

A Question and Answer Page for Foreign-Born

Questions on Americanization, Naturalization, Citizenship, Civil Rights and all matters of importance in regard to the necessary adjustments for foreign-born who have come here for the purpose of remaining permanently, will be answered promptly and as fully as possible, By Judge J. A. Buchanan, President Astoria Americanization Council in Astoria, and by H. J. Langoe, Editor The United American. Anyone asking a question may request that it be published under such pseudonym as he desires but the questioner must in all instances sign his correct name and address to the letter that accompanies the question. Anonymous questions will not be published or answered in this forum. People who are living in Astoria and vicinity may address their questions directly to Judge Buchanan.

Q.—Is it true that every applicant for citizenship must furnish a Certificate of Arrival? —V.W.T.

A.—No. If the alien came to America after June 29, 1906, he must, when he is ready to take out his second papers, ask the clerk of the Court for a blank form for "Certificate of Arrival." He then fills in the form and forwards it to the Naturalization office in Portland. The alien must then wait until he is notified by the clerk to appear. If the alien landed in America before the above date no Certificate of Arrival is required. —J.A.B.

Q.—To settle a dispute, is it possible for a Chinaman or a Jap to become a citizen of the United States? —Wm. K.

A.—Not unless he is born in America. The native-born children of Chinese and Japanese, to whom the United States refuses citizenship, are considered citizens of the United States if the parents look upon this country as their home. If, however, the parents are non-immigrants, and staying in America only for a season, the children born to them in the United States are not citizens. —J.B.

Q.—What should the alien do after declaring his intention to become a citizen? —Victor R.

A.—He should learn to read and write the English language intelligently, read the Constitution of the United States, learn all he can about the government and institutions of city, state, and nation, and learn something of the country and of its leading men. This can best be done in the night schools, which are conducted without cost to the applicant. —J.A.B.

Q.—I have had the misfortune to get drunk several times during the last two years, and have been arrested by the Police and fined. Will that record have any effect on my application for citizenship? —J.S.P.

A.—It certainly will. The law requires that an applicant must be of good moral character. The courts hold that any one who wilfully and knowingly violates the law is not of good moral character. You violated not only the city law, but you also violated the basic law, the fundamental law, the supreme law of the land. The punishment for violation of that law is more severe on an alien than it is on a citizen. A citizen can only be fined and imprisoned, but an alien may also be denied citizen-

ship. To become a citizen you must come before the court with a clean record. —J.A.B.

Q.—I am very nervous, and I dread the public examination in a crowded court room. Is there any way the examination can be made private? —Axel V.

A.—Private examinations are being held on the qualifications of the applicant on the Saturday before citizenship day. But only students of the night schools who have had at least twenty-one lessons or lectures on citizenship are entitled to take the examination at that time. You should attend a night school if you can possibly do so. —J.A.B.

Q.—Is it necessary to go to night school? Can I not study at home just as well to prepare for the examination? I think I am rather old to go to school. —Paul N.

A.—Of course, you can study at home, but I would advise you to go to night school if it is possible. They have trained, experienced teachers, who could explain many things to you which you might not get fixed correctly in your mind by studying at home. It is no disgrace to go to school. I have had students in my classes who were more than seventy-five years old, and they enjoyed the study. —J.A.B.

Dear Editor:—I have an American neighbor who tells me that a foreigner can never get equal rights in this country. I want to become a citizen, but if that is true, maybe I don't care. —Jacob L.

Your neighbor may be born an American but he is far from being the kind of American that helps to make America a better place to live in. If you have made America your permanent home and intend to become a citizen you are not in any sense a "foreigner" although you are foreign-born and necessarily an alien until you have become naturalized. The rights in citizenship are defined by the Constitution and more specifically by statutes, federal and state, and there is no distinction in the equality rights in citizenship whereby the native-born citizen is granted special privileges the foreign-born citizen cannot enjoy, save and except that no foreign-born citizen can become president of the United States. That prerogative is, as it ought to be, the one privilege of the native-born. There are foreign-born citizens right now sitting in the president's

cabinet, several are senators, congressmen, governors, high public officials, justices of the courts and captains in the world of business, industry and finance. Your American neighbor, judging by his neighborly spirit as evidenced in his crude insinuations when talking to you, is not the kind of an American that promotes and fosters good will, he sees and acknowledges no virtue in citizenship, save native birth, his hoity-toity opinion of himself should therefore not discourage you in your plan to strive to become an American citizen. Indications are that you will be a better citizen than your neighbor. Pay no attention to his caustic remarks and when you have obtained citizenship you will be your neighbor's equal if you conduct yourself as an American should, and it is beyond his power to deny you any of the inalienable rights that are due you as an American citizens. —H. J. L.

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