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EDITORIAL

## ABBE LOISY.

By DANIEL DE LEON

**T**HAT element in social reform movements whose mania is to fight “religion” should pause before the appointment of Abbe Loisy as Professor of the History of Religions at the College de France by the Government of Catholic France.

Abbe Loisy is an excommunicated prelate. While, in the strict sense of the word he can not be said to be the founder of the powerful intellectual movement now going on within the Roman Catholic Church, called Modernism, and against which the Papacy has fulminated its bulls, all the same Abbe Loisy was the leading Church dignitary who, before Modernism crystallized into a movement, brought the stores of his vast erudition and the fires of an upright mind against tenets that he repelled as alien to religion, and which in fact had no purpose other than to subserve the ends of politics in ambush. The political forces thus unmasked were not slow to make felt what powers they have left. They broke loose with all the force they could muster together under present enlightenment over the abbe’s devoted head. Persecuted, inhibited, encyclicaled against, Abbe Loisy held his ground, and when the Modernist Movement took shape he quickly found his place in its foremost ranks, thus drawing upon himself collectively all the Papal bolts he had been the target of individually. It is such a personality that has just been distinguished with a professorship in the College de France—a Catholic country.

The Socialist Movement has nothing to do with religion—any more than it has to do with astronomy, mechanics or therapeutics. That which seems to argue to the contrary—the conflict that the pulpit of all creeds has initiated by its attacks against Socialism—in fact proves the point. Only that which is threatened resists. Socialism threatens the capitalist State: it is the ambushed politics of capitalism, ambushed behind the word “religion,” that the attack comes from. How distinct the

two are, and that the two can be held distinct, is the object lesson furnished by the appointment of Abbe Loisy.

Transcribed and edited by Robert Bills for the official Web site of the Socialist Labor Party of America.

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[slpns@slp.org](mailto:slpns@slp.org)