

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