

Without hate or contempt for the men themselves their names are revealed—reluctantly; but who will care to condone their acts? Only one who can read the secret workings of the mind and weigh the pressure of known and hidden circumstances may sit in judgment on a fellow creature—but his public conduct we do and must appraise. We do not judge a leper, but we isolate him.

No man knows whether the one who falls or the one who stands firm has fought the bravest fight, overcome the most—but all men everywhere shun the traitor. The conduct of these

was traitorous. Morally they are lepers to be herded with their kind. They sold out the People of California. Harrison Gray Otis, the most heartily detested man in this or perhaps any other state, was in comparison almost a friend. At least he was an open foe; he fought out in the daylight. These Singletaxers stabbed in the back from a dark alley. They went about the state as Singletaxers and in the name of Singletax, under the cloak of Singletax, most effectively helped the banks, land sharks, and trusts defeat the first Single Tax measure for which the people ever had a chance to vote!

Who Didn't Know It Was Loaded

And these are the men (and one woman) with whom the Three Percent have been clamoring that the workers of The Great Adventure should "get together" and adopt some other than a One Tax demand for the next election!

These are the persons who, because they had not been publicly branded, soon after election drew to themselves half a dozen Singletaxers by nature of the Teaspoon variety and invited The Great Adventure with its 260,332 votes for One Tax to "get together" in the name of "harmony" and "democracy."

These are the identical individuals, tho their names are now kept modestly in the background, who banded themselves into an Equity Tax League and "adopted" at a "representative state convention" (you are not compelled to believe it) an elimination tax bill that specially exempts land values from levy for state revenue, reinacts the tax on occupations and gross earnings of public utilities, and nowise provides for the slightest increase in the tax on land values.

This bill is so patently plutocracy's own measure (after 260,332 votes had been acceded for a One Tax amendment)—so obviously designed to prevent the people from again voting for a frank, direct provision to open the land at once—that The Great Adventure was content to eschew personalities, scorn the cheap and easy bunc about "harmony" and "democracy" (on a monopolized earth!) and discuss only the issues involved in the two measures.

Failing to get The Great Adventure workers to rescind their One Tax demand, the Equity sent out a number of cheap prints, in which were personal accusations and every paragraph had its untruth or twisted half truth.

A few good men seem to have fallen for their easy words—"democracy," "harmony," "get together," "autocracy," and what not—and a few uninformed persons are mystified where the money came from to send two Equity people clear across the con-

tinient to force their bickerings and personalities upon the first national assembly of The Great Adventure—to "draw its fire" from the One Tax.

That money was subscribed by the Three Percent Teaspoon Singletaxers—doubtless some of it by those who honestly believed the Equity falsehood that "all the Singletax organizations and most of The Adventurers" had joined the Equity; but most of it was subscribed by those in whom the "wish was father to the thought."

In the Equity and other Three Per cent prints it has been argued that the 260,332 California votes do not "belong" to anybody or group; that most of these electors would have voted for any kind of a tax bill put before them; that the Home Rule bill of 1914 received 7000 votes more than given The Great Adventure.

This is Three Percent fact and logic—three more "reasons" why the people should not again be permitted to vote for a Free Earth.

The Home Rule bill of 1914 was not opposed by plutocracy, its banks, or its press—or but mildly. No one cared much whether it won or lost. Either way it could harm no one or benefit none. In the south, where it was openly preached as a step toward Single Tax, it carried. In the north, its home, it was advocated as a business man's reform and its Single Tax leaning (truthfully enough) was denied—and there it lost heavily. The Home Rule League handled about \$30,000 on that campaign, and had no opposition from any Singletaxers. The Great Adventure fund was \$8000. That means \$22,000 for 7,000 votes, doesn't it?

Yes, the electors will vote for almost "any old thing." They are trained to vote mechanically. They are used to being betrayed—but The Great Adventure will not betray them.

No, the 260,332 votes are not the property of any group, but they do "belong" to an Ideal. They are so many pledges to the disinherited millions, and whoever would lower that Ideal to replace it with a tax reform bill would be as false as the Otis Ten.

Not much money was deflected from The Great Adventure in California campaign fund by the lies and quibbles of the Equity—some, no doubt, and to that extent the Equity's single purpose is well served. But in the main those who caught at the quibbles and gulp the lies were only looking for an excuse to withdraw support from a movement condemned by the Banks. When they contributed they "didn't know it was loaded." But the banks knew.

Very few monied men are not amenable to the

hints or orders of their bankers. Very few monied men can afford to be connected with a living, active, imminent, specific demand for the overthrow of the grab-as-grab-can social "system" on a particular date in the immediate future.

It is quite permissible to Talk and Write about applying the Golden Rule at the base of life, but when it comes to immediate political action, with specific means and a definite date, already backed by not less than one-third of California's electorate—then something effective must be done to head off these "anarchists" and "social disturbers"!

Plutocracy dare not let the issue go squarely on its merits. Hence this quibbling dust of extraneous matters over the percentages of taxation, the idle palaver about "democracy" and "getting together"—with whom pray, shall we "get together"? With those who stand opposed to the One Tax demand? Never mind whether they are captained by traitors or saints. Suppose I am, or another is, "autocratic," "pig-headed," "incompetent," or any other thing—what of it? I would not raise a hand or make a penstroke to defend myself against any Equity accusation. Suppose they were all true. Then what? Then the people of California must not again be permitted to vote for a free earth!

That is the only question worth a Man's while.

Shall the people of California vote again on the issue of a free earth Immediately?

Most of the "Singletax" groups named in the Equity circulars as opposing The Great Adventure are parented by the progenitors of the "Single Tax League Incorporated."

But suppose all the Singletaxers in California were opposed to demanding One Tax on land values, what would that count against the 260,332 recorded votes for the Ideal?

For—note this: No other California group, or workers, or leader, or leaders have hitherto proposed or now propose to enable the people of California to vote on the question of a free earth Immediately. No such proposal has come or now comes from any other quarter than The Great Adventure. All the proposals, all the opposition, are for Pulling Down the Ideal and going back to the old inch-by-inch methods. Some of the proposals are probably honest, but most of them are treacherous. None of them are so treacherous, however, as would be the conduct of The Great Adventure workers who, after waking the whole state—indeed the nation—on the one vital issue of immediately changing the land tenure, should retreat from their advanced position—and leave the world to pussy-footing and chaos.

Is it a question of leadership?

In January of this year The Great Adventure administrative board sent a letter to J. Stitt Wilson inviting him to become the "leader and spokesman" of the One Tax demand for a Free Earth. This letter was sent after taking counsel with all the immediate workers who could be reached and with the realization of course that Mr. Wilson's necessary salary of \$250 a month would have to be forthcoming.

Mr. Wilson's reply was made personally, to the effect that he would not champion the One Tax demand for an immediate free earth. He argued for hours that we should drop the One Tax demand and stand for a tax elimination bill. He has since resigned from leadership of the Equity.

In April at a Sherman House meeting in Chicago (attended by Daniel Kiefer, G. J. Johnson, Clarence Darrow, George Schilling, J. H. McGill, Hugh Reid, Otto Culman, Charles F. Hunt, and Fay Lewis) I

was asked by Mr. Kiefer whether, upon assurance that the One Tax demand would be vigorously prosecuted as a moral issue under a leadership to be chosen by a state conference of Singletaxers, I would resign.

Unhesitatingly I answered "Yes."

The personal equation is only a subterfuge for those whose sole demand is for Retreat under fire of the banks! No one has opposed The Great Adventure (save two or three who would like a bill demanding the full rental value at once) with any other purpose than that of lowering its ideal into a respectable tax reform political indisturbance.

There is hope in this proposal to change the land tenure Now—the only hope there is in christendom. Bloody revolution, violent insurrection—these will come fast enough if the earth remains closed. They are on the horizon now so clear and vivid that only the purblind Three Percent cannot see them. But they will accomplish nothing for the People unless the land tenure is changed. The only lasting good that came out of the French revolution was the vast increase of separate land holdings.

The land tenure of America can be changed in an orderly way, without confusion to anything but speculative values and monopoly holdings. It can be changed immediately, within much less than a dozen years—or even if it took that long to abolish or bring to terms the last hindering court—it can be done very soon—or not at all. Your petty reforms, tax eliminations, one per cent land tax and two per cent tax on unimproved land to which press dispatches say Mrs. Fels is giving \$75,000, are all so many plays into the hands of violence.

For the Manhood of America is not dead, nor is it slumbering so soundly as the Three Percent. The Manhood of America is going to throw off the death grip of Wall Street, either by peaceably changing the scheme of land holding and building up a new order of society on that secure foundation—or in some other way.

Plutocracy fears nothing so much and is raising its vast army of human killers again—to hurl against the Germans? Do you believe that? Only the other day press dispatches reported a million men in arms in Italy more than could be used—a million soldiers in excess already in Europe! Plutocracy is arming against the People! Can you doubt it?

The insincerity of those who originated the "get together" plea in California was, perhaps inadvertently, shown in the argument of James H. Ryckman, an Equity attorney. By special courtesy (perhaps a mistaken kindness) he was permitted to address the Atlantic City conference, tho the organization he represented was known to be inimical to every inherent and widely advertised purpose of the gathering. Mr. Ryckman used his time on the platform by mechanically analyzing The Great Adventure and the Equity proposals, omitting reference (naturally) to the Equity clause that prohibits the State from raising revenue by taxing land values, and forcibly pleading—what think you? forcibly pleading that there was very little difference in the two bills!

Then why oppose the original One Tax demand already endorsed by a third of the electorate? Why come clear across the continent to dissect two proposals with very little difference between them?

By "figures that never lie"—unless you want them to—and by percentages and statistics that too long have warped human life, this Equity attorney "proved" that his bill would take almost as much of the rental value of land as The Great Adventure bill.

Had he talked another hour he could have proved just as conclusively that the Equity measure would take More of the "unearned increment." The "intent" of The Great Adventure bill to "take community created land values for community purposes" was not an important or "self-executing" part of the measure, he said.

Obviously it is the most important. It will become a part of the constitution—a clear and unescapable direction for the taxing officials to take the public values for public purposes. How shall they be taken? By the one tax on land values. To what extent? "To prevent the holding of land out of use." When shall they be taken in toto? When the people demand it and enforce it. Is there any other way of taking rental value?

Ryckman did not say the Equity tax bill would open the earth; he said The Great Adventure one tax demand wouldn't. Many theorists would not agree with him, but I do. He was right. No bill that human hand could pen would open the earth—nor even a Law of Nature. Only human beings can open the earth—by sweeping away the legal obstructions.

It is now physically open, unused. It is "closed" only by paper titles—legal necromancy. The hearts of men open to the needless sufferings of the millions, stirred to manly indignation, to Action! will dispel the superstitious reverence for land titles.

Intellectual perception! do you say? Not often or very much. Sheer intellectual perception of superstition usually leads to "reasons" why it should not be disturbed at present.

That is the nub of the whole matter, isn't it? That is the difference, wide as the ocean, between The Great Adventure and the Equity. One has faith in Men, all Men; faith in their warmer, generous impulses; believes these can be aroused and intelligently directed to Immediate Action. The other negatives, scorns, all this, relies upon the meaner impulses of self-interest, and proceeds to obstruct—only to obstruct. In its existence of six months the Equity has issued half a dozen leaflets and pamphlets personally attacking and technically quibbling Against the workers and methods of The Great Adventure—and has done nothing else! It has stood For—nothing, not even For its own bill.

Plutocracy's Line of Attack

Is there a positive note in the Equity Tax Reform bill—or a ray of hope for the disinherited millions? Here is its full text:

Article XIII of the Constitution is hereby amended by adding the following as Section 5 thereof:

Section 5. On and after January 1, 1919, all personal property, except the franchises of public service corporations, shall be exempt from taxation thereafter to be levied.

On and after January 1, 1920, all improvements on land shall be exempt from taxation thereafter to be levied, but the value of land and the value of such franchises shall not be so exempt.

Provided that Sections XI and XIV of Article XIII of the Constitution shall not be affected hereby in so far as they concern State revenues.

All provisions of Article XIII of the Constitution in conflict herewith are hereby repealed.

This amendment shall be self-executing.

The meeting at which this bill was adopted was called and engineered by the Eggleston-Todd-Troy Home Rule League. It was called on their letter paper. It is true that it was attended by C. K. Stern, Norman Duxbury, and Minnie Mackay Duxbury of San Francisco and by W. R. Edwards of San Diego, who had been conspicuous and capable workers for No. 5, but they did not represent The Great Adventure nor did they pretend to—and they have all repudiated the product of the meeting.

With these four and Attorneys Ryckman and Waterbury and those responsible for the Times' publication, the "democratic state convention" adopted its tax elimination bill by a majority vote of thirty-one persons. Thirty-one persons, called together by known opponents of No. 5, for the expressed purpose of formulating a demand less than the one tax, adopts an elimination bill and organizes—the Equity Tax League. "Equity" doesn't sound so harshly to the banks.

Its elimination proposal is not Single Tax, nor an approach thereto.

The purpose of Single Tax is to open the land, by taxing the community created land values into the public treasuries so that it will be unprofitable to hold unused land.

This bill eliminates from taxation, for merely lo-

cal revenue, two classes of property, improvements and personalty, and by the reenactment of Section XIV specifically forbids the taxation of land values for state revenue. How does this approach the purpose of Single Tax, which is to open the land by increasing the land values tax?

It is falsely argued that the deficiency created by these eliminations would logically be made up by increasing the land values tax. There is no such indication, and the logic is that land monopoly will dodge an increase of the land value tax up to the last subterfuge of the last astute lawyer that money can buy. But if it were the intent of this bill that the deficiency should be added to the land values tax, why doesn't it honestly say so? It is a most eloquent omission.

Aside from buildings and personal property there are eight other sources of revenue in California permissible by the constitution. What is to prevent any or all of these being increased to make up the deficiency? The tax on gross earnings of public utilities (Sec. XIV), the income tax including incomes of even \$500 (as advocated by Hearst papers) and the occupational tax, could easily be stretched to cover the deficiency—and it is no new thing in California to increase the number of misdemeanor arrests for the sheer purpose of raising revenue.

Well, we could have another constitutional amendment a few years hence, forbidding these taxes! and another a few years later forbidding still other taxes—and later on more, and more elections and amendments! "Ultimately," says Equity, "the tax would fall on land values." Equity is looking for a steady job, at least one that will last until it has checkmated the "ultimate" trick of plutocracy.

"But meanwhile business and the small land owner will be benefitted by having their personal and improvement taxes eliminated," argues Equity. This is fallacy. On a monopolized earth All reforms accrue to the benefit of plutocracy. Banks, the money trust, interest, and monopoly commodity prices, will take whatever rent and the tax collector relinquishes. This is elementary economics, also hard fact.

The money power and food trusts rest upon monopoly of the source of human necessities. Their in-