

decrees, that the lands and resources be returned to the cities, but she was never obeyed. At her death, in her famous testament, she again requested that the lands be returned to the people, but the newly rich, the famous Spanish nobility that she had founded, were immovable. They not only disobeyed Isabella's request, but they demanded more lands, saying that they had been paid very little for their services and they should be given the Province of Castile, in addition to Andalusia and the parts of Estremadura which had already been granted them. Cisneros, tutor of Charles the Fifth and a man of great talent and dignity, opposed the demands of the nobles but the fatuous Charles the Fifth gave himself over to them wholly, and, with the aid of his German invaders, destroyed the Communities of Castile and beheaded the leaders who defended the sacred right of every man to the products of his labor.

Charles the Fifth was the worst king Spain ever had. He launched wars of conquest, established a dictatorship in Spain, created the commercial monopoly of the trade with the Indies and destroyed with cannon-balls the free cities of Italy where the Renaissance and The Modern Age had their beginnings. He ended the free trade between cities and liberty of thought disappeared. Under his son, Phillip the Second, the economic situation grew worse from day to day. Hatred towards the liberty of man increased. During the reign of Charles the Second, who was known as "The Bewitched" and was the last ruler of the fatal house of Austria, prayers were screamed in the streets, so desperate had become the condition of the people. A nation of thirty-two millions of inhabitants was reduced to seven millions. The industries of silks, mosaics and knitted goods, etc., had disappeared. Roads went to ruin because of lack of traffic. Communication became impossible. The best careers open to a man were to enter the church or become a highwayman. The Church swayed the kings to its will, and when the state had even million ducats of income, the Church had thirteen millions. It is impossible, in a few words, to explain how work was carried on in this epoch. A directed economy dictated by unions and guilds had reached unbelievable limits. For example, a sardine fisherman could not fish for any other kind of fish because the authorities would not allow him to sell it later. The carpenter of oak could not work in pine wood.

The people of Spain had entered into a hell of their own making. They are still in it, and to come out of it will cost much sacrifice and effort.

With liberty in Spain the country could be a cauldron of industry where now one finds only misery. The Americas would again turn to Spain by the mere attraction of its enlightenment and prosperity. Liberty is the magnet of progressive association. Liberty and the return of the land to its rightful owners, the people, would bring to Spain:

Production without tariffs, consumption without taxes, communication without blockage, industry without proletariat, riches without parasites, speech without gag, law without deceit, strength without armies, fraternity without class consciousness, work for all, and harness for none.

It would be the *ideal* become the actual, and as there exists the guide swallow, there could exist the guide nation.

A Spain of equal citizens sharing equal rights in the land, would be a vigorous Spain. A democratic Spain would be a fortress Spain, a supreme, inexorable reality.

Liberty is immutable. It is always tranquil because it is indivisible, and invincible because it is contagious. He who attacks it, acquires it—is absorbed by it. The army that is sent against it rebounds against the despot.

A Spain with liberty and without private property in land would be an irradiation of the true, a promise for all. Totalitarian Spain awaits the spirit of Henry George.

## One of Rent's Masks

By LAURIE J. QUINBY

**D**URING the days when land values were booming, I remarked to a merchant that as land rent advanced wages and interest declined. This he disputed, saying, "You will agree that in this location land values have at least quadrupled in the past ten years, while our payroll and interest (dividends) have enormously increased."

"I agree to your former statement," I replied, "but doubt the latter part of it. Do you keep a cost-finding system?"

"Yes," said he, "and I can show you."

"But wait a minute," I asked: "You own this building *and the site* on which it stands. Do you charge against merchandising business a rental, and if so, how often do you revise it?"

He replied, "Yes, we do charge a rental against the merchandising business, but, coming to think of it, we have not revised it during the past ten years. We are still charging the same rental as then."

"Well, then," I suggested, "would you mind looking over your cost system as to your relative payroll and earnings then and now, in comparison with what is a fair rental now?" He assented.

Several days later I called. As I approached, he smiled. "I am having fun with my partners," said he. "I am proving to them that we are losing money."

"So," I rejoined, "you found that you are profiting not as merchants but as landlords?"

"That's about it," he admitted. "And I wonder how many other merchants who own their properties are overlooking that fact."