

the land, then of course work must be done. But if the young man gets the land and can keep it without work, the advances of civilization will do the rest. The paper from which we quote the "sage of Hinsdale," the Chicago Journal of the 29th, sees the matter with great clearness. In full sympathy with "the sage," it says: "The young man who can find a way 'to get land' will not regret it," for "land will never be worth less," and "each year should add to the value of land." That's the true idea—"find a way." If the young man finds a way to get and keep land, it makes no difference whether the way comes by inheritance, or fraud, or work, he will grow rich. If he gets and keeps the land, the people who must use it will have to work for him, and this, after all, is the explanation of great riches. It is not the work you do yourself that makes you rich, but that which others have to do for you on your terms.

Henry George, Jr., rightly places the responsibility for the anthracite strike upon the State of Pennsylvania. His lucid explanation is that while "the land value in the region of the mines is enormous," the land "is taxed only a trifle more than agricultural land." Mr. George, who is thoroughly familiar with the region and the labor problems connected with it, sensibly advises that the land value assessments there be increased to \$3,000 an acre. Even at that low valuation, low as compared with market value, he believes "the operators would hasten to put their mines in operation." Enlarging upon the subject, in an interview in the Chicago Chronicle of the 29th, he says:

Of course the thing that makes coal so high at the present time is its scarcity. The operators desire this very condition of things. They are doing as much as they can to make coal scarce. Being compelled to pay only a nominal land tax it is easy for them to hold vast quantities of coal land and allow it to remain idle. Thousands upon thousands of tons of coal are held back in this way. Some day when the other mines give out these in reserve will be opened. It is plain that if a heavy

land tax were made upon such holdings the operators would open the mines and get as much as they could out of them and as soon as possible. It would not pay them to give up a large tax yearly otherwise. The result would be that coal would be plentiful and it would be cheap. The operators would see to it, too, that the miners were kept at work. The matter of the difference of a paltry sum between them and the miners would not move them to close the mines were the land values increased by the State and the taxes made as high as the State has the power to make them. There would be no idle mines then and there would be no idle miners.

That is a perfectly sensible solution, in at least one aspect, of that labor problem which Carroll D. Wright pitifully confesses himself, "after years of careful consideration," to be unable to solve. Though he thinks slight ameliorations may come within the range of his intelligence, he sees no way out of the irrepressible conflict of labor and capital. Nor could anyone else who should follow Mr. Wright's example in seeking a way out. Mr. Wright wants to give to Labor all it earns but doesn't get, without taking from Privilege anything it gets but doesn't earn. That problem is indeed impossible of solution; and if Mr. Wright can be pardoned for confronting himself with it he should be excused for giving it up.

That kind of revolting piety that thanks God for helping us at the expense of others, meets a merited rebuke in an editorial of the Christian Register (Boston) of the 25th. The Register objects specifically to the kind of special Providence which is illustrated by a remark upon which it comments, the remark, namely—

that the hand of God is seen in the sale of the Park Street church in Boston for \$1,250,000. The property was bought 90 years ago for \$50,000. Because it is one of the most eligible sites in the city of Boston for business, it is now worth a million and a quarter. The difference between \$50,000 and the selling price is the gift of the city of Boston, made in the remission of taxes for service rendered to the community which enabled the church to hold the property. Our objection is to the idea

that the hand of God is specially shown in transactions that are advantageous to churches and holy men, and is not shown in other equally important affairs.

It is in the same way that "the hand of God" has interposed in behalf of the Astor family, of Mr. Baer, and of everybody else who secures a stake in the earth which he sells or can sell at a profit to somebody else. The simple fact about that church transaction is that the church corporation pockets \$1,200,000 of public money. It does the same thing, therefore, that Tweed did in New York, only it does it legally and he didn't.

A report on taxation recently made by a special committee of the Citizens Union of New York, and now under consideration by that body, is of general interest; for it deals critically with the usage, universal and vicious, of undervaluation. It is easy to dismiss this subject with the offhand comment that it makes no difference whether taxables are undervalued or overvalued or valued at their true worth, since the same revenue must be raised in any event. To be sure, that seems plausible enough. If tax payers pay 1 per cent. on double valuation, or 2 per cent. on true valuation, or 4 per cent. on half valuation, does it not all come to the same thing in the end? It would if all property were overvalued or undervalued in equal proportion. But the Citizens Union committee finds in New York, what is doubtless true everywhere else, that this is not so. According to its report assessed valuations are about 60 per cent. of the true value, as an average; yet "actual assessments vary over a large range all the way from 40 to 90 per cent. of the real value (with instances below and above those respective extremes)." It is these variations in individual cases that make the usage of undervaluation operate unfairly. The point may be raised, of course, that there would be similar variations just the same if the usage were to assess at full value, as the law requires. But to that point the reply of the