

## ATLANTIC MONTHLY:

A Magazine of Literature, Science, Art, and Politics.

VOL. XC. — AUGUST, 1902. — No. DXXXVIII.

## IN THE FEAR OF THE LORD.

LET it be made plain, in the beginning, that the dear Lord had nothing to do with it, for the doors of that poor heart were fast closed against him, and the benighted child within trembled, ever trembled, to hear Love's timid knocking: such, gentle reader, is the teaching of gray seas and a bleak coast, — the voice of thunder is a voice of warning, but the waving of the new-blown blossom, where the sunlight falls upon it, is a lure to damnation. It was not the dear Lord: it was the Lord God A'mighty, — a fantastic misconception, the work of the blind minds of men, which has small part with mercy and the high leading of love. Men's imaginations, being untutored and unconfined, fashion queer gods of the stuff the infinite contains. When they roam afar, — as from bleak places, where no yellow fields, no broad, waving acres, yielding bounteously, make love manifest to the children of men, nor do vaulted forests all reverberant to the wind's solemn strains inspire souls to deeper longing, — when they roam afar, it may be, the gods they fetch back are terrible gods. In Ragged Harbor, which is a cleft in the Newfoundland upper shore, some men have fashioned a god of rock and tempest and the sea's rage, — a gigantic, frowning shape, throned in a mist, whereunder black waters curl and hiss, and are cold and without end; and in the right hand of the shape is a flaming rod of chastisement, and on either side of the

throne sit grim angels, with inkpots and pens, who jot down the sins of men, relentlessly spying out their innermost hearts; and behind the mist, far back in the night, the flames of pain, which are forked and writhing and lurid, light up the clouds and form an aureole for the shape, and provide him with his halo. No, it was not the dear Lord who had to do with the case of Nazareth Lute of Ragged Harbor, — not the Lord who lives in melting hearts and therefrom compassionately proceeds to the aid and comfort of all the sons of men, even as it is written: it was merely the Lord God A'mighty.

Now, the father of this Lute, old Richard Lute, of the path to Squid Cove, where it rounds the Man-o'-War, called his first-born, Nazareth, and changed his own name to Jesus when he was converted, believing it to be no sin, but, indeed, a public confession of old transgressions and new faith, — a deed of high merit, which might counterbalance even so much as the past unrighteousness of putting more sea water than lobsters in the cans he had traded with Luke Dart, and would so be counted unto him when he stood on the waters at the foot of the throne and the dread account was put in his hand. "If it goas agin them lobsters on the Lord God A'mighty's bill," he told the people, "'t will do. If it oan'y goas agin the lobsters, b'y," he said to young Solomon Stride, "maybe, — maybe, b'y, — I'll

*The African Pygmies.*

As echoes falling from a star  
 The children called him. And he came, —  
 And on his face immortal flame.  
 For the dark wood had held him fast,  
 The leaves a subtle sorcery cast,  
 The briers bound him, the wild sprays  
 Tangled his feet in dear delays,  
 Tendrils would clasp, and waterfalls  
 Foam round him, and he broke through walls  
 Of living amethyst where sun  
 And haze and distance wrought as one.

And you will know him from the look  
 Of men by happiness forsook, —  
 Since he had been that time made free  
 Of the first court of poesy,  
 Nor till midsummer's day return,  
 And skies are blue and roses burn,  
 Shall he set foot within those dim  
 Delightful ranges, nor for him  
 Those vaporous barriers be stirred —  
 For he has lost the magic word.

*Harriet Prescott Spofford.*

---

 THE AFRICAN PYGMIES.

NOT long after my settlement at Ndombe, the town of a remarkable monarch of the same name, the king of the Balunda tribes around Wissmann Falls, Central Africa, an odd-looking creature came up to my bungalow, bringing a piece of fresh meat for sale. At first I took him for a boy, judging by his height and size, for he was about four feet high, and could not have weighed more than eighty pounds. As he came closer and held out his meat, making a peculiar guttural sound, I noticed that he appeared to be an old man. His form was slightly bent, his hair and beard were tinged with white, the lines were deeply sunken in his face, and his deep-set eyes were glazed with the film of age.

I began to question him, having become proficient in the native tongues, and was surprised to discover that I could

not understand my extraordinary visitor. His language sounded more like the gabbling of an ape than the ordered speech of the intelligent Balunda; but when I brought out the salt which is the universal currency in that country, his eyes sparkled, and a broad smile and beaming face rendered further efforts at conversation unnecessary to the trade. The little man grinned, laid his meat on the floor, readjusted his quiver of darts, picked up the bow he had laid aside, and started down the path, to all appearances supremely happy.

Turning to one of the boys in my employ, I asked who that man was. The boy answered, "Oh, he is one of the Batwa." The word had no sooner been uttered than I seized my helmet and started off in pursuit of the stranger; for I had read enough of African ethnology

to know that Batwa meant Pygmies, and here was a chance not to be lost.

My visitor was not far ahead, and did not seem to be alarmed at my following him, for soon he led me into a clearing in the adjacent plain, not more than a few hundred yards from my house, in which a little hamlet was ensconced. The Pygmy, if such he was, entered one of the beehive huts, and ousted a swarm of children, who scampered wildly about at sight of the white man. The boy who had given the name Batwa to my caller had followed me, and I now turned to him for more information concerning this strange village. He said that the Batwa were little people who lived to themselves, and were much afraid of the big people; that those in this town were under the authority of Ndombe, who would not destroy them, but kept them to hunt and fish for him. A few questions to the boy, and a careful study of the town and people, assured me that my next door neighbors were none others than the Pygmies of Herodotus, the fabled dwarfs of Ethiopia in reality and truth. From that time I began a close study of the life, condition, manners, customs, and language of these remarkable people, for the three years during which I lived among them.

The village of the Batwa was located in the suburbs of the town of Ndombe, the nephew of Mai Munene, who founded a famous African kingdom at the head of navigation of the Kasai tributary of the Congo River. The proximity of this Pygmy settlement to the principal city of tribes long noted for their large stature and fine physique was a unique fact in my knowledge of these people. Stanley, and most of the other explorers who had described them, had represented them as inhabiting the densest forests, and as being entirely separate from the other Africans, but this settlement was on the edge of the great plateau of Lunda, and under the sovereignty of a distinctly alien tribe.

Ndombe's town is situated on the crest of the watershed of the Kasai and Lubi rivers, and about fifteen miles above their confluence at Wissmann Falls, a series of cataracts in the former stream, so called in honor of the celebrated governor of German East Africa. This region is about five degrees south latitude and twenty-two degrees east longitude, with an average elevation of twenty-five hundred feet, some of the peaks of the Chrystal Range rising to over six thousand feet. The plateau of Lunda stretches from the Wissmann Falls to the Zambezi divide, embracing a territory about the size of Texas.

The population of Ndombe's capital is about five thousand, and that of the suburban Pygmies about three hundred. The Batwa formed a distinct village of their own, with no other inhabitants save their immediate chief or mayor, and his wife. This man was of Ndombe's own family, the representative of the king, who acted as the sub-chief of the Pygmy village under Ndombe's general suzerainty. His authority seemed never to be disputed, and through him the dwarfs paid their tribute of game and fish daily to the king. The Pygmies dwelt in little huts shaped like a beehive, with an opening on the side at the bottom, barely large enough to admit their bodies crawling. These houses were built by bending sticks into the shape of a bow, placing the ends in the ground, and thus forming a framework, upon which a matting of large leaves was tied with the fibres of the palm. These huts, although a full-grown normal African could not stand erect or recline at full length in them, sufficed for a Pygmy and his whole family, sometimes consisting of a wife and half a dozen children. About eighty of these little dwellings were arranged without any order or design upon the slope of the hill toward the Lubi, near the meeting place of the grassy plains and the tangled forests, which constituted the Pygmies' happy hunting grounds. The village cov-

ered about three acres, and was dotted here and there with the characteristic trees of the African plains, the baobab, euphorbia, and palm. Besides these, the wife of the Bakuba chief of the Pygmies had planted the village with plantains, bananas, and pineapples, also the never-failing pawpaw, red pepper, and castor-oil bushes. It is noteworthy that this planting was not done by the Pygmies, who did absolutely no agricultural work at all.

From the limbs of the trees about the houses hung uncanny trophies of the skill of the Batwa at the chase, — the head-bones of the antelope and buffalo, the skeletons of monkeys, boars, and large rodents, the skins of snakes, the scaly armor of the ant-eater, the feathers of many large birds, the shells of the porpoise, and the head and vertebrae of many large fishes. Immense nets, made both for hunting and fishing, were thrown over poles suspended under grass sheds about the village, while the walls of the little huts bristled with spears, knives, bows; and arrows, traps, harpoons, and hunting horns. Yellow dogs, whose diminutive dimensions were in proportion to those of their masters, prowled about the open spaces between the houses, jangling the peculiar wooden bells which were fastened about their necks. One striking peculiarity of these African curs is that they do not bark, and so the bells are put upon them to enable the huntsmen to follow. Often the dogs themselves are eaten by the Africans, but I never found the Pygmies guilty of this unsportsmanlike conduct. Neither was I ever able to detect any evidences of cannibalism on the part of the little people.

The life of the Pygmies was concerned chiefly in the procuring of meat for themselves and for the larger tribes with whom they traded. They were expert huntsmen and fishermen, their principal weapon being the bow and arrow with its poisoned wooden dart, the most formid-

able of all the implements of savage African warfare. The bow of the Pygmies was made from the wood of a very strong and tough tree, the color of the heart of which was bright crimson; the bowstring was made of a fibre stripped from the body of a rattan vine growing in the swamps. This fibre produced a string perfectly pliable, and exceeding a rawhide in strength. The Pygmies were often shorter than their bows. The arrow was a light straight piece of bamboo, usually the stem of the frond of one of the smaller palms. This frond stem was cylindrical in shape, and hollow throughout its length, the woody fibre being wonderfully strong and light. Contrary to the practice among larger tribes, these arrows were neither tipped with iron, nor furnished with the feathery barb. They were simply the neatly trimmed bamboo sticks, sharpened at the top and cleft at the bottom, the sharp point being thickly smeared with a dark poison. It is the last fact which makes these simple contrivances such deadly weapons. The poison is one of the most fatal known. It is decocted from the roots of one of the euphorbias by boiling and pressing them, a black sticky scum rising to the surface, into which the points of the arrows are dipped. The scum is very adhesive, and also impregnates the wood of the arrowhead, which is made from a certain kind of timber specially for the purpose.

The effect of this poison is more deadly than that of any vegetable poison with which I am acquainted. It has been known to produce death within two minutes of its administration to a human being. The ordinary way to test its efficacy among the Africans is to try it on a monkey, and the usual result is death in less than five minutes. The use of the poison in war or the chase depends upon the infliction of a very slight wound on the victim by the point of the arrow, the small amount of poison thus put into the system sufficing to cause death.

Sometimes, however, instead of death, the effect is insanity.

I noted several instances of the terrible effects of these poisoned arrows. A man of Ndombe's town insulted one of the Pygmies and was shot in the thigh. Despite all that the medicine men could do in the way of charms and various hoodoo practices, besides using certain herbs and roots which are often efficacious in ordinary ailments, the wounded man died in great agony after several hours of delirious coma. On another occasion the poison was administered as an ordeal to a woman accused of witchcraft, and she died in less than half an hour. A man in my employ was once going down the Kasai River in a canoe, and was attacked by some of the savage Baschilele tribe, who were armed with these poisoned arrows obtained from the Pygmies. The man sustained a scratch on the forehead from a passing arrow. Although the wound was so slight as to be almost invisible to the eye, the poor fellow went violently insane, lingered for two weeks, and then died in terrible convulsions.

Once, in making a survey of the upper Kasai valley, I had occasion to ascend a high mountain, upon whose summit I walked about, compass in hand, taking observations. Suddenly, without the least warning, I fell violently into the earth. I had come upon a concealed pit, made to impale antelopes upon sharpened stakes set in the bottom. One of these stakes penetrated my thigh and caused a severe wound. My only attendant, a boy of fourteen years, ran down the mountain and secured men, who carried me quickly to an adjacent village. The boy sucked the wound thoroughly, and the native doctors cauterized it by pouring boiling oil into it, thus no doubt saving my life and reason. I was dangerously ill for a month, and suffered for three years afterwards. The sucking of the wound and the cautery were at my own suggestion.

The use of these poisoned arrows by the Pygmies in killing game is wonderfully effective. The flesh around the wound is excised, and the rest of the meat is eaten with impunity. With its coat of poison, the puny bamboo reed becomes more fatal than the Krag-Jorgensen or Martini-Henry. With his bow and arrows the Pygmy is more than a match for any denizen of the African jungle; he kills the elephant, buffalo, antelope, leopard, hyena, jackal, and the numberless smaller animals of forest and plain, besides guinea-fowl, water-fowl, and others of the feathered tribe. The Batwa of Ndombe's village frequently brought in meat from these different animals, part of which went to Ndombe as his regular tribute, the rest being kept for their own use, or exchanged for the farinaceous produce of the Bikenge. Once the dwarfs brought in immense chunks of a huge python, which they found asleep after making his monthly meal of a whole antelope, horns, hoof, and all. The total length of the tremendous snake was twenty-six feet, and his body was as thick as a man's thigh. There was wild excitement in the Pygmies' town, and the other natives flocked in from far and wide to see the monster and enjoy the feast. It may be remarked here that the Pygmies' diet includes everything from the soft bodies of the white ant to the hippopotamus. I have known them to shake caterpillars from the trees, and dry them in the sun, preserving them as a special delicacy; and the locust, upon which John the Baptist fed in the wilderness, is as highly esteemed among them as the shrimp or lobster among the epicures of the West.

The method of hunting the monkey, the eating of which must have been the beginning of anthropophagy, is most interesting. A clearing of about half an acre is made in the forest where the simians abound; a net ten feet high and forty feet long, made from a very tough

and strong fibrous plant, is stretched across this clearing. The Pygmies then drive the monkeys from the forest into the clearing. When the monkeys attempt to cross the open space, they no longer find the convenient branches of the trees which have hitherto assisted them in their flight, and are forced to rush across the clearing on the ground. When they come upon the net, they are sorely puzzled, and instead of trying to climb over it, vainly strive to get through the meshes, and in this bewildered condition are set upon by the Pygmies with their bows and arrows and spears, and a general slaughter ensues. One reason why this method of hunting the monkey is followed is that a wounded monkey is so very difficult to pursue in the mazes of the forests.

The fact that the Pygmies did not cultivate the soil at all was established by careful and prolonged investigation, and is one of the most remarkable characteristics of these people. At the time of my residence among them, they had been in the habit for centuries past of trading the meat from the chase for produce of the fields of the Bantu. The latter people engaged quite extensively in raising food supplies of various kinds. Their principal implement is the hoe, the blade of which their blacksmiths make from the abundant magnetic iron ore of the country, the handle of the hoe being a short stick about two feet long, with a hole bored through a knot in the end, for the attachment of the blade. The Bantu women use this hoe exclusively, as they have neither plough, spade, shovel, nor any other agricultural implement. With this primitive hoe, however, they plant and cultivate corn, peas, beans, onions, tomatoes, tobacco, cotton, melons, pepper, and various tropical fruits and vegetables, besides the universal manioc, plantain, and peanut. The word for peanut, by the way, in the language of Ndombe, is "Ngoobah."

None of these products, which the

African soil and climate cause to flourish with such ease and abundance, have ever been cultivated by the Pygmies. The dwarfs, before the advent of the larger tribes, were literally wild men of the woods, who subsisted entirely on the bounty of unaided nature. The indigenous and uncultivated edibles of the African soil were considered ample for their needs. They lived on the roots and tubers of trees and of certain plants resembling the Irish potato, the young and tender shoots of succulent bushes, and the acidulous fruits occurring in great quantity in the forest, which the monkeys feed upon with avidity.

The relations of the Batwa to Ndombe and the powerful Balunda were unique. According to the traditions of both people, many ages previously the Pygmies had been the sole inhabitants and the undisputed masters of the vast territories now occupied by the dominant races in Africa. Then the forefathers of the Bantu came down from the Northeast, and began to fight the Pygmies. The latter represent these early conflicts as long and bitter. Some of the dwarfs escaped into the depths of the remote forests, into whose gloomy wilds the conquering invaders would not follow them. This accounts for Stanley's discovery of them in the Aruwimi forests, and explains his impression that the Pygmies were never found elsewhere in association with the other Africans. But some of the little people were captured in those ancient wars, and kept near their captors until their shyness wore off, and they were willing to live with them on friendly terms. It was in this way that Ndombe's kingdom came to embrace this settlement of the dwarfs. It is possible that the superior tribes could never have overcome the Pygmies had they not learned the secret of the manufacture and use of the poisoned arrows of the latter. But there never was any inter-marriage between the two peoples, nor did either adopt the ways of the other.

Both remained separate and distinct, though living side by side for centuries. The Pygmies did not increase rapidly in numbers, and barely kept up their existence from generation to generation. In this they appear to have been already a moribund race when the larger men came down upon them.

The complete confidence of Ndombe and his people facilitated my intercourse with the Pygmies. This ripened into the most friendly association when the little people found me such a steady customer for their game, the more so as the principal article which I had to offer was what they most earnestly coveted — common salt. The craving for chloride of sodium is enhanced by the fact that the chief mineral ingredient of the food of the African aborigines is a kind of chlorate of potash obtained by precipitating a lye made from the ashes of a marsh weed. Although there are deposits of rock salt in different parts of the continent, the natives have not learned to use it. The potash salt is so very inferior to the "white man's salt," as the blacks call our article, that the latter commands fabulous prices in the remote interior, where I was located. Salt is more precious than gold in the opinion of the Pygmies. As I was fairly well supplied with the coveted relish, my eager little neighbors undertook to barter all the meat they could persuade me to take for it. In this way quite a familiarity sprang up between us, and I was enabled to collect much detailed information concerning them.

The clothing of the Pygmies was the most primitive of all I saw in Africa. The children and some of the women were nude, and the best clad of them wore nothing more than a yard of palm fibre around their loins, this garment being obtained from the other tribes. Some wore pieces of fibre of the size of a pocket handkerchief suspended from a string around the waist, while others were content with leaves or grass. They

had no looms, and manufactured no cloth as the other natives did. The favorite ornamental garment among them was the skin of a large baboon. I never saw a single Pygmy tattooed in any way. They often made amulets or charms of the skin or bones of small animals. They did not wear the beads or brass and copper wire which were affected by the Balunda, but they often wore the gay feathers of some bird in their woolly hair.

The extreme simplicity of the manners and customs of the Pygmies was in striking contrast to the more complex life of the other races. Ndombe's people, for example, had been enjoying for centuries the advantages accruing from the subdivision of labor, somewhat on the lines of more civilized countries. The Balunda had blacksmiths, wood-carvers, weavers, mat-makers, manufacturers, besides lawyers, medicine men, governmental officials such as constables, tax-collectors, and executioners with chieftains and petty governors under the greater kings. The Pygmies had none of these. The governmental system under which the Batwa lived at Ndombe was imposed on them by the king. Nor had their system ever been even patriarchal. In most of these matters the aboriginal race of Pygmies must have been the most primitive race of mankind.

The poverty of the Pygmies alone restricted their naturally polygamous tendencies. The other Africans enjoy as many wives and concubines as they have means to buy. There are so few distinctions of wealth among the Pygmies that their women are pretty evenly divided among them. They are also much less prolific than the larger tribes. Their children are precocious, being exposed early to the hardening influences of their parents' lives, and made to shift for themselves as soon as they can catch mice, or dig up roots. While the men hunt and fish, the women search for the

wild food of the plain and forest, or barter meat for the food of the Balunda.

The average height of fifty grown men of the Batwa village was fifty-one and seven eighths inches, or four feet and nearly four inches. Seven men averaged less than three feet and nine inches high, and five of them were over four feet, six inches. It was very difficult to persuade the women to submit to measurement, but eight of them, mothers of families, averaged forty-seven and three eighths inches, four inches shorter than the men. The prevalent color was a light chocolate brown. The older men wore scanty beards.

The head of the Pygmy is of the brachycephalic order. The mean cranial index of the skulls of eight adult males is eighty-one degrees. The nose is small, but more aquiline than that of the real Negro. The mouth is large, and the chin usually receding. The hair is of a lighter color, — almost a shade of brown, — and is kinky and woolly. His hands and feet are small and well shaped, the hands in particular being delicately formed. In proportion to his size, his strength far exceeds that of all the other Africans. His powers of endurance on the march or in the chase are phenomenal. Fifty miles a day is an ordinary march for him, and he is almost as much at home in the trees as the monkeys themselves. The senses of the Pygmies are unusually acute. At quite a distance, they can distinguish the chameleon from the foliage in which it is hidden, notwithstanding the fact that the color of the little animal coincides with that of its hiding place. Much of their quarry is discovered through the powers of the nose, and it is no exaggeration to say that the Pygmies' sense of smell is as keen as that of their dogs. They are such shots with the bow that I have seen one send an arrow through a rat at twenty yards, while it was running through the village. The Bantu would spear fish as

they leaped from the water, or darted among the rocks in the streams.

As might be expected, the chief characteristic of the Pygmy's mind is cunning. Ages of warfare with ferocious beasts, and long periods of struggling against tribes of men physically superior to them, have made the little people so famous for treachery, sly dexterity, and extraordinary agility, that the words "Mudimuki mu mutwa" (sharp as a Pygmy) have become the favorite simile of the Bantu race.

The language of the Batwa is the most strongly onomatopoeic of any with which I am acquainted. The names of animals are made of sounds most characteristic of the beasts they describe. "Elephant" is "humba-humba;" "snake" is "luwilya-wilya" (note how this word squirms). The verbs describe actions imitatively. The vocabulary is much more limited than that of the Bantu. The Batwa appear to have very few, if any, abstract ideas.

The religion of the Pygmies consisted primarily in the worship of the sun. They were not idolatrous — the sun was worshipped as God, and the moon was feared as the devil. They made no images of material objects, and had very few of the superstitious practices of the other Africans.

After my acquaintance with the Pygmies had ripened into complete mutual confidence, I once made bold to tell them that some of the wise men of my country asserted that they had descended from the apes of the forest. This statement, far from provoking mirth, met with a storm of indignant protestation, and furnished the theme for many a heated discussion around the Batwa firesides. The sequel of the matter was an amusing occasion, when a venerable grandfather among the Pygmies turned the tables on me. One day a young ape of the Soko species was brought to my house as a present to me from my little neighbors. A gray-haired old Pygmy watched the

antics of the young Soko, the peculiarity of which consisted in its perfectly white face and hair. Turning his eyes on the Saxon propounder of the insulting hypothesis concerning his progenitors, and noting that Saxon and Soko alike were strikingly white, the shrewd old chap dryly asked: "If we black Batwa come from black monkeys in the forest, who then comes from that Soko there?"

The history of the Batwa tribe of the Pygmies is involved in the general history of all the dwarf races. It has been shown by exhaustive research that this species of the *genus homo* is not confined to Africa, but is widely distributed over the whole globe. My only guides to the history of the Batwa were their own traditions and those of the Bantu around them, — sources of information much more trustworthy than is often supposed. The Africans are very careful to conserve their traditions, and the old men gather the young ones about their firesides, and relate to them the lore of their people and the deeds of their fathers. They reckon time by the appearances of the new moon and the occurrence of such natural phenomena as earthquakes, eclipses, droughts, besides unusual wars, migrations, or any extraordinary events.

The concurrence of testimony is to the effect that the ancestors of the Pygmies many years before had exclusively occupied the vast territories throughout which they are now scattered. The statements of the Bantu and Batwa alike agreed that the latter were the only species of mankind occupying the plains of Lunda when the former came down upon them from the direction of the rising sun. The migrations of the Bantu, therefore, into Central Africa were from the direction of Egypt and Asia. When these larger people found the Pygmies, as before indicated, they began to destroy or subdue them, or to chase them into the depths of the remote forests. It is noteworthy that the Pygmies have never

developed any of the primitive arts which are practiced among the Bantu to-day. There are no signs of a stone age in Africa. This fact is of the utmost anthropological value when taken in connection with the fact that Central Africa is of extremely recent geological formation. The irruption of the Bantu, who were already in the iron age, upon the Batwa, who had not yet reached the stone age, is curiously like the superposition of volcanic strata upon a tertiary formation.

The geographical distribution of the dwarf races is much wider than has been popularly believed. The ancient Egyptians report them at the head waters of the Nile. This was confirmed by Stanley and Emin Pasha. Schweinfurth made a thorough study of a settlement of Pygmies in North Central Africa in the valley of the Welle, a branch of the Mobangi tributary of the Congo, three degrees north latitude, twenty-five degrees east longitude. Du Chaillu identified them in the Ogowé country of the Gaboon, a thousand miles southwest of Schweinfurth's investigation. Another thousand miles southeast of those found by Du Chaillu are the Batwa which I am describing, in the location already mentioned. Three hundred miles northeast of this country occurs a tribe of Pygmies mentioned by Dr. Wolf. It will thus be seen that the existence of the Pygmies has been authenticated in five different parts of Africa, over a territory much larger than the United States. Besides these it is pretty clearly established that the Hottentots and Bushmen of extreme South Africa also belong to this class.

The Pygmies are not, as has been alleged from lack of exact data, restricted solely in their habitat to the forests or impenetrable jungles. They are the residuum of complete occupation of vast continental areas. The interesting part, however, about this occupation is that no traces have been found of any human be-

ings prior to the Pygmies. In this respect, the Caucasian discoveries in North America differ totally from those in Africa. The aborigines whom the Europeans found in America had evidently been antedated by a people vastly superior to them in the arts of civilization. But the white man has found no traces of the handiwork of man preceding the Pygmies. These dwarfish beings are the most primitive of men yet discovered in the annals of history.

Reference has already been made to the existence of other Pygmy tribes. Most of these occur in different parts of the eastern hemisphere. One of the principal localities in which these Oriental Pygmies occur is in the Philippine Islands. In Luzon, particularly, black Pygmies with straight hair have been found. The other localities are the Andaman Islands, Borneo, Madagascar, the Punjab of India, the extreme western part of China, and the Malay Peninsula, while certain skulls on the Pacific coast of America point to the probability that the Pygmies, as well as the larger Asiatics, once occupied the western hemisphere.

While the indubitable existence of these Pygmy races is a fact which late modern research alone has demonstrated to the satisfaction of the scientific world, stories about the Pygmies have been current in literature from the dawn of history. The recent investigations of scientists in Africa have done much to dignify the oft-ridiculed writings of Herodotus. The Father of History records stories of his day concerning Pygmies who were said to occupy upper Egypt. Homer also makes reference to these little people, and Aristotle embellishes his account with reference to diminutive horses as well as men. Pliny places his Pygmies in a number of localities. Swift, therefore, had abundant classical ground for his Lilliputians, and a truer basis in fact than he imagined. The sober facts of the nineteenth cen-

tury have eclipsed the romances of Homer, Swift, and Defoe alike.

The philosophic speculations raised by the facts brought to light about these Batwa, Akka, Hottentots, Mincopies, and Negritos as they have been variously called, are not the least interesting results of their discovery. Who and what are they? Are they men, or the highest apes? Who and what were their ancestors? What are their ethnic relations to the other races of men? Have they degenerated from larger men, or are the larger men a development of Pygmy forefathers? These questions arise naturally, and plunge the inquirer at once into the depths of the most heated scientific discussions of this generation.

For practical consideration, we may classify these questions into three:—

1. Were the ancestors of the Pygmies larger men? That is, are the Pygmies a degenerate race?

2. Were the ancestors of the Pygmies also the ancestors of the larger men?

3. Are the Pygmies an unchanged race from their creation, or from their appearance as human beings on the globe?

It is to be remarked that so many correlative issues in questions which have been the subject of the fiercest debate are here raised, that only a résumé of the leading arguments in each hypothesis can be given.

The principal points in favor of the hypothesis of degeneracy are these: the clearly established fact of degeneracy as influential in modifying animals; the long ages in which this deteriorating history has certainly had time to act in the case of Pygmies—history records their existence for five thousand years, and the extreme probability points to a much longer period; the fact that the widespread occurrence of the dwarf races over the globe points to migration rather than to separate spontaneous evolution; and, stronger than any other point, the anatomical completeness of the Pygmy's

body shows near kinship to all the races of man. If the dwarfs were undeveloped men, not yet come to the full stature of manhood, this fact would probably appear in some incompleteness in their anatomic structure.

The considerations in favor of the Pygmy as the primeval man from whose ancestors the larger races were developed are the usual arguments for the evolution of man from lower to higher types, and are too well known for extended discussion here. The anatomic completeness of the Pygmy applies as strongly to this hypothesis as to that of degeneracy. It may be remarked that if the ancestors of the Pygmies also fathered the larger races, then there ought to appear among the Pygmies of to-day some cases of progressive development in that direction. As a matter of fact, I did not observe any case of this, nor have I found any recorded. The strongest argument for this hypothesis is, that everywhere the Pygmies have been found they seem to have chosen the outer frontier of the lands occupied by the stronger peoples. This looks as if the latter drove the former toward the extremities of the world from a country in which all were originally together.

The last hypothesis, that the Pygmies present a case of unmodified structure from the beginning, is supported by the usual arguments which are brought against both evolution and degeneracy. It is true that these little people have apparently preserved an unchanged physical entity for five thousand years. But that only carries the question back into the debated ground of the origin of species.

The point at issue is distinct. Did the Pygmies come from a man who was a common ancestor to many races now as far removed from one another as my friend Teku of the Batwa village is from the late President McKinley? We must reserve the discussion of this question for another time. It is too profound and

comprehensive to be fully presented now. The juxtaposition of the Bantu and the Batwa in Africa affords one of the best specific cases for this study which has ever been brought before the scientific and philosophical world.

Of one fact my experience and observation completely convinced me, — that these Pygmies are human beings in every sense of the word. The data corroborating this opinion are physical, psychological, and ethnical.

The Pygmies, without exception, have all the parts, organs, and powers of the human body, without any variation in kind distinguishing them from other men. They lack nothing in this respect, nor are there any cases of atrophied members of the body. Their vocal organs enable them to make all the sounds necessary to speak the languages of the several different tribes which meet and mingle at Ndombe. The linguistic differences between these tribes are such as to justify the word language rather than dialect. The fact of there being no cases of marital alliance between the Pygmies and the other races is due to the attitude of the larger and not of the smaller men. There is a variation of at least one foot among the Pygmies themselves, and it is conceivable that the law of natural selection might develop a larger race from the selected members of the dwarfs. But there are no authenticated cases of this development on record as far as I have been able to discover.

The Pygmies show, in a greater or less degree, all the mental faculties which are characteristic of other men. The love of parents for their children is quite marked. The affectionate playfulness toward their dogs attracted my attention. The institution of marriage is recognized among them, and although polygamy prevails, there is the disapproval of laxity in these matters which one finds among the higher races. I have already referred to sun-worship as their chief religious principle. Murder, theft, and violence are

punished by common consent with varying severity in each case. The necessity of cunning rather than of force as a means of self-defense has affected their standard of truthfulness, but they know the difference between a lie and the truth, and have words to express both ideas. They show the play of the emotions of love, hatred, fear, self-respect, vanity, emulation, and, in fact, to a greater or less rudimentary degree, of all the passions and affections. The possession of rational powers by the Pygmies is beyond dispute. They can form a correct induction from facts, and can deduce conclusions from premises, and act constantly on axioms which are expressed pithily in their language. This reasoning faculty was what especially caught my attention, and caused me to prosecute a psychological study of them; with the result that I was fully convinced that they were men, and if the lowest type, still men.

The Pygmies are essentially gregarious in their habits. This is in sharp contrast with the practice of the highest apes, the gorillas, which go in pairs, each pair exhibiting unrelenting hostility to all others. The Pygmies are not naturally warlike in their attitude toward one another, and the wars in which they have been engaged have been principally in self-defense.

On one occasion the Pygmies showed their common sense in rather a decided way. In my employ were some very turbulent natives of the Zappo-Zap and Batetela tribes, whose headstrong disposition was a source of constant anxiety to me. They were so superior in industry and intelligence to all the other natives available as laborers that I could not conveniently dispense with their services. Their love of meat made them constant visitors to our Pygmy neighbors, and their taste for sharp bargains made the little people decidedly reluctant to deal with them. So one day the Pygmies mixed an emetic herb with the

meat the Zappo-Zaps insisted on buying at too low a figure, and put an end to the nuisance.

Once some black soldiers sent by the Belgian representative of the Congo government to collect taxes from Ndombe came upon the town, and poured into the Batwa village demanding meat. The little people gave them all they had on hand, and promised more on the morrow. When the soldiers came next morning, they were presented with an abundance of venison, which, fortunately for them, they first fed to some dogs as a precaution. The dogs died, and it was asserted by the soldiers that the Pygmies had prepared to poison them all. But for my own earnest intervention, there would have ensued a bloody fray at once. The soldiers contented themselves with feeding the meat to the Pygmies' dogs, and the little people wept sorely because I pronounced this fair play, and told them that they thus escaped lightly from worse punishment.

Although I made many efforts to impress the principles of Christianity upon the Batwa, they were very slow to comprehend or act upon them. They were extremely materialistic in their views of life, and preferred the sodium chloride of commerce to the salt of religion. One of them is now a member of the church in good and regular standing, according to my latest information, and I believe they have souls with light enough in them to see the way to their spiritual improvement and redemption.

In conclusion, it may afford a striking contrast to this description of the dwarfs, if I briefly allude to the principal characteristics of the giant king Ndombe and his family. Ndombe stood six feet six in stature, with broad square shoulders, Herculean limbs, and massive statuesque features of a distinctly Egyptian cast. He was of a bright copper color, with aquiline features, and magnificent brown eyes. He carried himself as erect as a life-guardsmen, and

although he weighed fully two hundred and fifty pounds, there was not a superfluous ounce of flesh on him. The *tout ensemble* of the man was regal, and I have never seen his physical superior.

He had thirty-one wives and over forty children. His family connections were so extensive that they occupied a whole town, and his personal bodyguard was composed entirely of his blood relations. Ndombe's character was kindly and his deportment dignified. As a rule, he treated his subjects with benevolence, and even his slaves were devoted to him. Toward me his attitude was always both friendly and deferential. The complete

confidence which his Pygmy subjects proposed in him was one of the strongest testimonies to his good sense and diplomatic ability.

The accessibility of these Pygmies to the outside world by reason of the recent opening up of the Kasai valley to steam navigation — a steamboat for Kasai river having been built in Richmond, Virginia — ought to lead to a thorough study of these little people. No subject can be of more fascinating interest, whether to the followers of science, or to any others who agree with Pope to the extent of believing that at least *one* "proper study of mankind is man."

*Samuel Phillips Verner.*

---

## A NIGHT'S LODGING.

FATHER WILISTON was a retired clergyman, so distinguished from his son Timothy, whose house stood on the ridge north of the old village of Winthrop, and whose daily path lay between his house and the new growing settlement around the valley station. It occurred at odd times to Father Wiliston that Timothy's path was somewhat undeviating. The clergyman had walked widely since Winthrop was first left behind fifty-five years back, at a time when the town was smaller and cows cropped the Green but never a lawn mower.

After college and seminary had come the frontier, which lay this side of the Great Lakes until Clinton stretched his ribbon of waterway to the sea; then a mission in Wisconsin, intended to modify the restless profanity of lumbermen who broke legs under logs and drank disastrous whiskey. A city and twenty mills were on the spot now, though the same muddy river ran into the same blue lake. Some skidders and saw-tenders of old days were come to live in stone mansions and drive in nickel-plated carriages; some were dead; some

drifting like the refuse on the lake front; some skidding and saw-tending still. Distinction of social position was an idea that Father Wiliston never was able to grasp.

In the memories of that raw city on the lake he had his place among its choicest incongruities; and when his threescore and ten years were full the practical tenderness of his nickel-plated and mansioned parishioners packed him one day into an upholstered sleeping car, drew an astonishing check to his credit, and mailed it for safety to Timothy Wiliston of Winthrop. So Father Wiliston returned to Winthrop, where Timothy, his son, had been sent to take root thirty years before.

One advantage of single-mindedness is that life keeps on presenting us with surprises. Father Wiliston occupied his own Arcadia, and Wisconsin or Winthrop merely sent in to him a succession of persons and events of curious interest. "The parson," — Wisconsin so spoke of him, leaning sociably over its bar, or pausing among scented slabs and sawdust, — "the parson resembles