

For President- WILLIAM M'KINLEY, Of Ohio.

For Vice-President- THEODORE ROOSEVELT, Of New York.

PUZZLES IN CITIZENSHIP ARE SOLVED.

Here is something real funny. If it has any moral it probably is that an ounce of common sense is worth a whole law library, even if the library has its habitation in the brain of a justice of the supreme court.

A Porto Rican who is studying law at Washington applied the other day at the clerk's office of the supreme court of the District of Columbia for "first papers." That is, he expressed his desire to make a declaration of intent to become an American citizen. His attorney insisted that the proceeding was unnecessary and meaningless. Under the treaty of Paris Porto Rico was ceded to the United States and made a territory of this government, and the attorney contended that Castro was a citizen of the United States by virtue of that treaty and transfer of sovereignty. The clerk could not unravel the knot and the question was submitted to Judge Bradley. His honor was rather perplexed for a while, but he concluded that the safest way out of the dilemma was for the applicant to take oath and forswear allegiance to Porto Rico.

This was singular enough. Is, then, Porto Rico a nation, a sovereign power to which allegiance is due? No, she is a territory of the United States. Does not a man who renounces allegiance to Porto Rico also renounce allegiance to the United States? This difficulty was urged upon Judge Bradley, and he finally cut the Gordian knot by instructing Castro to forswear allegiance to Spain.

The second solution was by no means an improvement on the first. Allegiance to Spain was wiped out by the ratification of the peace treaty, and Castro was no more a subject of Spain at the time of his application than he was a subject of the sultan or of the czar. Judge Bradley's suggestion was harmless, but devoid of all meaning.

In Baltimore, where the registration officials had not the advantage of the advice of a justice of the supreme court, but had in lieu thereof a supply of simple, common sense, the question was solved in a jiffy. Five Porto Ricans applied there last Monday for registration. The registration officer promptly entered their names and wrote opposite each: "Naturalized by Annexation." All that was demanded of the Porto Ricans was proof that they had complied with the residence clause of the election laws of the state of Maryland.

Our Bryanite contemporaries see all manner of frightful things in this simple, common-sense decision. And the one at home here seems, as usual, worse scared than any of them and asks in wild astonishment and terror:

"Has the simple proclamation of the president, unauthorized by congress, admitted to citizenship 9,000,000 of people, whom the imperialists claim are heathens, incapable of self government? Have all those degenerate beings, 6,000 miles away, been made legal voters in the United States and granted the rights and privileges of the most favored citizens? If so, Mr. Hanna had better begin erecting election booths over in the Philippines and prepare to give the Tagalos the right to express their choice for president next November."

No, bless your dear, simple soul, no. The proclamation of the president has admitted nobody to citizenship. The treaty of annexation, that was ratified largely through Mr.

Bryan's influence with eighteen anti-republicans, accomplished whatever change was made in the political relationship of these people. And now the Porto Rican and the Filipino stand in the same relation to American citizenship as the New Mexican, Alaskan or native of Arizona. Residents of these territories are admitted to citizenship in the states, when they comply with the residence requirements of the states, without forswearing allegiance to anybody or anything. Nor does "Mr. Hanna" erect booths in these territories, any more than he will in our new possessions, to give them "the right to express their choice for president," for no resident of any American territory has such right or ever had since our first territorial acquisition more than six years ago.

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