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COLORED ORPHAN HOME GETS THE PIGMY

He Has a Room to Himself and May Smoke If He Likes.

TO BE EDUCATED IF POSSIBLE

When He Returns to the Congo He May Then Help to Civilize His People.

Ota Benga has left the New York Zoological Park, in the Bronx, and has been installed in the Howard Colored Orphan Asylum, Dean Street and Troy Avenue, Brooklyn. There it is hoped that by association with the colored children and their instructors the pigmy may be civilized, so that when he goes back home he will be able to teach his people.

The teachers in the orphan asylum realize that they have a difficult problem, but they are hopeful of Ota Benga. He is in an institution where the inmates are children. Not larger than they, he is a man. The children are under thorough discipline, but Ota Benga, although he is as gentle as a child, is impatient of restraint.

Dr. J. H. Girdonv [sic], who is in charge of the orphan asylum, said last night:

“Prof. Charles P. Verner brought the pigmy here this afternoon. He looks like a rather dwarfed colored boy of unusual amiability and curiosity. Dr. Verner said to him in his native tongue that he had taken him to the only place in the white man’s country where they would welcome him for his own sake. His face lighted up and he asked the professor to tell us that he was pleased to be with black people and free from the witchcraft of the white man.

“Now, our plan is this: We are going to treat him as a visitor. We have given him a room to himself, where he can smoke if he chooses. We have not placed him with the children in their dormitories and he eats with the cooks in the kitchen. He has already made good friends with them. He has learned a surprising amount of English, and we believe he will soon understand not only most of what is said to him, but will be able to express himself. This will be the beginning of his education.

“We put a pencil in his hand, writing his name, as you would with a child. Then we pronounced his name, pointing to the writing. He repeated his name and tried to imitate the writing. That is a beginning.

“Prof. Verner has not surrendered his charge to us, because he is under pledge to take him home. He brought the little man to us at our suggestion, and we are quite convinced that he has done all he could for the pigmy and that his treatment in the Zoological Park, where he was put in the monkey cage, was not intended to degrade him, but rather to supply him with amusement until the professor could come back from a trip South. He is to be taken out for walks by the attendants and by me. We hope to arouse his ambition and to make him feel that he at least ought to know as much as the children.”

Prof. Verner, who brought the little black man to this country from Africa, went yesterday to the Zoological Park, where he sought Director William T. Hornaday and asked for his pigmy. Mr. Hornaday was quite willing to surrender him.

Prof. Verner was much interested in the statement of John. F. Vane-Tempest, who insisted that Ota Benga was not a pigmy, but a Hottentot. Mr. Vane-Tempest's belief that he had talked with Ota Benga in the language of the Hottentots struck Prof. Verner as perhaps of great scientific interest. He was of the opinion, however, that Mr. Vane-Tempest was mistaken in his believe that he had made the little African understand him.

Ota Benga was allowed to say good-bye to the attendants, to some of whom he had become attached. He gave his arrows to them as souvenirs and the bow to the chief keeper.