

MR. BRYAN ASKS SOME QUESTIONS AND
MR. ROOSEVELT ANSWERS THEM *

YESTERDAY at Nashville, Michigan, Mr. Bryan propounded certain questions to the Republican party, to which I return my answers as follows:

1. *Q.* "If a trust is a good thing, why did the Republican platform denounce trusts?"

A. The Republican party denounced the evils of trusts and pointed out the way those evils could be controlled and minimized. Any sensible man knows there may be evils which need correction and yet that this may not mean the general and senseless destruction of all corporations and all the conditions of industrial development.

2. *Q.* "If the trusts are a bad thing, why did the Republican administration allow more trusts to be organized than during all previous history of the country?"

A. The Republican administration did not allow more trusts to be organized than during all the previous history of the country. Incidentally, the Standard Oil Company, the American Sugar Refining Company, and all the other more prominent "trusts" came into existence long before the present administration. But Mr. Bryan knows perfectly well that the National Government cannot, with its present powers, prevent the organization of these trusts, and that it was the action of his own party associates in Congress on June 1 last

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which prevented the passage by Congress of the constitutional amendment which would have given the National Government the power sought for.

3. *Q.* "If some trusts are good and some trusts are bad, can you tell the difference between a good one and a bad one?"

4. *Q.* "Do you know of any good monopoly in private hands?"

5. *Q.* "Do you know of any man good enough to stand at the head of a monopoly and determine the price of that which others are to use?"

A. Mr. Bryan's terminology is here so loose that it is difficult to know what he means. If he uses "trust" in the sense of large corporations, any intelligent man knows that there are good corporations and bad corporations and that the difference between them can be told as readily as the difference between two wealthy private individuals, one good and one bad. As for monopolies in private hands, patents are such monopolies, and if Mr. Bryan means that all monopolies are bad, he means that patent laws should be abolished outright. Does he really mean this? If not, his words mean nothing. The undoubted evils connected with some partial industrial monopolies will never be affected in the least by any opposition until in dealing with them their opponents learn and practise both precision of thought and precision of statement.

6. *Q.* "Do you know of any good reason why the army should be made one hundred thousand?"

A. Here again Mr. Bryan's language is loose. If he is speaking of the present army of sixty-five thousand regulars and thirty-five thousand volunteers, then every man who possesses an ounce of common sense or an ounce of patriotism must know not only that there

is very good reason for having had it, but no possible excuse for refusing to have it. It has been needed in the Philippines; it has been needed in China; and only the allies of Aguinaldo and the Boxers can criticise it. Half of the Democrats in Congress voted for it when it was provided for.

7. *Q.* "Would you be willing to make the army two hundred thousand if the Republican leaders said so, or a half a million if they wanted it?"

A. It is hard to believe that this question is put in good faith, for no one has dreamed of asking for an army of two hundred thousand or half a million. Abraham Lincoln once had to ask for a large army, and, in spite of the opposition of the politicians whose political heir and assign Mr. Bryan is, the people gave him what he asked. No increase of the army will ever be asked for by Republicans save because of reasons which would satisfy the people as they were satisfied in the days of Lincoln.

8. *Q.* "What is your title to the Filipino? Did you buy him or did you get him by force?"

A. There is of course no title to the Filipino save as there is a title to the inhabitants of Alaska or of the Hawaiian Islands, and he was not bought save exactly as dwellers in the Louisiana Territory, including what is now Mr. Bryan's own State of Nebraska, were bought by Thomas Jefferson. The Philippine Islands were acquired under President McKinley by treaty and purchase exactly as the Louisiana Territory was acquired under Jefferson or Florida under Monroe.

9. *Q.* "Do you think you can buy the right to govern people?"

A. This has already been answered in my reply to Number 8. Evidently Thomas Jefferson thought that

we could "buy the right to govern" the Indians of the Louisiana Purchase, and Andrew Jackson thought we could similarly acquire the right to govern the Seminoles of Florida.

10. *Q.* "What are you going to do with the Filipino when you get him? Are you going to kill him?"

A. We are not going to kill the Filipino unless he tries to kill our soldiers, and he will stop trying to kill our soldiers very soon after he becomes convinced that he will receive no further aid in the effort from the party of which Mr. Bryan is chief. As to what we are going to do with him, the answer is simple. We are going to civilize him and give him the peace, order, individual liberty, and gradually increasing self-government of which Mr. Bryan would deprive him for all time by turning him over to a syndicate of corrupt Chinese half-breeds and ferocious Tagal bandits.