

gent public sentiment condemns the man, matters not what his ability, wealth or position, who not only refuses to obey the golden rule, but actually practices its opposite. He is felt to be a mean man, an enemy to himself and his kind.

J. W. Dutton, Oakland, Cal.—Senator Owen's pertinent question starts out with the disjunctive conjunction "if." Now if the people indeed ruled, of course, they would then get what they wanted, and there would be no necessity for the senator to ask why they did not. The serious fact is, that the people who do the "ruling" are not "the people" at all, not even their honest representatives; they are merely the creatures of great special interests—astute professional politicians who, having captured the machinery of political parties, are running the government in the interests of their employers. They are working politics as a private industry. While we continue to be so handicapped by this complex political machinery it seems to be impossible for the people to rule. Take the case of the recent democratic state convention in Ohio. There is not the slightest doubt but that the honest voters of the democratic party in that great state, that is "the people," would like to express their opinion at the polls as to who shall be their candidate for the United States senate, but by the ingenious manipulation of the party machinery by self-seeking men, they are not permitted to do so. The only way that I can see that it is possible for the government to be restored to the people, is to "cut out" all side issues and confine ourselves exclusively to direct legislation. If we had the initiative, the referendum and the recall, based upon reasonable percentages of the vote cast, we would be in a position to defy political dictators, and the people could then indeed rule, and would be in a position "to get what they want."

F. W. Bigger, York, Pa.—The answers to this question are so many, and involve so much history, it would take a volume to answer it fully, so I will attempt but one answer. In most parts of America we have been taught to look upon our representatives as rulers instead of representatives, and as our masters instead of servants. This idea has been handed down to us for centuries, and we are not to blame for that we inherit. We are to blame, however, if we do not try to throw off those false doctrines which have removed the departments of government from our control. For the first sixty years of our democratic republic, our office holding population did, with a few exceptions, acknowledge their positions as public servants, but when Lincoln became president, the opposite idea at once took root, and a military despotism was established. Citizens were deprived of the right to either think or speak their sentiments. The actions of Lincoln, or his party leaders, all the way through were based upon the doctrine that people elected to public office are masters instead of servants, and that it was treason to think of them otherwise. This is a part of aristocratic philosophy to which the leaders of the republican party have always subscribed secretly while never daring to espouse openly. They are republicans, they say; so are the democrats republicans, but people will not stop to think of the difference between a republican and a democratic republican, which was the democratic party's original name. I think it lies principally in the distinction which I have drawn between the office-holder's view of his position. If he looks upon himself as a ruler he ought to be a member of the republican party, while if he considers himself a servant or representative he ought to be a member of the democratic party. This is dealing with principles and not issues. I wrote above that we have been taught to look upon our representatives as rulers, and in confirmation of this, I will quote the twenty-third article of the Articles of Religion of the Episcopal Methodist churches: "The president, the congress, the general assemblies, the governors, and the councils of state as the delegates of the people are the rulers of the United States of America, etc." The prayers used in many, yes, most of the churches of this country give one the impression that the president, the governors, and all others in authority "are our rulers," and seldom, if ever, do we receive the impression from the pulpit that these people are our hired servants. It would seem that to correct this evil it will be necessary to create such laws as will make it possible to recall those people with diseased minds who imagine themselves to be rulers, and to elect others to fill their places. The people must have an opportunity to express their wishes or it will never be possible for their representatives to know what

they want. We may have to pass through a long period of evolution to reach this state, but the initiative and referendum are aiming to that end. The mind of mankind is slow, but moves forward to the end that he must have his rights, and he will unless thwarted by the powers of evil to deceive and entrap him, thus hindering his progress. God bless The Commoner; it is doing a good work.

A. M. Mobley, Holliday, Texas.—In the first instance it seems plain that people do rule; they have the right by law to cast their ballot for any candidate who is offering his services to represent them. That much they rule. The people, as a rule, elect the candidate and give him power and place that rules people, so they rule and they don't rule. That places the people in the attitude with the old negro who said, "I don't know and I don't know, the people rules and they don't rule." This is the best answer to Senator Owen's question as I can give. As for getting what they want it seems to me as complicated matter as it is to The Commoner.

J. M. Burton, Melrose, Idaho.—Three reasons why the republicans rule and not the people: First, prior to the presidential election they give notice to the working men that their shops and factories will be closed if the republican party is not elected. Second, the money used direct and indirect to secure votes for the republican party. Third, if the democrats are elected we will have hard times just like it was when Cleveland was president. Would it look good to you to take the eagle off our flag and place a dollar mark in its stead. Then let the people rule instead of a special few.

C. C. Ratliff, Groesbeck, Texas.—Our representatives, great and small, to a great extent are elected with money, hence are mercenary men. They must have their money back. Their votes and influence are for sale. They are platform jumpers, bribe takers and bribe givers. Our United States senators and supreme judges should be elected by a popular vote.

Dr. J. M. Fulton, Audubon, Iowa.—The people do not rule. Why? Because there is a defect in the constitution of the United States. This can be proved, for did not Alexander Hamilton and Thomas Jefferson disagree over this question as to whether certain parts of the government should be elected by the people or be dictated from the throne. A compromise had to be made or some of the thirteen original states, ruled by the lovers of monarchy, would not have joined in the union of the states. Rule by the people is blocked by the supreme court and the senate of the United States. It has been known for ages that it is easier to control a few than it is to control all of the people. It is the old question of the populists of Rome against the senate. And now through many years of republican rule shrewd and greedy men have, through the courts, and different heads of the government been able to annul any laws the masses of the people make. There is a good deal of talk these days about progressives but when they constantly vote with centralized wealth to assist the Alexander type of government we need never to expect to rule. The progressive republicans (those who are dissatisfied with the tendency to one man rule) must come under the banner of democracy, where all men are equal under the law and then we will not be burdened by the "rule of the rich." No, the people do not rule yet!

L. J. Coppage, Crawfordsville, Ind.—In the first place, the people don't know what they want. It is no disparagement of the common intelligence to say that the average voter has not the time requisite to consider and determine the many complicated questions that arise in the administration of the government. Many of those below the average have not the capacity to deal with the intricate problems which present themselves to the legislative, judicial and administrative officials for solution. Some have not the facilities for investigation, and some unfortunately have not the disposition to investigate unless their personal interest is involved. Herein lies one of the advantages of a representative, over a pure democracy, viz., administration by men chosen on account of their superior intelligence, impartiality, patriotism and zeal for the public welfare. Could men of this character be always chosen, I doubt not that they would be more competent to perform the official functions, legislative, judicial and executive, than the average voter to say nothing of the considerable number who are far below the

average. In the second place, the people who know what they want, don't seem to know how to get it. No sensible man whose life or fortune was at stake in the courts, or whose recovery from violence or disease, would employ a lawyer or a surgeon on account of his party loyalty or zeal, nor on account of his impotency in begging or scheming for the job. Men procure good conduct of machinery, successful surgical operations, and cases in the appellate courts well briefed by selecting for such tasks respectively, those who are by natural bent, proper education and special training, eminently fitted to attain such results. In politics, however, especial qualification for the performance of the particular functions of the office, appears to be among the last things to be considered. If men were selected to control the ordinary enterprises of life with as little regard to their special adaptation to the respective duties required as in choosing officers to make laws and administer the government little progress would be made in art, agriculture or manufactures. We permit the vulgar importunities of the politician whose inordinate lust for office is prompted by avarice and ambition, to completely overshadow the disinterested patriotism of him who is not only willing, but eminently qualified to serve as a public benefactor if summoned so to do, but is unwilling to blazon forth his own merits or serve as a purveyor of patronage. Thus, before a man's fitness for an office is recognized he must exhibit himself as a demagogue, thereby advertising one of the most conclusive evidences of his unfitness.

James P. Murray, Dillon, Mont.—As I hoist the stars and stripes on my residence this memorable day, when every American citizen should feel glad that he is an American I pause for a moment to ask the question, are we indeed a free people? No, we are slaves; and do the people rule? No, money and the powers that be rule. Trusts, combinations, mergers, all backed by the multi-millionaires, are fast sapping the very life out of the people and this once glorious republic. And what is the remedy? I will tell you. Elect William J. Bryan president in 1912. Give him a majority in both houses of congress. Then go way back and sit down and watch the results, and see the people rule. He is our salvation, because he is of the people and for the people. The greatest American of today.

G. G. Lelevier, Editor Douglas Industrial, Douglas, Ariz.—The people do not get what they want, because as a rule, they do not rule in fact but by proxy. The proxy does not give what the people want because they think they own the proxyship; in lieu, they give what they want and not what the people want. To illustrate: They give but the crumbs that fall from their tables, and the people must be satisfied and leave the pies to be swallowed by their proxies. As these pies are generally supplies by the corporations, in the shape of profits, it will be readily seen what chance the people have in participation. The president and senators as a rule do not think they owe any allegiance to the people, but to the party to which they belong. They do not feel bound, as we have seen, by any promises made to the people but rather to the party, and they think they owe their jobs not to the people, but to their party. The remedy lies in the election of senators by the direct vote of the people, so they can turn the rascals out, and keep the honest ones in.

Mary Wilson, St. Louis, Mo.—I would just say they don't rule and never will under such men as Taft, Aldrich and Cannon. Too much bribing, too much intimidation and too much money used in the election of scoundrels to office. I must say they are getting what they voted for; they helped to make the times. Let them reap the whirlwind.

T. B. Menosmith, Bay City, Mich.—First the "system," the capitalistic class, own a majority of stock in most of the influential papers. Second, because a large percentage of the voting population depend on daily wages for their daily bread and are made to believe they would lose their jobs if they voted against, contrary to the wishes of their employers. Third, a large number of men who do not depend on daily wages for a living, have obligations to meet at banks and otherwise, and fear a possible panic in case the "system" is beaten by a small majority. Fourth, conventional partisanship controls many votes. The fourth class can not  
(Continued on Page 7)