

## Lecture Work of George H. Duncan

IN the eight weeks following the middle of September, Mr. George H. Duncan, of Jaffrey, New Hampshire, field lecturer for the Henry George Lecture Association of Chicago, has filled the following engagements:

In Illinois, 1; Kansas, 6; California, 15; Oregon, 6; Washington, 7; British Columbia, 2; Idaho, 4; These lectures have been given under the following auspices: Service clubs, 12; special meetings, 10; city clubs, 6; schools and colleges, 4; forums, 3; state-wide organizations, 3; labor councils, 2; masonic lodge, 1.

In these forty-one engagements, the combined audience has been about 3,000. Newspaper reports so far collected have been considerably more than two full pages with several reports in club papers and other special publications.

The impression formed during the previous Eastern tour has been confirmed that when people can be induced to listen, they are found to be much interested in the question of taxation, while newspaper editors react to the knowledge that their readers are anxious to obtain suggestions for improvement in present methods of taxation.

It is regretfully to be reported that there is practically no organized effort on the part of Single Taxers to secure the enactment of laws in our direction. The Relief Tax Association, with headquarters at Los Angeles, and with Stoughton Cooley as secretary, is preparing to secure a vote in 1926 on an initiated measure to exempt \$2,000.00 of improvement to each taxpayer.

Such men as Henry Ware Allen, of Wichita, Clarence E. Todd and E. R. Zion, of San Francisco, A. H. Sanborn, of Oakland, Jackson H. Ralston, of Palo Alto, C. K. Hale, of Santa Cruz, A. E. Brock, of Salem, Oregon, Wm. S. U'Ren and James J. Sayer, of Portland, Ex-mayor Cotterill, Oliver T. Erickson and W. D. Lane, of Seattle, Dunning, of Boise, and Robert D. Wilson, of Emmett, Idaho, are as firmly fixed in their convictions as ever, but they seem to be somewhat discouraged over the failure of past efforts.

There is an interesting development at Pretty Prairie, Kansas, where F. B. Hamlin has been preaching the doctrine of Henry George, pure and undiluted, in his little shop for years, so that the entire community of about 400 people seems to have been converted. At a school-house meeting one evening, fifty men gathered for discussion for two hours, and practically everyone seemed to be convinced of the correctness of the Single Tax principle.

In Spokane, where William Matthews has been the moving spirit in the People's Forum, which has been holding open discussions weekly during the colder months for over twenty years, the Single Tax has been constantly the guiding principle. The result is a pretty strong sprink-

ling of Single Taxers in that city. Would there were a Fred Hamlin or a Will Matthews in every town and city.

It was interesting at Victoria, B. C. to learn at first hand from men like F. W. Davy and Alderman E. S. Woodward, the truth about the widely heralded "failure" of the Single Tax in that province. It should be noted, particularly, that even now they are in the same position as Pittsburgh, with land taxed 100% and buildings 50%, while many small towns still do not tax improvements. The factors in renewing assessments on improvements after a cessation of several years were (1) A provincial limitation of the tax rate on land at 2% and (2) the world-wide industrial depression following the war.

This subject really deserves more discussion than present space warrants, because a correct apprehension of the causes of British Columbia's retrogression would refute entirely charges that the "Single Tax failed," as well as show other communities how to avoid similar pitfalls.

To E. P. E. Troy, of San Francisco, the movement is indebted for a painstaking investigation of the operation of California's irrigation districts. Here, almost unnoticed, pure Single Tax, for the purposes at hand, is in effect. Briefly summarized, there are 104 districts, comprising four million acres, with 185,000 population, where improvements are untaxed. This subject, too, deserves fuller treatment.

An editorial in the *Saturday Evening Post* of November 14th, in discussing prohibition, used these significant and true words—"While it had the whole-hearted backing of many moral reform groups, the force that finally put it over was economic." The Single Tax is fundamentally a moral issue. To put it actually into effect will require economic pressure. The present demand of the people for community benefits, resulting in taxes burdensome when wrongly applied, is bringing a tremendous economic pressure on productive and distributive business. Just now is an opportune time for all Single Taxers, who know the real solution, to extend their influence in every way possible.

## The Liberal Party's Programme

THE Rural Report of the Liberal Land Committee, which forecasts the policy of the British Liberal Party, is what might have been expected—an attempt to dodge the real solution of the land question. Everywhere it hints at the problem only to side-step with uncanny agility. Instead of suggesting the simple remedy, it erects a national bureaucracy of land and survey commissions, tribunals and government departments. Its recommendations are purely socialistic and ignore the Liberal Party's repeated demands for the taxation of land values. It is governmentalism run mad. It is a betrayal of promises made over and over again to the people of the United Kingdom. Like many of the recent speeches of Lloyd

George, it is an example of *suppressio veri*, with phrases that are meant to be comforting and are intended to deceive.

This then is to be the Liberal programme. Our friends of the United Committee perhaps expected to be deceived and the Commonwealth Land party people have all along predicted just what would happen. The difference between the two groups is that the latter have declared definitely that they would have no political partnership in the deception and withdrew to form a party of their own for the collection of the entire rent of land on an appointed date.

This voluminous Report, which concerns itself with rural land opens up the land question for popular discussion. Thus far it is to be welcomed, for there is much in the report that furnishes ammunition to our friends. And they have not been slow to take advantage of it. *Land and Liberty* has opened its guns on the Liberal programme. It has drawn the fire of the Liberal Land Committee. The London *Daily Chronicle* of Nov. 11 in a column article reviews the reply of the Liberal organization to the United Committee and makes extracts from it.

From a letter from John Paul, editor of *Land and Liberty*, we quote the following:

"Lloyd George has certainly given us a bit of an issue this time. His own proposals are doomed to be put into cold storage in due course, but we can pass on Single Tax compliments to the 'Wizard' for the opening he has provided. I only wish we were in a position to take a more imposing part in this engaging publicity campaign, but you can depend upon it we are doing the best we can in the circumstances. We are getting much free space in the press these days. The subject is topical and editors on such occasions as you know are out for suitable 'copy'."

## Joseph Silbern timer

ANOTHER old time Single Taxer has passed away in the person of Joseph Silbern timer, once an active member of the Manhattan Single Tax Club, and a speaker and worker for the cause for many years. He had passed the age of three score and ten, though he hardly looked it. He was a frequent visitor at this office, and was a valued friend of the Editor of LAND AND FREEDOM. Every worker for the cause in and around New York knew Joe Silbern timer.

It was curious that he had never quite learned to master the English language and as he spoke rapidly it was often difficult to follow him. But with a pen in hand he was a different creature. He wrote like an angel. The discreet and immaculate pages of the *Evening Post* welcomed his articles, many of which appeared during the last few years. His knowledge of economics and his ability to express himself in writing were not surpassed by any man in the movement. He has left in manuscript a critical

work on Socialism entitled "Marx on Marx," which may soon find a publisher.

Joe Silbern timer will be missed from the circles in which he was long a modest and greatly beloved personality.

## Jerome O'Neill

THE death of Jerome O'Neill, better known to his intimates as "Jerry," was announced in our last issue. It came as a shock to many of our readers

Of late he had dropped out of active work for the cause which had enlisted the activities of his earlier years; his hopes had, without adequate reason as it seemed to us, become clouded; his health was not good; he spoke with sorrow of defections of those who had formerly worked with him.

A characteristic of "Jerry" O'Neill was his sterling honesty. This endeared him to Henry George who esteemed him as a friend and listened to, if he did not always follow his advice.

Leonard Tuttle of this city who knew him well writes LAND AND FREEDOM as follows:

"All those who were active in the early days of the Henry George movement knew Jerome (Jerry) O'Neill. He was a close friend of Mr. George and a valued leader in the movement.

He believed that private ownership of land with the consequent private appropriation of land rent was the great fundamental injustice that afflicts humanity. He was not given to trimming or minimizing his statement of belief. He was too honest for that.

He had a highly developed desire for justice which seems to be a rare quality in mankind. He was always genial and pleasant and to know him was a pleasant experience in life.

He will live in the memory of his friends."

MILLIONS of men who would be useful citizens are sitting in demoralizing idleness because they are denied access to the land for which they fought. We turn a deaf ear to those who urge emigration as a remedy. Why should our men emigrate? What is there to hinder them settling on their own land? What, indeed, except the land system under whose dead weight the country is slipping to stagnation? Dire times need drastic remedies. There must be a thorough overhaul of the land system. Land must be unlocked that those may work who will. 'God gave the land for the people' is no less true now than when the Liberal Party made it their battle-cry. Let the people have what is theirs. Let the land be freed.

—John Bull, London, England.

Missionary: "Have you been Christianized?"

Heathen: "Not entirely; they took my land but I still have my clothes."