

If the People Rule Why Don't They Get What They Want?

M. Smith, Stanleyton, Va.—Yes! Will try my hand at answering Senator Owen's question. The people don't really rule—money really rules the people. Every rule of our moral, social, political and industrial life is subordinate to the rule of money. This government is nominally a republic, but in reality is a monetary despotism. And under this illogical rule, those who get money can't, with it, get all they want, and those who don't get money can't get anything they want, and the incessant strenuous struggle to get some of this precious elusive thing, has corrupted the morals of the entire nation. One of the imperative prerogatives of civilized government,—and the most potent for weal or woe of its people,—is the establishing and control of a current money and exchange system for their use. Under most modern government, this sovereign prerogative seems to be exercised at will by financial autocrats, responsible to neither the government or the people, and is therefore prevented to a means for oppression of the industrial body. As might be expected of Americans, we have built up a system possessing some striking peculiarities which seems to have escaped the notice of the average citizen. The popular impression is that the United States treasuries, state treasuries, municipal treasuries, banks, trusts, insurance and like institutions, contain vast hoards of money, when, in fact, if the entire sum was distributed per capita among the people on a given date, many of our rich men would not have enough to last them over night, and workingmen perhaps not more than a month—say fifteen days' actual supply—and not a dollar in reserve in any treasury or bank if so distributed. It is estimated that the entire volume of this money must be used two or more times over each year, to pay the taxes of the country. How many times it must be used to exchange the products, can only be guessed, but every time it is so used, the industries must pay hire to this system for its use. Another peculiarity of this question is that about three-fourths of its volume is make-believe money, costing practically nothing except paper and printing, promises to pay real money which does not exist. No doubt the insufficiency of current money is responsible in some measure for the existence of the vast quantities of supplemental money issued in forms of stocks, bonds, mortgages, certificates and securities of various kinds, which is estimated to aggregate many times the volume of current money.

This vast nondescript aggregation of unknown amount and unknown value saddled on an inadequate current money system, and subjected to the gambling manipulations of an army of conscienceless speculators, should be sufficient to appal any careful, conservative business man. No man assumes to understand this system. No power assumes to control it. Even the government disclaims responsibility for it, and of itself. We know it is entirely irresponsible. We are well aware that a supposed immutable standard of stability was injected into it a few years ago with vociferous pretense of financial wisdom. Was it not inserted right? Perhaps the ballast has shifted? Or perhaps it was not put in at all? Who will dare assert and prove whether or not? At least ordinary men seldom see any evidence of it. However this may be, it gets quite

groggy at times, erratic in its movements, and lately had an attack of delirium tremens, but none of the financial esculapians could diagnose the case; at least they did not prescribe the gold cure again. Seriously, the multiplied doubled and twisted web of compounded interests, dividends, premiums and exactions of this supplemental system, has placed an annual burden of tribute upon industry, approximating the value of the entire production of the country. Think of it! A crop mortgage on all farms, factories, mines, and productive enterprises for more than they can produce, and no hope of lifting the mortgage! There is no source under heaven from which interest dividends, taxes, tariffs, profits or fortunes can be extracted, except from commodities in transition from production to consumption. Look down the vista of coming years, and see industry struggling under the ruthless bondage of this despot without soul, body or conscience, which no law or government assumes to control, and which is hourly growing in power for extortion, and determine in your own mind if it is possible for the people to get what they want without first controlling this monstrosity of their own creation.

Joe McCarville, Moorland, Ia.—Any man that thinks that the people do not rule and that they do not get what they want is mistaken. They do get what they want. But why do they get the things they are getting? That's the point. They get these things because they are educated to want them. The want is planted in the people by a special interest press. Were the people not educated to want a high tariff so the American workman could maintain a high standard of living? Have they not been taught that the railroads must be allowed to skin the shipper if the present high (?) efficiency of railroading is to be maintained? Haven't the people of Nebraska been educated during the last few months to things that they don't want the privilege of deciding for themselves whether they want a saloon in a certain county or not. They are willing to leave that to the brewers. When the people are educated to want something they ought to have they can get it. They are stronger than all the trusts put together. Instead of the trusts denying the people the things they ought to have the trusts educate the people to want the things that are good for them (the trusts). How foolish it would be for the special interests to say to the American people: "You can't have this." Last winter the beef packers didn't say "You must take the tax off colored oleomargarine." Not at all. But they did say that oleo is better than butter and it is a sin to prevent the poor man from buying this excellent stuff, and behold! Washington was flooded with letters from the consumers asking congress to remove the tax. I guess the people get what they want all right. They have graduated in the idea that the Payne tariff is "a substantial revision downward," that it is the fulfillment of the republican promise to revise the tariff. You bet.

HAD HIS HANDS FULL

Judge—"Why didn't you seize the thief when you found him?"
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