

relative nearest to the existing owner. Land could not be sold or alienated, but its succession was fixed by law. Intrigue and murders were planned and committed by aspirants to the right of succession. This prevailed until mercantilism forced the abolition of feudal tenure.

It is interesting to note the effect which the recognition of private property in land had upon the code of morals of our ancestors and upon us. When it became accepted that a man's eldest son could inherit his land, the determination as to who were his offspring became a legal problem. To obviate many contestants for title, the law and the early Christian church established monogamy as the only acceptable standard of human conduct. In biblical times men had multiple wives and the morality of this custom was not questioned. When it became necessary to protect legal titles to land and estates, man devised this restrictive code of human conduct.

This discussion of our matrimonial concepts is not meant as a criticism of our legal and religious rules. Perhaps this was the only way to bring

order out of chaos in a world of private property rights. But this legally adopted moral code has had a profound and continuing effect upon man's psychological development. It must be clear to all that our ancestors recognized as concomitants of civilization, these private property rights, first in the things and people which primitive man wanted for his exclusive enjoyment, and later in land. That the recognition of private property rights in land is different from private property in *things made by man* is still obscure to many. Recognition of property rights in personal property has resulted in man's ability to specialize in production and then to exchange products with others so that more and better things could be enjoyed. Freedom and the advance of civilization emerged from the recognition of these rights. But the recognition of exclusive right to use land and prevent others from doing so, except at a stiff price to the enrichment of the exclusive owner, has had a retarding effect upon man's well-being and has brought misery and starvation to millions.

Noah D. Alper's Brief Cases

A FRAGMENT OF THE GREAT INIQUITY, OR THE POWER OF POWER

According to Ripley's column, Believe It or Not, "The Abbey of Fethard, Ireland, together with a vast estate, was granted by King Henry VIII to Sir Edward Butler on a perpetual lease—at a rental of \$1.28 a year."

CIVIC LEADER SEES SOMETHING

Edwin M. Clark, president of Civic Progress, Inc. and of the Southwestern Bell Telephone Company (St. Louis), was quoted in The St. Louis Globe Democrat as saying that he did not regard the net decline in assessed valuations downtown as a sign of decay. He warned, however, that if the trend of reducing land assessments and increasing building assessments continues it "will contribute materially to the tearing down of buildings to make way for parking lots and the like."