The Public

erything with its proper Latin name, and you can read some of 'em yet.

I like purple foliage and reds, rock maples and Japanese in their fall suits. Up one side is a group of magnolias, the common southern kind, and the kind with great big burdock-like leaves, now all scattered on the ground.

One of 'em was Magnolia Acuminata. I got it off the plate. And what do you s'pose it was? Nothin' in the wide world but a cowcumber tree. I've seen finer along a line fence in Ohio, but it's a pretty tree. John, if you'd see a cowcumber tree in early fall, with dark green pointed leaves and full of scarlet cowcumbers, you'd want to come west to live.

I called on my Supreme Court; eight fine lookin' grandfathers sittin' in a row, intent on upholdin' the rights of property. The rights of man are more in the realm of poetry—in Bobby Burn's "sphere of influence," I guess. A bald-headed lawyer was tellin' the court how things were, and the old boys were botherin' him, askin' him flip questions, and tyin' the grass in front of him to trip up his heels. You can't cure a boy of mischief—not by age.

One difference between the Supreme Court and the Negro minstrels is that the end man is in the middle. That's the Chief Justice—Fuller, his name is—and he looks the part. He has long, flowin' white hair, and long, flowin' white mustache. They're grave and reverend seigniors all right, and I'm proud of their appearance a little and stage effects. Once we came nigh havin' an accident. A sight seetin' woman appeared, ostrich feather afoot, an' all sail set, and turned into the holy circle around the throne sacred to the lawyers. In another second she'd have got in and the anarchy I've been afraid of would have arrived; but two ushers, hissin' like geese, caught her and turned her into the audience circle, and the country was saved. Then someone said in a husky voice: "Suspend!" There was a sudden show of gloomed backs, a flash of bald heads, a stir of concealing drapery, and, a moment later, eight empty chairs. The Supreme Court of the United States had vanished.

UNCLE SAM.

* * *

JUSTICE TO THE NEGRO.

It seems to have become popular, even in the North, to regard Negro suffrage a failure—and to acquiesce in an effort to make it a failure. This, to me, is unmistakable evidence of the decadence of patriotism—of which we have another humiliating example in our war on the Filipinos. For ourselves, as American citizens—without regard to the welfare of the Negroes—we cannot afford to be unjust to them! We are morally responsible for them! Our teaching and training have made them what they are!

Had the whites been truly just, not to say magnanimous, they would have said at the close of the war:

My colored friends, you have served us long and well. Your unrequited labor made us rich. You are now free. Henceforth you shall have a fair race in an open field. We have the advantage of you now and intend to hold it, but if in the strife for a higher civilization you can overtake and pass us, we will yield the palm and sa: God speed you!

With the manifestation of a just and kindly spirit a race war would have been impossible.

If we search the history of the world, we shall find no story more pathetic, and in multitudes of cases none more tragic, than that of the colored people of this country. Stolen from their native land, sold into a bondage in which they were held for centuries in the most abject slavery; with no rights, even of person, which their masters were bound to respect; hopeless and hopeless they lived on in peaceful, friendly and often intimate and trusted relations with the whites.

How they became free we need not here relate. It is enough to say that it was not because of their asking. Freedom was thrust upon them, not from motives of humanity, or philanthropy for them, but as a last resort for the preservation of our Union. The ballot was given them as a supposed means of protection.

As a race they have proven themselves amiable, docile, forgiving and quite as trustworthy as could have been expected when we consider their training and environment.

I think it would be difficult to find a white race, which as slaves, would have protected the interests of their absent masters as they did during our civil war. They not only protected their families—wives and daughters—but in many cases provided also the means for their subsistence. Indeed it would be difficult to invalidate the oft repeated statement that not till the Negro aspired to a higher manhood was he objectionable to the whites.

Believing that the Golden Rule is of universal application, and that the Sermon on the Mount will never become obsolete, the more I read and hear of the feeling manifested by the whites toward the Negro, the less I am inclined to justify their attitude. They assume it to be their right to rule arrogantly, with or without law, evidently expecting the colored man to practice the forbearance and self-control generally acquired by education only; and that he shall forego his right of citizenship also. As evidence of the feeling which dominates the South, I quote an editorial from a Bristol, Tenn., paper:

The Negro problem has long been one of gravest importance to the people of the South, and the recent race riots in the Carolinas have brought it even more forcibly before the public. There has never been a time since the civil war, perhaps, when the two races were at peace and on friendly terms in all sections of the Southern States. There has always been more or less trouble and ill feeling; but the dire possibility of Negro equality, the threatened calamity of Negro domination in some of our sister States, has aroused hatred and prejudice to the point of slaughter, and intensified the existing enmity between the white man and the black to the last degree.

The Southern people are averse to bloodshed, and resort to the shotgun policy only when that alternative is forced on them. In the North the Negro's offense has mostly been competition with white labor: while in the South he ignorantly aspires to domination and social equality. This danger is ever present and ever growing, and as the lines are becoming more and more sharply drawn, it is only a question of time when race riots will become frequent. There seems to be no solution to this problem, which as time goes on becomes more complex. The Negro is a free citizen by
of government, and under the law has rights e white man. And yet, where Negro suprema
ble by reason of numerical strength, the has shown that he will never submit.
ultitudes of people in the South deprecate
g, in this quotation is manifest the quint
t the spirit which has persistently antag
black man. He knows that morally and is entitled to political equality. That he
social equality (except possibly in rare o not believe.
missionaries to Africa at vast expense of
care, in an effort to spread the gospel of
inculcate a belief in the fatherhood of God
otherhood of men. Would not those whom
then be justified in sending missionaries
th and South? SUSAN LOOK AVERY.
April, 1903.

RULED BY THE DEAD.
Rebuilding of Old Commonwealths,” by Wal
H. Page, Doubleday, Page & Company,
New York.
ve Southern life is to be found not only In
y but in certain old towns also. A college
serve as an example. I know such a com-
cere it seems proper to rest till one die, so
st mild, contented life, so dignified the
the trees, and so peaceful the half neg-
dens. You are aware only of an invita-
dose. When a route for a railroad half a
more ago was run through a college town
this there was great excitement. A rail-
ver! It would far the dignity of the com-
l corrupt the morals of youth. It was de-
refore; and, after thirty years of jolting
ver bad roads, the people had to build a
road. But even then they would not
ocomotive nearer than a mile. The rail-
fore, ended in an old field and the same
have their share of work to do. But the
now the site of a cotton mill.
ly visited a college town contemporary
The century-old buildings, the elms and
hat give acres of shade—trees some of
planted by great men with proper cere-
such an atmosphere generation after
of youth has absorbed a little yearning
patriotism. The young men you meet are
anner, earnest fellows who have already
m themselves to the State; for the State is
the Nation.
this academic circle more than a decade
asked a member of the faculty why he
particular church, for I knew that he
years been an “adherent” of another
believer in none. “I throw beef to the
be. “The sectarian representation in this
st be evenly balanced, and by this ad-
belong to the church that I attend.” He
doors in his library and took out a hand-
s, Matthew Arnold’s “Literature and
volume of Renan and two or three others.
under lock and key.”
this college town that I went to rest last
winter. My memory will suffer palsy before I for-
get the unchanging charm of that academic circle of
eighteenth-century life; for it is as it was before
anything was that now is in our country. The suc-
cession of generations is an incident; the coming
of men from other States and other lands—it is they
that soon change, not this circle into which they
come. Tradition is king here and there is no other.
You would wear his livery yourself within an hour
after you entered his kingdom; and you feel at home,
as you would feel at home if you could visit your
ancestors from whom you were reprehensible for stray-
ing away into your own generation.

When the play of general conversation had ended
one evening the talk settled down to a specific topic,
and this was the topic—the lack of freedom of
speech in the community. Of course, there was in
that company absolute freedom. We were talking
about “radical” opinions, especially on theological
subjects and about the race-relation. “I should not
dare,” said one Professor, “to say in public—in my
lecture-room or in print—a single thing that I have
said here.”

“What?”

“I should be dismissed.”

“Do the men who hold the power of dismissal all
count your opinions a crime?”

“Why, not one of them. They all agree with me.
There is no difference of private opinion. I can dis-
cuss anything with them in private. But they could
not withstand the public indignation that would be
expressed through the press.”

“This is the more remarkable,” another added
with a laugh, “because the editor of the most im-
portant newspaper in this quarter of the world holds
more ‘radical’ opinions than any other man I know.
But he has to serve the public.”

“Who is the public?”

“The Democratic platform, the Daughters of the
Confederacy, old General So-and-So, and the Pres-
byterian creed,” said one.

“And the farmers who vote whether they can read
or not,” added another.

As for the editor of the powerful newspaper, I
knew that a year before he had sought an engage-
ment in New York in order “to get out of the realm
that is ruled by the dead.”

It is in such a circle of the old academic society
and in rural regions that you come upon the real
Southern problem—that unyielding stability of opin-
ion which gives a feeling of despair, the very anti-
thesis of social growth and of social mobility. “Every
thing lies here where it fell,” said a village philoso-
pher in speaking of this temper. “There are the
same rocks in the road that were there before the
war.”

To illustrate—one morning I went to a school for
the Negroes and I heard a very black boy translate
and construe a passage of Xenophon. His teacher
also was a full-blooded Negro. It happened that I
went straight from the school to a club where I en-
countered a group of gentlemen discussing the lim-
itations of the African mind.

“Teach ‘em Greek!” said old Judge So-and-so.

“Now a nigger could learn the Greek alphabet by
rote, but he could never intelligently construe a
passage from any Greek writer—impossible!” I told
him what I had just heard. “Read it? Understood