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CUMBERSOME NATURALIZATION METHODS AIDING ALIENS UNDER ADVERSE CIRCUMSTANCES

[As instructor in the course of Americanization, added this year to the subjects taught in the Oregon University Extension Department, summer term session, which began June 26th, the university faculty secured the services of Mr. Geo. A. Green, director of Americanization at Cleveland, Ohio, one of America's foremost students of Immigration and Americanization problems. In the following article, written for *The Western American* by Mr. Green, his views on the subject have been set forth from almost every conceivable angle. His discussion of the problems of naturalization, and the many impediments, indirect and faulty methods, still in vogue, should interest every American having any interest in the subject, as well as all those of foreign birth who are familiar with many phases of the matter under discussion.—The Editor.]

By GEO. A. GREEN

THE PROCESS of naturalization of the aliens, seeking citizenship in America, is attracting the attention of the American public at large today, to a greater extent, than in any other time in the history of our country. Differ as people will on the subject of qualification, the fact of the matter is that our naturalization laws are still largely in the experimental stage and the qualifications of the applicant is largely a matter resting with the judge of the naturalization court and the examiner for the government, and they invariably disagree. The examiner often approves of an applicant's admission while the judge, for temperamental or other reasons, refuses to admit him. Again the examiner may raise objections to the naturalization of an alien and demur to his qualifications while the judge, perhaps in a particularly happy mood, will overrule the examiner's objections and admit the applicant.

Paul Lee Ellerbe, for ten years a chief Federal Examiner at Denver, Colorado, and therefore qualified

to speak with authority on the subject of naturalization, writing in a recent number of the *Survey* said:

To many an immigrant who wishes to throw in his lot with this republic, naturalization must present itself as a kind of steeplechase, with three hurdles to jump and an unseen arbiter stuck off somewhere who may finally declare the race lost anyway because the rider, didn't cock his cap at the correct angle or carry a rabbit's foot in his pocket.

The first hurdle is put up by the clerk of the court, the second by the naturalization examiner, the third by the judge. The unseen arbiter is the Commissioner of Naturalization in Washington.

The clerk fills out your papers for you. First, your declaration of intention, or "first paper," and then your petition for naturalization. If he gets them wrong, down you go.

The examiner examines your papers, and you, and your witnesses, your certificate of arrival, your depositions if you have any, your neighbors, if he wants to, your sisters, your cousins, and your aunts, your record in the old country, and anything else that he thinks might add a cubit to the stature of his hurdle, and if you don't jump high and straight, he gets you.

The judge's hurdle, as a rule, is a bit lower, but not always. But remember, the judge in Ohio who would require twenty years' residence in this country before naturalization, and then only admit the heads of families. And His Honor of Arkansas, who avowedly "construes everything against the applicant," and would admit a German under no conditions until he had been here fifty years.

However, we'll say you've jumped the hurdles put up by the three of them. You stick your certificate of naturalization into your pocket and canter off into the pleasant fields of citizenship, with the band playing the Star Spangled Banner. But alas, the rabbit's foot!

Mr. Ellerbe's analogy in many respect is unhappy though it serves well the purpose for which he intended it. Some of the most essential characteristics of a race are speed, directness, light, and little or no financial expense to contestants. Where do we find any of these on the long hazardous journey to citi-