

try is arousing such distrust and hostility among our naturalized citizens of European birth. Republican leaders affect to believe that there is no danger to the republican party from this feeling of fear. They should take heed. In Europe, militarism is a black and blighting shadow. Let it not fall across our republic's onward way.—Jerome A. Hart, in Argonaut.

#### THE CONSTITUTIONAL QUESTION.

The decision of the federal court, for the district of Minnesota, that the constitution extends wherever new territory is acquired, has been variously commented upon by the press of the country. The following is from the National Provisioner and notes more particularly the commercial phase of the question:

"A United States court in a matter involving the liberty and status of a native of Porto Rico has decided that the moment this government acquired the island of Porto Rico the constitution of this country extended over the new possession and that no further legislation was necessary. It is to be regretted that the question is involved in a matter of murder in which the prisoner won his contention, because that disbars an appeal to the supreme court of the United States which could, at this early date, settle a vexed constitutional problem that is going to jostle us in a legal, political and business way for some time.

"If Porto Rico and the Philippines upon the ratification of the treaty with Spain became United States territory under our constitution without the need of further legislation and with full territorial rights, then the products of these lands must be admitted into this country free and our goods must be admitted in there duty free. That is a matter of the organic law over which congress has no control. If free trade must exist between the states and our new territory, existing treaties with foreign powers must apply to them as to any other part of this country. Any new treaties or tariff acts are unconstitutional and will involve us in a string of awkward and peculiar complications.

"In view of the decision already rendered by a very high court of this country—a decision which stands until overruled by the supreme court itself—any acts under the recent legislation of congress are involved in unconstitutionality and are liable to be gainsaid some day by the final arbiter at Washington. We do not believe that the new 'colonial policy' of our government can hold. In saying so we do not necessarily infer that it is a wise or an unwise policy. We simply say that it is not in keeping with the traditions or the organic law of this country. We believe that the supreme court of the United States will so hold and upset the recent legislation of congress which provides for discrimi-

nation against our new territory. The sooner this court is invited to pass upon this question the better for our peace of mind and the complications which are likely to follow a pursuance of the present policy in regard to our island possessions. Our food interests are as much involved in this constitutional question as is any other trade. We expect to ship the meats, lards, butters, oils and other edible goods which the populations of our acquired land require in excess of their home production.

"It has been our historic boast that everything is free under the American flag; that where floats the stars and stripes there live liberty and freedom of trade with every other part of our land. We believe that the supreme court will ultimately say so in regard to Porto Rico and the Philippines."

#### THE ECLIPSE.

Going away? asked the editors, who stand guard at the entrance of the town, to see that none pass or repass without the worshipful public's knowledge. — New Orleans. — On business? — An engagement to meet a party there.

An engagement indeed; one made years and years ago by the infinite labors of the patient astronomers. And the contracting party surely the strangest that any man ever made appointment with, even a visitant from interplanetary space; the tip of a shadow 240,000 miles long, which, forever walking that cold emptiness, was to stroke our continent in a narrow path on the morning of the 28th of May.

It is a long journey—or, as the really up-to-date people say, a "far cry"—from Nebraska City to New Orleans. One crosses eight of the states of the Union; one also passes twice through the shadow of the earth. That is a cone of blackness, so huge that it makes one's hair rise to think of it, always lurking close behind the shoulder of our globe; the reason we think so little of it is that we spend half our lives in it. Through it two mighty trains plowed roaring tunnels, each four or five hundred miles in length. Twice we emerged from it to confront the eternal pageant of the rising sun. Once he appeared above a misty land that was Illinois, raising a ruddy face surmounted by a lofty plume, like an Indian chief in his war-bonnet; between us lay the vague expanse of the Mississippi, with woods and green islands looming through the morning vapors. It is like the Mississippi of which the strange French genius Dore dreamed, without ever having seen it. And again the sun rose above the blue and smiling level of Lake Pontchartrain.

There was a day between, a long day. Both the Burlington and the Illinois Central railroad systems are among the greatest of human organizations, and every known appliance is employed to

make smooth the path of those who go to view eclipses over their lines. And still it is hard, undeniably hard, even for one who loves to look upon his native land in all its parts, to abide upon any railroad train whatsoever for many days in succession. Double track, ninety-pound rail, locomotives of incredible bulk and power and cars of the best, do not remove the weariness that settles upon eye and brain as the caravan goes on and always on. If it is a rapid train, one tires of the unvaried speed maintained hour after hour, and of seeing one town after another whirl by undistinguished. If it is a slow train and stops at the towns, one wearies of his rural fellow-citizens and wishes that the train would make haste and get somewhere.

This is not one of the worst days. It lies altogether in the Old South, and the ways are full of confederate veterans hastening to a reunion in Louisville. A veteran it seems is a veteran, whether north or south; these differ to the eye only in the lettering upon their badges from the old soldiers familiar to us in the northern towns, neither are their wives and daughters more or less fair than those who grace with their presence the gatherings of the Grand Army. One notices only that they are all elderly men, and that some of them are not so active as when they trudged, musket-laden, along the miry path of duty; and everywhere one hears that, Thank God, there is no bitterness now.

Another class of fellow-citizens becomes more conspicuous with every mile of southing accomplished; that is the man and brother with the black, black face. The villages came to consist of the indispensable stores, and only a cluster of whitewashed shanties besides, before each of which the "colored" are taking their rest. Appears also the separate waiting-room, and the Jim Crow car as well. Looking forward from his own seat, one may behold projecting from a window far ahead certain feet, which the Creator never caused to grow upon the shanks of the white man; and at stopping places one may see travelers alight from that vehicle, to be welcomed by throngs of billowy black dames with shouts of—Dah you is.

The negroes are amusing at first, but end by becoming annoying. They grow and grow upon one, as their numbers increase, until they grow into a kind of black nightmare, and "more negroes" becomes an unwelcome sight, from which one willingly averts his eyes. How quick the northeastern section of our country was to judge the southeastern in its difficulties, fifty years ago!

Further, there appears, as wherever one goes at present, the process of shortening lines by the avoidance of curves, together with a scaling down of grades, and all to the end that freight and passengers may be conveyed more