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According to the New York Nation, "advocates of the extension of the referendum will find little encouragement in an analysis of the official election returns from the four states in which constitutional amendments were submitted in November." The reason given for this inference is that only a small vote was cast upon the amendments, owing to "the ignorance or indifference of a large majority of the voters." But does not the Nation favor a limitation of suffrage to the intelligent and public spirited? Why, then, is not the referendum a good thing, even from its own points of view? If the referendum operates automatically to disfranchise the ignorant and indifferent, what more could the Nation ask?

It is with conflicting emotions that we read in the Albany Law Journal of a recent decision of a federal court, reported at page 145 of the Federal Reporter, vol. ix. For an act not committed in its presence, a Kentucky court had summarily convicted a lawyer of contempt and imposed a fine upon him, ordering his imprisonment until payment. The lawyer petitioned in the federal court for a writ of habeas corpus, and that court released him upon the ground, as stated by the Albany Law Journal, that—

a person who is summarily adjudged guilty of contempt without a hearing for an act not committed in the presence of the court, and who, in consequence thereof, is imprisoned for non-payment of the fine imposed, is deprived of his liberty without due process of law, in violation of the fourteenth amendment to the constitution of the United States.

Our conflicting emotions with refer-

ence to this case may be easily explained. On the one hand every new interference with local courts by federal courts respecting matters of local concern impresses us as a dangerous innovation. On the other hand, summary convictions for constructive contempt certainly are without due process of law, and it is gratifying to have them judicially so decided to be—even by a federal court as against a state court.

Representative F. J. Kern, of Illinois, has been made the butt of a little good-natured ridicule by the press, because he declares that he will not vote to appropriate a cent for the expenses of the American envoys to the coronation of King Edward. But while his objections may at first seem trifling, because they relate to a mere ceremonial, they deserve more than a passing thought or a flippant remark. For one thing, they are made in good faith, which in itself demands for the objecting congressman a respectful hearing. Good faith is not so common in congress that it may wisely be scorned when it comes to the surface. And beyond the matter of Congressman Kern's good faith are the merits of the question itself. Why should this republic send special envoys to participate in a medieval ceremonial—"the survival of feudal flunkysm and childish love of show," as the Philadelphia North American truly describes it—on the occasion of the crowning of a monarch? It is true that the king of England does not reign by divine right. His throne rests upon the express consent of the English people. But, like his nephew of Germany, he has a notion, only half concealed, that this expression of popular consent was only a restoration of the divine authority which blasphemous rebels had presumed to assail. That apart, however, the cere-

monial itself symbolizes divine right. Why, then, should this republic be especially and ostentatiously represented? American respect for the British people could be sufficiently shown by the unostentatious attendance at the ceremony of our regular representative. There is no reason for any peculiar representation except the itching this republic has recently experienced for the pomp and circumstance of glorious empire.

Inasmuch, however, as the president does send special envoys to the coronation, one from the army, one from the navy and one from private life, he might have done better in making at least two of his selections—better in the official sense, of course, for there is no criticism of the individuals. When the navy is to be represented abroad upon a state occasion, its highest officer, next to the president, is obviously the appropriate representative. The same is true of the army. But, upon the authority of the distinguished correspondent, Walter Wellman, it appears that the president has passed over Admiral Dewey, of the navy, because Dewey filed a dissenting opinion in the Schley case; and over Gen. Miles, of the army, because Miles incurred his displeasure in connection with the same controversy. Mr. Roosevelt seems to be having his own way as president; and a very small way it is, whether regarded from the point of view of a president or of a presidential candidate.

The discourteous refusal of a Bourbon Democratic committee to welcome Mr. Bryan on the occasion of his recent visit to Massachusetts, has been rebuked in a gratifying manner by the people of that state. Citizens of both parties have most cordially received him, applauding his speeches with the enthusiasm which

their sentiments and eloquence deserve. Short-sighted beyond measure is the politician who imagines that Mr. Bryan is without honor in his own country. Defeated though he has been in two historic presidential campaigns, he is, nevertheless, without exception, the most popular man, simply as a man, in the United States to-day. No glamour of success envelops his personality, and he has no official power with which to command the admiration and gratitude that consist in a lively sense of favors to come. He is a simple citizen. Yet in the great heart of the American people—the common people of the East as well as those of the West, including many of both sections who for one superficial reason or another voted against him—there is a feeling that this man has represented them. His eloquence is of a kind that touches a popular chord which the mere politician is too apt to ignore and the money-changers cannot understand. Mr. Bryan's public life has not ended. It has only fairly begun.

In this connection, a word about Bryan's Commoner will not be out of place, though an exception to a general rule to which we are disposed most strictly to adhere. That publication is now entering upon its second year. Fresh from the presidential campaign of 1900, Mr. Bryan started the Commoner to keep alive in the public mind the declarations of the Kansas City platform which so many Democratic papers of the nominal sort were eager to consign to political oblivion. The Commoner has been made to serve that use with ability and fidelity; and it will be well for American democracy if it is liberally supported in the same service in the future. Though some of us may not be in full agreement with the Kansas City platform, and for this reason may be disposed to criticise the policy of the Commoner in some particulars, that platform represents on the whole the best democracy that the Democratic party has put forth since it fell under the domination of the slave

power, and the Commoner is its able exponent and loyal defender. Such a paper is needed at this critical period, and in conducting it Mr. Bryan is doing a work for good government which is not even second to that which for five years he has been doing on the platform. It is to be hoped that in its second year the Commoner may at least double the circulation of its first.

Besides being really an excellent news collector and news purveyor, the Chicago Tribune is notable for its editorial candor. When it has a bad cause to defend, it conceals nothing. It boldly defends the cause, not deceptively for what it isn't but frankly for what it is. An example is its plea in the issue of the 13th for the "real estate" owners of Chicago as against the demands of the public for lower street car fares. George C. Sikes, the secretary of the Chicago council committee on local transportation, has advocated low fares without compensation to the city, for Chicago, as Mayor Johnson is doing for Cleveland; and the Tribune appeals in all seriousness, to them both, to desist for the sake of real estate interests. "The people of Chicago," it urges, "have not complained of 5-cent fares; they have not appealed to the legislature for relief, as the owners of real estate have." Therefore don't tax the real estate owners who do complain, but tax the patient public which doesn't. That is the gist of the Tribune's argument.

Correctly enough, the Tribune traces the responsibility for low fare agitation to the single taxers. They, it says—

are its most earnest advocates. It is in their clubs that it is chiefly preached. The most conspicuous three-cent fare man in this country is Tom Johnson, of Cleveland, who is a notorious single-taxer. The Chicago single-taxers know perfectly well that real estate is already ferociously taxed here. They would like to see other sources of municipal revenue cut off so that even higher taxation of real estate may become necessary. They wish to have more taxes piled on this kind of property until all of what they call the

"unearned increment" shall be wiped out, and all motives for owning or building on real estate destroyed.

This is so correct a diagnosis, in a general way, that it ought to be more accurately stated in particulars, and that we shall attempt briefly to do.

At the outset it should be understood that what the single taxers want is not heavier taxation of real estate, which includes improvements as well as land, but of land itself. So far from wishing an increase of taxes on the part of real estate which consists of buildings and other improvements, they want to exempt that kind of property altogether. It is the land, the site for improvements, the building lot, which they wish to see heavily taxed; and they want this kind of property, this part of real estate, taxed so heavily that no one can afford to monopolize it without improving it. In order to bring about that result, they would like, as the Tribune says, to see other sources of municipal revenue cut off. This is not their only reason for advocating three cent fares. They advocate three cent fares in preference to higher fares with a tax on them to be paid by the companies, for several reasons. The taxation of fares, if honestly enforced, would amount to a tax on the use of street cars, falling with equal weight upon all. The mechanic, the clerk, the washerwoman, the errand boy—all would pay taxes to the city for riding in street cars, over and above the value of the rides, though the only benefit they would get would be the value of the rides. Yet landowners would pay no more, though they would get the same benefit as to riding, plus the benefit of lower taxes on their valuable building sites—sites to which they have no better claim in justice than the others. Another objection to taxing receipts is that this arrangement would furnish an incentive to street car managers to "cook" their books, so as to collect the tax without turning all of it over to the city. Another is that the users of street cars would be compelled to pay five cents for a ride worth only three