

Nor is this all. For the manufacturing industries also depend very largely upon direct and immediate access to land for the sites of their factories, mills, warehouses, and offices; and part of their manufacturing is due to the demand of the land workers (including the miners) for machinery, tools, buildings, clothes, furniture, etc.

(3) The raw materials, and the partly or wholly manufactured goods, can only be moved by human agency, and this fact opens up a new vista of useful and productive, though again secondary, employment. Corn in the farmer's stockyard and coal at the pit-head are not yet "produced" for me if I want toast for breakfast. Not only must the miller grind the corn, and the baker turn the flour into loaves, but, in order to bring this about, the carter must take the grist to the mill and the railwayman must bring the sacks of flour to the baker and the baker's boy must come with his hand-barrow or basket to my door; railwaymen must bring the coal to the London merchant and the coal-porter with his waggon deliver it to the baker and to me. Thus we have the third great group of industries in this triple industrial alliance—those, viz., engaged in the distribution and exchange of the goods produced by the other two groups. By means of *transport and "shop-keeping"* the raw material passes from its first producer on the land to the manufacturer (or series of manufacturers) who work it up into desired forms, and so on to the places where, and the people by whom, it is wanted for consumption. So that all the persons who are engaged in the final stage of production—the distribution and exchange of the goods, produced directly or indirectly from land—are no less concerned in the question of access to land than are those who till the fields or win the coal. Our sailors, railwaymen, all workers in road-transport (whether by horsed vehicles or by motor-lorries), dockers, lightermen, stablemen, warehousemen, packers, porters, shopkeepers, shop-assistants, would soon learn their dependence upon the land if the earth refused to give her increase, or if the landlords used their monopoly-power altogether to prevent access to land. All coal-porters, and most railwaymen and many sailors must have learnt lately that their employment is, as it were, a by-product of the industry of the miners. But exactly the same is true of the black-coated workers—bankers, accountants, auctioneers, manufacturers' agents, commercial travellers, merchants, clerks, book-keepers, house-agents, etc., etc., so long as they are dealing in real values of material things.

While the material to be transported or exchanged is thus derived, directly or indirectly, from land, the machinery of transport is largely dependent upon coal. Even if we electrify our railways, electricity is, as it were, fluid coal. We replace the steam-engine by the internal combustion engine driven by petrol. Petrol, like coal, comes from land. We try to dodge the landlord by generating electric current by water-power, and we find that all the river banks, and many of the rivers, are "private property," and that our electric mains for the distribution of current must pass under or over land, and pay for the privilege. Fall back on horses, and you must get their feed from land.

We want access to the whole of Nature's store-houses. We can equalize the natural inequalities of English land, and the unequal needs of English

citizens for direct access to land, by taxing land values into the national and municipal exchequers.

FREDK. VERINDER.

(From a paper read by Mr. Verinder last month to the Council of the English League for the Taxation of Land Values, to be published shortly by the League, as a pamphlet, with the title, "Is there a Cure for Unemployment?")

OUR INIQUITOUS LAND LAWS

The Rev. F. C. Spurr, the well-known Baptist minister of Regent's Park Chapel, London, has a contributed article in the CHRISTIAN WORLD of 7th July under the above title. He refers to the enormous increase in rent which the Regent's Park Chapel is called on to pay if the lease expiring in June next year is renewed. After referring to a number of illustrations showing the growth of land value and its appropriation by the private landowners, Mr. Spurr goes on to say:—

"The leasehold system is only one phase of the great land question. It is the question as a whole that needs the serious attention of the nation. It becomes more grave as time passes. Indeed, it is not too much to say that it is the question of all others that we must grapple with if England is to be the land it ought to be. The depopulation of the countryside, the horrible overcrowding in towns and cities, the growth of slumdom, nearly every phase of the acute housing question, the problem of our food, the root difficulty of our mineral supplies—all depend upon a satisfactory solution of the land question. . . . In the light of the admitted evils which are bound up with the present land laws we might properly ask such fundamental questions as the following:—

"Is not land one of the three sources of all our national material wealth? Is it not unique in that man can neither create it, augment it, nor diminish it? Is it not one of the primitive gifts of God to man—to man as a whole and not to some few men? Granted that men have the right of disposal of the creations of their hand or brain—have they any right to dispose, privately, of that which belongs to all? Is there any price that any man can pay which would entitle him and his heirs to a permanent possession of land? Air, water and land are the gifts of God to men, without which they cannot live. Nobody dares to propose a monopoly of air or water . . . why then should the remaining gift be turned into a monopoly? Has any person a moral right to possess that for himself during his lifetime which carries with it the dispossession of future generations of people? Is it equitable that any people of one generation should be allowed to buy up what every succeeding generation will need, yet which they could only, in such conditions, use by permission of the will of those now dead? Is it just that a minority of the people should be able to hold as their own and to dispose of as they please a commodity upon which the very life of the community depends? And since the nation is now called upon to face the serious question of its future food supplies, ought such a grave matter to be left to individual landowners to decide, or should it not be the concern of the entire nation through its appointed leaders?

"Political action would have to follow the facing of these questions. I am not now concerned with what that action should be. But every open-eyed person must perceive that the land laws as they now stand are thoroughly unjust; they are inimical to the best interests of the nation, and they ought to be changed. Thinkers have been saying all this for 50 years, but Englishmen are as stubborn as mules and blinking as owls where reform is concerned. Do we want another war to wake us up—or to complete our destruction?"