

**'Mr. Kakyak Decides to be a Republican,' *Chicago Record*, July 22, 1899.**

"Now Mr. Kakyak, we will begin the course of instruction by telling you something about the great political parties," said Mr. Washington Conner, the missionary from the United States of America. He and Mr. Bulolo Kakyak, the Tagalo agriculturist, were seated in the shade of the nips hut.

"As I am now an American subject and have a proprietary interest in American politics, I am naturally anxious to find out what is what," said Mr. Kakyak, squatting into a comfortable attitude.

"Have you made up your mind which you wish to be--a republican or a democrat?" asked Mr. Conner.

"What is the difference between a republican and a democrat?" asked the Filipino.

The missionary whittled fine shavings from a piece of split bamboo and half closed his eyes as he meditated upon his reply.

"There are supposed to be certain live issues dividing the two parties," said the missionary. "For instance, the republicans are supposed to favor a high protective tariff--although not all republicans are high protectionists and not all high protectionists are republicans. The democrats are in favor of free trade, a tariff for revenue only, a tariff for revenue exclusively, a tariff for revenue with incidental protection and a tariff affording protection to the products of democratic states. The republicans are in favor of a gold standard, all except the bi-metallists and the silver republicans. The democrats are in favor of free silver, at a ratio of 16 to 1, or any other ratio that will win, all except the gold democrats, who are not in favor of any ratio at all. Each party is in favor of civil-service reform when the other party tries to make a sweep of the offices. Both parties are opposed to all trusts and combinations of capital, as nearly as you can gather from late platforms. Although the platforms for 1900 have not been framed, I have every reason to believe that all republicans, except the anti-expansionists will indorse President McKinley's plan of colonial extension and benevolent assimilation, while all democrats, except a large body of imperialists, will denounce the campaign of conquest in these islands. And there you are!"

"That being the case," said the Tagalo, "I think I will take to the woods."

"Nonsense," said the missionary. "You must make a choice."

"But I can't see that there's very much difference between the two parties. You say that some democrats indorse nearly everything in the republican platform and some republicans are opposed to expansion, high protection and the gold standard. How can they be republicans?"

"They are republicans because they vote the republican ticket. A republican is one who votes the republican ticket. A democrat is one who votes the democratic ticket."

"In your country how does a man make up his mind which ticket to vote?"

"He usually follows the example of his father. That is always a safe and easy plan."

"But my father was neither a republican nor a democrat. He was a rebel."

"An insurgent patriot, you mean."

"You called them 'rebels' yesterday and warned me not to use the term 'insurgent' any more."

"Those of your countrymen who fought Spanish rule were insurgent patriots, as nearly as I could learn from reading the publications in my own country a year ago. Those who are now resisting American authority and trying to thwart our scheme of benevolent assimilation are disorderly rebels. There is a wide distinction between an insurgent patriot and a disorderly rebel and you want to get it clearly fixed in your mind."

"Whether insurgent or rebel, he did not give me a distinction in American politics and I fear I am not qualified to make a choice between the two parties you mention. At the same time, as I am now a subject of the United States, I suppose I ought to be something."

"By all means," said the missionary. "I can assure you that I well understand your hesitancy because there are no geographical predilections here in the island of Luzon. If you lived in Reading, Pa., you would have no trouble over coming to a decision. You would be a republican by instinct. Or, if you were a resident of Talladega, Ala., you would be a democrat, so as to get into society. But here in Luzon it is different, I will admit. Still, as you say, it is highly important that you should be something."

"Hold on! I have it!" exclaimed Mr. Kakyak. "You say that the issues have become rather cloudy and indefinite here of late and that there are varying beliefs in each party. Why wouldn't it be a good idea for me to hold aloof from both parties for awhile? By declining to ally myself permanently with either of these political organizations I could be free to act upon each issue independently, as it were. That is, I might support the republican ticket this year, and then next year, if the republican administration had made serious mistakes or nominated candidates of low intelligence and bad records, I could change around and vote the democrat ticket. By doing that I wouldn't bind myself to the democratic party forever, mind you. I would simply vote to give it a chance to correct temporary abuses of power."

"Great Scott!" gasped the missionary. "How did you ever get that perverted idea into your head? Do you know what you would be if you ever went to changing about like that?"

"Why--no," replied Mr. Kakyak, somewhat frightened at the missionary's manner.

"You'd be a mugwump."

"A what?"

"A mugwump."

"That doesn't sound very nice."

"A mugwump is the most detestable of all creatures. All true partisans recoil from him as from a deadly adder. Little children hoot at him as he passes along the street with an umbrella under his arm. He is represented in the comic papers as wearing side-whiskers and gum shoes. He cannot vote at primary elections. No mugwump may ever hope to get on the police force. He is the torment of the political prophet and the day-bogey of the campaign manager. You ought to read what the New York Tribune says about him. I implore you, Mr. Kakyak, not to make this mistake at the very outset of your political career. Be supreme a populist, be a prohibitionist, be anything that bears a party name, but don't be a mugwump. Once the brand of mugwump is put on you you are a political Jonah, to be mistrusted for all time. You won't be able to get a political job if you live to be 100 years old. If at any time you venture to address your fellow-citizens on any topic of public interest and claim a respectful consideration of your arguments some editorial writer will pick you up and say, 'This man is a mugwump,' and that will settle it! He won't have to strain himself to refute your arguments. You will be ruled out of the game of politics on your own damning record. No, Mr. Kakyak, be something. Those were the exact words that you used only a few moments ago. Be something; Be either a republican or a democrat, and after you have selected your party stick to it through thick and thin. If you happen to be a democrat and believe in protection and the gold standard you vote for free trade and 16 to 1, understand? It may go a little hard at the time, but after you get to be an old man and want to act as a delegate to something or other it will count largely in your favor if you can swell around political headquarters and say: 'I'm 69 years old, coming this fall, and I never voted anything but the straight ticket.' Then people will respect you. But whatever you do don't become known as a mugwump."

"Perhaps you are right," said Mr. Kakyak. "I am an unsophisticated Tagalo and you are wise with the experience of triumphant democracy. But I don't know which I ought to be. From what you say, I don't believe it makes much difference. I believe I'll toss a coin. Heads, I'm a republican; tails, I'm a democrat."

He pulled a copper coin from the loose pocket of his trousers and tossed it into the air.

"Heads!" ejaculated the missionary. "You are now a republican. Welcome to the grand old party. Remember that hereafter you indorse the administration."

Thus ended the first lesson.