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[[three columns]]
[[start column 1]]
WHITE FOLKS DOWN IN HAYTI.
[[line]]

Translated from the original MSS. of Ad. Ackermann for Douglass' Monthly.
[[line]]

The whites in the Republic of Hayti are composed chiefly of merchants and their clerks, with some servants, a limited number of Professors of Mathematics and of Languages, and a few artisans, as bakers and shoemakers. The whole number of them may be estimated at four hundred, of whom two hundred reside in Port-au-Prince.

Let it be understood that we do not speak of the Representatives of France, England, and Spain, which powers maintain diplomatic agents in Port-au-Prince, who form the best society of the capital. Other nations have their consuls and vice-consuls, chosen among resident merchants; but these agents, being for commercial purposes only, and having no diplomatic character, are not required to possess extensive educational qualifications.

In short, nine-tenths of the whites are occupied in business, and their relations with Haytians [[sic]] are merely with the residents of the principal towns; for a white man is not allowed to engage in retail trade, but only wholesale - 'gros or demi-gros.' Germans, French, a few Englishmen, fewer Spaniards and Italians, compose this number. Americans are about as numerous as Englishmen; Germans generally prevail in number.

No social circle of white men exist in Port-au-Prince. There is not a single association of any kind among them - no reading-room, no club - literally nothing of the kind. This may astonish the reader; but let us tell how it comes.

Europeans who go to this country are generally young clerks, who have learned only just what they must in order to be merchants. - Rarely an uncolored person of ability remains in Hayti; and as the yellow fever thins the ranks of white foreigners almost every year, (1858, '59 and '60 excepted,) such clerks advance easily into partnership, and finally become powerful men (in their own opinion.) So, by far the greatest number of the established merchants are what would be called in Europe, uncultivated parvenues, and consequently, can have no taste for refined customs and life.

A good number of them are married to, or live with mulatto women, so that their family life is a singular mixture of a pretentious outside, with a semi-African interior of manners. Few are disposed to return to Europe in order to finish their lives more agreeably. for, if married with Haytian women, family reasons induce them to remain; besides, the use (or rather the abuse) of alcoholic drinks (rum and gin) often shortens their lives in a singular way, and renders them early victims of a sure moral degradation.



Their intercourse with Haytians is characterized by hypocrisy. Every one vaunts himself as having no prejudice against the natives; but let several of them be together, and ridicule and mockery of Haytians will form a principal part of their entertainment. The sudden change of conversation on such occasions consequent on the appearance of a respectable Haytian, has often caused a singular effect upon the writer's mind. It is not his purpose here to write an apology for the Haytians; but all will see that, since the latter know the truth perfectly well, and are obliged to judge of whites generally by the few they know, a favorable judgment cannot result. This, indeed, is one great reason why they mistrust whites in general. When they have seen these clerks arrive in the country, accompanied with their whole fortune - a bag of clothes - lifting their hats obsequiously to every negro; and then growing every year more hypocritical, until fates give them

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opportunity to sign their names below account-sales; and when they know the real feelings of these parvenues - it is astonishing that Haytians show their distrust even in their laws?

The morning, from eight to nine o'clock, is usually passed by these merchants in coffee-houses on the quay, (wharf,) where the news of the day are discussed, and several grogs taken. Then they go to business until noon; breakfast and 'sieste' occupy till two o'clock; then the counting-room is again visited, and an hour is passed on the quay, where much honor is paid to the rum-bottle. At five o'clock begins the time of recreation; and it consists of riding on horseback out of town to call on any acquaintance, or to visit any place where more grog can be obtained. After sunset, one returns home for supper. Supper over, the remainder of the evening is, indeed, tedious. There are no theatres, rarely a concert or public amusement of any kind. One visits a friend, or receives a friend; they talk, and - what is indispensable to keep up their spirits - make frequent demands on the bottle. Card-playing for money is a usual attendant.

Doubtless some of these merchants have access to the English and French Ambassadors, for these gentlemen must have some society; and in their presence no doubt conduct themselves in a worthy manner - as much so as their education will permit.

An established merchant always desires to be the 'consul' of some nation, and this is the ne plus ultra of his aspirations. His favorite dream is to have a flag-mast attached to his residence. When it happens that a consul dies, then a veritable consulate race takes place - every one employing all his means, all his recommendations, all possible stratagems to obtain the vacant office. Should certain letters, which have been written for this purpose, be published, more than one of these merchant-consuls would blush with shame and confusion. But little matters it to them: to wear a European gold-striped uniform or epaulettes [[sic]] among negroes [[sic]] is altogether satisfactory to a parvenu merchant, who before never managed anything but cotton goods and bricks!

The writer once saw several consuls, on a gala occasion, (the 31st December,) going on horseback to visit Soulouque. The smaller the

nation represented, the more brilliant was the uniform of the consul. Poor Soulouque was much perplexed in determining which were the great Powers. The United States consul had no uniform; he appeared in the garb of a citizen only - black, with a white waistcoat, without epaulettes *[[sic]]* or gold lace. Jonathan was seen to smile at the tawdry display of his fellow officials.

It is a singular fact that the State of Rhode Island has no consul in Hayti, though beyond question this post must have been applied for by some merchant.

When whites meet in the evening, Haytians are rarely present, and this separation is pretty generally observed. But on other occasions whites and Haytians mingle freely and publicly, and no white would dare to assume a superiority.

There is perhaps no country where life to the white folks passes so monotonously *[[sic]]* as in Hayti; and the person who does not find comfort in his own house, must necessarily be very unhappy. And this is the reason so many whites die in early life. They abandon themselves to excesses, the consequences of which are ruinous to both body and mind. There exists no unity among them; the pride of position is strong; and jealousies between different nationalities are sadly prevalent.

The financial crisis of 1857 was greatly disastrous to the interests of foreigners. There were few houses which did not suffer enormous

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losses, and several failed. Should all the foreign houses now wind up their concerns, it is to be feared that few merchants would retire with fortunes. This state of things prevents social amusements - for those who spent money freely before are compelled now to study economy. - Soirees are exceedingly rare; and this causes young foreigners to seek amusements often among the lower class of people.

Formerly persons of wealth gave 'barbacos' - brilliant country dancing fetes - to which sometimes two hundred persons were invited. These were really splendid; but those times have passed.

Every where in small towns, every man's conduct is known and commented upon; and the whites of Hayti are not backward in this amusement. Every movement of one's neighbor is subject to criticism; and, as is usually the case in such communities, no very strict adherence to truth is maintained.

Foreigners are generally welcome in Haytian families, and a Haytian father is always proud to marry his daughter to a white, even though the fortune of the latter is disproportionate. - These unions are rarely happy; for the wife, accustomed from childhood to a careless life, seldom becomes a lady of society, and the brilliant, graceful exterior of manners is rarely attained by the good-hearted Creole in a degree to be compared with a white lady. Nevertheless, she is attached to her white husband - is his house-physician, and almost his servant - and faithfully she fulfills these offices. She will minister all the Haytian comforts of life,

and if the husband's ambition does not extend beyond the family circle, he will be happy. The wife does not aspire to be brilliant among whites, but she will be proud of being the wife of a white man; and however kind to her less fortunate friends, will show a gentle superiority. She is especially fond of her children; and when a child departs for Europe to obtain an education, it is touching to witness the suffering of the distracted mother; and as her husband usually accompanies the child, she is left sad and disconsolate.

A white man is never well served, either by servant, cook, or any other factotum, unless he has a Haytian wife. He is regarded as a superior being in money matters, and must pay dearly for everything. A servant is never faithful unless overseen by a Haitian lady; and indeed she will herself complete the work.

There are a few white ladies in Port-au-Prince; and if their husbands are well served, it is by the hands of their own ladies; for if a white lady attempts to manage Creole servants, the house will always be in revolt. A family may be maintained at much less expense with a Creole wife, than with a white one.

AD. ACKERMANN.
[[line]]

HOUSTON ON THE TROUBLES IN TEXAS.-- A correspondent of the Galveston News writing from Independence, Oct 21, gives the following extract from a recent speech delivered by Gov. Sam Houston: -- 'In regard to the recent raid and incendiarism in Texas, he said it had been exaggerated and misrepresented by the letters of "that man Pryor of Dallas," the brother, he said, of Roger A. Pryor of Virginia, who had some time since sent a certain challenge. The fact was, that there had been but one white man hung in Texas for incendiarism [[sic]] - Herndon of Henderson, and two negroes [[sic]]; and there never had been a vial or bottle of poison found in the possession of any other negroes [[sic]] in this State - thus intimating very clearly that the others who were punished were unjustly punished. - However much he might regret the election of Lincoln, still, if constitutionally elected, he ought to and should be inaugurated. "Yes! they would have to walk over his dead body if he was not." '

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