

fold, fifty fold, a hundred fold or a thousand fold. Is this because he has increased the productiveness of his energies, and the abundance of his industry? Is it because of his industry that the harvest waves, that dwellings increase, that railroads develop? Not at all, but the very reverse. Does he give abundance for abundance, benefit for benefit? Not at all, but the very reverse. It is out of the abundance of our products that he is licensed by law to appropriate that abundance and to leave us but a meagre relict of penury. The transaction is not enrichment for enrichment, but while we enrich, the land holder impoverishes.

Could there be anything more contrary to the spirit of true religion than this method by which, as fast as one party does the enriching, another party appropriates the riches, leaving the producers in poverty?

The producers of abundance despoiled and left with scarcity; others allowed to appropriate the abundance because land becomes scarce; and by our present arrangements this may continue to the end of time, the obligation of the industrious classes ever increasing, thus insuring their endless impoverishment, the power of the land owner to appropriate the products of industry ever increasing, thus insuring the widening of the gulf between leisured affluence and overworked poverty. Can we be convinced that this is the fruits of righteousness and of that "love which rejoices not in iniquity"?

We have no difficulty in understanding why we should pay the farmer who feeds us, the tailor who clothes us, the teacher who instructs us, and any one who produces for us, or renders us a service; but we cannot possibly understand why we should have to pay any man for access to the land, the forest, the minerals or the other things that man never furnished, any more than we should have to pay him for the sunlight, the air or any other gift of the Creator, and it is equally difficult to understand why we should have to pay an increasing amount of our productions to land holders because the increase of population makes land more scarce. Is not the whole system of land speculation an attempt to secure the products of industry by the impoverishment of the producers; how can it succeed except by the spoliation and degradation of industry? Is it not a wrong that should receive the most emphatic condemnation of the whole church?

You urge us, you plead with us, you beseech us to come and unite with you and to yield ourselves to the claims of religion. But what kind of religion do you ask us to adopt? A religion that rejoices in equity, that loves justice and hates iniquity; or a religion that looks on the spoliation of labor, if not with complacency at any rate too often in silent tolerance or even acquiescence? A religion that recognizes every child of God as equally the heir of God, the heir to the bounties of the All-Father-Creator, or a religion that ignores the