

their sweat and toil they have dotted the surface of the globe with temples to Thee.

How long, O Lord, is Ireland to suffer! For centuries she has been nearest to the cross of Thy crucified Son. We pray that having, like Him, been fixed to the wood of the cross, like Him also she may be raised by Thee from the dead. Amen.

RIGHT CONTROL OF INDUSTRY BY DEMOCRACY

(By ARCHBISHOP REDWOOD.)

Any well-informed student of the industrial state of the world may safely affirm that, as long as what is fitly called the *Servile State* prevails, namely, the régime under which the masses of the people possess little else than their labor-power, while a few powerful employers concentrate in their hands the ownership of the instruments of production, no industrial peace is possible. Such a system precludes any democratic peace, no matter how much wages are increased or hours shortened. Nor are democratic forms of Government a satisfactory solution. Because it easily happens that, while the Constitution is becoming more and more democratic—as in England just before the war the legislature, under the guise of "social reform," tends to mark off all wage-earners as a definitely servile class. So we are assured by Cardinal Bourne. But against such conditions a violent reaction existed in England even prior to the great war.

To gain correct ideas, from the Christian standpoint, about desirable democratic control of industry, it is essential to distinguish different kinds of productive property. Many among the Syndicalists and Socialists make a great mistake in overlooking the complexity of modern social problems. One must beware of panaceas warranted to cure all evils—their sole credential is their seductive optimism.

The first kind of productive property in need of democratic control is undoubtedly the public-service utilities. No solid objection can be found, either in sound reason or Christian faith, to putting the public-service utilities under municipal or national ownership, provided it can be proved that such a transference from private ownership makes for the common good, and that proper compensation is offered to private owners. It is a fact of experience that public ownership has, in certain conditions and places, been a great advantage, while, in other conditions, such ownership has been financially disastrous.

So it has also been with natural monopolies. They are open to public or private ownership and management, according as the general welfare may in a given case require. One fails to see what valid ground for complaint any private owner of public-service utilities

or of natural monopolies can have, if, after due compensation to him, his business is absorbed by the city or the State. Evidently the only consideration that ought to weigh with any public authorities, in such transactions, is the reasonable conviction that they are promoters thereby of the common good. With this proviso such action has not a shadow of Socialism.

But such transference of ownership requires great circumspection. One undeniable fact must never be overlooked, namely, that apart from all advantages which may arise from increased centralisation, public management involves generally increased expenditure. Under equal conditions, great advantages result from private owners, at less cost, than is possible under public ownership. Yet, spite of this fact, it may sometimes happen that the elimination of the enormous profits reaped at the public expense by private capitalists, will still leave a substantial gain to the people. Another drawback here is the power given to politicians, who may prove in unscrupulousness more than a match for the most criminal profiteers. The question, accordingly, requires most careful consideration, in each single instance, to see whether a strict and complete government control may not be more advantageous than public ownership. Prudence suggests that, before nationalisation is called in, private ownership shall always have a previous trial. It may also be laid down, as a general and safe rule, that the less an industry partakes of the nature of a public-service utility, the greater is the likelihood that private ownership in it is preferable, as being more conducive to the common good. Similarly where public ownership is not desirable, government control and supervision will be more or less necessary according as the industry is nearer to or farther from the nature of a public-service utility. It seems that industries which have not the character of public-service utilities would sufficiently protect the wage-owners and the consumers from exploitation, if a graduated tax on the profits of large-scale concerns were levied, so that the fullest measure of liberty would be left to those smaller concerns which, to the general benefit of the public, are achieving for themselves a moderate prosperity under the stimulus of private enterprise.

But there is one form of public ownership against which all those who have at heart the welfare of their fellow-men should combine with all their might, although there is a wide agitation in its favor, namely, the universal nationalisation of the land. Than this there could not be a more disastrous social error. If, in the whole range of economic science, there is any one thing certain, it is that the land should, so far as possible, be owned by the men who till it, and not controlled by the Socialistic Co-operative Commonwealth, a State monopoly, or any other form of government absolutism. This is the one instance purposely



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