

EDITORIAL

JUDGE LOVETT A SYMBOL.

By DANIEL DE LEON

MUCH attention is being devoted to the testimony that the Lobby Investigating Committee is eliciting in connection with the interview given by Judge Robert S. Lovett of the Union Pacific Railroad.

Just now, what purports to be the connection of Edward Lauterbach with attempts to traffic upon “pull” with Congressmen is taking up most space.

It is not to be denied that if Edward Lauterbach should turn out smirched, the fact would be “notable.” Apart from Mr. Lauterbach’s being “a distinguished member of the New York bar,” the gentleman is a pillar of the Felix Adler Society for Ethical Culture. Such a man’s indulgence in the dishonorable practices that are being charged would shed quite some light upon “the legal profession,” also upon ethical culture.

But that is not the really important revelation. Even if all that is being charged should ultimately be fastened upon Edward Lauterbach, the distinguished member of the bar and pillar of ethical culture, that revelation would pale before another, the real revelation, a revelation that did not need the Lobby Investigating Committee to make, a revelation that revealed itself, to wit: the title of “Judge” enjoyed by Robert S. Lovett.

With increasing frequency the title is found prefixed to leading “captains of industry.” At one time some military title was in vogue—“Colonel,” “Major,” “Captain.” Now “Judge” is crowding the “Colonels,” “Majors” and “Captains.”

Is there any significance in this?

We have seen a Judge in Pennsylvania issue a drastic decree against workingmen, and immediately resign and receive the appointment of a fat railroad receivership; we see a Judge at the top in the Steel Trust; we had a Judge figuring promi-

nently in the management of Wood Pulp; we here have a Judge chairman of the Executive Committee of a railroad under a cloud.

Theoretically, the study of jurisprudence and a taste for money grinding do not go together. How comes it that so many Judges—take Judge Lovett as an instance—lightly turn their thoughts from Blackstone to Money Bags? That the Bench is a preparation for the office of leading the “cleverness” of monopolistic industries—that is the most notable, the most significant, the most symbolic of the developments of the Lobby Investigating Committee.

One man comes spotless—spotless?—nay, with angelic wings of purity out of the Mulhall revelations—pure as incorruptible Lucretia. It is Mr. Samuel Gompers, president, editor, etc., etc. Though Mulhall approached Gompers in behalf of the National Manufacturers’ Association, with vistas of “\$40,000 and a permanent political job abroad,” he “stood aloof.” Loyal to the Civic Federation, Lucretia Gompers—he might as well be decorated with the title he has earned—Lucretia Gompers resisted the blandishments of the N.M.A.

Transcribed and edited by Robert Bills for the official website of the Socialist Labor Party of America.
Uploaded January 2016

slpns@slp.org