

as if they were purely the products of their own labor and industry, and that they can exact in exchange for them famine or scarcity prices. Finally, that they enjoy the enviable privilege of appropriating the hard-earned property of others against their wills, and do them no wrong even if they charge them a rent for the use of what would really appear to be their own.

Landlordism Robs all Classes.

Hitherto we have confined ourselves almost exclusively to the consideration of the various forms of injustice, and the spoliation of private property which the existing system of land tenure enables the proprietors of the soil to inflict on the tenant farmers of Ireland. But the tenant farmers, though a numerous, an influential and an important section of the nation, are, after all, not the nation. Despite our cruel misgovernment in the past, some few of our national industries still survive, as well as the industry of the cultivation of the soil. Then there are, moreover, certain trades and professions whose services are indispensable to any nation that has any claims to be considered *civilized*.

But the Irish system of land tenure wrongs and impoverishes not only those who live by and on the land, but all other classes in the community as well. It robs not only the cultivators of the soil, but every man in the community, of a substantial portion of the hard-earned fruits of his labor, no matter what the trade or profession in which he may labor for his living. It is, therefore, not a local or a particular grievance, but a great national injustice, and that, I think, is its most objectionable peculiarity. I have already shown that the land of every country is the public property of the people of that country, and, consequently, that its exclusive appropriation by a class is a substantial injustice and wrong done to every man in that country, whom it robs of his fair share of the common inheritance. The injustice of this appropriation is enormously enhanced by the fact that it further enables the landlords, without any risk or trouble, and, in fact, makes it a matter of course for them, to appropriate a vast share of the earnings of the nation besides. They plundered the people first of God's gifts in the land, and that act of spoliation puts them under a sort of necessity of plundering them again of an enormous amount of their direct earnings and wages. The line of argument that leads directly to this conclusion seems abundantly clear.

Land Values Intended by Providence for Public Purposes.

It would seem as if Providence had destined the land to serve as a large economical reservoir, to catch, to collect and preserve the overflowing streams of wealth that are constantly escaping from the great public industrial works that are always going on

in communities that are progressive and prosperous. Besides the permanent improvements that are made in the land itself, and which increases its productiveness and value, there are other industrial works not carried out on the land itself, but on its surroundings and in its vicinity, and which enhance its value very considerably. A new road is made for the accommodation of a district; a new bridge is thrown across a river or a stream to made two important localities accessible to each other; a new railway passes close by and connects it with certain large and important centres of industry; a new factory or a new mill is erected, or a new town is built in the neighborhood. Industrial works like these add very materially to the value of all the land in their vicinity. It is a well known fact that a new railway has in several instances doubled the value of the land through which it passed, in consequence of the increased facilities it had afforded for the sale of its agricultural products. In every state of society, which is progressive and improving, such industrial works are continually going on, and hence the value of the land is rising also everywhere.

The Great National Property Which Landlords are Permitted to Appropriate.

But now the great national property which Providence had destined for the support of the public burdens of society has been diverted from its original purpose to minister to the wants, the necessities, and perhaps the extravagance of a class. The explanation of this extraordinary act of national spoliation will be found in the fact that hitherto this class could do just as it pleased; the government of the country lay for centuries exclusively in its hands, and despite the combined influence of "English radicalism" and "Irish obstructionism" it is practically in its hands still.

The enormous value then thus superadded to the land from the two sources just indicated passes directly with the land itself into the hands of those who own it. Those who hold the ownership of the land hold also the ownership of all the accessions of value it receives from all quarters. This increase in the value of their property cost no sacrifice, demanded no painful effort of labor. Even while they slept their rent rolls went on increasing and multiplying.

The value continually imparted to the land by the industrial exertions of the community, in the construction of harbors and bridges, in the making of new roads and railways, in the erection of new factories, mills and houses, etc., has all gone with the land, has all been confiscated and appropriated by the owners of the soil. Professor Cairnes feels sorely perplexed to account for some of the anomalous results of this appropriation. "A bale of cloth," he says, "a machine, a house, owes its value to the labor expended upon it, and belongs to the