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

If the people are ruling
And don't get what they want,
'Tis sure that the "interests"
Have a good cause to vaunt.

From the government power
The people are so far
That the public officials
With the "interests" star.

If the public officials
The "interests" betray,
They have found they'll be lonesome
On next election day.

But this rule can be canceled
By passing the "recall."
Instead of fearing the few,
They will then fear the "all."

Pass the "initiative"
And law-makers will know
They must favor the people
Or sit in a back row.

The "referendum" comes next
Lest law-makers forget
Their action is not final
But might take a back-set.

There will be other measures,
As the "primary act,"
To purify politics
And make freedom a fact.

When the people get control
Do not think that they will
Pass laws for the "interests"
Which their own rights will kill.

Now the custom seems to be
For officials to say,
"How much for the 'interests,'
How little for our pay."

—J. C. Hiberly, Copeland, Idaho.

C. M. Nichols, Thatcher, Arizona. —I have been reading all the letters in your valuable paper, in answer to Senator Owen's great question with much interest. I think the majority of the voters get just what they vote for at the time they do the voting; they get flattery, money, cigars, whisky, etc., and a large per cent get a big bluff to vote thus and thus or lose their job, therefore they vote for the job. There are enough of this kind of voters to elect men to the favored few, or their officers, or their hirelings to make the state and national laws in their favor, and they get what they want. So it is the minority of the voters that vote intelligently for the greatest good for the greatest number of people and they are the men that do not get what they want. If these men could have what they wanted they would have had W. J. Bryan and enough men of his type to have made laws for the good of all the people instead of the favored few. If all of the so-called democrat papers would fall in line with The Commoner and educate the people on the true democratic principles enough of the voters mentioned above could be educated to vote intelligently and the majority of the people would still get what they wanted; then we would have a government by and for the people.

H. M. Peters, Watseka, Ill.—Permit me to chime in on the question. It is well to discuss this question. It is high time that we should think upon it. My answer is this: The people don't get what they want because the people have been too trustful; they see the prosperity of the trusts which their trusted representatives have promoted and fostered, and they have been hoping and trusting that their representatives would

in time take them in too, to share the plunder and spoil. They have been taken in. The fact is the people get just what they want when they elect their representatives. If they didn't want Cannon in congress they wouldn't elect him; and if congress didn't want Cannon for speaker Cannon would be "spiked." The people do get what they want—if they don't the fault is theirs. Ours is a free country, and the people rule; if they don't ours is not a free country. Let the discussion proceed; we, the people, may learn something about who rules, why, and what for.

Reuben Reid Adams, Sheridan, Ark.—In answer to Senator Owen's question, I desire to say the reason the people do not get what they want is because they have not the initiative and referendum and W. J. Bryan for president, and the reason W. J. Bryan is not president is because he is the one man on the earth who would rather be right than to be president.

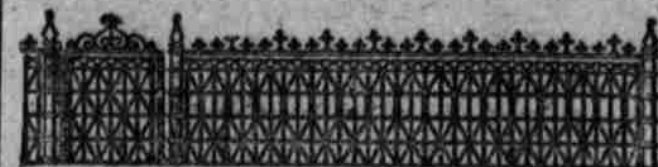
ANOTHER "TAINTED NEWS" OUT-PUT

When in San Diego, Cal., a movement for the municipal ownership of the local gas service was recently made, the people there were victimized, as in many another place they have been, with "tainted news." The paper that supplied the "news" but probably not the "taint"—that being furnished free by some "tainted news" bureau—was the San Diego Union. It published daily what it called an "epitaph" on municipal ownership of some kind in some place far enough away from California to make verification difficult. Among these epitaphs was one on what it called "the late municipal lighting plant of Elgin, Ill." Another was on "the late municipal lighting plant of Toledo, Ohio." This is the "tainted news" we alluded to in an editorial on "Tainted News from Topeka."

Of the Elgin plant the San Diego Union's "epitaph," No. 4 in its series, said that "after only six years of 'letting the peepul run their own affairs,' Elgin 'sold out her pretty municipal lighting plant at a loss of over \$100,000; that Elgin had 'had enough of it in a very short time, and so her nice municipal lighting plant also went the way of all such.' Now, the truth is that Elgin did not get 'enough' of her municipal lighting plant. It was taken away from her through a deal between certain members of the city council and the local traction company, secretly; it having been rushed through a special meeting of the council in the form of a ten-year contract with the traction company. The officials who engineered the deal have ever since been under a cloud in Elgin in consequence; and Elgin has appropriated funds and is about to let contracts for the preliminary work of re-establishing its municipal lighting plant in connection with its municipal water works plant. The San Diego Union's "epitaph" on the Elgin lighting plant was an inexcusable lie—using those words, as Mr. Roosevelt would say, "scientifically and descriptively and because no other terms express the fact with the necessary precision."

Likewise of the San Diego Union's "epitaph" No. 2, on the "remains of the late municipal lighting plant of Toledo, Ohio." According to the tainted veracity of that "epitaph,"

"the municipal lighting experiment" of Toledo, costing \$1,500,000 in bonds, "of which \$1,050,000 still remain unpaid," was "unsuccessful from the start," and, "after seven



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