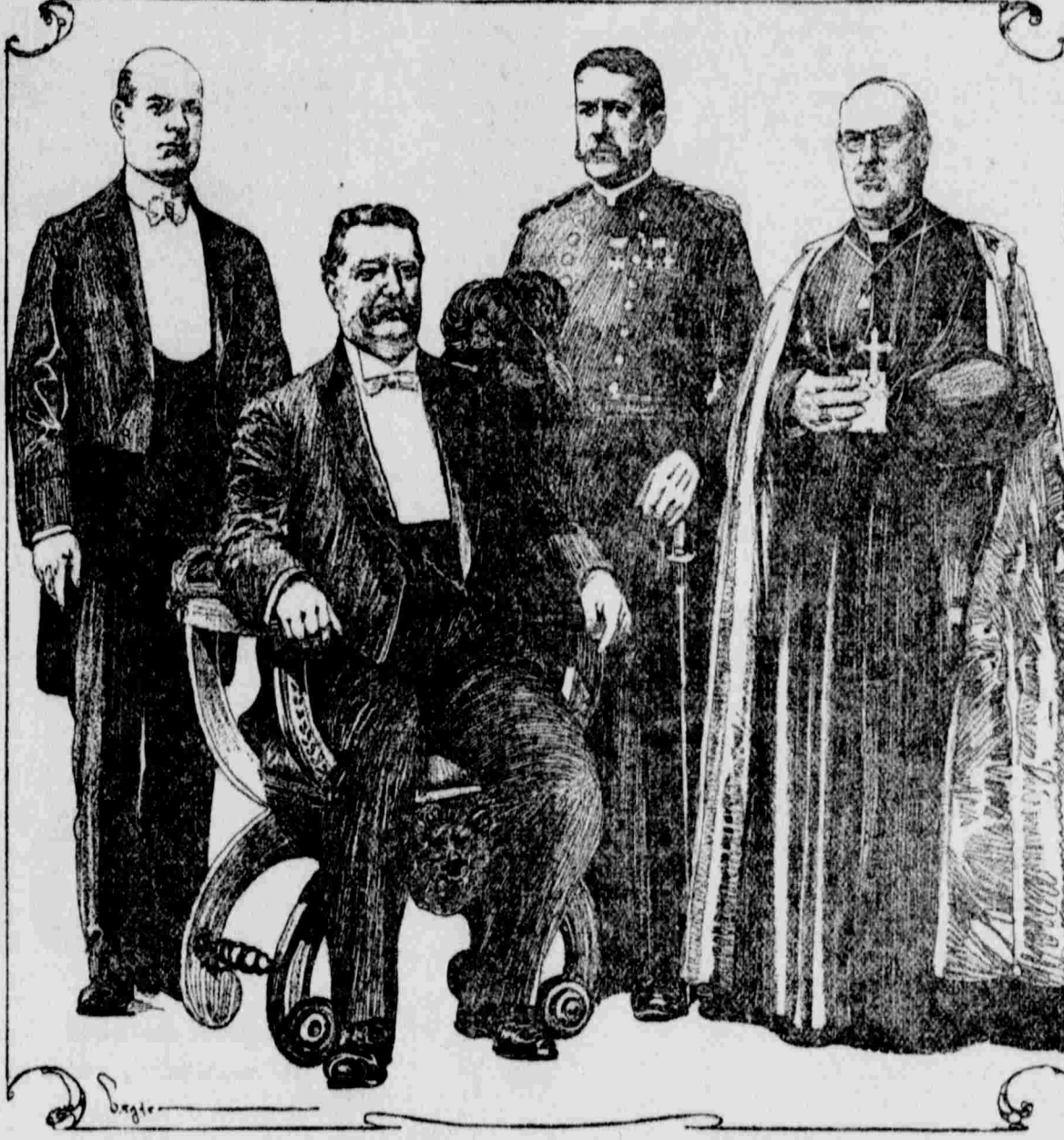


A MAN OF WEIGHT

William Howard Taft, Secretary of War, Is a Heavyweight Both Mentally and Physically. His Title Is Suggestive of War, but His Actual Mission Seems to Be That of a Promoter of Peace—Even Those Who Do Not Share His Political Beliefs Are Attracted by His Personality.

THE successor of William Howard Taft as secretary of war will have to be a man of parts in order to fill that office creditably. The present incumbent has made that necessary. He has established precedents so striking and, withal, so popular that all future war secretaries will be expected to follow them, and it will not be easy to do. Until his day the duties of the office were not well defined. He has demonstrated that fact in a very practical way by doing things that his predecessors never did. It is true that these things were not expected of the others—it is probable that if he wished he might do them. The war secretary of the past was a perfunctory dignitary, wedded to the traditions of his department and not inclined to expand them. With the possible exception of the few who developed taste and ability for the business under the stimulus of actual war our secretaries have shown no special aptitude. Some of them had been famous in other capacities, and some of them had already achieved recognition when they were put at the head of the war department. William Taft has performed his duties in the war department in a way that has made his name known to the people. He has been a man of peace, a maker of peace, a promoter of peace. His public career has been devoted to the service of peace. He is entitled justly to the title of "peace secretary."



VATICAN COMMISSION—W. H. TAFT, CHAIRMAN.

order that was more difficult to handle. "If I had the right man," the president was saying, "I should send him there right now and put as much of a civil government right in under the military as the situation could stand. I would, if I could, give them something to show for our promises to them."

He grew quite enthusiastic over the matter and finally began to describe the man that would suit him. "It's only a question of the right man," he declared. "He must be a law student, a law maker, a law executor and a jurist. He must be young enough to accept a big risk and capable of meeting many a trying situation that no one can foresee. He must be magnetic and a model in his private life. More than that, he must be known to me personally, so that I can be sure that he is all of these things."

It so happened that Judge Taft had left the train just before the president had spoken. Mr. McKinley turned and looked out of the window. His friends exchanged smiles and winks. "It seems to me, Mr. President," one of them finally ventured, "that you have given a pretty fair description of your young friend, Judge Taft."

Mr. McKinley smiled faintly, and before they had reached the next station he remarked calmly that if Judge Taft wanted the position he could have it. Judge Taft accepted the mission. The novelty of the assignment was a powerful incentive, and the president's generosity in choosing him in spite of his avowed hostility to the scheme appealed to him. He went to the Philippines in the summer of 1900 with very definite instructions. His directions were so specific that a less resourceful man would have discovered no elasticity in them. It was evident that the executive was so impressed with the risk of the experiment that every possible emergency was provided for.

It was not until the governor had returned to the United States and presented his case to congress, before committees, in speeches and in particulars in public life that he is today. There was something about his frankness that carried conviction, as there is an indescribable something in his manner that makes every one who meets him a devoted admirer ever after. Few among those who have been connected with the pacification of the Philippines have escaped imputations as to their motives, but Taft is one of them. His official acts have been assailed vigorously by the opposition in the senate, and his mistakes have been pointed out with all the acrimony of bitter debate, but no one has attempted to arraign him.

In 1903 Governor Taft was in America again, this time on his way to Rome. General James F. Smith and Major John B. Porter, representing the military authorities, and Bishop Thomas O'Gorman, the learned Paulist who had recently been appointed to the diocese of Sioux Falls, S. D., were the other delegates. Before he sailed the members of his class at Yale gave him a complimentary dinner. At the time of their annual class reunion they had sent a telegram to Manila assuring Taft that they had not forgotten him and never should. He was sick at the time, and the fraternal message cheered him wonderfully. Now, in his after dinner speech he confessed that it had moved him greatly to learn that they still thought of him occasionally. Then, as if moved by an irresistible impulse, the class president broke out: "Forgotten you! Confound you, Bill Taft, we all love you!" And every man among them said, "Amen."

That is the keynote to Secretary Taft's character. That explains why it is that the little brown men of the Philippines have christened him affectionately "Saint Taft." Such men are born to be leaders among their fellows. That seems to have been the role indicated for Taft even in his youth. Every man who was with him at college bears testimony to the ascendancy he had over them. He went to Yale physically perfect—six feet two of him from the ground up, the arms and shoulders of a Hercules and a big head cast in an intellectual mold. He was noted as a wrestler and was a lover of all manly sports. He ranked very high in his intellectual attainments, graduating second in a class of 120, and he was the salutatorian and class orator.

The time came when a man of Taft's caliber was needed at Washington. He was made secretary of war and was sent almost immediately to straighten out the tangle in the Panama business. It was the first time in the history of the republic that a member of the cabinet had been assigned to a diplomatic errand in a foreign country while still retaining his post at home. Since then he has become the handy man of the administration.

GEORGE H. PICARD.

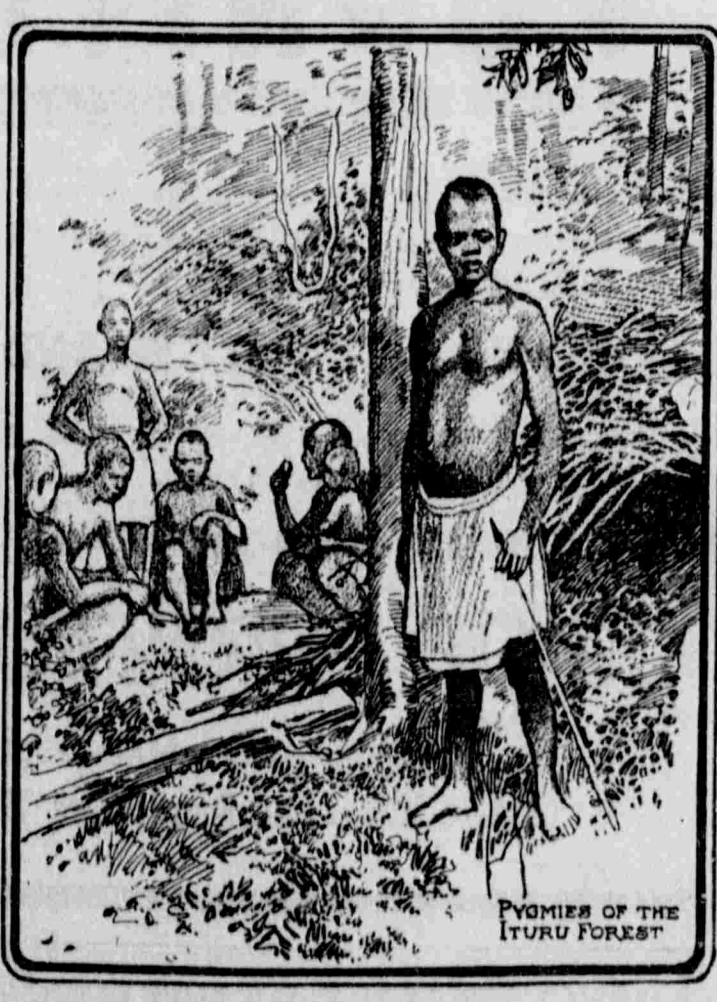
Tiny Folk From the Dark Forests of the African Interior; Recent Finds Have Vindicated Du Chaillu and Stanley

THE recent exhibition at the New York zoological park of an African pygmy confined in the same cage with an orang, and the criticism on the part of the public, has resulted in a good deal of ill feeling and criticism on the part of the zoological park. A prominent negro declared in his public that it was an attempt on the part of the director of the animal exhibit to show a relationship between the negro and the simian. In the end the opposition to the display became so strong that the pygmy was withdrawn from public view.

The subject of all the discussion, Ota Benga by name, did not seem to be at all concerned over the efforts for his release. On the contrary, he appeared to be extremely happy, exhibiting in most of his time while on exhibition in wicker baskets and nets, which he does not skillfully. He has never shown the slightest distaste for the close companionship of the orang outang, which is an exceedingly prepossessing simian with no race prejudices.

Ota Benga was brought to America by Samuel P. Verrier, a noted American explorer and collector, who found him in 1894, in the Congo. The pygmy was a captive in the hands of a tribe of cannibals and had been fattened for eating purposes. Mr. Verrier was moved by the cannibals to take pity on him, and in order to console him, the fat and shining pygmy was shown to him. Mr. Verrier offered to buy him. The cannibals found it most unusual to relinquish such a dainty morsel, but Mr. Verrier was firm, and so Ota Benga came to be on exhibition at the park.

Pygmies from Africa that he is. Ota Benga is neither the first of his race nor the last that has been seen in this country. He is about fifty inches high, well proportioned and fairly intelligent in view of his restricted opportunities. It is not Mr. Verrier's first experience in bringing these little creatures to the United States. He was instrumental in securing the exhibit of the St. Louis fair. To test the intellectual capacity of the dwarfs he arranged the experiment some time ago



PYGMIES OF THE ITURU FOREST



OTA BENG AND HIS ORANG OUTANG



HARRISON'S GROUP OF PYGMIES FROM CENTRAL AFRICA

of bringing to America two tiny cannibals from the Luahla river country. These small Africans are being educated in this country and have already shown considerable progress.

The most considerable band of genuine African swamp pygmies ever brought into civilization was the collection of dwarfs imported into England last year and exhibited in London. Colonel Harrison, their discoverer, had spent many years in searching for them and was eventually rewarded by finding the tribe which he believes is the one seen by Stanley and described in his book on African travel. They are more like the pygmies of Du Chaillu and Stanley than were the specimens exhibited at the St. Louis fair in 1904.

Last year Colonel Harrison went inland to the great Ituru forest of the Belgian Congo with the express purpose of

making a study of the race of dwarfs that inhabited that region. He succeeded in living four months among the little people and at his departure persuaded six of them, four men and two women, to accompany him. After numerous delays the party arrived in England—all but Colonel Harrison, who was detained in the Sudan. The pygmies were in charge of Harrison's trusty Arab servant, who succeeded,

during the long homeward voyage, in obtaining a working knowledge of the weird language spoken by the tiny Africans.

As soon as the party landed, the pygmies fell into the hands of the anthropologists, who proceeded to study them in the most approved scientific fashion. The result of a careful measurement showed that the mean height for the men was four feet six inches and for the women four feet one inch. It was found also that the two traits that specially characterize the pygmies are the form of the nose and that of the upper lip. The nasal bone has a scarcely appreciable projection, while the base of the nose is very wide. The upper lip is longer and more protuberant than in other negroes. The chin is short and retreating. The legs are short and stout, and

the feet are large. Neither skin nor hair is as black as that of other negroes, and both have pronounced reddish tints. They have also longer beards than the other African tribes.

Colonel Harrison says that these pygmies are brave without being especially aggressive. During his stay with them in the forest of Ituru a party of pygmy warriors attacked a Belgian caravan, killing seventeen carriers and plundering the goods. They are nomads, having neither cultivated fields nor houses, and live only on game and wild fruits. Their household equipment is limited to a few rude earthen saucers, in which they cook game without taking the trouble to skin it. They eat the skin as well as the meat, even breaking the bones with their teeth.

They do not worry about clothing. Only in the tribes nearest to those of greater stature do the women wear girdles woven from tall grass. Both men and women shave the head partially. Some cut straight paths across their woolly hair, and others dress it with birds' feathers or squirrel tails.

Colonel Harrison is convinced that the African pygmies have absolutely no religious instincts and believe in neither God nor devil. They practice polygamy, each man buying for himself as many wives as he can afford. As with the orientals, the birth of a girl is looked upon as a real calamity. Strange as it may seem, these small people are not resigned to their own proportions. Pygmy mothers do not neglect an opportunity to steal the newborn children belonging to the neighboring tribes of normal stature, leaving their own tiny specimens of humanity in exchange.

It seems that these dwarfs have no original language of their own. They take the elements of their speech from the dialects of their neighbors, and of these form a sort of lingo which is understood in the vast African forests. Observation has shown also that these little folk are unmistakably intelligent and have the gift of language in a marked degree. They know how to extract iron from the ore and to fashion it into arrow heads without other tools than round stones.

H. A. BROWER.

ALL OVER THE WORLD.

A cure for seasickness, which a German doctor says he has discovered, consists in the sufferer lying on his back with his head tilted very slightly toward the horizon.

It is expected that the Florida legislature will close the sponge fisheries along the coast of that state for a year, because of the arrival of some Greek fishermen from the Mediter-

anean, where their ravages have caused the Turkish government to close the beds.

Donkeys of the highest grade sometimes sell for \$1,000 apiece in Egypt. Good average donkeys for riding bring \$50 to \$200 apiece.

A system of wireless telegraphy, by means of which messages can be dispatched and received on trains in motion, has been experimentally intro-

duced by the Bavarian ministry of public works.

The women of Chile maintain a high average of beauty. They are well featured and have beautiful complexions. The wheat crop in the Punjab this year is half a million tons in excess of the largest crop hitherto recorded.

Quill pens came into use in 553; the first steel ones in 1820, when the first gross of them sold for \$36.

Much of our textile materials now comes from the mines. Silk rustles

with 26 per cent of salt of tin, flannel is weighted with epson salts and linen tablecloths are made from cotton filled with china clay and starch.

Few gradients upon railways are steeper than one in sixty. Modern locomotives will take much steeper gradients, but they are not economical to work.

A balloon carrying an English aeronaut descended recently upon the roof of a railway carriage forming part of a train traveling at forty miles an hour

in the neighborhood of Herbesthal, Germany.

A Zionist society of young girls has been organized in Brooklyn.

In Germany there are fifty-four mountaineering clubs, with a total membership of 142,603.

The first canal was made in England when Henry I. joined the Trent to the Witham, in 1134.

A gigantic steel bridge over a mile long and 300 feet high across the Belly river, at Lethbridge, is about to be

constructed by the Canadian Pacific railway.

First Lieutenant von Franck, the oldest officer in the German army, celebrated his one hundredth birthday at Charlottenburg. He is in full possession of his faculties.

The bridge on the Cape to Cairo railway, over the Kafue river, 266 miles north of the Victoria falls, has just been completed, and the other day the first train passed over it.

The highest railway fares in the

world are those in operation on the Kongo line, where \$100 is charged for a journey of 230 miles. This works out at 40 cents a mile.

The origin of the word "tram" is the Scandinavian "trömm," log or stick of a tree and eventually wearing shaft of cart or carriage.

A committee appointed by the British parliament to investigate the tramp problem reports that there are never less than 40,000 tramps in England. Hard times double that number.