

## Lecture Tour of George H. Duncan

**D**URING the past three months Mr. George H. Duncan, of Jaffrey, New Hampshire, as field lecturer for the Henry George Lecture Association, 538 South Dearborn St., Chicago, has filled the following engagements:

May 13, Concord, N. H., Kiwanis Club; May 13, Keene, N. H., Norris Brotherhood, M. E. Church; June 1, Holyoke, Mass., Lions' Club; June 2, Boston, Mass., Civitan Club, (Broadcasted from Station WEEI); June 7, Boston, Mass., New Thought Forum; June 8, Nashua, N. H., Lions' Club; June 9, Taunton, Mass., Lions' Club; June 10, Oakdale, Mass., Worcester County Assessors' Ass'n.; June 10, Winchendon, Mass., Grange; June 16, Worcester, Mass., Exchange Club; June 19, Toronto, Ont., Tax Reform Club; June 23, Rochester, N. Y., Lions' Club; June 25, Niagara Falls, N. Y., Kiwanis Club; July 9, Jamestown, N. Y., Kiwanis Club; July 10, Pittsburgh, Pa., Henry George Club; July 10, Pittsburgh, Pa., (Broadcasted from Station WCAE); July 13, Jamestown, N. Y., Rotary Club; July 14, Pittsburgh, Pa., 27th Ward Board of Trade; July 16, Johnstown, Pa., Kiwanis Club; July 20, Keene, N. H., Exchange Club.

In these twenty engagements he has spoken directly to over a thousand people, besides an unknown number who may have been listening to the radio. Wherever time has been available a questionnaire has been conducted, eagerly participated in by the audience, which in every instance has evinced a keen interest in the proposed tax system. Newspaper reports of the engagements have occupied 175 inches of column, equal to about a page and one-half. That so much newspaper space was available is not to be taken as a tribute to the reputation of the speaker or to his skill in presenting our philosophy, but is an evidence that the public at large, as sensed by newspaper editors, is keenly aware of the shortcomings of present taxes, and anxious to find some way out of the present maze.

In Pittsburgh the Henry George Club is full of life and courage. It has a fine corps of interesting and competent speakers, who frequently fill engagements in various parts of the city and neighboring cities. Mr. M. S. Robinson, Mr. Percy R. Williams, Mr. John M. Henry, Mr. Harry H. Willock, not to mention others, are always available to preach the gospel of Single Tax. That veteran of many conflicts, F. W. Maguire, is secretary of the club, and indefatigable in his work. Within recent months he has made arrangements to have Single Tax publications placed on sale in 52 book-stores of Pittsburgh, as a result of which there have been sold 834 copies *Progress and Poverty*, 272 *Land Question*, 438 "*Moses*," 217 *Labor Question*. Besides this over twelve thousand pamphlets have been distributed gratis. Is it any wonder, then, that Pittsburgh is in the forefront of tax advance, with

buildings assessed at only half their value, and with a strong movement on foot to secure legislative authority for still further reduction of taxes on improvements.

In Toronto the Single Taxers were somewhat disheartened over the defeat of their Local Option plan, followed by the repeal of the so-called "Drury Act," the basis for Local Option. Their recent campaign, in which some \$4,000 was expended, was met by the usual misrepresentations, in spite of which they secured 12,000 votes; and they feel that practically each one of the 12,000 is now a sort of distributing centre for their doctrine. Mr. W. A. Douglass, Mr. Alan C. Thompson, Dr. W. McLarren, Mr. A. W. Roebuck, Mr. Sydenham Thompson, and others are active in the work.

In Rochester, N. Y., the principle of excess condemnation has been employed on four occasions, three not yet being completed. In the first case a street was widened and straightened, and the excess-condemned lots sold for sufficient to pay for all the land used in widening and a profit to the city of about \$1,500.00. This favorable result has caused considerable interest in an extension of the principle of taking for the community the benefit of public improvements. Mr. A. L. Vedder, Deputy Superintendent of City Planning, presented a paper last January at a meeting of the American Society of Civil Engineers, giving the result in Rochester.

Jamestown, N. Y., is just now establishing the Somers System of Valuation, the expense being borne by voluntary contributions by the manufacturers of the city, who feel that more equity will result from a scientific assessment. The current interest in taxation there made Single Tax addresses especially timely, and considerable interest was evinced at both of the meetings.

The outstanding feature of the speaker's experience thus far is the intense interest manifested in the subject of taxation particularly by business men, to whom the pressure has been brought home vividly within the last few years. So the time seems opportune to spread our doctrines as widely as possible.

It might be added that the speaker uses three different topics, adapted to the character of the gatherings addressed, but all coming to the same conclusion, i.e., that all community revenues should be raised by a tax on land values. To business men's organizations, "*Rational Taxation*," showing particularly the destructive effect of taxes on improvements as compared with the benefits of land value taxation; "*The Business of Taxation*," showing how land value taxation follows the lines adopted by all other businesses in charging customers for "*Value Received*;" and "*Our Natural Heritage, The Earth*," a somewhat longer talk, which traces the moral relations that should exist between man and his Mother Earth, and which is adapted particularly to organizations where there is opportunity for more full discussion than so-called "*Service Clubs*."