

were slaves imported by the Spanish and French, and many French also had a slave-status, having been brought over under indenture, like our own original settlers at Jamestown and Plymouth. It is not generally understood, I believe, that slavery in America was originally an *institution*; there was no color or nationality peculiar to it; it knew no such thing as a color-line. So here in Haiti a man might be white, black, brown, French, Indian, African, anything, but if he bore the slave-status, that was that, and he was simply out of luck.

But blood-strains do not follow political geography; and here is another thing not generally known: Whereas the original importations of low-grade labor into our own country, for example, were mostly 'clean-strain' (our miscellaneous importations were relatively late, following the development of heavy industry), Haiti's were anything but that. The French slaves were of every strain from the Channel to the Mediterranean; Bretons, Basques, Normans, Poitevins, Picards, Angevins, everything, bearing with them their peculiar provincial dialects, customs, habits of mind and temperament. Likewise the Africans were not all raked out of one tribe, district or coast; they came out of pretty nearly every tribe in Africa, differing in language, social customs and religious practices, and often hostile one to another. The result is a mixture such as I doubt exists anywhere else in the world, and I would suppose its biology might have some points of special interest.

Nor is this all. Haiti was cut off from the rest of the world after it emerged from under the French domination and set up for itself in 1804. It closed its ports for twenty years, building a sort of Chinese wall around itself, during which time nobody came here; and for various good reasons very few came afterwards. Practically none of those

who did come got any further than the port towns or had any contact, even indirectly, with more than eight or ten per cent of the people. Thus as far as the great general mass of the population is concerned, the country remained in virtual isolation until the American invasion of 1915, and even now there is an accidental combination of factors tending powerfully to maintain that isolation; indeed, which make it almost impossible of breaking down. Hence the specific cultural peculiarities of a civilization bred out of a most unusual mixture of blood-strains and traditions have been developed in more than a century of isolation, unmodified by social contacts or biological adulterations. One may put it that they have been developed under laboratory conditions, and therefore they might be well worth investigation by some pundit who is in that line of trade.

But the man who really gets his money's worth out of Haiti is the student of civilized society, such as you are, and such as I too pretend to be, in a small way. You would be here but a short time before you would be asking yourself, if what you see is the upshot of a century of isolation, precisely what could a larger intercourse with other nations do to improve it. You know the conventional answer to that question, and so do I, but if you could make it stick in this instance, you are just the man I want to see. Isolation is supposed to be a bad thing for a country, and perhaps it may be, speaking generally, though I must say most of the arguments I have heard on that point seemed to be specious. But has it been bad for Haiti, and is it bad now? The longer you stay here and the closer you reckon the fat with the lean, the tougher that query becomes; at least, that is my experience. I confess that when I tot up the balance of advantage and disadvantage, I am not