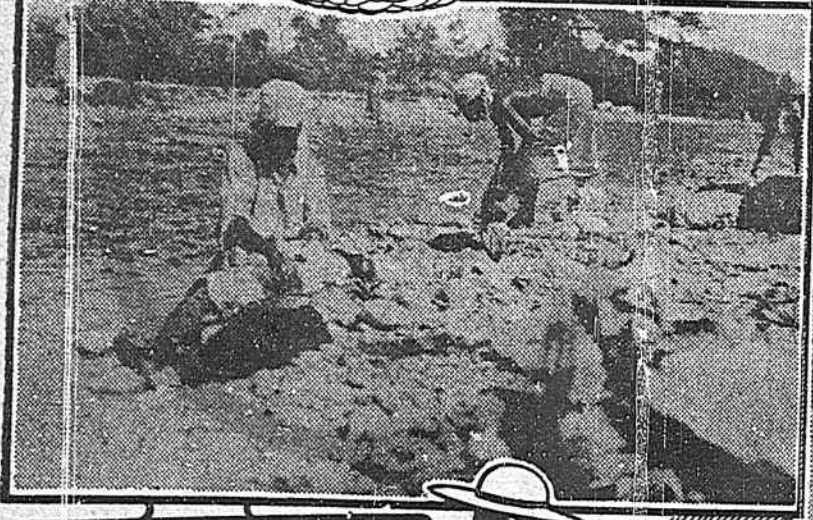


TURBULENT HAITI, The Black Republic of the West Indies



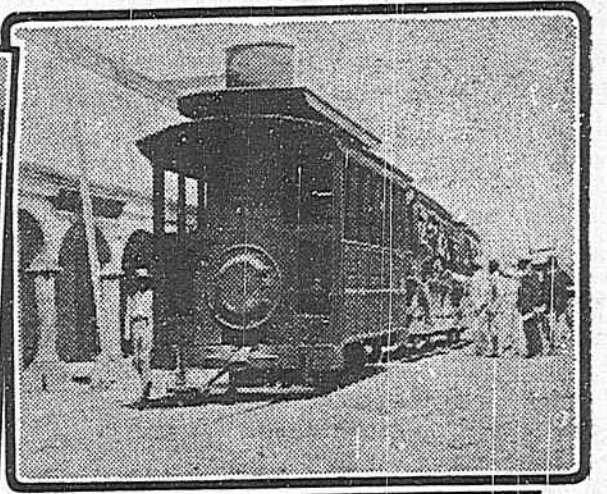
Washing is Done in the Streams



Coffee Drying in the Streets



A Haitian Belle



The Street Car of Port-au-Prince



Street Scene



Typical Haitian Soldiers (The President's Bodyguard)

Ever since the wholesale massacre of the whites by the order of General Dessalines in 1804, just after she became an independent country, Haiti has drawn a mantle between herself and the rest of the world. Notoriety misgoverned, this little country has for years been the scene of bloody revolutions, and today is having one of the most serious civil wars in her history. Many of the Haitian rulers have been both cruel and corrupt, and it seems surprising that the whole system of government has not crumbled long ago. The entire country has been alternately governed by so-called generals of the army, who hold in their hands the power of life and death. They rule much after the fashion of a schoolboy bully and deal out justice with about the same lack of discrimination between right and wrong. Dislike at seeing others of their race prosper is a trait which displays itself in the Haitian character when the occasion arises, and in the frequent uprisings these jealousies often result in the most cold-blooded murders being committed under the pretense that it is for the good of the country. Men have been taken from their beds in the middle of the night and shot to death at sunrise of the same day after a trial which was little less than a farce. The residences of men who were merely political suspects have been burned and their families murdered in a most brutal fashion, their only crime being that they did not agree with the political methods of the ruling power. In the revolution of 1903 a general, who was living quietly at Jacmel, one of the principal seacoast towns of the island, was suddenly taken from his home and thrown into prison. He never learned the nature of his offense, for he was beheaded the same evening. His head was then stuck on a bayonet and paraded through the streets for an hour, and later tossed into the sea. The body was buried at a desolate spot in the mountains. Quite recently the government soldiers burned a town and massacred the helpless inhabitants, and afterward had a free fight among themselves.

These crimes are but a few of the many atrocities perpetrated in the name of "crushing a revolution." Several times the United States had been compelled to send warships to the scene of trouble, and frequently the United States Consul at Port au Prince has been overcrowded with Haitians who have sought the protection of our flag during these disturbances. The French and German Consulates also have been called upon to afford shelter to the refugees, and had it not been for the Monroe Doctrine one of these two countries would long ago have put an end to

these uprisings and would have taught the negro republic some wholesome lessons in the respect of other people's lives and property. Our own government seems to be getting tired of Haiti's monthly revolutions, and a short time ago warned the Haitian authorities that more humane methods must be used in the handling of political prisoners. This may stop bloodshed for a time at least, for while the Haitian has little love for the American, he knows since our Spanish-American War over conditions in Cuba, that there is a limit to Uncle Sam's patience, and that intervention is sure to follow a continuance of the troubles of the past.

The Haitian army is a ragged-looking body of men of uncertain number. It has almost as many generals as private soldiers, to say nothing of the colonels, majors and captains. The officers draw nearly all the pay coming to the army, and if the soldier's word is to be taken the latter's mere pittance of a wage must pay tribute to the greed and tyranny of their superiors. The private soldier of Haiti is an ill-fed, ill-clad individual for he must provide both of these necessities himself. Indeed, he is often compelled to lay down his gun and carry bags of coffee to the wharf in order to get a square meal. If the government changes he fares no better, and if he rises in rebellion he is shot—so, no matter what happens he still goes hungry and ragged. Haiti, too, has a police department, whose chief work seems to be to make a noise, for they have a series of calls at night which make sleep impossible. During the day they lounge about the streets and smoke, and are usually absent when there is a row.

Remnants of the French regime still cling to the citizens, and the residents in a feeble way try to ape the French nation. Men will swelter

in black frock coats in midsummer because they fancy such is the style in Paris. They must also wear gaiters, for this is likewise French. The women are the real workers of Haiti as the majority of the men spend their time in smoking and drinking the "rhum," made on the island in rude stills, operated by hand. The men who do work are either employed by the government, do odd jobs for the foreign merchants or live in the mountains trusting to the fertile soil to produce enough wild fruits for their sustenance. If they reside in the country, few clothes are needed, and their children require none until they are at least 10 years old.

Haiti has been steadily going backward for the last fifty years. The large coffee plantation once owned by the French have been allowed to go to ruin, and the fine homes once occupied by the owners of these rich coffee fields have long ago fallen to decay and native huts have taken their place. The cities are without sanitation and in most of them the garbage is thrown into the streets where part of it is eaten by the hogs allowed to run at large, yet the people are unusually healthy. During the rainy season it is impossible to walk these streets unless rubber boots are worn. In the country a few roads become bogs and are practically impassable. Bridges over streams have fallen to decay and the only way to cross the deep streams is to swim. The traveler who goes to Haiti is first of all impressed with the congested condition of the country, for more than 2,000,000 of people are crowded into the little part of the island, the Dominican Republic occupying two-thirds of the land. Go where you will, even in the mountains, you will find hundreds of people passing and repassing. Everybody has something to sell, expect-

ally the women, who will stand for hours trying to dispose of half a pound of coffee, a few bananas or a chicken, the foot of which has been tied to a stone to keep it from getting away. The means of transportation of products is the same as it was a century ago, and it takes considerable dodging to keep out of the way of the hundreds of produce-laden monkeys ridden by women on their way to market. Port au Prince boasts of a street car—the only one in the republic. In many places its tracks are one or two feet above the street bed. The motive power is a small donkey engine, and the two cars attached have the exact motion of a child's rockinghorse and one expects every minute to be thrown from the track, yet the center of gravity is always maintained. The roads leading into the country from Port au Prince are perhaps the best in the island, but these are bad, for, as the German residents declare, "roads and cleanliness are not Haiti's strong points."

The peasantry of the black republic are for the most part ignorant and lazy, but of a kindly disposition. They are generally uneducated and having no intercourse with the outside world, seldom see a foreign face. They have little knowledge of other countries and have a deep rooted conviction that Haiti could conquer any other land. They dwell in huts such as one might expect to find in the Congo, and while these huts are for the most part filthy, the women insist that what clothes they (the women) do wear shall be clean and every day hundreds of the women can be found at the streams doing the family washing. Often they are almost naked as they work.

The clothing to be washed is rolled into bundles and pounded with a rock or flat paddle. Afterwards it is

spread on the stones to dry. It is needless to add that after this process of beating the buttons have all disappeared from the garments. This may account for the great number of safety-pins found on sale in the shops.

The women, too, are the real bread-winners, and will work hard to support their children. Often they will travel for miles over almost impassable roads, carrying heavy loads on their heads and dragging children by their sides. The boys learn to shirk work early. If by chance the lord and master of the house should go with his wife, he will ride the donkey, while she walks behind, carrying the market produce on her head.

Dancing is the chief amusement of all classes—dancing of every conceivable style and to the music of any instrument which may be obtained. In select circles in Port au Prince balls are frequently given and the social lines are clearly drawn. The poor people will dance, no matter what their labors of the day have been or how many miles they have walked to attend the affair. Even after-noon dances are popular, and the American graphophone playing The Merry Widow waltz is usually the orchestra.

As to the educational advantages of the island, the Haitian will tell you that at least one-tenth of the revenue goes for this purpose, and you will at once conclude that the

revenue is small. Nearly every school in the island is conducted by Sisters of Charity, and in Jacmel there is a very excellent one for little girls. The children of the island, generally speaking, are mischievous, but not wicked or vicious, and there is an absence of the street game.

Superstition and ignorance go hand in hand in this strange country, and travelers tell wondrous stories of voodooism, slow poisoning and snake worship, but it is difficult to verify these stories. Catholicism is the religion of the country, and whether or not this is but a veneer to cover up strange doctrines, the poor people give liberally to the cause.

The foolish laws of Haiti are responsible for its backward condition. Their cry is Haiti for the Haitians, and no foreigner may own land. He must reside in their country for five years before he may become a Haitian citizen, and even then he may be blackballed if some official does not fancy his naturalization. It he is a Syrian he must live in the island for ten years before he may become a citizen. This distinction is because the Syrian is the merchant of the island, and after he has made a certain amount of money he returns to his own country to live. Sometimes he intermarries with the natives and the children of these parents are unusually very pretty.

The commerce of the island is

practically in the hands of a few foreigners, for while the average native hates the man from the "bigger land" he cannot get on without him. Haiti is a perfect Garden of Eden for the coffee importer, and the berry grows wild on the old French plantations and finds a ready market, especially in Germany. The coffee is spread out on sail cloth in the dirty streets to dry, and men are employed to bag and weigh it for a trifling sum. It is then taken to the Custom House for reweighing for customs duty. The export duty charged is three cents per pound. Another set of laborers, who can bear the weight of 170 pounds on their heads with ease, carry it to the barges on which it is lightered out to the steamer. It is not uncommon for a steamer which stops at a seacoast town in Haiti once a month to take seven or eight thousand bags of this wild coffee to St. Thomas for reshipment to Germany. This coffee readily brings 25 cents per pound in the German empire.

Cotton, too, grows wild and is also shipped under heavy export duty. Oranges, grape fruit, shadocks, rice, corn and yams are also plentiful. The mountains teem with lignum-vitae, the Logwood, so valuable for dyeing purposes, is easily obtained. The weighing of this is done on the beach for export duty, as the Haitian government allows nothing to go out or to come in free of charge. Coconuts grow in large quantities, and the luscious green jellynut is one of the articles of food.

Everywhere on the island is well watered, undeveloped land, just waiting for the guiding hand of the white man to make it "blossom as the rose."

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Ida St. Leon in "Polly of the Circus."

Telling, as it does, the story of the odd romance of a pretty little circus rider and a village pastor in Middle West, "Polly of the Circus" which will be presented at the Academy of Music, tomorrow evening, a drama as original as it is refreshing, and is one of those rare plays that appeal to the "gallery gods" with the same force as to the occupants of orchestra chairs. Since this play was first produced, hundreds of thousands of persons have been moved from laughter to tears and to sheer joy in following fortunes of the wistful girl, from which comes the title "Polly of the Circus," and her ministerial admirer. The reproduction of a circus in full swing in the third act is one of the greatest of stage realism. Dainty Miss Ida St. Leon will be seen in the title role. The personnel of the supporting cast is an apparent assurance of a finished and artistic portrayal of the other characters. The scenic production is remarkable for one of such admittedly unusual skill in such matters as Frederic Thompson.

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