

THE HUMAN SPHINX

By **Ellis Parker Butler**

ILLUSTRATIONS BY F. E. WATSON

home sick." Abner and went and sat in a chair by his bed and they talked, just the two of them. He had a hard time in the west there, and sometimes he went for days without food, prospecting the hills with a man named Jarling, his partner. Then they found copper and it was when they were both pretty well played out; it was a question whether they would either of them last until they could each civilization. So they drew up a couple of papers—if either of them died all the other had was to go to the one left alive. John told Ella

that as he lay there dying, and then he died."
 "That night," said Simon Judd. "Yes, he died that night." Abner Dart said. "So Ella went back to her bed and sent for me, and she told me what to do. You remember old Doc Worley, Sime? Always drunk. He was drunk when we sent for him, and we got him drunker, and he signed a death certificate and ended up that spree with the tremens. The rest was easy enough. You were at the funeral, Sime. You never guessed it was John we were burying when we said it was Ella."
 "No, it fooled me easy enough," Simon Judd said. "Typhoid was what Ella had and they had cut off her hair and none of us had seen her since she was took sick. I thought how bad she looked, but that was all."

"So we had 'John' get well," Abner Dart said. "We had 'him' sick for a couple of weeks and then we had 'Ella' get well enough to walk around with a cane, and presently he was well enough to leave town."
 "I went to the station with him myself—hailed him in one of my rigs," Simon Judd said. "We talked about when we were kids. I was fooled, black my cats."

"She went to Chicago, Ella did," Abner continued, "and after awhile, when she had gathered up the loose ends of John's affairs, she came down to New York and got settled here and I failed in business the way we had arranged and came to West-cote and she gave me money to start in again. For a month or two we pretended to be strangers to each other; then we 'got acquainted' and she was the only close friend I had. She began speculating in Street and did well—she was a wonderful woman that way. But all the while she was worried. That old partner of John's, Jarling, kept her worried all the time. She could never find him—a word of him now and then and then he was lost. It might be five or ten years between times and then she would hear he was alive and then no more news of him for another long stretch."

"And if Jarling knew the real John was dead he could claim a million or so, hey?" Simon Judd asked. "That's what worried her," Abner Dart said. "She got so she thought more of money than of her life. And then—"

He stopped and hid his face in his hand.
 "She poisoned the first one," Simon Judd supplied.
 (Continued next week.)

Vote "YES" on the TAX AMENDMENT

To Article V, Section 9 Constitution of North Carolina

New Section:

Section 3. Taxes to be levied. Laws shall be passed taxing all real and personal property, including moneys, bonds, notes, investments in stock, and all other choses in action, according to their true value in money. The rate of taxation on real property and tangible personal property shall be uniform within the territorial limits of the authority levying the tax, but intangible personal property may be classified by the General Assembly, which shall prescribe a uniform rate of tax throughout the State for each class.

The General Assembly may also tax trades, professions, franchises, and incomes: Provided, that the rate of tax on incomes shall not in any case exceed six per cent (6%) and there shall be allowed against the income the following exemptions, to-wit: for a married man with a wife living with him, or for a widow or widower having a minor child or children, natural or adopted, not less than (\$2,000) two thousand dollars; for all other persons, not less than one thousand dollars (\$1,000), and there may be allowed other deductions (not including living expenses), so that only net incomes are taxed.—Public Laws, 1927, c. 216.

Old Section:

Sec. 3. Taxation shall be by uniform rule and ad valorem: exemptions. Laws shall be passed taxing, by a uniform rule, all moneys, credits, investments in bonds, stocks, joint-stock companies, or otherwise, and also all real and personal property, according to its true value in money: Provided, notes, mortgages, and all other evidences of indebtedness, or any renewal thereof, given in good faith to build, repair, or purchase a home, when said loan does not exceed eight thousand dollars (\$8,000) and said notes and mortgages and other evidences of indebtedness, or any renewal thereof, shall be made to run for not less than one nor more than thirty-three years, shall be exempt from taxation of every kind for fifty per cent of the value of the notes and mortgages: Provided, the holder of said note or notes must reside in the county where the land lies and there list it for taxation: Provided further, that when said notes and mortgages are held and taxed in the county where the home is situated, then the owner of the home shall be exempt from taxation of every kind for fifty per cent of the value of said notes and mortgages. The word "home" is defined to mean lands, whether consisting of a building lot or larger tract, together with all the buildings and outbuildings which the owner in good faith intends to use as a dwelling place for himself or herself, which shall be conclusively established by the actual use and occupancy of such premises as a dwelling place of the purchaser or owner for a period of three months. The General Assembly may also tax trades, professions, franchise, and incomes: Provided, the rate of tax on incomes shall not in any case exceed six per cent (6%), and there shall be allowed the following exemptions, to-wit: for married man with a wife living with him, or to a widow or widower having minor child or children, natural or adopted, not less than \$2,000, to all other persons not less than \$1,000, and there may be allowed other deductions (not including living expenses) so that only net incomes are taxed.

Explanation By State Board of Elections

In the Constitution as now written, Section 3 of Article V, all property of every description is required to be taxed by a uniform rule. That section also provides machinery for what is known as the home exemption provision. The rest of the section contains authority to tax trades, professions, franchises, and incomes.

The amendment to this section changes it materially. The rule of uniformity required in the old section is eliminated entirely except as to real property and tangible personal property, as follows:

"The rate of taxation on real property and tangible personal property shall be uniform within the territorial limits of the authority levying the tax"—then comes the vital feature of the amendment—"but INTANGIBLE personal property may be classified by the General Assembly, which shall prescribe a uniform rate of tax throughout the State for each class."

The object of this new provision is to permit a different rate of taxation for intangible personal property such as bonds, notes, investments in stock, and all other choses in action from that imposed upon tangible real and personal property. It is said that the universal experience of imposing a moderate rate of tax upon what is known as solvent credits results in increasing largely the amount of such solvent credits given in for taxation. This amendment, too, seems to permit a classification of the various kinds of solvent credits. The home exemption feature of the existing section is entirely stricken out but that in relation to the taxation of trades, professions, franchises, and incomes is identical in every particular with the part of the old section that deals with this subject.

THE above Amendment was approved by the last General Assembly. It has been endorsed by the almost unanimous opinion of the leading men and women of North Carolina. If it is carried and adopted by the votes of the people, it will establish an important step in the future progress and prosperity of our state.

This Amendment will encourage further industrial expansion. It will aid in the development of our natural resources. It will lower taxes on real estate. It will reduce farm taxation. It will favor the large class of our young people and others of limited means who are ambitious to win success. It will improve the entire economic condition of

our state, without favor to any and with equal benefit to all.

The Amendment will help to keep North Carolina money at home. It will also attract outside money into North Carolina for investment. It will remove serious handicaps imposed by the present constitutional provision and will inaugurate a new era of stability, protection and opportunity for all the varied interests of the people of this state.

Thirty-one states have already adopted laws similar to the one proposed by this Amendment. These states have thus secured advantages which North Carolina may now secure. And we may wisely secure these advantages for North Carolina by voting "yes" on the tax amendment.

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