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FOREIGN REPRESENTATIVES

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SHOULD THE ADOPTION OF THE COMMISSION FORM REQUIRE 51 PER CENT. OF THE ELECTORATE?

M. R. KING, the Republican leader, has said that commission government ought not to be adopted in Bridgeport except upon approval by 51 per cent of all persons entitled to vote.

At first thought there may seem to be little objection to this proposition, especially by those not very familiar with the principles upon which democratic forms of government are administered.

Such a vote, however, is unworkable, and it would tend to paralyze democratic action. It is foreign to the actual working principles that prevail in the United States.

Its application to elections, and even to legislatures, would result in unending difficulties, and would frequently paralyze government activities, or leave government to the hands of those exercising hold over authority.

Everybody will remember the difficulties that confronted Connecticut when the governor was required to have a majority of the votes cast. The state was in frequent turmoil. That requirement gave us the "deadlock" year, in which the government was virtually an anarchy.

The best that could come of such a situation was that the legislature should elect a governor.

This the legislature did, when it could. But no matter what the legislature did, there stood the plurality of votes for the candidate whom the people had chosen.

Such a situation could not but provoke the repeal of this provision. Now the governor is elected, as every other officer is, by a plurality of those voting.

Very seldom in its history would Connecticut have chosen a governor by popular vote, had there been a requirement that the successful candidate should have a majority of all those entitled to vote.

As a rule no more than 75 per cent of those entitled to vote do vote. Under a majority requirement the elected candidate would have to obtain two-thirds of the vote actually cast.

The election of Mayor Wilson would have required at least 40,000 votes. He had less than 8,000.

Governor Holcomb would not have been elected. The United States would not have elected a president within the last 75 years, except by the will of the presidential electors.

Up to this time we are speaking of a majority requirement. But Mr. King wants more than this. He wants 51 per cent.

In defense of this extraordinary proposition he claims that commission government represents an extraordinary change, and that therefore the city should pass upon it by an unusual method.

But commission government for a city is not more important than the adoption of a constitution, to be the organic law of the state. The constitution of 1818 was adopted by a majority of those voting.

More than a million people today are living very comfortably under rules which received their authority from less than 43,000 persons, for the constitution was adopted by the affirmative vote of less than that number of electors.

The Farmer has no interest in commission government, beyond seeing that the people get it if they want it. Whether or not Bridgeport ought to have a commission is debatable. But Mr. King's proposal is not debatable. An attempt to make it effective would swamp any politician that ever lived.

As a mere theory Mr. King's 51 per cent of the electorate is merely a curious view. Embodied in legislation, it would be an assault upon a basic principle of American government, that the people are sovereign, and that the sovereignty of the people is expressed by their will declared by the ballots of a plurality of those voting.

If Mr. King believes that Mayor Wilson should get out of office and stay out until he obtains the vote of 51 per cent of the whole electorate, and will get an act to this purpose, he can get support for his commission government requirement.

There are plenty of voters who believe commission government would never have been needed if there had never been any Mayor Wilson. These voters might be willing to kill two birds with the same stone.

NO OCCASION FOR "RETALIATION"

NOTHING IN the relations of the United States with Europe requires at this time any retaliatory measure of any character. The war in Europe subjects this country to much inconvenience, but the war is not conducted for that purpose. Our difficulties are an unavoidable by-product.

Much of the discussion of our duties in this situation are plainly based on medieval conceptions, in which nations went to war, as lightly as duellists used to, for almost any sort of affront, real or fancied.

The war is the greatest of all the ages. History tells of nothing like it. Nobody knows why it has occurred. It may be the result of arbitrary conduct upon the part of a few individuals. On the other hand, it may be that the cause is deep seated in the institutions of men. "Through the progress of the ages one eternal purpose runs." So wrote the poet, and so humanity has believed. In this view, the war may be as necessary to the future of society, as an earthquake may be to the equilibrium of the planet.

Europe fights, not to injure us, but for self preservation. Our interests, and especially our mere trade interests, are entirely subordinate to Europe's necessity, and ought to be.

An embargo retaliation is unnecessary, and only less regrettable than actual war. Let us concede to Europe the right to fight its Armageddon according to its own necessity.

Let trade continue, but at its own risk, or at the risk of the insurer. Under this rule, as the Farmer has before shown, Europe destroys her own property, for trade carries the hazards of the enterprise, and the European purchaser pays for the goods, plus the risk.

An embargo would be justified only for some reason involving our own comfort, or security, as that the exportation of food stuffs might be forbidden to prevent war prices here.

The experience of the United States with embargo against

its own trade has not been encouraging.

In consequence of the injuries to trade inflicted by England and France during the Napoleonic wars, congress in 1806 forbade trade with those nations, and in 1807, at the suggestion of Jefferson, passed an act prohibiting any American vessel, except a coaster, sailing from an American port. In 1813, during our war with England, another such act was passed. These embargoes were extensively evaded, and created universal dissatisfaction at home.

Let trade move at its own risk. If it cannot move under those conditions, it cannot move at all.

No principle of national honor calls for retaliation in any form. To plunge our people into the European war upon some medieval principle of affront would be a national dishonor, and an insult to the national intelligence.

The United States looks, with unspeakable sorrow upon the anguish of the continent on the other side of the Atlantic. It offers mediation and healing. It desires such intercourse as Europe will permit.

But the United States does not, cannot and will not regard the misery of civilization as something to be added to unless some of us can make a profit by it.

SIX LOST AT SEA AFTER EXPLOSION ON BENZINE SHIP

Norwegian Tank Liner in Flames, Crew Escapes in Open Boats Only to Disappear in Heavy Seas—Steamer Saved By Huge Waves Breaking Over Bows—Navigation Instruments Gone, Captain Finally Makes Port.

New York, March 1.—Six members of the crew of the Norwegian tank steamer La Habra, carrying a cargo of benzene, were lost at sea in an open boat they had launched in an effort to escape from flames which threatened her, according to an unusual shipwreck story brought to this port today from Horta, Faeroe by the Holland-American freighter Zaan-dijk.

The fire aboard the La Habra was caused by an explosion of benzene while she was on her way from Tex-lara Bay, Peru, to London by way of the Panama Canal. The captain ordered the crew to take to the boats and stand by. The chief officer and five men were in a boat towing astern when the painter burned off and they drifted away without oars in a heavy sea, he said.

The fire was extinguished by giant waves which broke over the ship and the captain took her safely into Horta, Feb. 7 by dead reckoning for all his navigation instruments were burned.

UNIDENTIFIED LINER ADRIPT IN MID-OCEAN

New York, March 1.—An unidentified steamship was drifting last week with all propeller blades shorn off, near the middle of the Atlantic, according to the log of the American line steamer New York which reached here today from Liverpool.

The New York was spoken by wireless on last Thursday by the British steamer Milwaukee bound from Canadian ports for Liverpool. The Milwaukee advised the New York of the drifting steamer's plight and fixed her location as Lat. 41, Long. 45.20. The name of the steamship was given as the Tritonian in the wireless message but maritime records here failed to disclose any such name.

According to the wireless message the "Tritonian" requested a tow and added that, except for the loss of her propeller blades all was well aboard.

OCEAN LINER SAFE IN PORT HERE AFTER PERILOUS TRIP THROUGH MINE-LADEN SEA

New York, March 1.—Unusual precautions for safety were observed by the American line steamer New York when she sailed from Liverpool, Feb. 20, and reached this port today. As she steamed out of the Mersey under cover of darkness with the German submarine war zone to pass, she was convoyed by four torpedo boats, destroyers and lifeboats from her davits ready for instant use.

Two hundred and twenty-one passengers were aboard, 50 of whom

came from Paris. Several of the latter were so delayed in reaching Liverpool that Mr. Page, the American ambassador to Great Britain, asked the steamship officials to hold the New York for them. During her passage through the waters believed to be infested with submarines, passengers and crew on board the New York were in readiness to take to the lifeboats at a moment's notice.

When the war zone was left behind the torpedo boats returned.

VILLA REPORTS GREAT VICTORY OVER CARRANZA

Many Prisoners Taken and Heavy Casualties in Battle of Acambro.

El Paso, March 1.—A battle between Villa and Carranza troops at San Mateo, Chihuahua, and the capture of Acambro, Guanajuato state, is reported in a brief telegram signed by Francisco Villa received here last night by The Associated Press. The message dated Guadalupe, follows: "I take pleasure in informing you that in a battle held yesterday (Saturday) at San Mateo the forces belonging to the countrymen of General Urbina defeated the Carranzistas who lost between 45 and 50 men. They also captured seven prisoners and about 200 fugitives besides 50 rifles and a rapid-fire.

PURIM, FEAST OF THE LOTS, CELEBRATED BY PEOPLE OF JEWISH FAITH

"The Lessons of Purim to Our Modern Generation" was the subject of the sermon delivered yesterday by Rev. David M. Levy at the Park avenue temple in observance of Purim, the Feast of the Lots.

Purim was observed generally throughout Bridgeport yesterday by members of the Jewish faith. The Book of Esther was read in the synagogues.

Rabbi William Wittenstein conducted the services at the Congregation Adath Israel.

Let Us Refill Your Fern Dish JOHN RECK & SON

FOUR HOMICIDES, 13 SUICIDES IN STATE DURING LAST MONTH

New Haven, March 1.—Fifty-three persons suffered violent deaths in the state during February, according to unofficial records, 36 being accidental, 13 suicidal and four homicides. The total for January was 55, divided: Accidental 41, suicidal 13, homicide 1.

DROWNED IN CONN. RIVER, BODY FOUND OFF LONG ISLAND

Chester, Conn., March 1.—Word has been received here from Coroner C. C. Miles, of Greenport, L. I., of the finding of the body of John Stone, one of the three men from here supposedly drowned in the Connecticut river last October but none of whose bodies had since been seen. The corpse, found floating near Greenport, was identified by credit slips in pockets. Stone was married and had a family living in Killingworth.

POOR COUNTERFEIT \$10 BILL IS FOUND

Washington, March 1.—Chief Flynn, of the secret service, has issued a warning of the existence of a poor counterfeit of the new \$10 national banknote on the Second National bank of Boston bearing the portrait of William McKinley. It is a photographic production on which no attempt has been made to color the seal or numbers.

Farmer Want Ads. One Cent a Word.

Scott Successfully Delivers Kansas Gift to Hungry Belgians



Former Congressman Charles F. Scott

Former Congressman Charles F. Scott of Kansas has written letters to his friends at home telling about the joy with which the poor people of Belgium have received the shipment of provisions sent by his state. Kansas was one of the first states in the Union to come to the aid of the starving Belgians. Carload after carload of flour, canned goods and other provisions were donated and were shipped to Holland in charge of Mr. Scott. The ship arrived safely and the provisions were properly dispensed.

WANT RETURN TO OLD CAUCUS PLAN FOR NOMINATIONS

Newtown Citizens and Some Office Holders Scent Row Over Election.

(Special to The Farmer) Newtown, Mar. 1.—With the borough election two months in the future, there is considerable activity among the incumbents looking towards renomination. Worry is apparent on the faces of many of the hard-worked officials, whose chief efforts seem to be directed against any movement for partisan caucuses. Since the borough resumed its corporate powers a few years ago, only a citizen or non-partisan caucus has been in vogue, but the talk is running strong in another direction this year and both influential Democrat and Republican brought their agitation for caucuses of both parties to name candidates to be voted for in the election next May.

These party men claim the citizen's caucus is an anarchism, and is mainly responsible for the oligarchy alleged to be running things. How to go about it, is what puzzles them, for no member of the lower committee of either of the older political parties, resides in the borough, and the dissatisfied citizens are at a loss how to call a caucus. The beneficiaries of the present plan are bending every effort to forestall action in this direction by the town committees of the old parties, and thus squelch the insurrection at the start.

Whether the Newtown Borough Charter provides a way to register party wants in this case nobody seems to know, as the Borough clerk, Charles F. Beardsley is away for the winter, and the authorized printing of the municipal laws and their distribution to taxpayers, ordered by the annual meeting of last May, has not been done and nobody knows when it will be done. The non-compliance of the official borough board with this instruction is looked upon by the dissatisfied taxpayers as a dodge, and the absence of the borough clerk at this time a part of part of the game to side track the opposition.

Some of the latter are growing bitter in their denunciation of the tactics of the standpatters, and have approached the chairman of the Progressive town committee who resides within the borough limits with a view to call a caucus of the Progressives if action by the other town committees is forestalled.

The Giant recruits at the training camp, Martin, Tex., rendered valuable aid to firemen of the city in fighting a fire which did \$35,000 damage.

Study These Prices

Table listing various tire and tube prices, including items like '28 x 3 Non Skid', '30 x 3 Non Skid', etc., with prices ranging from \$7.45 to \$5.04.

THE ALLING RUBBER CO. 1126 MAIN STREET

The D. M. Read Co

Established 1857

Dainty Apparel for the Newest Arrivals



The Section for Infants' Wear directs attention to the very large assortment of Slips and Frocks for the littlest folk. These garments are of fine nainsook and exquisitely hand made.

Prices begin at \$1.00

It is surprising to see how very well made is a little dress for \$1.00. There are a few little hand-run tucks, a sprinkling of tiny French knots, and some rows of feather-stitching. Neck and sleeve bands are finished with the narrowest of Valenciennes edging.

From \$1.00 and \$1.25 to \$5.50

According to fineness of material and amount of workmanship.

Short White Dresses, for ages 6 months and to one and two years, have the little yokes smocked with white, pale blue or pale pink. Smocking is a form of needlecraft that is centuries old, and seldom does its effective simplicity fail to please. These dresses are from \$3.50 up. Second Floor.

Some Novelties in Jewelry

The ever convenient little brooch known as the "Friendship Circle" arrives in more attractive styles than ever, ready to be used with spring waists and gowns. Circles with gold tops 25 cts. Circles in blue, white, or black enamel, 50 cts. Circles in white and black combined, 50 cts. Circle Sets, two pins, 50 cts. three pins, 50 cts. Circles of brilliants with black enamel, 50 cts and \$1.00. Any of these could be used as slipper buckles.

For the Hair

The "Sans Gene" Casque Comb, effective with French twist, \$2.00.

A Comb known as "The Eternal Question", of handsome demi-blonde shell, which appears when placed in the hair, like an interrogation mark of mysterious fashion, 50 cts.

The "Castle Band" which is the little fillet band worn by Mrs. Vernon Castle, having colored jewels, sapphires, topaz, moonstones, etc., arranged to fall on the forehead, and a pendant baroque pearl, with them, \$2.50. At the Jewelry Section

Do you wish to send a Birthday Handkerchief? Put it in a Folder of quaint design that carries a word of greeting and a breath of sweet smelling sachet, 20 cts each. Handkerchief Section

The Art Section is complete with new materials of all desired kinds. The pattern books of Miss Alden are available for those who wish exclusive designs on garments of any kind or housekeeping linens.

Remember to see the display of Spring Dress Cottons, Flowered and Embroidered Voiles, Poplins, Organdies and Lawns. Main Floor

The D. M. Read Company.

RADFORD B. SMITH

FAIRFIELD AVE. VARIETY STORE BROAD ST. CO-OPERATIVE CAR FARE 20 OUR CUSTOMERS PROFIT SHARING WITH OUR EMPLOYEES

BEST VALUE IN COTTON BATTING Large rolls very white-cotton. Similar to kind sold at 25c 15c ROLL 7 ROLLS FOR \$1.00

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