

down shacks or neglected lots to "uglify" the city, with profit to individuals. No citizen would have any advantage over other citizens save that given him by his education, his industry, his skill and intelligence; each would obtain what he fairly earned and the progress of science, the march of invention, the diffusion of knowledge would bring their benefits to all, insuring to the humblest plenty, comfort and leisure—with a community chest superfluous.

This is not a new proposition but a very old one that has never been honestly or logically assailed altho it has been lied about and its sponsors maligned by the Rich and Honorable, and subservient weaklings, to divert attention and obscure its truth from the Plain People. It is in harmony with the virtuous precepts of all ages and the pretense of every religion. It is the reform without which all other worth-while reforms are fore-ordained to failure. All opposition to it is founded upon greed or ignorance and ignorance is a crime, contemplating those who influence legislation or sway public opinion.

"When a country is ill-governed, riches and honors are something to be ashamed of" (Confucius) and our representation in this government of the Plain People, for the Monopolists and by the Rich and Honorable, appears wise and respectable only because it escapes attention for the detail of its activity.

In America, no one is so inconspicuous that he is without influence in our economic affairs, altho most of us are so deluded by the propaganda of fictitious news that there is little or no virtue in our suffrage, but, "the thought of the Plain People, who enjoy no privilege and have very simple and unsophisticated standards of right and

wrong, must prevail, if the government is to survive" (Woodrow Wilson). It is the patriotic obligation of every man to be alert and to disclose dishonest influences, political grafters, educational parasites and effervescent hypocrites; to assail everything that makes America look like a doubtful experiment in government and discredit everything that stands in the way of *truth and comprehension, practical democracy and economic righteousness*; everything that strives to delude those in comfortable circumstances with the idea that "the humanity at the bottom" deserves its degradation and is less aspiring, less honest, less in The Brotherhood than The Rich and Honorable who have given us existing conditions.

To profess goodness and ignore, or ridicule, or oppose this economic reform is to acknowledge ignorance, or worse, and to pray "Thy will be done, Thy Kingdom come" and do nothing to help overcome this iniquity is the consummation of hypocrisy.

You are urged to join this association of Plain People and cooperate in its effort to discredit propaganda with The Truth—to "lift so high the incomparable standards of *the common interest and the common justice* that all men with vision, all men with hope, all men with the conviction of America in their hearts, will crowd to that standard and a new day of achievement may come for the liberty which we love."

Be identified with an honest, worth-while endeavor to make mankind richer, wiser, better and happier by substituting Justice for Charity and elevating society from the bottom.

Send a stamp, or a dime; a dollar, ten or a thousand to

The Civics and Equity League
Post Office Box 49
Washington, D. C.

The Truth Teller & Economic Adversaria

IF YOU hand a dime, or a dollar, to some one in need they benefit by ten cents, or one hundred, but if you contribute a dime or a dollar to organized charity the needy one gets, perhaps, three cents, or thirty, so you must give with the understanding and liberality of the old sailor who remarked, as he dropped his contribution into the plush bag, "here's a cent for the heathern, and here's a dollar to get it to them."

OUR Ostensible charities serve but to obscure and palliate great evils. Conventional charity drops pennies into the beggar's cup, carries bread to the starving, distributes clothing to the naked. Real charity, which is justice, sets about removing the conditions that make beggary, starvation and nakedness. Conventional charity plays Lady Bountiful; justice tries to establish such laws as *shall give employment to all*, so that they need no bounty. . . *Conventional charity piously accepts things as they are and helps the unfortunate; justice goes to the legislature and changes things. . .* Charity gives quinine in the malarial tropics; justice drains the swamps. . . Charity works among slum wrecks; justice dreams and plans that there be no more slums. . . Charity assumes evil institutions and customs to be a part of "Divine Providence," and tearfully works away at taking care of the wreckage; justice regards injustice everywhere, custom-buttressed and respectable or not, as the work of the devil, and vigorously attacks it. (Dr. Frank Crane)

A fraction of the money contributed to the charity that has no social plan, but tends to augment and perpetuate poverty, if devoted to economic truth-telling, and the education of the electorate, would soon insure respectable, intelligent representation and legislation of economic righteousness . . . legislation designed to bring about that "kingdom come," with charity superfluous, which the prayer of centuries has failed to advance.

HERE were thirty-four contributions to the Washington Community Chest in 1929 for more than \$5,000 each, and it is quite reasonable to assume that not one of them was associated with self-sacrifice. On the other hand, there were forty-six thousand contributions that averaged less than \$4.00 each and it is quite as reasonable to assume that most of them involved some self-denial. These small contributors would do far better to lend a hand now and then in personal contact than to intermingle their little contribution with the superfluous wealth devoted to an ill-advised endeavor.

"The mistake of the best men through generation after generation has been thinking to help the poor by almsgiving, and by every other means except the one thing which God orders for them—Justice" (Ruskin). More recently Tolstoy said: The way for the rich to help the poor is to get off their backs.

If we had no great charitable undertakings, with thirty-four contributors that are too rich, misdirecting the sentiment of forty thousand contributors that are too poor, the forty thousand would, perchance, do more thinking, discover that poverty is the result of a social crime whereby the rich victimize the poor, and legislate righteousness into the distribution of wealth in

this country where unbounded natural resources assure plenty for all. At a conservative estimate, society, in the making of one rich man, reduces a thousand to the anguish of a lifelong struggle with poverty. Whoever *honestly desires an end seeks the means* and \$5,000 donations to charity are not actuated by considerate, honest solicitude for the poor, or any inclination to "get off their backs."

LAND VALUE is a sort of by-product from population, social advancement and our collective activity. Because land rent is a value *created by all the people it therefore belongs to all the people* and it is the duty of the government to collect it for our social benefit.

If you find a dollar you are that much richer *because someone was unfortunate and is that much poorer*. Likewise if a man "gets" a dollar, or a million dollars, for which he renders no corresponding benefit, he is that much richer *because others have been robbed*, by theft, or some economic hokus pocus they do not comprehend, *and are that much poorer*.

In every fair transaction, both parties profit but when a man collects land rent, or sells land at a profit, which he does not earn and for which he makes no social contribution, the community—all of us, who collectively render service and create the value, are robbed. *Regardless of their antiquity*, laws which permit a man to rob the community are just as wrong as a law permitting him to rob an individual. Such laws confer a privilege, which is a legal right to perpetrate a moral wrong, and innumerable privileges are granted by our lawmakers. Some of them are so involved and obscure that they escape discovery, others are so traditional that they escape attention,

like this particular privilege which permits the theft of something like fifteen billion dollars a year from producers and contributors in the United States—from those of us who "earn" all we acquire, and that much more which eludes us. It is this abstraction that, directly or indirectly, reduces so many of us to poverty.

Contemplate the young people of today and the ceaseless propaganda to saturate them with a conviction of America's resources, opportunities and righteousness—a conservative acceptance of the existing economic adjustment. In fifty years about half of them will be dead with at least fifteen per cent of them disposed of as paupers. Most of them will leave relatives incumbered with the obligations of an installment funeral and at least eighty-four per cent of those alive will be dependent upon the charity of relatives or institutions. Five per cent will exist as comfortably as one may with a hop, skip and a jump between himself and some collector, and one out of a hundred will be wealthy. We are indebted to the Treasury Department for the statistics, and the youth who assumes that he is to acquire wealth and distinction is presumptuous, because, if the truth is told, luck is the predominant factor in this selection. Men are born very much alike with few far above the average, few far below, and our social disparity is the result of that social wickedness which permits *The Few to exact that fifteen thousand million dollars a year from The Many, for permission to live and work on the land provided by Nature—God if you please*.

IF ALL land rent was assessed and collected, like taxes, from those permitted the exclusive occupation of land, there would be no slums and no tumble-