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EDITORIAL

JOHN, VIII., 3–9.

By DANIEL DE LEON

REPRESENTATIVE G.L. LILLEY of Connecticut is discovering to his sorrow that neither are these the days described by John in verses 3–9 of his VIII-th chapter, nor is the conscience of the House of Representatives as quick as was the conscience of even the self-righteous scribes and Pharisees.

Lilley brought charges of corruption against certain members of the House in connection with the award of contracts for submarines. One touch of nature makes the whole world kin: hit one crook, and all crookdom feels hit and runs to the rescue. A House that harbored a Grosvenor; a House that has on its very floor been twitted more than once by some of its own members with being the obedient tool of corporations; a House that has looted the Treasury again and again to swell the purses of its members; a House that decreed itself “mileage” between an extra session and the regular session, there being but a fraction of a second between the one and the other; a House that has raised its own salary; a House that has repeatedly seated defeated and perjured members and ousted legally elected ones; a House that gloried in a Littauer; a House that—

Why heap on the agony?

One would think that a body made up of such material would be a safe place for any charges to be brought in. So must Representative Lilley have thought. He must have looked around and said to himself, “He that is without sin among them let him first cast a stone at me,” and he must have smiled in complacent safety. But he erred.

The scribes and Pharisees may have been all that they are described to have been, yet some little vestige of conscience was left in them. The summons to him among them who was without sin to cast the first stone had for its effect to scatter them. The same summons addressed to the modern scribes and Pharisees who

constitute the House of Representatives, had a different effect. The effect was to draw them together into a solid body, and cause them to vie with one another as to who would throw the first and largest rock. The consequence is the unanimous sentiment to expel Lilley.

Hitherto “whitewashing” has been done by others to culprits. To-day culprits whitewash themselves. Being “convicted by their own conscience,” the scribes and Pharisees, told about by John, “went out one by one, beginning at the eldest, even unto the last.” The Representatives in Congress, “beginning at the eldest, even unto the last,” spake themselves sinless by jointly throwing rocks at poor, fatuous Lilley.

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