

plaintiff, Miss Duncan, was and is a member of a body calling itself the Democratic Club. A misunderstanding arose between her and the club committee. She was suspended from the rights of membership, and applied to Mr. Justice Grantham for an interim injunction to restrain the committee from suspending her. Ultimately Mr. Justice Grantham refused the application. An appeal was taken to the Divisional Court. At this point the comedy of errors began. The Divisional Court, being desirous to prevent any inferences adverse to the lady being drawn at this stage in the proceedings, did not allow the affidavits to be publicly gone into. It appears, however, to have been stated in open Court, first, that Miss Duncan had been expelled from the club, and, secondly, that the rule under which the committee had acted was one framed against drunkenness, gambling, and bad language. Mr. Finlason, the able reporter for the *Times*, recorded these alleged facts; but inspired by a kindly wish to save the public from misunderstanding what the nature of the charge against Miss Duncan was, he extracted from her affidavit (which had not been read) and embodied in his report a paragraph to the effect that the head and front of her offending was an allegation that she had allowed a gentleman to drink out of her shoe! This report duly appeared. The humour of the thing caught the journalistic eye of one of the news editors of the *Westminster Gazette*, and he reproduced in an abbreviated form and with comments the report in the *Times*. The paragraph in the *Westminster Gazette* in turn attracted the attention of a writer on the staff of the *Daily Telegraph*, and he, too, commented on the incongruity of democrats managing a social millennium by potations from a lady's shoe. *Hinc illæ lacrymæ!* On these slender materials Miss Duncan based her application for a committal. The learned judges dismissed it summarily, though in the case of the *Times* without costs, and emphatically declared that nothing in the nature of a contempt had been committed. We are not concerned to defend the prudence of the reports and comments to which Miss Duncan objected. But it is simply monstrous that the time of the Courts should be taken up and that newspapers should be harassed by such applications. We can conceive of nothing better fitted to make the process of contempt of Court contemptible: and we trust that the result of the present case will convince the far too numerous body of litigants who are so ready to appeal to Cæsar with a cry of *læsa majestas* that our legal tribunals are of the same opinion.—*Law Journal (London.)*