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EDITORIAL

THE CLERGY IN PORTUGAL AND AMERICA.

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PROFESSIONAL atheists, and people in the air generally, are probably delirious with joy over the events in Portugal. They surely are pointing with pride to the sweeping away of the Jesuits and other political ecclesiastics by the new republican broom and ten to one they are contrasting the drastic measures adopted in the now Republic of Portugal with the increasingly fraternal relations that are noticeable here between the Government and the Roman Catholic prelacy; no doubt these folksies in the air are saying: "See how far Portugal is advanced ahead of the United States!"

Fact is, the pro-clerical attitude of the American bourgeois, when contrasted with the anti-clerical of the bourgeois who are just getting on their legs in Portugal, does not write our American article backward; on the contrary, it writes them clean ahead of their Portuguese cousins.

The attitude of the bourgeois towards clericalism is closely paralleled with their attitude towards the suffrage.

As to the suffrage, the point was extensively elaborated in the address on *Woman's Suffrage*, issued in 1909 by the Socialist Women of Greater New York. Suffragists, who do not realize the class-basis of their movement, having berated the United States for allowing herself to be distanced by Finland, whose revolution immediately admitted woman to the suffrage, it was shown in that address that what Finland did in our own days the United States also did in her infancy. It was shown in the address that the denial of the suffrage to woman and a general inclination to restrict the same are symptoms of bourgeois maturity. Necessarily radical in his infancy, in order to overthrow the reactionary feudal master, the bourgeois becomes, in turn, himself reactionary just as soon as he feels firm in the Usurper's saddle. The situation with regard to the suffrage was summed up in these

words: "So far from the Bourgeois Rule of America proving itself behind the Ruling Class of Finland by reason of its withholding suffrage from Woman, the Bourgeois Rule of America attests by its posture the long distance it has traveled since the time it was at the Finland stage." Exactly so with regard to pro- and anti-clericalism.

Bourgeois Rule in its infancy is a perambulating lump of radicalism. There is no logical extreme it is not ready to reach. The law of its existence compels it to. Its foe of feudalism, having for its necessary wrappage thick cloaks of mystification, mystification is the first thing the bourgeois is driven to tear down. Among the torn shreds of the mystification thus torn to shreds is clericalism. Thus it happens that all bourgeois revolution is marked with just such scenes as the present bourgeois revolution in Portugal is being accompanied with.

But this is only a stage in bourgeois life. The time comes when, the usurping feudalism being unhorsed, his usurping bourgeois substitute in turn feels the need of the wrappage of mystification to keep him in the saddle. From that day on clericals become a needed and a coveted assistant—as needed and coveted as they were during the Rule of Feudalism. Then, so far from being swept out as the "instruments of tyranny" that the Clergy are, and were at first pronounced to be, they are coddled as the "instruments of Law, Order and Religion." Then the Baptist Rockefellers are seen photographed in a group with the Cardinals Logue; then the Lutheran Presidents Roosevelt are seen violating the law, which forbids moneys appropriated for the Indian schools to be devoted to sectarian purposes, and handing out \$98,000 of the fund to the Roman Catholic political adjunct; then the Dutch Calvinist Depews are heard praising the Roman Catholic Church as "the best police"; then the "free thinking" New York "Evening Posts" sympathetically declare, as the *Evening Post* does on the 10th of this month, that "a painful feature of the news from Portugal is the wholesale exclusion of monks and nuns"; etc.; etc.

The present fond attitude of American Top-Capitalism towards Clericalism, in contrast with the present hostile attitude of the bourgeois revolutionists in Portugal, does not attest Portugal to be in advance. On the contrary: It attests the long distance American Top-Capitalism has traveled since the time it was at the Portugal bourgeois stage of revolution.

Hence, the political engine of oppression, the Clergy of Portugal, may take heart. Bright days are yet in store for it. Hence, also, the wing in America of the identical engine lives in a fools' paradise when it glorifies in its "progress to power." America being the country in which the Social Revolution is nearest—America being, accordingly, the country in which mystification-needing Class Rule will first be wiped out—the total and final eclipse of Clericalism is in America perceptibly nearer than in Portugal.

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