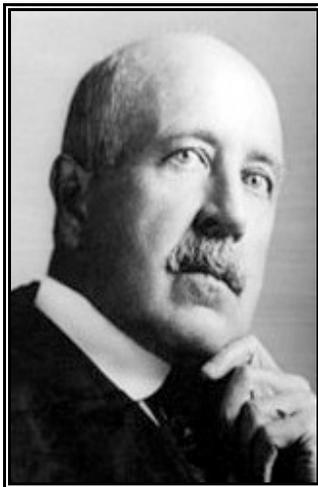


EDITORIAL

ROBERT W. ARCHBALD.

By DANIEL DE LEON

THE impeachment of a Judge, a Federal Judge, at that, is nothing new in the land. Indeed, the very first officials against whom the impeachment machinery was ever set in motion were Judges. This notwithstanding, the impeachment and conviction of Robert W. Archbald is singular in its significance. It comes at an hour most unpropitious for the powers that be.



ROBERT W. ARCHBALD
(1848-1926)

Long has the judiciary been extolled as the “palladium of the country’s safety.” The opinion was first prominently expressed by the French traveler and publicist De Tocqueville. Later, and increasingly so since the Civil War, the judgment of De Tocqueville was seized upon, was veiled with a sort of mysticism, the judiciary began to be paraded as expressive of a sort of thing kindred to the Holy of Holies. A means to promote the mystification was the robing of Judges in special robes. The move was considered successful. The late Lawrence Godkin, Editor of the New York *Evening Post*, devoted not a little time to the canonization of the office. In the intervals of prescribing the “rifle diet” for the workers, Mr. Godkin, a type of the bourgeois mailed hand, contemplated with devout admiration, swung incense to, and, in the name of Her Holiness the School of Manchester, demanded of the masses in whom his keen nostrils scented the breath of rebellion, that they bow clown and worship, the office, and, as a matter of course, the incumbents. Senators, Assemblymen, Governors, aye, even Presidents, so ran the fatuous cant, might succumb to the allurements of popular clamor”—the Judiciary, never—not “hardly ever,” but never! It was to be “the Nation’s palladium.”

Suddenly, as from a clear sky, the bolt fell. The “palladium” had mystified no-

body It mystified not the masses; least of all did it mystify the mystifiers. Due, or rather, thanks to the internecine feuds to which the law of the latters' own existence condemned them, the capitalists found themselves frequently compelled to turn upon the fetich that they had raised. Like genuine heathens, they cuffed and kicked the Idol of their own fantasy.

While this was going on at one end of the social ladder, the other end was not blind, neither was it deaf. The consequence was the swelling demand for the "recall" of judges. The "palladium" threatened not merely to crumble. It threatened to fall into the hands of "the mob," which has been acting as if it meant to out-palladium the palladiumites.

With things finding themselves at such an "alarming pinch" Robert W. Archbald, a pet of the expiring President, is found to have taken his palladium functions so seriously that his palladiumizers were sorely grieved—and—and—regardless of sociologic consequences felt constrained to brand him infamous. If one Archbald, why not more?

The Archbald impeachment will mark an epoch to reckon from.

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