventure—for a new social base—Immediately!

It is agreed that this can be harmoniously accomplished and maintained only in one way, by the application of a Single Tax on land values pushed to its logical conclusion of absorbing all rent. Of course, to apply the Single Tax means to abolish all other taxes—else words have no meaning at all; else the purpose of Single Tax can never be accomplished.

Students of sociology, all who have examined carefully and fearlessly social causes and relations, are agreed that the Single Tax, faithfully administered with that end firmly in view, will speedily reduce the tenure of land to Use and distribute its values and resources fairly.

How far this will result in a fair and humane distribution of the manufactured products, the finished food and clothing, the money, etc., remains to be seen. We needn't worry much about that yet. When we take the Sources of wealth we will probably have sense enough—and the Manhood!—to control the wealth itself in a satisfactory manner.

We need not be so anxious about the great accumulations of the billionaires. They haven't so much tangible property—scarcely any that is not scrap-heaped every ten years and must be renewed from the Source. Their enormous wealth is mainly in paper securities that are mortgages on labor thru titles to the earth.

The inherent value, compelling power, of these mortgages and titles will be destroyed by the One Tax on land values—or its enactment will be futile.

On a free earth Wall street will have no power to exact high prices, to compel low wages, to starve or disemploy, to take rent. When the People own the Source they will be

able to control all that flows from it, but while the Source remains in private hands all efforts to control the flow are but wasted energy.

If the Single Tax is not administered with the definite, determined purpose of accomplishing this result it will be futile—and so would any human device. The world is ruled by Desire, usually by the desire of the few impressed on the many—negatively the desire of the few becomes the desire, or the acquiescence, of the many. Occasionally the Many awake and enforce Their Desire, marking an epoch in history. Russia is marking one now.

These epochs are marked when the natural leaders of the people, the radicals of the time, find a base of union and, at least for the moment, cease bewildering the crowd with contradictory counsel. The Base of Union is here—the Land Issue! Not a radical of any school will care to dissent or withhold his active support from the land issue when it becomes an Immediate movement of the people to take possession of the Source of their supplies.

But what a fatuous error it is to confuse the actual radicals who are ready Now to act boldly and frankly, with those pseudo, academic, timid, self-styled, radicals whose only sign of movement is to hinder Action!

Is it to be thought, indeed, that there is such confusion in anyone's mind? or is it that those who seem to hesitate between the Shovel legions or the Teaspoon Seventeen are trying to "salve their consciences," "looking for a soft place to fall," or "trying to carry water on both shoulders"? They catch at such trival reasons, anything in the guise of a reason seems enough; any Word or catch-phrase they cling to, any untruth or half-truth flung about, any silly personal accusation (true or false, as tho the failings or virtues of a person had anything to do with the Land Issue) any technical or legal quibble raised by a paid attorney—(even children know that lawyers disagree).

To be more explicit, since it seems impossible utterly to ignore these superficial things, since even the Land for the People plea must be interlarded with these sectarian quibbles, since there may be an honest uninformed hesitant—

For "Shovel" read The Great Adventure's unequivocal California demand for a Free Earth—at once—written in the plainest, most direct and unmistakable, the frankest and tersest language, without an extra word or syllable upon which to hang a cavil: "All public revenues shall be raised by taxation of the value of land irrespective of improvements thereon"—followed by this equally clear expression of its purpose, "The intent is to prevent the holding

has recently come to light a whole township was betrayed at this incorporated office into voting against No. 5.

But this is not all. A few months prior, these same five Singletax Incorporators and John J. Abramson and Ralph E. Chadwick, with the connivance of Clarence E. Todd and E. P. E. Troy of San Francisco, formed the Southern California League for Home Rule in Taxation, all but Hubbard still retaining their membership in the Los Angeles Single Tax League which was then adopting The Great Adventure measure. This new Home

Rule organization of seven or eleven members printed an imposing letterhead and issued a statement in which No. 5 was denounced in the name of Single Tax, because (quoting): "I would deprive municipalities of revenues collected from public utilities!"

As the California constitution taxes public utilities only for state revenue, as such tax is known to be a swindle, and as Single tax cannot be enacted while it lasts, this was a stupid sophistry scarcely worth its price to plutocracy—yet it helped to create the cloud of quibbles and doubt by which No. 5 was beaten.

The "Singletax" Allies of General Otis

October 22, 1916, near the close of the campaign, this document was published in the Los Angeles Times under this heading:

SINGLE-TAX BODY TURNS

ON VICIOUS AMENDMENT

Confiscatory Initiative Measure on November Ballot Is too Much for Home Rule League That Worked for Two Previous Proposals of The Same Purported Tenor—Destructive Features Exposed!

The article was two columns long, spoke an untruth or vicious half-truth in every paragraph, and was signed by David Woodhead as president, and P. T. Anderson, secretary of the Southern California League for Home Rule in Taxation. Appended were the names, as officers and "advisory committee," of R. E. Chadwick, Helen Murphy—and a score of well known men and women more or less closely allied with Single Tax and kindred work, among them, for instance, Thomas Barker, secretary of the Building Trades Council. Of course Barker promptly repudiated the use of his name in any such connection, and so did most of the others.

But these repudiations were not published in the Times—that was not part of the program. Again word went over the state that Singletaxers repudiated the Single Tax amendment.

Concerning this Times publication, on October 30, 1916, Daniel Kiefer wrote to Clarence E. Todd, the state Home Rule secretary at San Francisco, as follows:

Contributing Singletaxers of the United States should be assured that their funds will never go to anyone who cannot show that he or she is not under suspicion of connection with opposition to a movement (The Great Adventure) that had the approval of ninety-nine and nine-tenths percent of the Singletaxers of the United States. I think it incumbent on you to denounce such unspeakable knavery.

When the roll is called, whether The Great Adventure win or lose, the traitors in California should be exposed and drummed out.

But the Eggleston-Todd-Troy "Singletaxers" were not in the business of exposing and drumming out their associates. There was other similar work to be done, and such workers were few. The matter was dropped, hushed, almost forgotten. The workers of The Great Adventure had no feeling to pursue the traitors, expose the "Singletax" infamy to the world. They contented themselves, after election, with refusing to confer on political action with those known to have worked with plutocracy against No. 5.

Yes, it was Treachery that defeated No. 5. Singletax money, dollars collected from Singletaxers, by Singletaxers, for Singletax, used by Singletaxers, in the name of Singletax, that defeated the first Single Tax measure ever proposed in the United States that ever stood the slightest chance of enactment.

It cannot be said that these were the acts of sincere but mistaken men who honestly believed that Amendment No. 5 was not a genuine Single Tax proposal which if voted into the constitution and administered by those in sympathy with its clear intent would not speedily end land monopoly in California.

They claimed that, they published it in the plutocratic press, but their plutocratic allies were more honest, openly declaring that if No. 5 passed it would destroy land values. Especially the banks and the real estate sharks flooded the state with such declarations.

If No. 5 was not a Single Tax bill, if it would not destroy speculative land values, if it would not stand the strain of the courts—then why was it so bitterly fought by united plutocracy? Why did the plutocratic press even refuse to publish paid-in-advance advertisements of it?

The Los Angeles Times declared it to be the "Greatest Menace to labor and industry as well as to all property interests of the state." By its enemies the crowd knew it to be a Single Tax bill—and honest Singletaxers in doubt