

quet were to deprive him of his seat, under the pretence that he being also an invited guest, had an equal right to it. At the grand banquet of nature spread before us by the benign and bounteous Creator, all men are but invited guests. At that banquet places are not assigned, and according as each guest is ushered in, he chooses his seat and no one can deprive him of his title to it, because it is based upon prior occupation.

This right is so fundamental that its inviolability is recognized by every civilized nation, but it is especially sacred to the English race, whose whole legal edifice is reared upon a basis of historical rights, which is but a wider extension of the principle of prior occupation.

Thus on the side of history, Mr. George stands confuted by the established facts of the present as well as by the traditions of the past.

But how does he deal with his problem from the point of abstract reason? His principle, as already stated is, "There can be no exclusive possession and enjoyment of anything not the product of labor, therefore, the recognition of private property in land is wrong." He clearly explains his argument, but fails to prove that only the products of labor can be possessed and enjoyed. This statement cannot be taken as granted, for common sense denies it. It must be clear to all that in a farm improved by patient toil, or in a block of marble which has been fashioned into a statue, the improvement is inseparable from the material and cannot be enjoyed unless the material be possessed by him who worked it. But, even accepting the theory that labor put in concrete form on material things, gives the only title to ownership, still private property in land is just. If I clear a field, fence it in and put a house upon it, I put my labor in concrete form. A useless piece of land has by my industry been converted into a productive one. Now, if I am deprived of right to own this field, I am deprived of the product of my honest exertion, just as would be the miner, if denied the right to own the gold which by his toil he has extracted from the bosom of the earth. Moreover, if land cannot belong to a private owner, neither can it be owned by a corporation, a state or a nation. Starting from the principle that God has given the earth to

the sons of men and that it belongs to them in common, we must conclude that no body of men can lay claim to any portion of the earth. But Mr. George denies this and herein he displays his inconsistency.

He denies the title of the individual on the ground that all land is common property, but allows that a body of men has a right to possess a portion of the earth from which they may exclude the rest of mankind. To be consistent with the principle that all land is common, he should deny to any community the right to own land; he should deny to a state the right to put up barriers and mark out a frontier; he should deny to a nation the right to defend the land that has been moistened by the blood of their ancestors for generations, the land that has been their cradle and that is to be their grave.

Thus, by the rigid enforcement of this pernicious doctrine, patriotism would become an empty sound; the ties of nationality would be severed and our most sacred institutions would fall into chaos. Nay, more, in its final results, if not in its direct aims, it must inevitably lead to socialism and communism. If he who by the sweat of his brow reclaims the sterile soil, who changes the wilderness into a blooming garden, is not entitled to possess the object thus transformed, then why should he be thus favored who fashions the death-dealing bow, who breathes life into the rude marble, or who harnesses the steam and the lightning to his service? For except in the realms of the ideal, in the arts and sciences, man, properly speaking, produces nothing. He only transforms the free gifts of nature: the oak, the metal, the stone or the land from an object quite valueless in itself into one of varied utility by impressing upon that object the stamp of his handiwork—his own idea.

It must thus become evident to all that land nationalization, in its ultimate consequences, means communism, and communism means the destruction of that noble civilization which is the pride of modern man. For it would rob life of every incentive to exertion, and our existence would be one steeped in idleness and sloth, except when roused into activity by the lash of the tyrant, the task-master. All ambition of perfecting our faculties and of thereby gaining distinction and independ-