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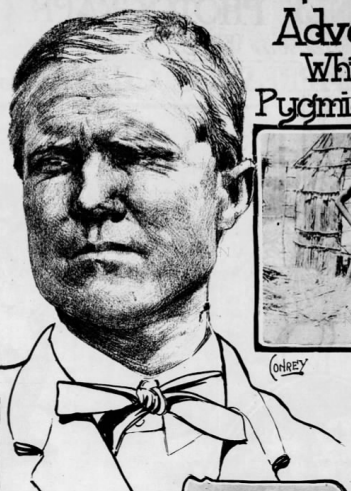
An Untold Chapter of My Adventures While Hunting Pygmies in Africa.



SAMUEL P. VERNER

ONREY

VERNER ARBITRATING A TRIBAL WAR IN AN AFRICAN JUNGLE.

NOTICE THE PYGMY CANNIBAL'S TEETH: EACH FILED DOWN TO SHAPE OF V

Rev. Samuel P. Verner Tells the Story of Difficulties Encountered in Securing for the World's Fair the Most Startling Ethnological Exhibit Ever Seen in Civilization—Arbitrated a Tribal War in one Instance and Bought a Cannibal Prisoner-Slave in Another—The Loneliness of Filed-Teeth Otabenga, Devourer of Human Flesh.

HAVE you seen Otabenga's teeth?

They're worth the 5 cents he charges for showing them to visitors on anthropology hill out at the World's Fair.

Otabenga is a cannibal, the only genuine African cannibal in America today. He's also the only human chattel. He belongs to the Exposition company. Step right up. There's no charge, except to see his teeth. He has the reputation of being a man eater and has on exhibition the identical molars and incisors with which it was done.

His teeth are as sharp as those of any wild animal. They are pointed like the teeth of a saw. They have been filed that way.

Otabenga himself looks playful and harmless enough. He is gentle and graceful, and the first impulse of the visitor is to pet him and exclaim: "Poor little fellow; he looks so sad and lonely."

But look at his teeth!

Perhaps he's lonesome because he is deprived of his native kin. Otabenga is pitiable, however, though he is to be feared and shuddered at.

Can you put yourself in his place for a brief period, say just between meals? Pity the fierce cannibal! He has a sad history. He is here alone in the world, quite alone, nearly nine thousand miles from those who can speak the only dialect he knows or enjoy a repast with him. He is heart sick because he has no one to chatter with. He is from a river bank far distant from the jungles of his fellow pygmies at the Fair, and not one of the latter knows his tongue. He is lonely because he has learned but few words of the other pygmies' language. He picked those up while en route across the Atlantic or since reaching St. Louis.

And, because he is a cannibal the black lilliputians brought with him out of Africa look down upon him. He is not in their set. And Otabenga is bowed with shame because he, too, realizes that man-eating is an old fogy idea. His people are behind the times in darkest Africa.

To determine what part this World's Fair specimen has taken in the actual eating of human flesh seems as hard as the problem of his age, yet certain it is that he is of a man-eating tribe who file their teeth to a point for the purpose of tearing human flesh. Those very people who, within the last ten years, however, making denial that they are cannibals, conscious of the degradation and ashamed of a practice which more advanced savages look down upon. They are becoming ashamed of cannibalism just as civilized people discard and become ashamed of certain old customs of a less repulsive nature.

Poor little Otabenga—most to be pitied, most to be feared! He is a Chirchibi. That's the name of his tribe, a name suggestive of the chattering tongue of his monkey-like people. He is a dwarfy, black specimen of red-eyed humanity, 4 feet 9 inches tall and somewhere between 17 and 25 years old. That's as near as anyone can come at a guess. Nobody knows his age.

When he first reached St. Louis early in July Otabenga was asked his name. He understood what was wanted, but his questioners didn't understand his reply, for thereafter they called him Autobank. To the reporters Autobank appealed as the nearest probable interpretation of the cannibal pygmy's chattering. The name was straightened out only upon the arrival later of Rev. Samuel P. Verner, the Presbyterian missionary who brought the pygmies of darkest Africa to the great World's Fair.

Otabenga's story as told to the Sunday Post-Dispatch by Rev. Verner is truly a pathetic one.

Otabenga was a slave, held captive by another tribe, till Rev. Verner bought him in a Congo slave market at a cost of $5. The price was not paid in cash, but in bright calico and such trinkets as appealed to the taste of his warlike captor, the giant Baschile. The little cannibal had his choice of remaining in captivity a slave or coming out of it in the World's Fair. He gladly accepted the trip across the unknown seas, though it meant that he must go thousands of miles farther and stay long away from his native shimber under the bamboo tree.

Rev. Verner, delegated by the Louisiana Purchase Exposition Co. for the purpose, on account of his previous years of experience down in the equatorial jungles, steamed up the Congo river from Matadi last spring on a pygmy hunt. He knew of the Batwa tribe at Wissmann Falls, near the headwaters of the Kasai, the largest southern tributary to the Congo river, and while traveling the thousand miles or so up those streams with his 15 native porters on board the 35-ton boat Ville d'Anvers, he stopped at the village of the Baschile to inquire about the Chirchibi, which tribe, he knew, lived some 75 miles inland. That distance through the torrid African jungle was to him equal to the distance from St. Louis to New York, and Rev. Verner was overjoyed to learn that there had been a tribal war and that one captive was held as hostage on the river bank. It was Otabenga.

Negotiations for his purchase were opened and a bargain was readily struck. Five dollars in goods was the price, and some of the Baschile who knew his tongue explained the situation to the little slave. He was glad to go with the white man to escape captivity. Rev. Verner took the necessary steps at the nearest government post to have Otabenga officially enlisted, and he now he is in St. Louis as a consequence. The Congo Free State government was assured that all the pygmies would be returned to their homes after the Fair.

The seven other Ethiopians brought out of Africa by Rev. Verner were secured by a single coup several hundred miles up river, but that coup was no more nor less than the arbitration of a tribal war, accomplished by the exercise of the adroitest diplomacy. At Wissmann Falls the cargo of the Ville d'Anvers was discharged in the jungle and Rev. Verner walked 20 miles to the village of Ndombe, where he had formerly been stationed as missionary, only to find King Ndombe at war with his cousin, King Belinge of the village of Belinge, over a woman whom one of Belinge's lieutenants had stolen. These native chieftains are all eager to have the white man come to their country, and by assuring Ndombe that by continual warfare he would get a reputation as a fighter and delay the white invasion, Rev. Verner succeeded in bringing the two chiefs together for a peace conference. Belinge came over under assurance of safe escort into Ndombe's realm, and they smoked and deliberated till Ndombe finally gave up the stolen woman on the ground that she had really eloped, and the war was declared off. The pygmy people, who were parasites on the Ndombe and Belinge tribes, now came out of hiding and Rev. Verner was able to negotiate with them for the first time. It was only by settling the war that he made this possible. The women, however, remained in hiding for fear of being stolen, and only men and boys were secured for the World's Fair. The four Batwa pygmies who readily agreed to come were:

	Height.	Age.
Shasha	4 feet 9 inches	25 to 30
Kashoba	4 feet 6 inches	14 to 16
Lumu	4 feet	18 to 20
Mudwaba	4 feet 8 inches	18 to 20

Ndombe's prime minister and son wanted to come to America, but were dissuaded by their lord and king, and instead there came from that larger tribe Lutuna, nephew of the prime minister, aged 17 years, and Lombango, nephew of Ndombe, aged 15 years. Two other Ethiopians who help to make up the expedition are Kalama, a Balubu tribesman, aged 24 years, and Kondola, a Baketela, who had been in America four years and who returned to Africa to assist Rev. Verner in the undertaking. He is now their interpreter at the Fair. Upon reaching his native haunts in the Congo country he was given a reception that would have made the prodigal son envious and would have dimmed the glory of Jason's return to Thessaly with the golden fleece.

With his party of nine native Africans, representing five tribes, Rev. Verner sailed May 23 for the United States and reached New Orleans June 26. He had traveled 20,000 miles on his mission. Each of his charges is promised pay equal to four times the amount he would have earned in Africa, or about $2 each per month. Added to this is the invaluable experience and education afforded by the trip, but which, of course, means nothing in the calculation of the benighted pygmy.

Therein lies the pathos of the situation. Otabenga thought only to accept deportation as a lesser hardship than remaining in slavery, and the advantages of a trip into civilization are reckoned as naught by the lowly savage. Otabenga came gladly for $2 and will be a very wise little man upon his return. Yet his unhappy, homesick countenance oftimes prompts Rev. Verner to recall a certain Batwa mother who declared that she would not let her son come to America for 100 tusks of ivory. Perhaps Otabenga would give that much to be rid of our civilization.

RICH BED OF RADIUM FOUND IN CONNECTICUT

Scientists Discover Evidence of the New Mineral in Amount Promising an Output Almost Surpassing Belief.

MANY persons are now especially interested in the "Nutmeg State." Somewhere under its rock-ribbed hills and valleys there is, according to the scientists, a bed of radium sufficient in value to pay for national debts of England and America.

The section in which this amazing mineral has made its appearance is comprised that part of the state between Bridgeport, New Haven and New Milford, northward to the Massachusetts line.

It has been further incompletely prospected by Mr. C. P. King, a Boston mineralogist, and may traces of radium and uranium ores have been found.

The radium is thinly distributed, with possibly not three ounces of the pure metal to the ton of earth. But never theless it is sufficient if gathered together and estimated at the present value of radium, $1,000,000 a pound, to make its owner twice as wealthy as a Rockefeller and a Rothschild combined.

It also contains sufficient power to kill an army if the troops were for a short time exposed to its rays.

In April Mr. King made a visit to Connecticut and found traces of uranium. At that time he expressed confidence that a great deposit of the weird mineral existed somewhere around New Milford and New Haven.

Then the professors of the Sheffield Scientific School at New Haven decided to investigate matter up. At New Milford there is a spring 100 feet deep.

Its clear waters bubble up through the stones of the Devonian age beneath which it is thought the vast radium bed is located.

At the request of Prof. J. J. Thomson, who was visiting Yale College at the time, Prof. L. P. Wheeler of the Scientific School procured a quantity of the water of the New Milford spring for the purpose of making a test.

In an absolutely clear and clean vessel the water was boiled until nothing visible remained. Nevertheless, upon the skins of the vessel there was an infinitesimal quantity of matter which Prof. Wheeler proceeded to test for radioactivity.

As ordinary gold leaf electroscope was placed on the table and the empty vessel brought in contact with it. An immediate fluctuation of the electroscope took place and a radio-active discharge was noted.

The accusers were amazed. That the discharge of the delicate machine had been caused by the effect of radium on the deep spring water there could be but little doubt.

After establishing the presence of radio-activity in the spring, Prof. Wheeler turned his attention to the lake and surface waters around New Haven. The first experiment was made with water taken from out of the lake used as a reservoir.

A smart measure of the liquid, fitted with an airtight cover, was placed on the furnace. In a few moments thousands of small bubbles formed on the sides of the vessel and drifted slowly to the top.

When the steam and gas thus generated were brought near the electroscope the electroscope was discharged. Here was shown the presence of a radio-active gas.

The water was then taken out, and after the gas had been expelled, was aerated by dropping and allowed to stand for 36 days before it was again tested. It had entirely lost its power of radio-activity.

This more than anything else would seem to indicate the presence of a great radio-active body far beneath the surface of the earth. It was plain that the gas did not come from a radio-active substance dissolved in the water.

Radium has the appearance of fine table salt, but it makes amends for its common appearance by its very remarkable properties.

It transcends all other discoveries of the past decade in its importance and revolutionary possibilities. After years of experimentation from its surrounding matter, it requires a month to begin to give out light and heat. But when once started it will continue to bombard the universe with infinitesimal particles of matter for millions of years without cessation or diminution.

It gives out greatest heat when subjected to pressure only. It has been proven that typhoid bacilli die in its rays. It has been tried successfully in cases of cancer. Through its use Mr. William J. Hommer caused Little Spatzendel, a blind girl, to see. Oculists, however, say that the restoration of sight was caused merely by the bombardment of infinitesimal particles against the optic nerves.

If kept for a short while near the skin a tube of radium raises a blister and produces a shallow sore. Applied to the nerve centers it produces paralyzing effects sufficient to kill small creatures. All these things it does through glass, for nobody can afford to handle it loose.

If there were plenty of it we might put it in the street lamps and get a mild moonlight everywhere.

It has been calculated, with a show of accuracy, that the sale of office is such that a piece of radium lens she scale from every square inch of its surface in about 20,000 years.

For anything known to the contrary a particle of the queer mineral after acquiring its full power, may continue to manufacture, heat emanations, three kinds of rays, electricity and gases forever.

Forever! Well, perhaps not so long as that, but surely the loss in a thousand years would be next to nothing. If the power of one gramme of radium extending over a period of 1000 years could be converted into work it would raise 50 tons a mile high.

In its industrial application scientists are restricted by the comparatively small supply of radium available, but it is known that a small fraction of an ounce properly employed would probably provide a good light sufficient for several rooms and would not require renewal during the present activity.

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