

YOUNG GORILLA MENTALLY MEASURED

Of all the man-like apes, which have been studied by psychologists, the gorilla probably is the leader intellectually. This is indicated by a series of tests recently completed on a young female gorilla by Dr. Robert M. Yerkes, professor of psychology at Yale University.

Dr. Yerkes has just returned from Jacksonville, Fla., where he spent six weeks testing the animal, which belongs to Benjamin Burbridge. Mr. Burbridge, an experienced hunter, captured the gorilla single-handed in the forests of the Belgian Congo. On his last trip to Africa he caught four, but two died in Africa; one, which was taken to Belgium, has since died, and the other is Congo, the one that was studied by Dr. Yerkes. Probably it is the only example of its species, the mountain gorilla, that has ever been brought to the United States.

The chimpanzee, the most familiar anthropoid ape, has been the subject of many psychological inquiries. The Yale Institute of Psychology has several chimpanzees in its "Primate Laboratory", on which tests are being conducted, but on account of the scarcity of specimens, the gorilla has never before been studied experimentally.

"One's first impression is that the chimpanzee is the more intelligent", said Dr. Yerkes, "but that is probably due to the temperamental differences of the two animals. The chimpanzee is the more emotional and impulsive; the gorilla is the more deliberate, and worked calmly and with better judgment, and I should expect that the gorilla would go further in the long run. I was able to work with Congo for hours at a time, and she stuck to her tasks. A chimpanzee by comparison tires quickly."

The animal weighs about 65 pounds, Dr. Yerkes stated, and is perhaps five years old. Although their average span of life is not certainly known, they probably attain the age of 30 or 40 years. Congo displays great strength, for "when she tugged at me, I felt as if something would break," he said. When tested with a spring balance, she pulled 160 pounds, which, considering relative weight, would be equivalent to a pull of 400 pounds by a man. Despite this, however, the animal is quite gentle, in Dr. Yerkes' opinion, for, he said "she doesn't realize her strength."

The methods used with the gorilla were similar to those employed on the other anthropoids. One consisted in arranging the animal's food so that it was necessary to pull on a rope to obtain it, and then, after this had been learned without aid, the rope was hooked at one end, and it was necessary for the monkey to unhook it before it could retrieve the reward.

Several hundred feet of motion pictures were made of the ape while she was solving problems, and these, in conjunction with many thousand feet which Mr. Burbridge made of the gorillas in their native haunts in Africa, will throw considerable light on gorilla psychology. "You may know much about the psychology of the chimpanzee, but it doesn't help you more than does human psychology to understand the gorilla," said Dr. Yerkes. "What impressed me most is the great array of mental differences between the gorilla and the other great apes."
