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EDITORIAL

## EH, PROFESSOR?

By DANIEL DE LEON

**I**T is not frequently that one is inclined to grow jocose over “the dismal science.” But bourgeois economy is so fearfully and wonderfully made that it is pardonable if one twits one of its Professors upon it occasionally. We feel inclined to twit Prof. Clark, of Columbia University, for a statement in the *Independent* which, while made no doubt in all seriousness, appeals to us as a sly joke. Writes the Professor:

“The reason why trusts are now tolerated is that people perceive that while in their several fields they have reduced to a very few the number of real or possible competitors, the actual power of competition does in some way survive.”

So the farmers who are continually compelled to pay the railroad trusts “all that the traffic will stand” and who find no way out of the difficulty but to succumb, “tolerate” these trusts because they feel that “the actual power of competition does in some way survive,” eh, Prof.?

And so too the users of petroleum oil who burn the product of the Standard Oil Co., because there is none other to be had, and who, if they wish other light must turn to some other monopoly, “tolerate” that oil trust and all the other gas and electric trusts, because they realize that “the actual power of competition does in some way survive,” eh, Prof.?

And so once again the consumers of coal who are now paying, amid strenuous protests, excessive prices for coal, and the coal miners who are striking, amid barricades and militia, for higher wages, shorter hours, and union recognition,—“tolerate” the trust because they realize that “the actual power of competition does in some way survive,” eh, Prof.?

And yet again the meat eaters and dealers, kosher and otherwise, who are in the

grip of the Beef Trust—and will stay there “prosecutions” and “investigations” notwithstanding—“tolerate” that institution because they realize that “the actual power of competition does in some way survive,” eh, Prof.?

And yet still again once more—but what’s the use of carrying a joke too far, eh, Prof.? What you really meant to say, Prof., is that the people “tolerate” the trusts because the trusts tolerate them; and that they realize that the actual power of the trusts does somehow permit them to survive, eh, Prof.?

Ah, but you are a sly dog and a great wit, in that case, eh, Prof.?

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

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