

Richard McGhee

THE Henry George philosophy has attracted many ardent disciples in all parts of the world, men of devotion and character—fired by enthusiasm—almost divine—to make a contribution to the cause. Among their number the name of Richard McGhee who recently died in Glasgow, stands high. It might truly be said of him that his life was given to the cause.

Born near Lurgan, like so many of the Irish people, he went to Glasgow in his early youth and served his time as an engineer. He was quickly driven to the study of social questions by the conditions of the working population of Glasgow and became an ardent temperance and social reformer. The great temperance advocate, Dr. F. R. Lees, gave him a copy of "Progress and Poverty" soon after it was published. He eagerly devoured it and became an enthusiastic propagandist of its gospel. Soon after he left the engineering trade and became a commercial traveller, representing a big stationery firm in Ireland, Scotland and England. This gave him a great opportunity to preach the George gospel and wherever he went, on rail in boat or hotel, he was busy in the cause, arousing discussion, distributing literature and organizing supporters. He met Henry George on his first visit to Ireland and they became fast friends. McGhee was the guiding spirit and organizer of George's great lecture campaigns which made such an indelible impression on the public opinion of Great Britain.

The revolt of the workers in the last decades of the 19th century gave him a new platform for propaganda which he took full advantage of. A strike of the Dock laborers took place in Glasgow and he threw himself into it with all his characteristic energy. Out of this strike grew the great organization known as the National Union of Dock Laborers, of which he became President. There is little doubt that the existence of a Labor Government in England today is largely due to the seed sown by McGhee in these years. He concentrated public attention on the injustice of the existing order in a way that was unique and awakened the workers to a consciousness of their importance in wealth production. He constantly pointed out the inefficiency of Trade Union methods and demonstrated at every opportunity that nothing short of the abolition of land monopoly could emancipate labor. It was at this time that he originated the policy known as "Ca Canny" which created such a furore among the employing class.

"Suiting labor to wages," he said, "was no more immoral than fitting product to price, a well known practice of manufacturers."

An intimate friend of Michael Davitt and John Dillon, his sympathies were always with Ireland in the Home Rule struggle. He was returned to Parliament to represent an Irish constituency and for years gave himself to the work of Irish Home Rule. There was scarcely a con-

stituency in Scotland and few in England where he was not known as the Home Rule protagonist and many a Liberal victory was due to his exertions. His faith in Lincoln's democracy, "Government of the people, for the people, by the people," never wavered and when opponents argued against the fitness of the Irish people for Self-Government all the indignation of his nature was kindled to flame. He visited the United States several times and made many friends. His last visit, after the outbreak of the Great War, was in company with T. P. O'Connor and Joseph Devlin.

For the past number of years he has been living quietly in Glasgow in the company of his loving and faithful wife and daughter, to whom he was greatly attached. To the last he was interested in public questions. He passed away at the age of seventy-nine after a few days illness with pneumonia.

It is difficult to appraise the worth of men like Richard McGhee. They are the salt of the earth—pioneers in the onward and upward struggle of humanity—builders of the future. Their persistence at all times in the history of the world is proof that the seed of the truth never dies and that in the fullness of time the harvest will be reaped.

The funeral took place on Thursday, April 17, attended by his four sons, Richard, Fred, George and Hugh, and a large number of his Single Tax and Irish friends.

Joseph Davison, of Bellaghy, County Derry, delivered the following address:

"The last post has sounded for our dear friend Richard McGhee. He has passed beyond our ken, but his life's work remains—a sweet memory to us all and an inspiration to those who would help in the great uphill struggle for human liberty and emancipation. His passing was just as he would have it—no prolonged ebbing away—but the terminus reached in the fulness of mental vigor.

"It might be said of him in the words of Browning.

"Here had been the general and chief
Through a whole campaign
Of the world's lives and deaths
Doing the King's work all the dim day long.

"If there ever was a man who lived an unselfish life—who gave of his best to the service of humanity, Richard McGhee was that man. His sympathy for human suffering, his resentment to injustice of any kind—his intolerance of hypocrisy and sham, were his outstanding characteristics. Had his wonderful energy been devoted to the material things of life he would have ranked high among the world's successes. But he chose to stand for truth and justice as he saw them, regardless of personal consequences and in the sum of things who can say but he chose the better part? As the Master mind of Henry George put it, "Success! Why, falsehood has often that to give and Injustice often has that to give. Must not Truth and Justice have something to give that is their own by proper right—their in essence and not by accident?"

"We part with him in sorrow and I would close with the words of his great teacher and friend, Henry George.

"The only thing certain to any of us is death.

"Like the swallow darting through thy hall, such, O King, is the life of man!" We come from where we know not; we go—who shall say? Impenetrable darkness behind, and gathering shades before. What, when our time comes, does it matter whether we have fared daintily or not, whether we have worn soft raiment or not, whether we leave a great fortune or nothing at all, whether we shall have reaped honors or been despised, have been counted learned or ignorant—as compared with how we may have used that talent which has been entrusted to us for the Master's service? What shall it matter, when eyeballs glaze and ears grow dull, if out of the darkness may stretch a hand, and into the silence may come a voice:

"Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things; enter thou into the joy of the Lord?"

California Preparing For National Conference

THE actual birthday of Henry George has been selected as the opening day for the Fifth Annual Henry George Congress, which will meet in San Francisco from September 2d to 4th, and immediately follows Labor Day. The idea of holding the national conference this year on the Pacific Coast has apparently met with general favor and, while the number who can arrange to make a transcontinental trip is always somewhat limited, already a number of Eastern Single Taxers are making their plans to go, and a large attendance from the Western section seems to be assured.

A. J. Milligan, President of the Civic Chamber of Economics of San Francisco, and proprietor of the Henry George Hotel, has been appointed Chairman of the Convention Committee and, supported by able and energetic co-workers, has been active for several weeks past and expresses full confidence that the Congress of 1930 is going to be one of the most interesting and successful gatherings yet held under the auspices of the Henry George Foundation. The Single Tax leaders on the Coast seem to look upon the approaching Congress as timely and as affording an excellent opportunity to further strengthen the movement in that section and bring about closer cooperation.

One of the features of the convention will be the dedication of a bronze tablet which it is planned to place on the building now occupying the spot in San Francisco where Henry George wrote his immortal "Progress and Poverty," the 50th anniversary of which was celebrated at Pittsburgh last September. The Mayor of San Francisco has accepted the invitation to deliver an address on this

occasion in honor of the Prophet of San Francisco and his great contribution to humanity.

While programme-making is now only in the preliminary stage, it may be said that the committee is planning many interesting features and the presence of a number of prominent speakers is virtually assured.

The San Francisco Convention and Tourist Bureau is cooperating actively with the local Single Tax organization, and as all the railroads offer greatly reduced rates during the summer season, it is hoped that all who possibly can will take advantage of this favorable opportunity to combine the enjoyment of the wonderful scenery and delightful climate with the pleasures to be derived from the good fellowship and stimulating atmosphere of the annual Henry George Congress.

Lecture Tours Through the Middle West

SECRETARY PERCY R. WILLIAMS, of the Henry George Foundation, has been devoting the month of May to a lecture tour of Ohio, Indiana and Illinois, the present tour having been arranged through the cooperation of the Henry George Lecture Association, now affiliated with the Foundation. Generous newspaper publicity has been given practically everywhere to reports of his speeches, tax questions being at present very much to the forefront, State Tax Commissions having hearings on in Ohio and Indiana and the extraordinary tax situation in Chicago attracting widespread attention. Following is a list of recent engagements of Mr. Williams:

April 30—Canton, Ohio, Lions Club; May 1—Youngstown, Ohio, Lions Club; May 2—Ashtabula, Ohio, Rotary Club; May 5—Dayton, Ohio, Y. M. C. A.; May 6—Rensselaer, Ind., Rotary Club; May 7—Lebanon, Ind., Kiwanis Club; May 8—Washington, Ind., Rotary Club; May 9—Indianapolis, Ind., Exchange Club; May 17—Chicago, Ill., Single Tax Club; May 19—Kenosha, Wis., Optimist Club; May 20—South Bend, Ind., Chamber of Commerce; May 21—Aurora, Ill., Kiwanis Club; May 22—Oak Park, Ill., Lions Club; May 27—Chicago, Ill., South Central Kiwanis Club; May 28—Chicago, Ill., Woodlawn Kiwanis Club; May 29—Hamilton, Ohio, Rotary Club.

Attorney William N. McNair, of Pittsburgh, now on the lecture staff of the Henry George Lecture Association, is in the midst of a two months lecture tour through the Middle West, embracing the states of Ohio, Indiana, Michigan, Illinois, Wisconsin and Minnesota, and is meeting everywhere with a fine reception. Herewith is a list of his engagements:

For an appointment in some unfilled time—morning, noon, or evening, write to the Henry George Lecture Association, 538 South Dearborn St., Chicago.

Mingo Junction, Ohio, Kiwanis Club, Tuesday, April 29th—noon; Bucyrus, Ohio, M'gr's Ass'n of Central Ohio, Wednesday, April