Who's Who in Georgism

Stephen Bell

Stephen Bell was born in New York on February 22, 1864. His earliest known occupation was that of "printer's devil," from which he graduated to proof reader on several New York newspapers, until in 1916 he was asked to join the editorial staff of "Commerce and Finance," as a result of a series of articles on fundamental problems of the day.

He was one of the Georgists who came to the philosophy of freedom through an understanding of the importance of free trade, and on this subject he has written many illuminating articles. He was the first teacher of a course based upon "Protection or Free Trade" at the Henry George School of Social Science, and his notes were used in preparing the manual for this course.

About the age of 30 he became acquainted with Henry George, and joined the valiant workers in the "back-end-of-the-truck" campaigns, including George's last campaign for the mayoralty of New York City. Speaking of these times Mr. Bell says: "I used to think human cussedness was the principal trouble with the world, but I am convinced that it is not the cussedness of mankind but ignorance that stands mostly in the way of achieving a civilization worthy of the name." Since the inception of the School he has been very closely connected with it as teacher and advisor.

His last and perhaps most important contribution to Georgism is his excellent book "Rebel, Priest and Prophet," dealing with the life of Dr. McGlynn and giving a scholarly though inspired story of an important historic incident in the movement.

Perhaps Mr. Bell's most valuable contribution to the movement are his three sons, two of whom have been active in the Henry George School.