

SYDNEY VERE PEARSON, M.A., M.D.

In our previous issue we had to report with deep regret the death of Dr. S. Vere Pearson, in Kingston, Jamaica, on March 18, at the age of 75, which has lost to the causes to which he dedicated himself a man of outstanding character and accomplishment. He was an eminent physician and surgeon, earning for himself a world-wide reputation in that profession. His zeal as a social reformer was bound up in the Henry George movement. Although himself a partisan for abjuring the use of the term "taxation" as applied to the collection of the rent of land—in this he was a follower of the late R. L. Outhwaite—he allowed nothing to stand in the way of his goodwill toward every kind of educational activity. We doubt if there is any of the many agencies for promoting the Henry George principle and policy, at home or abroad, which failed to enjoy the encouragement of his co-operation. For 40 years or more he was a subscriber to *LAND & LIBERTY* and his contributions to the United Committee were constant and generous. The objects of the International Union also absorbed him, and at all its conferences, save that in New York, 1939, where he could not be present, he took a prominent part. All who worked with him, whether in personal touch or in a correspondence which reached far and wide, will cherish these associations. In the medical world he had fame as one of the greatest authorities on tuberculosis, and as medical superintendent of the world-renowned sanatorium in Mundesley, Norfolk, from which he had retired shortly before his departure to the West Indies, bent on holiday. Among his various travels abroad that was his second journey there. "He was planning," Mrs. Dorothea Simmons has written us, "to lead discussion groups on the subject of Land Value Taxation which is now much to the fore here, but he wanted to pay a few visits first and attend the opening ceremonies of the new West Indies University. The very day after the opening he fell seriously ill with some sort of brain hæmorrhage. Mrs. Pearson flew out from England, but before she could get here he had lost his speech. After about four weeks illness he died and was buried behind the very English-looking stone church at 'Half-way Tree.' Mr. F. R. Williamson was one of the pall-bearers"—Mr. Williamson the leading exponent of Land Value Taxation in Jamaica.

Remarkable tributes to the work Dr. Pearson achieved have appeared in the *Lancet* and the *British Medical Journal*. His autobiography *Men, Medicine and Myself* (in which, incidentally, there was a charming digression in a page of high esteem for his friend and collaborator in the Henry George cause—Rev. Mervyn J. Stewart) "unwittingly presents," as the *Medical Journal* says, "the self-portrait of a near-genius with a zest and curiosity which were boundless. Intense honesty, kindness and sympathy were among his leading characteristics." He made many valuable contributions to medical literature. As a social reformer he wrote much. His main works in that field, *The Growth and Distribution of Population* and *London's Overgrowth*, were contributions of a special nature to the literature on the land question. A large and representative company attended the Memorial Service held on April 18 at the Mundesley Parish Church. We extend to Mrs. Pearson, to her son and daughter, Jeffery and Sylvia, and to other members of the family our sincere sympathy in their bereavement.

A. W. MADSEN.

In my long acquaintance and friendship with Dr. Pearson I have been greatly impressed by his loyalty to a noble ideal and his kindly and unflinching tolerance. His connection with the Manchester Land Values League began thirty years ago, and although his home in Norfolk was so far distant, he supported its work with his presence and encouragement whenever that was possible. His views on some questions of policy differed from those of some of his Manchester colleagues, and it was when such questions were discussed that his genial tolerance and goodwill were manifested. No difference of opinion affected his friendly attitude towards a colleague, and his interest and support were freely given to people and movements whose aims were, in some cases, only remotely related to his own ideal of economic freedom. When the Manchester League lost its valiant and well-loved leader—Dr. Percy McDougall—in 1941, Dr. Pearson accepted invitation to become its President. From that time until his death he took an active and generous part in the League's various

activities, and his advice and material assistance were always available. His brotherly kindness to me was shown in his interest and concern when I was ill a year ago. One way in which he showed this was by writing to the surgeon who had my case in hand, and in other ways he contributed to my well-being. His death is a hard blow to the Manchester League and the movement elsewhere at a time when men of long experience and proved zeal are rare; to me it means the loss of a dear and warm-hearted personal friend.

A. H. WELLER.

This writer met this "Rebel, Physician and Prophet" at Copenhagen in 1926. Links then forged grew ever closer, and were recognised by him publicly in terms only too generous.

As the greatest authority of his day in altering the methods of the fight against tuberculosis, he learned to hate physical exploitation, and the cult of working for so many hours of as many days as possible, so popular in wartime circles. So he did not flinch at sympathy with Anarchists, while he tried to sow Georgeist seeds in their European minds: with little success! And so with the Pacifist groups, who as a body also rejected the idea of social justice as a foundation.

He was an intense admirer of such men as W. C. Owen and R. L. Outhwaite, whose devotion to Georgeism in principle often led them to scorn those who had to move through barbed wire and minefields prepared by formidable enemies: and his position as president of the Manchester Land Values League in association with the United Committee and the International Union entailed a wide change in tactics, though none in principle.

It will be a lasting stain on the War Cabinets that the police were ordered to raid his office; when, of course, nothing discreditable was unearthed. He grieved at the constant reports of deaths by starvation in the British realm of Jamaica, an earthly Paradise ruled by an oligarchy; and in association with a new form of Government went, on retirement from medical practice, to see and advise what could be done on Georgeist lines to save life. Probably like Henry George he knew the battle was one for a younger and stronger man. But he went on, and at Kingston fell in his lifelong battle against injustice, cruelty and suffering. A very lonely and very great fighter.

M. J. S.

SARAH CATTERALL

We regret to announce the death of Mrs. S. Catterall, member of the United Committee and widow of the late David Catterall, both she and he giving devoted and exceptional service in the work of the Manchester Land Values League. Her interest was bound up also in the Henry George School in Manchester, which she helped to establish, and in which she took a very active part. At the funeral service the United Committee was represented by Mr. V. H. Blundell.

IN MEMORIAM.

One of the happy results of the Manchester League's campaign of open-air meetings in North Manchester was the meeting of George Musson's sister with the late David Catterall. The progress of the friendship then formed is recorded in the minutes of the League's Committee meeting held on June 26th, 1912: "By special request Mr. Catterall and Miss Musson were present at the meeting and were presented with a dinner service as a token of esteem and good wishes on the occasion of their approaching marriage." In the years that followed this happy Single Tax wedding, Mrs. Catterall shared to the full her husband's zeal for the Henry George cause, and soon qualified herself as a partner in his good work. Both he and she were members not only of the Manchester Land Value League, but also of the United Committee. For many years Mrs. Catterall took an active interest in the Women's Co-operative Guilds and used her influence to arouse thought on fundamental economics. Though saddened by the loss of a daughter, who showed great promise as a worker in the movement, and later by the death of her husband, Mrs. Catterall never wavered in her devotion and service to the cause which the League and the Committee exist to promote. She leaves one daughter, and to her and her family are assured the deep sympathy of all who had known and shared her mother's warm and helpful friendship.

A. H. WELLER.