

SECOND EDITORIAL

SATIRICAL PROF. ELY.

By DANIEL DE LEON

“**A** CLEAR-CUT, well-defined theory of wages based upon his understanding of the approved doctrines of his religious body,” and the first attempt in the English language “to elaborate what may be called a Roman Catholic system of political economy,” is the language with which Prof. Richard T. Ely introduces the work *A Living Wage: Its Ethical and Economic Aspects*, freshly written by Father John A. Ryan, S.T.L., Professor of Ethics and Economics in the Seminary of St. Paul, Minn.¹

We have not before now given Prof. Ely credit, or done him the injustice (whichever way he may prefer) of being an occult satirist. Henceforth we must take him for one.

If there can be a “Roman Catholic” system of any one science, why not a “Roman Catholic” system of all other sciences? Why not a “Roman Catholic” system of arithmetic, a “Roman Catholic” system of geometry, a “Roman Catholic” system of spheric trigonometry? Moreover, if there can be a “Roman Catholic” system of science, by equal right and reason other sects can set up their peculiar systems of sciences—a “Baptist” system of hydraulics; a “Presbyterian” system of phlogistony; a “Jewish” system of geology; a “Holy Ghosters” system of bacteriology; a “Mohammedan” system of astronomy; a “Salvation Army” system of acoustics; a “Schwenkeldians” system of anatomy (Huxley claims the Jesuit Order already has that);—and so down or up the long line of “religious bodies” all of which claim with equal positiveness to have derived their “approved doctrines” from, to use the language of Lincoln, “an interview direct with the Almighty.”

Of course, there can be no such thing as a scientific subject based upon

¹ Ryan, John A., *A Living Wage: Its Ethical and Economic Aspects*. (New York: Macmillan, 1906) 346 pages)—R.B.

anything but ascertained foundations of fact. That the scores of “religious bodies” in existence, each with a difference system of “approved doctrines,” have their private “systems of science,” is a fact that Prof. Ely’s introduction to Father Ryan’s “Roman Catholic” system of political economy” quite pointedly suggests. Wherein consists the newly discovered satirical view of the Professor.

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