

Haiti

(Continued from Page 1)
their own child poison or cut it down.

It is not uncommon then to see the lips of the corpse together, since it is a belief among many of the Haitians that in this way the unfortunate victim will not be able to answer the voodoo priest when called from the grave.

Not so loud as the drum of the tambour player in Haiti, is the almost imperceptible rumbling of political upheaval.

The Haitians are a proud people with the justified pride of men who have given blood to grasp and maintain their freedom. The Black Republic fought for and won its independence from France in 1820, becoming the second free country in the Western Hemisphere.

There is a new administration in Haiti under the guidance of President Duvalier and his wife attended the Anglican Cathedral in Port au Prince for religious services. Heavily guarded, he looked like a tired worn man. Friends told me that he is a good man, doing his very best for his people, killing him self from over-work.

Contrary to popular belief, the Haitian is not a Negro. He has a mixture of the African, French, Spanish, Indian and other blood lines. His color runs from black, through all the shades of brown, to Caucasian white.

"While French is the official language of the country, Creole is the popular tongue — another mixture that includes words

Caribbean Jewel Drenched In Sunshine and Voodoo

rehabbered from darkest Africa and a corrupted French of slavery days.

Perhaps the most unforgettable characteristic of the Haitian is pride. This is perceived equally in the fashionable suburban homes of the "elite" class and the waterfront slums of the poverty-stricken.

The proud carriage of the elite debutante dressed in the latest Paris creation is no greater than the vendor in the public market with a bunch basket of vegetables perched gracefully upon her head.

The national religion of Haiti is Catholicism, even though there have been inroads made by the Anglican and other Protestant sects. There are still, however, many pagans living in Haiti, especially in the mountainous country areas.

I met a young hotel waiter who has 7½ brothers and sisters. Never marrying, his father would live a few years with one woman, separate on a "gentleman's agreement" basis, and begin life with another. However, throughout the years of promiscuous domesticity, the father did not forget his many children and their many mothers. Periodically he would visit each of his ex-wives and make what provision he could for their sustenance.

It is among these people of no- or forgotten religion that voodoo is strongest.

In the past few years there has been an upsurge in the cultural aspects of Haiti. Leading the way has been a handful of native painters who have displayed their work in the form of murals on the walls of Port au Prince's Anglican Cathedral.

Their work is primitive, intriguing and full of the color with which nature surrounds them on their little island.

Despite its sharp contrasts politically and socially, the Haitian people (like their French forbearers) have an immutable love for the physical aspects of their lush country.

The cloud capped mountains, the unbelievable green of the valleys, the flaming pinkish blossoms growing two stories high, the royal purple bougainvillea, the exotic and priceless — here perhaps next to its loving and lovable people is Haiti's greatest wealth — its extravagant and fantastic coloring — the malice and savagery leaped from the blazing wreckage.

I asked Pierre if he voted. He didn't. "How can I vote?" he asked. "We are presented with as many as ten candidates for a single government office." I pointed over the roof tops, exotic and priceless — here perhaps next to its loving and lovable people is Haiti's greatest wealth — its extravagant and fantastic coloring — the malice and savagery leaped from the blazing wreckage.

He was Father Philip D. Kiely, of the Jesuit New England province, who is stationed at St. James Church in Montego Bay, the popular Caribbean vacation resort. At least 75 percent of the tourists from the New York sports and rich sped to the scene, found Catholic papers diligently and rightly so, report. "This launching drive, the making of new monsignors, the results of vocational appeals, the needs of our charitable institutions."

However, he changed, "we are letting a good many other matters escape our observation" because of lack of sufficient interest in the "secular" environment.

The Catholic press," Mr. Kiely said, "represents the Catholic mind at work."

"By reporting," he said, "I don't mean covering a speech or a routine and predictable news-event, but thorough investigation involving both research and legwork, launched without preconception, similar to find proof or illustrations of a pre-formed thesis, but simply to discover the truth of a situation."

The writer noted that at the 1959 Convention of the Catholic

than American women — but how can you vote when you are not informed?"

Although recently released from government charges of political interference, Haiti's Catholic Archbishop Poirier was confined to the hospital during my stay. No interviews were available nor was the nature of the Archbishop's illness released to the press.

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