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EDITORIAL

ROOSEVELT FOR SCAPE-GOAT.

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AMONG the significant beams, not straws any more, that are coming thick and fast floating down the stream of capitalist thought, is an article, "The President and the State of the Country," which appeared in the *New York Sun* of last December 28th. The article, especially its culminating sentences—"We have had such years of material prosperity and progress as were never known in the history of the nation," and yet "there is a greater unrest and a greater uneasiness in the air than there was before Sumter was fired on"—ranks easily abreast of ex-Secretary of the Treasury Shaw's recent warning to a banqueting set of capitalists: "Fall upon your knees and pray to God to save us from our prosperity."

So far as these three expressions go they are strikingly illuminative of what the "we's" stand for when capitalists utter themselves on "the prosperity that 'we' enjoy." It goes without saying that if "we" stood for the whole people, as it is meant to imply, there would be neither occasion for praying to God to save us from "our prosperity," nor would the unrest and uneasiness prevalent in the air to-day suggest the days that preceded the firing on Sumter. Obviously the expressions quoted are truths wrung from the secret chambers of the capitalist's heart, where he had until now carefully concealed the fact that "we" in his mouth means the small idle class of spongers, to the exclusion of the large toiling class of producers.

The *Sun's* article, however, goes slightly beyond Shaw's warning. As things are ripening fast, it was but natural that the *Sun*, which spoke a week or so later than Shaw, should be driven by a week or so more of cumulated fright. Accordingly, the *Sun's* article is a pagan's pious attempt to conjure the punishment off the guilty head, and fix it upon a scape-goat. The article is in the nature of a prayer, addressed to the God Capital, to wreak vengeance upon Roosevelt for the unrest and

uneasiness, unlike anything seen since the days before Sumter was fired on,—Roosevelt being “the cause of it all.”

No lover of his kind and country can entertain any love for the bumptious “doer of things” Roosevelt. He would be getting no more than was coming to him, whatever affliction fell upon him. In this instance, however, Roosevelt is safe. He will not be singled out by Fate. The wrath to come is a wrath that he will but share with the rest of his class. The Deity that presides over social evolution is not a pagan Deity that can be cheated with scape-goats. The capitalist class, essentially a pagan class, must itself atone for the reign of plunder and cheating, of false weights and false measures, of exploitation and chicanery, by the aid of which it has gorged itself with a prosperity, which has created such a vacuum in the social atmosphere that it feels the hurricane is at hand—the hurricane that heralded the “firing on Sumter.”

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