

The New York Times

Thursday, September 13, 1906

LEGAL FIGHT FOR PYGMY.

Courts Will Be Asked to Free Him from the Monkey Cage.

After consulting the Corporation Counsel yesterday Wilfred H. Smith, the lawyer who has been engaged by the committee of Baptist clergymen to assist them in preventing any more exhibitions of Ota Benga, the African pygmy, in a cage with the monkeys in the Bronx Zoo, decided to appeal to the courts.

He notified the committee to meet him in his office at 150 Nassau Street this morning. A Philadelphian named Milholland, who recently lectured at Cooper Union against the disenfranchisement of the negro, telegraphed Mr. Smith that he would help pay the cost of any legal steps undertaken to free the dwarf.

The keepers at the Zoological Park yesterday afternoon took down the sign announcing that the pygmy would be exhibited every afternoon in September. Benga was not in the cage much yesterday. A policeman on duty near the primate's house said that the dwarf had been in the chimpanzee cage for a little while after dinner.

Most of the afternoon visitors stood about the monkey house, waiting for a chance to see him. They were rewarded from time to time when he went to the soda water fountain. For a short time later in the afternoon he walked around the chimpanzee cage, jabbering at the monkeys. From time to time he would call out:

“Money! Money!”