

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

W. T. Johnson, Hinton, Okla.—I must say that the majority of the people do rule and do get what they want, or at least do get what they vote for, just the same nowadays as they did when the majority crucified Christ. The majority wanted Him crucified and they did the horrible deed, and the same kind of a clique, the same majority, led by the same kind of leaders, the special interest captains, are in the saddle unto this day, and would again crucify Christ should He appear on earth, and in any manner meddle with, or thwart their plans of oppression, deception and robbery. I don't aim to say that the people get what is best for them, or what they expect to get; nor will they ever change the situation while through ignorance and political prejudice they are so easily persuaded to follow the advice of the standpatter captains.

R. H. Brown, Buena Vista Ranch, Crowther, Texas.—The man who thinks the people rule, his intelligence on political questions deserves sympathy. It has been shown by reasonably good authority that money carried every general election since 1880, the party having the largest campaign fund being the victorious one. The power that elects is the power that rules. Quasi public corporations and trusts are a menace to any republic. Their influence through money and other means permeates directly or indirectly every industry from the plow to a battleship and every political office from constable to president. If the wealth producers (but the wealth they create they do not enjoy) would devote less time to their unions, but more time to politics and demand direct legislation, the initiative, referendum and the recall (of these the recall is the most potent and which the boodle politician most fears) then the people might rule, but without it never. That every boodle and platform jumping politician and a very few honest men who believe the people incapable of self-government will most strenuously oppose direct legislation is expected, because by the recall some politicians in office would lose their jobs. A boodle politician would rather lose his eye-teeth than his job. After having voted every democratic ticket straight since 1872, my first vote, and then being compelled to view the ignominious spectacle of democratic platform jumpers voting with high protection standpatters in framing the schedules of the Payne-Aldrich-Taft 1.71 per cent upward tariff revision, is truth demonstrated that legislation in the interest of all the people is impossible through either of the old parties. Many leaders in both old parties are controlled by and are the tools of the great corporations, hence said corporations get what they want. The interests are already, through their tools in one party, proposing candidates for 1912 in order to forestall a real democrat. Taft and Harmon are their tickets. Democrats and insurgents take to the woods. But socialism is making progress, to which the people may be forced. A new party is absolutely necessary—Jefferson-Lincoln party. W. J. Bryan for president and R. M. LaFollette for vice president in 1912. With that ticket success would be assured and the people would once more rule.

George Houser, White House, S. D.—If the people rule, they get what they want. If people do not rule,

and do not get what they want, it is because dictators in office and out, influence "the powers that be" to betray the people and give the interests what they want. When the people cease to follow the leadership of dictators (good or bad) they will get what they want, and their capacity for self-government will not be questioned. "Principles, not men," must be the slogan in this campaign of education. Hero worship must cease. The voters must know what they want, and must nominate and elect trustworthy men to do specific things. To the extent that the voters fail in this duty, representative government is a failure. Men must work to maintain their principles. If they have no principles, or will not work for them, they can not expect to get what they want. A self-governing people must be an intelligent and virtuous people. They must be educated in the science of government, and trained in civic righteousness. Ignorance and slavery go hand in hand. An ignorant man is not a free man, neither is he a happy man. He seldom gets what he wants. He is a dangerous voter. If he votes for what he wants and ought to have, it is because he is led by a wise and good man instead of a demagogue. But democratic government demands that the voter be educated to the point where he needs no one to tell him how to vote. The ideals of the representative are not higher than those of the average voter. In every movement for bettering their condition, the people must be in advance of their leaders. Do the people rule? Do they get what they want? Our people are the most progressive in the world, and have more capacity for self-government than any other people. To a greater extent than any other people we rule ourselves, and get what we want. We will receive more blessings from our form of government, however, when we spend less money for battleships and more for education.

Rev. J. B. Maine, pastor Littlestown, Pa., Methodist Episcopal Church.—The people will rule and receive what they want when they do absolutely want it. They can conquer and overthrow all the political tricksters and shysters on earth when they fully determine to do so. The want is only half expressed.

J. F. Eidemiller, Englewood, O.—The people get just what the majority vote for; not that all the people voiced their wishes at the polls. They do not. A vast number of voters or we will say those who are qualified voters, do not attend elections of any kind because they say it is of no use. Now these stay-aways are among our very best citizens, morally, intellectually and financially. They have become disgusted with the corruption practiced by our officials, dismayed with the obnoxious political manipulation of bosses who control elections, and legislation by the corrupt use of the money power. This, in our estimation, is a serious mistake for any patriotic citizen to neglect to exercise his right, his privilege, his individual duty to himself, his neighbor, his country and his household. The nefarious use and influence of money by corporations and trusts at elections and in our legislative halls both state and national render it impossible for the people to get what they want even if all should voice their wants at the ballot box, as long as we elect men to serve us who disregard the plat-

forms and principles upon which they were elected. After election they have no recourse until another election. The oath of office seems a farce. When we have direct legislation or the initiative and referendum then will come the day of salvation. God speed the time. Then if the voter exercises his proper function the people will rule and get what they want.

J. Edwin Wood, Charlottesville, Va.—The people do not rule for the reason they do not know what they want. Why? Because a vast majority of the prominent secular newspapers and much other reading matter are controlled by the moneyed or special interests, and by constantly reading the literature, under the guise of news, prepared or inspired by these interests, they are in many cases, made to believe exactly as these interests want them to believe. For example, how often have the laboring men been made to believe that the protective tariff is imposed for their benefit? Time and again have I heard business men and others claim that trusts are good things because they reduce prices. Let any legislation affecting adversely the railroads be attempted and you will soon hear the cry that this agitation is affecting business and threatening a panic and that it will jeopardize the savings of the widows and orphans who own stock in the railroads. Let a man undertake to accomplish a reform and he is soon heralded as a fanatic, or as a demagogue exploiting his own selfish interests. It matters not how unselfish, sincere, or patriotic he may be, it matters not if he be poor and give his time and services without remuneration, or if he be rich and generously spend his means, he is held up to ridicule by the newspapers, which are the puppets of the special interests, and made to appear a crank, a fool, or a knave. How many good people ridicule Mr. Bryan? How often is Governor Folk condemned by the best people in the land? Are not LaFollette, Cummins and Dolliver all held up to scorn by some of our best citizens? Why? Simply because the columns of our newspapers respond to a systematic and persistent effort of the "system" to discredit them by misrepresentations of every conceivable kind. Note how successful they were in the Francis J. Heney case—the man who gave his services and almost contributed his life to the people's cause. The public was made to believe him little less than a monster, all because of the secular press, subsidized with the money stolen from the people. At present money rules. This is proven by the fact that the Morgans and Guggenheims may, with impunity, organize, merge and perpetuate trusts, may entirely change the color and effect of rate bills or any other inimical or regulative legislation; may cause to be appointed and retained cabinet officers of their own choosing, or may arrange to have turned over to them for a pittance the vast territory of Alaska with its countless millions of treasure. Yes, money buys congressmen, senators and other legislators. Who can say that even courts are not brought under its magic spell? The rest of the people are blinded with false reading matter daily placed before their eyes. With a fearless, faithful, unprejudiced press to champion their cause, the people can and will rule. Find a way to get before the masses the plain unvarnished facts, the conditions as they actually exist, and the people will get what they want.

Walter H. Beecher, Norwood, O.—It seems to assume that the people know what they want. If they do, then certainly they do not know how to get it. Either faculty is vital to democracy. A rather broad hint of their gullibility and helplessness was

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