

United States, or was the first President?

A.—He is not now. I know the name of the present President, but have forgotten it just now.

Judge Powers objected to the admission of the applicant, on the grounds that he was not eligible because of his race, and that he was not competent because of his qualifications. He then proceeded with an argument, claiming that it was the intention of the government originally to confine citizenship to free white persons—that is, descendants of the Caucasian race. To this had subsequently been added Africans and persons of African descent. It was the intent of Congress to confine citizenship to two races, the Caucasian and the African. Judge Powers read from treatises on ethnology in the American and international cyclopedias, and from decisions rendered where the applicants to citizenship were Chinese. He further argued that the applicant in the present case was not qualified for citizenship, even if he were included in the races that were eligible. He claimed that the courts had been too lax in the admission of citizens; that they should be required to give themselves up entirely to the laws of the country which they listed to obey. In Utah the courts had set an example to the entire land, in being more particular than others in the examination of applicants for naturalization.

Le Grand Young followed, saying that it was by the grace of the government that aliens were admitted to citizenship, and the courts acted under the laws of the government. He cited the fact that Judge Hunter and Judge Zane had both admitted to citizenship natives of the Hawaiian Islands. He also called attention to an act of Congress excluding only Chinese from naturalization. The Kanakas did not belong to the Chinese race, and were therefore eligible for admission.

Judge Powers said Congress had specially excluded Chinese because some of the State courts had admitted them in spite of the statute in force.

Mr. Young said Mr. Richards desired to be heard. The court, however, said it would take the matter under advisement and decide the question at an early day.

ENTHUSIASM OF FAITH.

Ezra was born during the captivity of Israel in Babylon. He was a grandson of Seraiah, the chief priest, one of those who were slain when Jerusalem was taken by Nebuchadnezzar. But although living far away from the land of his fathers, in a strange, idolatrous country, where the songs of Zion no longer sounded, his heart was full of love to God and to his brethren. He studied the word of God, became an able instructor in the law of Moses, and was in the hand of God the chief instrument in bringing the people back to the land of promise. He remained in Babylon for many years after the first com-

pany had left for Jerusalem, but, finally, joined his brethren in the Holy Land, bringing with him a second company. For about twelve years he was at the head of the government in Jerusalem and died at the age of 120. By the Jews Ezra is esteemed second only to their great Prophet Moses. His book covers a period of 79 years, from 536 to 457 before Christ.

The journey of Ezra from Babylon to Jerusalem with the second company of Jewish Saints displays an instance of noble courage, heroic faith and pure integrity the excellence of which cannot be too much lauded or admired. But it happens that we have the event recorded only by Ezra himself, and the humble language of the author makes us, in reading the passage, almost forget the vastness of the fact recorded, thereby adding to it another excellency. True greatness is always humble. It needs no boasting, and hates it like poison. It is petty insignificance only that must always be "loudly talked up" in order to make its non-important presence known.

Actions like Ezra's may, by the wise of the world, be termed enthusiasm; but, if the term is proper at all, it is true enthusiasm, the enthusiasm of faith, well worthy of imitation in this age of chilly philosophy.

EZRA'S TESTIMONY.

From Ezra viii: 22 it is clear that the devoted servant of God had used his influence in Babylon to convey to the King Artaxerxes, a right knowledge of the character of the God of Israel. He had told the king what great wonders God had anciently performed; how He had liberated His people from Egypt, saved them from the hands of the mighty Pharaoh, commanded the waters to divide before them, and the rocks to give water. He had told him how nothing would withstand His hauds and purposes, but that all things must serve Him. He had told him that the God of Israel never changes, but remains the same in power, in love, in holiness; and he had most solemnly declared that "the hand of God is over all those who seek him, for good, but that His power and anger are over all who forget him."

These great truths Ezra had learned from his diligent study of the Word of God. He did not hesitate to talk of them, and with his testimony honor his God. It is not, however, in this verbal testimony that we find anything peculiarly or exceptionally heroic. Ezra was living under a friendly government and had many opportunities of exalting the power of God. His position as a public teacher of the law—for such he was rather than a "scribe"—gave him every desirable opportunity to bear this testimony, and not to have done so would have been a most strange and criminal indifference.

As far as the verbal testimony goes, it is most excellent. But it will be perceived that there are thousands of preachers right in our own age who know all this about God and are saying every Sunday,

like Ezra, that God is with his people in order to help them. Let us therefore leave this point and go a step farther.

EZRA'S TRIAL.

It is only right that a man who talks much of faith in God should be afforded an opportunity of proving that he himself, at least, believes what he says. Such an opportunity Ezra had given to him. The event was this:

In his advanced age Ezra had a great desire to join his brethren in order to investigate the law of God more fully, and also to instruct his brethren. He therefore sent a letter to the king, asking for permission to emigrate; and his majesty in a most gracious communication granted the petition in the following language:

"Artaxerxes, the king of kings, to Ezra, the priest and instructor of the law of the God of heaven, perfect peace! I have given the command that everyone of the people of Israel and the priests who are in my kingdom and are willing shall go with thee; thou art sent from the king and his government to investigate the conditions of Judah and Jerusalem according to the law of thy God, which is in thy hand, and to bring with thee gold and silver, contributed by the king and his government to the God of Israel, whose dwelling is in Jerusalem; and also all the silver and gold that thou canst find in the whole province of Babylon, and such contributions as thy people may be willing to give towards your God's house in Jerusalem * * * and by me, King Artaxerxes shall the commands be given to all treasurers on the other side of the river, that all what thou may require shall be given unto thee." (See Ezra, chap. 7.)

According to this liberal loyal command Ezra gathered a company of 1,496 manly members, the number of the women and children not being given. This company we now find gathered at the borders of the great empire by a river, and we may take a look at the camp. There is many a young man who has never seen the land of his fathers, and whose heart beats rapidly in anticipation of the joy that awaits him. There are also men with white beards and silver hair who can hardly realize the fact that they are on their way home. They have still a vivid impression from their early childhood of the sacred valleys where their cradles were rocked, and now they go to lay their bones to rest where their fathers sleep. All is joy and anticipation in the little camp. As prisoners in chains Israel was led away from home—laden with gold and silver, the contributions of wealthy Babylonians, once their captors and oppressors, they now return home. No wonder they have brought their carefully tuned harps with them, so long neglected by the rivers of Babylon. For now they can again sing the songs of Zion.

Looking about us in this joyful camp, one thing is very striking: there is not a soldier in the camp.