

many people do you know in your town who fill that bill? I have not once seen the hard, weary, vacuous face that you and I see everywhere in our respective bailiwicks. Does not a diffused general happiness and contentment say something for the quality of the civilization in which it prevails, even if the people have no railways and can't read newspapers? The Haitian can't freeze; the climate won't let him. He can't starve unless he wants to; the earth and its waters are too prolific. Any sort of shelter that will shed rain is enough, and as for clothes, I'll take oath that one garment is one too many, unless you get up pretty high in the mountains. 'Social security' is something the Haitian does not understand at all. He does not like hard work any more than you or I do, and the average of his natural intelligence and capacities runs on about the same level as elsewhere. He has exquisite good manners and is amiable, kind, and especially obliging to strangers. Foreigners who have lived here for years tell me that you may go where you will in the forests and fastnesses of Haiti, and the two things you will never meet are a deadly varmint and an ill-disposed Haitian. Defining civilization as the humanization of man in society, as you and I do, all this seems to sum up to a degree of civilization respectable enough, to say the least, to breed doubt whether an indiscriminate inflow of foreign influence might not cost more, in terms of actual civilization, than it came to.

What most interests me here, however, are the factors which I spoke of a moment ago as tending to keep up Haiti's isolation. The most important one is the constitutional provision that no foreigner can own land in Haiti. When Toussaint, Dessalines and Henri Christophe — who notwithstanding all the rainbows squirted at them by Wordsworth, Wendell Phillips and Co.,

must have been fearful fellows — when they threw off the French yoke in 1804, they had seen enough of large foreign-owned landed estates, very correctly associating them with slavery. They seem to have got a glimpse of the great basic truth that it is impossible to exploit a people unless you first expropriate them from the land. In this they showed more sound economic wisdom than has been shown by all our progressives, laborites, square-dealers and new-dealers. Dessalines cut up the land into small-holding peasant proprietorships, and put a provision against foreign ownership into the constitution, where it remained until the American invasion of 1915.

Thereby hangs a nice story. As you know, capital gravitates straight to any field which offers two inducements: abundant natural resources and an abundant potential supply of cheap low-grade labor. Haiti has no end of both. Hence whole generations of scoundrelly American imperialist enterprisers have licked their lips at the thought of making it another Porto Rico by expropriating the natives and thus enabling themselves to exploit them as thoroughly as the French did years ago by the same method. But that clause in the constitution has always been a killer; there was no way to exploit the natives until it was got rid of, and apparently the only way to get rid of it was by force. You no doubt recall how in the 'seventies a group of would-be exploiters wheedled Grant into a scheme for forcibly annexing the eastern half of the island, and how near they came to succeeding.

The great chance came in 1915, when all America's attention was focused on the European war. A Heaven-sent rumpus broke out in Port-au-Prince, in the course of which a number of political partisans, including the president, were most laudably killed off; I say laudably, for Haitian politics, what