

and seals and wax—all of which give to the holder thereof the right to exact ground-rent to the full extent of production, if the deed-deviser deems it wise, in return for nothing.

In one respect the aims of the brazen exploiter and of the suave ground-rent collector are identical—both intend to take from the victim a part—mebbe all—of the products of his earnest and honest labors.

In a second respect those Mohammedan victims were twice as fortunate as we—the banditti did *all* the tax collecting at one operation on each occasion, whilst we pay twice—once to the official tax collector and once to the ground-rent collector, on each occasion. Furthermore, the victims of the great Mogul learned the worst in a few moments, but we—Lord help us—are subjected to a prolonged agony, not knowing for weeks or months or mebbe years whether we are in the red of ruin, after each occasion.

The pages of history run rank with tales of the time-tried rapacity of man—the man who stole the food and fields and families of the toiler; with tales of tyranny and starvation in India, of six millions of Indians perishing in hunger en masse; with harrowing details of Chinese mire and misery and poverty where mandarins waxed wealthy and smooth and sleek; with prosaic recitals of Irish famines wherein Irish foods were carted away for exportation “along roads lined with the starving and past trenches into which the dead were piled.”

The crude methods of India's banditti have given way to a more refined, a more cultured, exploitation of laborers—modern methods in which our nation and that of our British forebears assume a statesmanlike atmosphere—streamlined methods whereby billions of dollars and hundreds of millions of pounds periodically are levied in taxation upon illiterate workers to finance wars growing out of man's rapacity for power and plunder—methods pursued to perpetuate the legal right of the few to exploit the many whilst hymns and organs soothingly sound in the distance.

As we visualize the physical and mental tortures which accompanied tax collections in ye olden dayes we can appreciate the difficulty experienced, by charitable readers of today, in controlling a rising feeling of contempt for “a race of people who, stung by such wrongs, have *only occasionally* murdered a landlord.” But what greater contempt arises as we witness nary a landlord taken for even an oratorical castigation by a race of this day's ostensibly cultured, erudite, parliamentarians who are easily buncoed by legal bombast which carefully has confused private and public wealth under the mediocre mark of “real estate”—the whole structure being painstakingly carried on rickety cribbing placed, one log at a time, in the names of commonsense, common-law, statute-law, university economics and legal precedent.

'Tis well nigh impossible to cool our boiling blood as we

read the sordid stories of ancient Hindoos selling the souls for a handful of rice—of emaciated coolies clawing the gutters for roasting rats and pups—of tiny tots toiling in textile sweatshops until death brought an early release. Yet all this—as nauseating as it is—creates less heat in our hardening arteries than does a revelation of the successful span of suave, sanctimonious, noiseless thievery whereby industry—both man, woman and child—today starves human stomachs and stunts human minds because of being busily engaged in bringing home the bacon to beneficent racketeers.

As between a bad, bold, brazen exploiter and an unctious hymn-humming statesman who carefully steers the ship of state away from public site-values into the private pockets of labor, our scintilla of respect still sticks to the guy with the gat.

TELLING POINTS

As we bore our way into the boring schemes, plans and programmes for rescuing humanity from depression recessions—yea, and obsessions—we note that in order to be a la mode to you, the reform genius, should have a programme of so many points. Ten points, twenty points, or so—any substantial number which will lead the reader to suspect that you carefully have analyzed the entire social problem and have boiled it down to an all-inclusive, fixed and limited, number of essential features.

A one-point reform, like Single Tax, haint enough 'Taint got enough heft. It's too simple. Readers and taxpayers like a lot for their two-bits. Take care, however, that you don't have too many points because a fifty-point programme for social relief, f'rinstance, might cause your readers to suspect that your scheme had got the best of you—had got you down—and that you had finished your monumental proclamation on the floor under your desk buried in a litter of copy-sheets. It is better to stick to a manageable number of points—say a baker's dozen or less.

At the close of the World War our dexterous Democrats juggled a plenty-of-points programme onto the international stage and outpointed the Ten Commandments by several. In political campaigns both major parties usually dish out a plenitude of points, although our robed Republicans ordinarily are not as lavish with points as are our daedalian Democrats.

To blurt out the fundamental truth which is the key to social chaos—the failure to collect site-values for public expense—is a one-point programme which cannot politically compete with the 57-point programme of our sovereign State's legislative experts on taxation.

Take the new, Republican, “eight-point” programme of Senator Vandenberg, f'rinstance, as enumerated under four items by a smart reporter: (1) a balanced budget, (2) repeal of surplus profits tax, (3) avoidance of entangling foreign alliances, and (4) a balanced respon-

bility between Capital and Labor and the Constitution under a new name for the Republican party. Now *there's* a neat number of points, each carefully set apart like the four vegetables on a partitioned-plate at a vegetable dinner, wherein the diced carrots stand apart from the cabbage whilst the peas do not roll into the mashed potatoes. Dishing up a programme in *that* form presents an edible whole which means much to the empty Republican stomachs and to the vacuous digestive tracts of independent, dyspeptic Democrats of advertised Jeffersonianism. Hash, on the other hand, while being a one-point lunch does not begin to offer the epicurean allurements and public exposure of what's-in-this-lunch as does the four-point, blue-plate, partitioned vegetable dinner.

Success in putting over your reform of the taxation muddle lies in offering a fascinating number of points. Surely, there is a number which fascinates you, is there not? *We* have a weakness for fives and sevens, though we don't know why and they've never brought us luck in the nigger pool. It's just a hunch. If we were asked to write an "eight-point," Republican, salvation programme (under four items) we would submit the following:

- (1) A balanced budget arrived at by spending for government costs an amount equal to the revenue derived from a single tax upon the site-values of land.
- (2) Repeal of the surplus profits tax and of all other taxes upon industry.
- (3) Avoidance of entangling foreign alliances by the means of free trade, free speech universally, free men, women and children, economically as well as physically.
- (4) A balanced responsibility between Capital and Labor by preventing owners of natural resources from boosting and pocketing the site-values of land, and by harmonizing the now-contradictory clauses and amendments of the Constitution—all done under the new political party name of Republocrats or Demicans.

Now *there's* an "eight-point" (four item) salvation programme which tells *how* to accomplish the eight points proclaimed by Senator Vandenberg. Congressmen have no difficulty in naming an eight-point, or ten-point, or sixteen-point goal, but they seldom know *how* to reach it. For three centuries our eminent statesmen complacently have been enunciating prolificly-pointed programmes to gape-mouthed captains of industry until the tidal wave of economic chaos has grown to mountainous proportions. Half a century ago Henry George waded through the deluge of verbiage and sorted the wheat from the chaff—filtered the juice from the pulp—took the kernels from the husks—and wrote a one-point programme, Single Tax; a one-point programme which has one point too many to be comprehended by some minds; a one-point programme which is several points too few to satisfy the complicated thoughts of perplexed politicians, erratic economists and straddling statesmen.

A point is position, says the geometrician. The center of a circle is its locus, whilst the circumference is the locus

of all points which are equi-distant from the center of the circle. Statesmen with a flair for many points will be found out on the circumference running around in circles or—if their points are not equi-distant from a common center—running around in ellipses, spirals, trapezoids, polygons, parallelograms or parabolas; all the while professing to be oriented to the common point of common sense.

THE NEGATIVE APPROACH

"Capital does not limit industry, as is erroneously taught. . . .

Capital does not maintain laborers during the progress of their work, as is erroneously taught. . . . Capital does not supply or advance wages, as is erroneously taught. . . . Capital does not supply the materials which labor works up into wealth, as is erroneously taught. . . ."

Thus wrote Henry George in 1879, all of which he painstakingly proved.

You, Mr. Big Businessman, and you, Mr. Little Businessman, may put these five contradictions of five erroneous teachings, into your pipes and smoke 'em. Both of you have had nigh unto three centuries in which to discover correct methods for permanent success for industry—without regard for the length of time similarly at the disposal of your foreign forebears. Both of you have had nigh unto three score years and ten in which to read the long-discovered correct methods for permanent success of your own affairs. Little attention, if any, has been given by your almost entire multitude to the logic (?) of erroneous economic teachings. Little energy, if any, has been expended by you in solving the simple equation which governs your own commercial lives. As long as your individual heads escaped the brick-bats of bankruptcy you all, each and severally, naively plodded your nonchantly selfish ways and let your sinking fellowmen go to economic hell. His plight, your engulfed fellowmen, and the plight of the low-browed multitude—wearily unemployed or busily brawling with Big and Little Business Bosses—these plights, sez you, were none of your business.

Oh, yeah?

What did you care about the error or truth of the teachings of your professors of political economy—what did you care as long as *you* made a profit? "Am I my brother's keeper?" (meaning *no*) sez you to yourself time and again during the last three generations.

Well . . . are you?

You felt certain, did you not, that the rising tide of economic chaos *never* could reach *your* doorstep?

Well . . . did it?

You are charged, both of you, by Bernard M. Baruch with not having done your share toward rectifying the causes of industrial disaster.

Well . . . have you?