

following questions, to which the subjoined letters are replies, more or less explicitly in answer:

1st.—Where Single Taxers are free to organize politically, can they vote with parties which favor the ownership of land, without themselves incurring moral guilt?

2nd.—Should our political work be governed by moral principle, or by mere seeming expediency?

Editor Single Tax Review:

Replying to Mr. Weeks' first question, there is no moral guilt in voting for a party which favors ownership of land when that is not an issue and all parties support it as they do other established institutions; nor even though a small party opposes it when that party has no chance of success and those which have are divided on important, though minor, issues. Those who believe it is better to let things get as bad as possible and then they will be righted may refuse to change a small wrong because a greater wrong cannot be changed. But men driven to despair strike blindly and without thought. Permanent improvement along political lines results only from hopeful and thoughtful enlightenment, and there is no moral guilt in helping those to right one wrong who have not yet seen the greater wrong.

The answer to the second question is much the same. Moral principles are not always applicable to political work. While all of one's work should be governed by what seems to him moral principles, it is in the nature of things that he cannot apply these principles absolutely in actions which involve association with his neighbors who do not agree with him. Political work is but a form of association with our neighbors. A man who thinks he has a truth is certain to retard and not to advance its acceptance by absolutely cutting himself off from all his fellows. This is not an argument for conformity, but for toleration. If people do not agree with us it is simply because they do not see things as we do, and if our way is right they only need the education we have had to come to our way of thinking. To set ourselves apart is to assume that we are different from them when the only difference is that we heard the truth first.

Politics is the art of obtaining results through legislation. Political parties exist for the purpose of securing a majority of legislators favoring certain desired results. The party in control of legislation is of course satisfied with it, as a party. The only way in which the party out of power can obtain control is by winning over some of the supporters of the party in power. In order to do this certain concessions must be made to their opinions and desires, and the party platform must be so drawn as to hold out the greatest possible inducements to those out of the party without going as far as to drive away the most determined of

those within the party. No small "one idea" party can obtain control of legislation without pursuing this policy unless its one idea becomes so dominant in the public mind as to utterly minimize all other public questions.

The so called Prohibition and Socialist parties are not political parties at all, except in those localities where they have a fighting chance of success within a reasonable time. In other places they are nothing but educational organizations under a political form.

There is certainly not such a popular demand for abolition of land ownership as to afford reasonable foundation for believing that a Single Tax party would have any chance of success in any state, let alone as a national party. In proof of this are the small votes that have been polled in New York, Philadelphia, Chicago; and, even after the tremendous work done, in Delaware. Of course those who believe that in their neighborhood there is a demand and chance of success for a Single Tax party have no way of testing their belief except by starting one. That is a matter of expediency.

To forestall a possible criticism I will admit that I have advocated a separate party as a matter of principle even when hopeless. But now, for the reasons above given, I believe political action to be only a question of expediency.

NEW YORK.

A. C. PLEYDELL.

Editor Single Tax Review:

Henry George in *The Land Question*, says, that the Single Tax will never enter politics as a direct issue, but indirectly, and he cites as an example the question of chattel slavery entering politics indirectly on the question of union or disunion.

By "entering politics directly" I take it, that he meant, by independent political action, through a Single Tax party.

At the time of Grover Cleveland's second election the Single Tax came near entering politics indirectly on the question of "tariff for revenue only."

But it was side-tracked, and perhaps it was well, for the country was not then ready to vote upon the land question.

It looks now as if the Single Tax had already entered politics in Ohio on the question of home rule, and equality in taxation, and that it may enter the next presidential campaign on the issue of "taxation a remedy for trusts;" but before this remedy can be largely acceptable to the people they must more clearly understand the difference between capital and privilege, and also between a corporation and a trust. Our work, therefore, is still to agitate, and educate.

To organize now a Single Tax party for independent action would do little but disclose our weakness, and create dissensions among ourselves.

It is always difficult for reformers such as we Single Taxers to work harmoniously together, for we are by nature individualistic, following Truth as our only leader; and caring little for expediency, that continued unity of action is rarely possible. Some of the most devout disciples became so filled with their own standards of right, that they are often impatient with their brothers because they do not view every question from their stand-point. One thinks it morally wrong to vote, unless he can vote for the destruction of private property in land; while another thinks it wrong not to vote, since the power of his ballot may assist in suppressing privilege.

Forces are gathering for a conflict, and the party that represents the trust democracy will use the aid of every liberty-loving man, to assist it in divorcing the control of government from the power of special privilege.

When the great truths we stand for are more clearly understood, we can safely leave the issue to the voice of the people, whatever be the name of the party.

ELIZA STOWE TWITCHEL.

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Editor Single Tax Review:

Those of our friends who are anxious to lay the groundwork for a new party machine and build upon it for the future triumph of the cause, should be willing to await the outcome of the efforts of those who claim that it will be easier to capture a first class machine in splendid condition for immediate work in the fields we are plowing and seeding; a machine that we know will work; a machine that, with a little trimming up and cutting off here, and adding to there, will enable us to reap the harvest years in advance of the shortest possible time the most enthusiastic of us could begin to imagine, working through the new instrumentality.

Let us await developments in the Ohio field. Tom L. has a fine machine in operation over there and there is no one left to dispute his supremacy. Let us wait long enough to see what the harvest will be. If he gets a good crop, including a fair return from the seed he has been sowing among the tares (republicans and those lukewarm in the past), we will have then demonstrated that we are entitled to retain possession of the machine and to go after the bigger one for the greater harvest.

In other words, if Johnson holds the bulk of the Democratic vote in Ohio this fall and adds recruits sufficient to show that being an adherent of Henry George is not hurtful to him as a leader of the Democratic hosts, notwithstanding the campaign being waged against him is a campaign of misrepresentation, based on his known advocacy of the Single Tax, then there will be no reason to

justify us in spending a moment of our precious time in the experimentation and worry of trying to build up a new machine.

If our friends will take a look backward and see the evidences of success already attained to in the five victories that wonderful man has had in the heretofore solidly republican county of Cuyahoga, where for thirty years or more, there was hardly a Democrat holding an official position in the County Courthouse, and how, now the building is in control of our people, administering the affairs of that County as they have never before been administered—that is, honestly and in the interest of the whole population without regard for special interests or party designs, more than to profit politically by conducting the business of the public honestly and for the public interest, they will, in a measure, realize what glorious advances are possible in the immediate future, if Johnson wins in the State this Fall. But whether he wins or not, and it is almost too much to hope for under the conditions which confront him, he will have gained for us an immeasurable amount of prestige if he holds the Democratic vote and adds to it sufficient to show the people that the Republicans had to take advantage of all of their powers to overcome him. That they are doing this, that they have put in the field more than eighteen hundred speakers, or an average of eighteen or twenty to a county, many of them orators of national reputation holding, too, high public positions, affords ample testimony. It demonstrates what the Republicans think of Johnson as a political factor, and their object in making such extraordinary provisions for his overthrow are two-fold: In the first place, they desire to make sure of saving Hanna's scalp. In the second place they imagine that by bringing into the state all of their heavy guns and discharging them in every quarter of the local field, they can overwhelm him with an adverse vote that will forever blast his political prospects and destroy him as a leader of the new Democracy.

I do not make any predictions as to the result more than to say that I am extremely optimistic and hopeful of the outcome. I know that the hearts of the great common people—the masses, including those of all classes, rich and poor alike—are properly tuned for the harmony our thoughts inspire, and that they will join in if we can only strike the right chords. I believe Tom L. is striking them in every speech he makes, and we need not be surprised if, at midnight on November 3rd, the returns from the old Buckeye State give us an opportunity to expand our lungs in vociferous shouting for joy as reward for the many, many disappointments the long years of our labors have vouchsafed us.

L. P. CUSTER.

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