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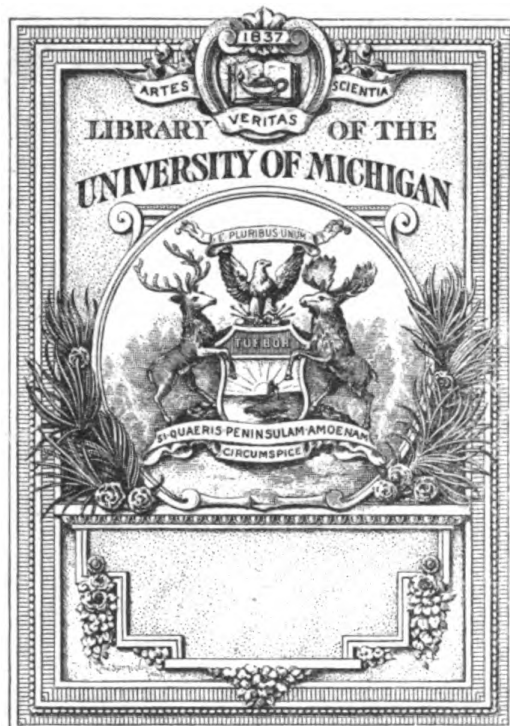
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OF
POPULAR LITERATURE SCIENCE AND ARTS

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companies, bankers, hotel-keepers, &c.; such wires to be used solely by and for the particular establishment paying for the accommodation.

The commercial question, as one of profit and loss, we have already decided not to notice here. We stop not to inquire whether they could send 10,000 messages a day from the central office alone? whether they could fit up all the stations, and provide all the wires and apparatus, for so low a sum as L.35,000? whether we might or might not reasonably expect that one person in each family would use the telegraph, on an average, once in three months? whether the three million of souls in the metropolis would, even at this low average, bring L.40,000 per annum to the company's coffers? whether the system would open a field for useful woman's work, as telegraphic clerks at the various stations?—these are questions to be decided on their own merits, by persons best fitted to estimate them; but we cannot hesitate to express a conviction that a system of local or street telegraphs, whether 'over-house' or otherwise, are among the things which we are destined to see ere long. But *cheapness* will be an indispensable feature of the plan, to insure success; the penny-post has spoiled us for any forms of transmission—whether of persons, messages, letters, or commodities—which involve the high charges of former days.

THE LATE EMPEROR SOULOUQUE.

THE official journal of France informed the world not long ago that the Council of the order of the Legion of Honour had, after due deliberation, resolved that the order of St Faustin, founded by the Emperor of Hayti, should take its place among the decorations which French subjects would be permitted to wear; and as the honour of bearing this decoration might eventually be extended to English subjects also, we thought that the future knights of St Faustin among our readers would perhaps thank us for an introduction to the illustrious individual to whom the calendar of saints is indebted for a new name, and the College of Heralds for a new order. And thus, ignorant of the future, we wrote.

Like a humble river, whose waters have for years flowed smoothly on between level banks, but suddenly swelled by a thousand rills, grows into terrific magnitude, and spreads desolation around; so the fortunes of Faustin I. have sprung from a humble source, and have only been swelled into their imposing proportions by circumstances, in a great measure independent of his will. In 1804, his imperial majesty was servant to a certain mulatto general Lamarre, and was distinguished as a great, burly, good-humoured negro, as ignorant of letters as of state affairs; in 1847 he was elected president of the republic of Hayti. Between these two dates extends, not a series of great deeds, but a dead level of social and political insignificance. However, the position of president once attained, it is to his own exertions that Faustin owes a throne. Between 1847 and 1849 he established in the blood of his fellow-citizens his right to an imperial crown.

To understand the history of this emperor, we must go a little back in the history of his empire, which has most likely been forgotten by many amid more stirring events nearer home; although there is much to interest us in an empire formed of self-emancipated negro slaves, who, during the last fifty years, have alternately been proclaiming democratic republics 'in the presence of the Supreme Being,' and monarchs 'by the grace of God;' which has a titled nobility and a rigid court etiquette, but in which duchesses and marchionesses sell tobacco, soap, and spirits by the pennyworth; which has deliberative chambers and a daily press, but in which the

monarch is but just learning to spell; where the Roman Catholic faith is the recognised religion of the state, and professed by the whole people with few exceptions, but in which the dominant class worships fetiches and dances magic-dances.

Circumstances connected with the struggle for freedom, towards the close of the last century, in the French colony of St Domingo, as well as the difference of culture existing between the negroes and the mulattoes, laid the germs of animosity, from the first, between these two divisions of the coloured population of the island, and it broke out into open dissensions as soon as the whites had been expelled; although article 14 of the constitution proclaimed by Dessalines declared 'that as all distinctions of colour between children of the same family, whose father is the head of the state, must necessarily cease, the Haytiens shall henceforward bear the exclusive generic denomination of Blacks,' no fusion of hearts followed this decreed fusion of colour; and the history of the island is but a record of a series of changes and revolutions brought about by the continued dissensions between black and yellow, now ending in a yellow republic, now in a black monarchy; to one of which Faustin owes his elevation to a throne.

In 1810 General Lamarre fell while defending Le Môle, for the mulatto party, against Christophe, then Haytian general, formerly waiter at a tavern, and subsequently king. Faustin Soulouque, by that time promoted to be his master's aid-de-camp, is said to have been charged by him to carry his heart to Pétion, who reigned as dictator over a republic in the south of the island, in which the half-castes predominated, while Christophe, a black, ruled the north with a royal sceptre. Pétion appointed Faustin Soulouque to a lieutenancy in his mounted body-guard; and at his death in 1818, bequeathed him to his successor, Boyer, as part of the goods and chattels of the presidency. Boyer attached him to the service of a certain Mademoiselle Joute, who had likewise been bequeathed to him by Pétion, and who employed Soulouque as superintendent of a spirit manufacture.

In 1847, Soulouque found himself commander of President Riché's guard; and upon the sudden death of that potentate, the votes of the senate, as well as the parties in the state, were equally divided between two candidates. Eight successive ballots having proved that neither of the parties would yield to solve the difficulty, the president of the senate—in which body the constitution vested the right of election—proposed a third candidate, who, for the simple reason that he was unknown to all, was unanimously elected; and thus, to his own surprise, as well as that of the rest of the world, Faustin Soulouque suddenly found himself chief of the republic of Hayti.

The new president, a man about sixty or sixty-two, but looking not above forty, was remarkable for his timidity, but timidity of a peculiar kind. He had an unconquerable fear of magic and of ridicule; and to this weakness must be attributed the bloodshed through which he has waded from the presidential chair to the imperial throne. Each of the presidents who succeeded Boyer and preceded Soulouque, had either died prematurely, or been deposed, before attaining the first anniversary of their election, and Soulouque's immediate predecessor, Riché, had even died on the very eve of this anniversary. These were suspicious circumstances, and quite sufficient to awaken the fears of the believers in Vandoux, among whom the new president was conspicuous. Vandoux is an African god, whose worship was transplanted to St Domingo by the negroes imported as slaves, and who reveals himself in the form of a snake, which, being shut up in a box for the purpose, communicates a knowledge of hidden things to his worshippers

through the medium of a high priest and priestess, called respectively *papa-loi* and *mama-loi*, and who, in virtue of their connection with the snake, possess great magic powers. The worshippers of Vandoux among the former slaves of St Domingo—and the same is said to be the case among its present free inhabitants—formed a secret society, admission to which was preceded by a most solemn oath, delivered under circumstances the most terrific that the African imagination could invent. Sometimes a cup of goat's blood, still warm with the life of the animal from which it had been extracted, was quaffed in confirmation of the oath taken to suffer and to inflict death rather than to allow the mysteries of the society to transpire; sometimes the blood of an ox was substituted, and mixed with *tafia*, the spirits manufactured in the country, to give more zest to the ceremony.

Now, Soulouque had taken it into his head that some spell, worked by the help of Vandoux, had been the cause of the premature conclusion of the presidential career of his three predecessors, and that he would likewise come within its power by occupying the same palace and the same seat in the senate. However, Madame Soulouque having consulted on the subject a *mama-loi*, holding a distinguished position among the sorceresses of Port-au-Prince, was informed that no danger was attached to a seat in the presidential chair, but that the magic—for magic there was—was wrought by means of a doll, which had been buried by Boyer in the presidential garden, previous to his leaving the island; and that not until this magnificent doll had been restored to the light of day, would the spell be broken that doomed the career of each successive president to be cut short before the expiration of a twelvemonth after his election. Somewhat relieved by the tangible form thus given to his enemy, Soulouque immediately ordered search to be made in the garden, and also ordered counter-incantations to be performed by a certain Frère Joseph, whose history is so curious as to merit a digression.

During the disturbances which took place in the interval between the resignation of Boyer and the election of Soulouque, a negro, by name Acaan, clad in nature's simplest garb, with the exception of a linen cloth round his loins, a straw hat on his head, and a pair of huge spurs on his naked heels, repaired one day to the market-cross in his native village, and there publicly made a vow not to change his toilet until the 'orders of divine Providence had been carried out'; these orders being, as he explained to the crowd gathered around, that 'the poor black people' should expel all mulattoes, and divide their property. His auditors seem not to have been quite as far advanced as he in communistic doctrines, for a murmur ran through the assembly, and all eyes turned towards some poor, ragged mulattoes, who formed part of the assembly. 'Oh, those,' exclaimed Acaan, with ready wit, 'those are negroes!' and another black man, serving in a *tafia* manufacture in the neighbourhood, stepping forward, confirmed and extended the dictum in the following words: 'Acaan is right, for the Virgin has said (in negro French)—*Néque riche qui connaît li et écrit, cila mulât; mulâtte pauvre, qui pas connaît li ni écrit, cila néque.*' (A rich negro, who knows how to read and write, is a mulatto; a poor mulatto, who neither knows how to read or to write, is a negro). This black, whose name was Joseph, subsequently attached himself as military chaplain to Acaan's army, a band of half-naked savages, who went about the country pillaging, murdering, and burning, according to the principle laid down by him, and over whom he exercised considerable influence by means of his Vandoux incantations, which he varied at times with hymns to the Virgin, in order to suit all tastes. Clad in a white shirt and white trousers, and with a white handkerchief tied

round his head, Frère Joseph, as he was now called, might always be found urging the true distinction between negro and mulatto on his hearers, whenever sympathy of race inclined them to clemency towards a rich black; but when Acaan, after a career of indescribable atrocity, amid which he had proclaimed himself the 'protector of suffering innocence,' and the champion of 'the *eventuality* of education,' despairing of the gratitude of his fellow-men, blew out his brains with a pistol, Frère Joseph gave up his roving life, and devoting himself exclusively to witchcraft, settled in Port-au-Prince, where, as in some capitals nearer home, it seems that a tolerable living can be made by it.

Such was the man from whom Soulouque sought aid in his campaign against the buried doll and its malignant influences; but while these measures were going on, rumours of the state of superstitious terror in which the president was held got abroad; and he became the laughing-stock of the enlightened class of the community, who thus revenged upon him their own folly in having elected for their chief a man who could neither read nor write, and whom his nationality, under those circumstances, naturally laid open to such influences. Soulouque winced at the laughter; but the greater fear conquered the less, and the excavations in the garden continued; while on the other hand the president endeavoured, by the most assiduous attention to affairs, to deprecate the ridicule of the scoffers. Unfortunately, however, in spite of ministerial discretion, anecdotes illustrative of the gross ignorance and strange mistakes of the chief of the state began to circulate, and the laughter redoubled. This was unfair and unjust. Soulouque had attained his position by no intrigues of his own, but by the unanimous voice of the elective body; and if some of his early acts had betrayed the superstitious negro, others had given evidence of his sincere desire to do his duty. Again Soulouque winced, and now changed his tactics. An assumption of self-confident knowledge succeeded to his former naïve betrayal of ignorance. Dispatches and documents submitted to him were taken proudly from the hand of the minister or other official, perused with an air of profound attention, and then laid by, to be read and interpreted in secret by some confident, possessing the art of letters. But hatred and distrust of the class who ridiculed him, while he was so anxious to propitiate their esteem, began to rankle in Soulouque's heart, and he drew nearer and nearer to the *ultra-black* party, who alone seemed to sympathise with him, and with whom he might speak pure creole without fear of being criticised. *Peuple Noir*, as they called themselves, who had so long been in slender favour in the highest quarters, were not slow to avail themselves of their good-fortune, and every morning some sable gossip brought to the palace some new joke or witticism, circulating at the president's expense, and which in his judgment confirmed the suspicions he had begun to entertain, that the whole of the mulatto and moderate black party were accomplices in the affair of the buried doll. Gradually, also, it became customary for a band of blacks, comprising the individuals most conspicuous for their antipathy to the mulatto race, to assemble round the palace gates on Sundays, and when the president returned from parade, to address him after the following primitive fashion: 'President, *peuple noir* desires that all men of colour shall in future be excluded from public offices;' and Soulouque, who, thanks to Vandoux exorcisms, had by this time got over the thirteenth month of his tenure of office, and who, thanks to repeated violations of the constitution and other acts of oppression which had remained unresented, had also got rid of his fear of mulatto superiority—Soulouque graciously granted the request. Another

day, 'black people' required that the red colour, the emblem of the half-castes, should be expunged from the national standard; then demanded the re-establishment of the constitution of 1816, which will transform the elective presidency into a dictatorship for life, the dismissal of the cabinet, and the substitution of simple secretaries for the responsible ministers. Soulouque, in whom the savage African nature had by this time conquered all the gentler instincts, was equally ready to cede to these demands, but prudently deferred their execution until a scene very similar to that of the slaughter of the janizaries by Sultan Mahmoud, should have struck such terror into the opposition as to prevent all resistance.

In accordance with this plan, on the 16th of April 1848, three cannon-shots from the palace gave the usual signal that the country was in danger. As prescribed by law, the country population, from fifteen miles around, began at once to crowd to the capital, while the inhabitants rushed armed into the streets; and generals, senators, deputies, and other functionaries hastened to the palace to inquire the cause of the alarm, and to ask for orders. Successive volleys of musketry, followed by shrieks of anguish, re-echoed through the town, soon gave the answer. Within the closed gates of the palace-yard, and even in the very corridors of the palace, the mulatto functionaries of all grades, who had crowded thither, were being deliberately murdered by the president's body-guard, assisted by the president himself, as a preliminary to the introduction of the constitution of 1816. Soon the work of slaughter spread from the palace to the streets. For three days the carnage continued, accompanied by pillage and incendiarism, the panic-stricken mulattoes offering no resistance, but flying to the foreign consulates, and on board the foreign ships of war, for protection. At length the consul of France, dwelling on the effect that would be produced on public opinion in Europe, succeeded in wresting a so-called amnesty from Soulouque, whose vanity, in spite of his barbarous acts, still craved for the approbation of the civilised world. But on receipt of the dreadful news from the capital, a mulatto insurrection at once broke out in the south. The president repaired thither. Denunciations, wholesale murders, confiscations, and illegalities of every degree of violence ensued. During six months, the island was deluged in blood; and not until the groans of the survivors had been stifled by terror, did Soulouque return to his capital through triumphal arches inscribed with the most enthusiastic welcomes. When he deigned to look at these, and express a word of approval, the enthusiasm of *peuple noir*, at the supposed fact that 'president had learned to read,' rose beyond all bounds. Every day the speeches emanating from the Haytian senate and chamber of deputies, from which every man of character had been eliminated, and recorded by the *Haytian Moniteur*, became more fulsomely adulatory, until, on the 25th of August 1849, in accordance with a petition presented by the people, and acceded to by the chambers, a troop of senators on horseback proceeded to the presidential palace, and imposed upon the head of President Faustin Soulouque, whose 'inexpressible benefactions' had 'consolidated the institutions' of the country, a crown of gilded pasteboard, in virtue of which he was in future to bear the title and to enjoy the immunities of Emperor of Hayti. His majesty Faustin I. responded to the senatorial speech by an enthusiastic '*Vive la liberté, vive l'égalité*;' and then, accompanied by a numerous *cortège*, and greeted by the acclamations of the people, he proceeded, amid salvos of artillery, to the church, where a *Te Deum* was performed, with such music as the chapel imperial could command, trumpets, clarions, and drums making up in noise what was wanting in harmony.

But the new emperor was not a man to rest satisfied with a pasteboard crown, however richly it might be gilded, nor with coronation by universal suffrage. Faithful worshipper of Vandoux though he was, his greatest ambition was to be numbered among Christian monarchs, and in consequence, negotiations with the court of Rome were at once commenced to obtain the nomination of an ecclesiastic of sufficiently exalted rank to perform the ceremony of the coronation; for, strange to say, though Hayti had had an emperor and a king, and had now again given itself an emperor, a bishop it had never had since the expulsion of the white population. Up to the time wherein we are writing, the clergy in Hayti, with a few honourable exceptions, have been represented by a set of runaway French, Italian, and Spanish priests, or adventurers, who in many cases have never received ordination, who lead lives of scandalous immorality, and who live in brotherly harmony with the practisers of Vandoux magic. Christophe, it is said, on assuming the royal title, applied to the pope for a bishop, but never received an answer; while, during Boyer's presidency, negotiations were opened for the establishment of a concordat, but were broken off again because the papal court demanded greater independence for the clergy than the Haytian government was disposed to grant. Faustin's attempts to secure a real bishop to perform the ceremony of his coronation proved equally abortive, his negotiator having, by some misconduct, given umbrage at Rome. However, this individual, who enjoyed the title of chief-almoner to the emperor, chose to conceal his failure, and to return to his country with the self-bestowed title of Bishop of Hayti; and thus the coronation was duly celebrated on the 18th of April 1852, and was not a whit the less brilliant for being rather spurious.

Thus far had we written in the full assurance that Emperor Soulouque had still his 'right divine to govern wrong.' But now (Feb. 2) we receive news that the creator of the Duc de Limonade and the Marquis de Marmalade will bestow his titles upon the salt of the earth no longer. Soulouque is dethroned. The Haytian Republic is once more established, and General Fabre Geffard, its president, and only 'nearly a black man,' reigneth in our Black Emperor's stead.

OUR COUSIN ALICE.

I HAD certainly not recovered from the effects of the severe wounds received in the battles fought between Cawnpore and Lucknow, when I met again, after four years of separation, my cousin Alice. My brain must have been less steady than usual; and it was perhaps a little turned by my being regarded as the hero of the little world, formed by the county families and early friends, who met to congratulate me on my return to England from the seat of war in the east. I ought to have had a mother to nurse me, but I had none. I was an orphan. Yet it was to the house which, in my father's lifetime, had been my home that I came back.

There was the great down, wooded nearly to the summit, which I remembered so well, where the coursing meetings used to be held. I could scarcely believe, as I entered the drawing-room before dinner, that the same party which had so often assembled for the great gatherings on Marley Down, were not drawn to the place now for the same purpose. But other customs prevailed. My young cousin, Sir Reginald Moore, was no sportsman. The sleek greyhounds had all disappeared; I missed them sorely. The old squire—my grandfather—had been dead more than a twelvemonth. His youngest and favourite son—my