

WHAT ABOUT CANADIAN COAL LANDS?

The following extracts are from an article by Henry George in the *Standard* of Nov. 19, 1887 :—

The strike in the Lehigh Valley coal region still continues. The miners are asking for a pitiful increase of eight per cent. upon a scale of wages which just barely enables them to live. Any one who visits the Lehigh valley, even in ordinary times, will see that the highly protected American laborer, in this part of Pennsylvania at least, is hardly, if at all, better off than the poorest class in western Ireland. And now, with fifteen thousand men out of employment, the region is as though swept by the abomination of desolation.

Labor of itself is perfectly helpless in these Pennsylvania coal fields, because the laborer has no legal right whatever to the use of land, the indispensable natural element of human life and human production. There is enough unused coal land in this region to give employment to a far greater number than the men who are now standing idle because they cannot agree on a matter of wages with their employers. But this land, though unused, is all held in private ownership, and although neither the miners themselves nor any one who wanted to employ them in mining coal could get permission to use this land without paying for it a very high price, it is taxed at purely nominal rates—land worth thousands of dollars per acre paying taxes at the rate of seventeen cents per acre.

In this region one may hear just such stories of individual tyranny and oppression as may, or perhaps, rather, could some years

ago
stor
fiar
the
trad
only
being
He
cases
use
work
and
befor
regio
ough
really
the
\$6.67
on wh
thirty
the re
when
age n
of th
miner
of th
tity o
capita
does
some
missi
was i