

demand a privilege; rights and privileges are mutually destructive. The first human right is the right to life, and this is first in time and in importance - no duty can precede it or be discharged if it is withheld. These elementary facts are not usually denied by politicians, but as their implications are ignored, there is reason for wondering whether this is due to ignorance or to a desire to withhold these natural rights.

Man and Nature

Nature provides everything for man - his dwelling-place, his workshop, his raw materials and his playing fields - and all these gifts are in the land. But Nature does not give man food and homes; her abundant provision reaches him in the form of opportunities to produce these and all other good things by his own labour and skill. Wherever poverty exists, it is due to laws and customs which prevent men from satisfying their desires by applying their labour to the natural resources. But with the exception of the Snowden Budget of 1931, no political party in office has ever promoted measures effective in removing the legal barriers which deprive the people of their natural right to use and enjoy their native land. To admit the right to life and refuse to implement it is no better than saying to a starving man "Be fed" and leaving him without food or hope. It is obvious that the right to life must include the right of access to land, and the primary duty of governments is to secure the full enjoyment of these rights for every individual by legislative action.

Unconscious impertinence

Politicians and others who lecture the public about their duties - while making no effort to restore to them their natural rights - are guilty of unconscious impertinence. But ignorance of the facts does not excuse such conduct; the facts were proclaimed to the world by Henry George in "Progress & Poverty", and for more than half a century his followers have preached this gospel in the written and spoken word throughout the civilised world.

The fear of poverty

Concern about the performance of duties need trouble no-one. The average man will, if given opportunity, do his duty to his neighbour without persuasion or force, and in the free conditions resulting from the abolition of the Land Monopoly no normal person would desire a good livelihood without earning it. It is fear of poverty which drives men into anti-social courses, and that haunting dread can be banished by means of Land Values Taxation and Free Trade. The world can be made "a land flowing with milk and honey" where peace, plenty, and happiness are within the reach of all.

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THE PORCUPINE

(WITH SOME TELLING POINTS)

No. 228

May and

A BISHOP ON PEACE

In the March issue of the Manchester Leaflet (quoted in the "Manchester" of Feb. 21) the Bishop of Manchester writes: "...there is likelihood of a general war provided we and the country with us do two things, both of which are equally important. Firstly, we must rearm .. Secondly, we must be ready and willing to make such social reforms, both at home and in our dependence on the world, that we make men feel that they are not being exploited but just with."

The Bishop's counsel does not seem to be in harmony with the Master he serves. In the Sermon on the Mount - St. Matthew's Gospel - Jesus said: "Agree with thine adversary quickly, whiles thou art in the way with him; lest at the end of the day thy adversary deliver thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and thou be cast into prison. Verily I say unto thee, thou shalt by no means come out thence till thou hast paid the uttermost farthing." Agreeing with an adversary involves submission and conciliation - an effort to understand the adversary's case and to remove any possible grievances. This, too, would appear to be the Christian way to endeavour to avert the final disaster of 'being cast into prison' - bloodshed and ruptcy. The Bishop, however, seems to assume that the world has no grievance that calls for consideration; he advises submission for conflict, and conciliation of friends.

A backward glance

It is said that history repeats itself; we need no more say that we repeat our mistakes. A few months before the outbreak of war in 1939 the economic conditions in Germany were described by the Financial Editor of the Manchester Guardian thus: "The industrial system is held up at all sorts of points by lack of materials to work on. The owners of the factories have no money for present plant but for an extension of plant."

have frequently worn out their plant with excessive use and want renewals. They cannot get them because the engineering industries, short of metals and fuel, reserve their own output for those customers who are working on urgent orders for the State. Numerous industries whose work is not of the first importance in the four-year plans are thus unable to work to full capacity, although customers are clamouring for the goods." The significance of these facts is obvious in view of the uneven distribution of the world's raw materials. In "Problems of the Economic Commission of the League of Nations" Sir T. Holland stated that the British Empire held a dominating possession of 18 out of the 25 essential raw materials, while Germany had only four.

Christian Peace Aims

In a joint statement issued in 1940 by the Archbishops of Canterbury, York and Westminster, and the Moderator of the Free Church Federal Council, the inequality referred to was recognised thus: "The earth's resources should be used as God's gifts to the whole human race, and used with consideration for the needs of the present and future generations." And in a report drawn up in 1924 by a Commission representing the various denominations of British Christians this principle was more fully stated: "Christian men will do in vain all the things so far suggested in the interest of peace unless they frankly and bravely face the economic difficulties in all their complexity and subject the policy of their own nation to a searching scrutiny, and if need be, a scathing exposure. To hinder the development of another nation by a selfish abuse of national power in making it difficult to secure food for a growing population, or raw materials for developing industry, or homes overseas for those who seek abroad what they cannot find in their own land, is inevitably to provoke war."

Un-Christian Silence

But in 1932, when this country was committed by the Ottawa Agreements to a policy of "protection" which aggravated the economic problems of other nations and led to the second world-war, the churches were silent. Where do they stand to-day? Is their attitude still what it was in the above-quoted declarations? If so, their present silence is inexplicable. Or is it possible now that war threatens - that their concern is only for their country, their friends, and their privileges?

THE PRICE OF "FULL EMPLOYMENT"

A few weeks ago the Prime Minister stated in a message to a parliamentary candidate that unemployment had been abolished. At that time figures published by the Ministry of Labour showed number of unemployed persons in the country (registered) to be

30,000. To ordinary people "full employment", or the unemployment, means that involuntary unemployment has ceased to exist. To some people, however, it seems to mean that unemployment problem for those who can find jobs. Be it as interesting to learn from Mr. Herbert Morrison when employment is likely to cost. Speaking at Uxbridge in 1932, said full employment is threatened unless we all accept social responsibilities which full employment involves. To explain that these responsibilities would include "some of workers from one job to another, and even from one industry to another." This appears to be reasonable and harmless; leave the workers free to change their jobs and choose their own. But was Mr. Morrison hinting at another infringement of liberty in the form of a new direction of labour? "Move workers" may be voluntary, but it may also mean that the would be moved from one job to another. If this is Mr. Morrison's meaning, he is asking for nothing less than submission to totalitarian government and the loss of what still remains of freedom in industry. The steady growth of bureaucracy years under Tory and Labour governments shows this suspicion justified. There was full employment for the chattel slaves, the emancipation. The natural remedy.

RIGHTS AND DUTIES

Speaking in Manchester recently Mr. President-elect of the Liberal Party, teaching of the Labour party that rights come before duties, responsible for much of the workers' present attitude.

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