

the loss of power by the old party politicians. It will educate as no other method can, and it will supplement every form of proselyting activity that the individual may undertake. It will deter us from taking part in those political activities which are at the best but of small importance and which have in the past too greatly absorbed our activities. And it will keep the principle itself clear of other entangling alliances with movements, excellent in themselves but remote from our purpose, which have too often enlisted our short-lived enthusiasm, followed by the depression at so little accomplished. We have, we think, learned a great deal in the last few years.

## The Philosophy of The Single Tax Movement

WENDELL PHILLIPS, in an address delivered before the Anti-Slavery Society in Boston, on June 27, 1853, said in opening: "Mr. Chairman, I have to present from the business committee the following resolution:

"Resolved, that the object of this society is now, as it always has been, to convince our countrymen, by arguments addressed to the hearts and consciences, that slave-holding is a heinous crime, and that the duty, safety and interest of all concerned demand its immediate overthrow, without expatriation."

These words may well hold our attention at this time. For slave-holding substitute in words of your own choosing the laws which permit the private collection of the rent of land, and let the rest stand as our declaration of policy. The man or woman who subscribes to it is a Single Taxer, and he who refuses to subscribe to it does so because he is not a Single Taxer, or because he desires to compromise the principle in the interests of something or somebody.

To the contention of the conservative Single Taxer that we should moderate our demands, we quote this from the same address:

"The cause is not ours, so that we may rightfully postpone or put in peril the victory by moderating our demands, stifling our convictions, or filing down our rebukes, to gratify any sickly taste of our own, or spare the delicate nerves of our neighbor."

To the argument that we might win the support of conservatives by our attitude, he says: "The elements which control public opinion and mould the masses are against us."

If it be urged that the appeal for the Single Tax be to the intellects rather than to the emotions and sympathies of men, Phillips furnishes the answer: "There are far more dead hearts to be quickened than confused intellects to be cleared up."

To the contention that we seek not to give offence, Phillips replies in the language of Fuller: "I should suspect the preaching had no salt in it if no galled jade did wince."

To the defence of the past political programme of Single Taxers by which they have sought to engage in political

activities as members of one or other of the old parties and and by such means induce them to take up measures "looking in our direction," Phillips gives us this noble reply:

"We do not *play* politics; anti-slavery is no half jest with us; it is a terrible earnest, with life or death, or worse than death, on the issue. It is no lawsuit, where it matters not to the good feelings of opposing counsel which way the verdict goes, and where advocates can shake hands as pleasantly as before."

To those who would condemn appeals to the principle in all its fulness and urge us not to denounce the political time-servers, the eminent but hollow idols, with heads of brass but feet of clay, Phillips says again:

"How shall we, a feeble minority, without weight or influence in the community, with no jury of millions to appeal to—denounced, villified, and contemned—how shall we make our way against the overwhelming weight of some colossal reputation, if we do not turn from the idolatrous present and appealing to the human race, say to your idols of today, Here we are defeated, but we will write our judgment with the iron spear of a century to come, and it shall never be forgotten, if we can help it, that you were false in your generation to the claims of the *landless*."

We have substituted the word *landless* for the word "slave" in Phillips' great address.

Again, and toward the close of this wonderful oration, Phillips furnishes the reply to those who think the Single Tax can be advanced by treating it timidly as a change in taxation merely:

"Caution is not always good in a cause such as ours. It is said that when Napoleon saw the day going against him he used to throw all caution to the winds, and trust himself to the hot impetuosity of his soldiers. The masses are governed more by impulse than conviction."

And again to the absurdly timid programme of some of our friends in the Single Tax movement his answer is conclusive:

"Every thoughtful and unprejudiced mind must see that such an evil (as slavery) will yield only to the most radical treatment. If you will consider the work we will have to do you will not think us needlessly aggressive, or that we dig down unnecessarily deep in building the foundations of our enterprise."

In the passages we have quoted Phillips gives us the keynote of the new movement for the Single Tax now beginning. The title of the address was "The Philosophy of the Abolition Movement." We have adapted the title along with the passages, so pertinent they seem.

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—JAMES G. MAGUIRE.