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No. 230.

NIGER.

WEST AFRICAN FRONTIER FORCE.

REPORTS FOR 1897-8.

Presented to both Houses of Parliament by Command of Her Majesty
June, 1899.



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1899.

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COLONEL F. D. LUGARD, C.B., D.S.O., to the SECRETARY
OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES.

63, Jermyn Street, S.W.,

13th March, 1899.

SIR,

I HAVE the honour to forward herewith the report which, in accordance with your instructions, I desired Lieutenant-Colonel Pilcher to submit on the work done in raising the 1st Battalion of the West African Frontier Force. A similar report on the raising of the 2nd Battalion will shortly be submitted by Lieutenant-Colonel FitzGerald.

2. Lieutenant-Colonel Pilcher's decision to concentrate the recruits at Lokoja as soon as possible was entirely in accordance with the views I had expressed to him before he left London.

The site chosen by him for the Camp was, in my opinion, the best possible in the immediate vicinity of Lokoja. I do not entirely associate myself in the generalisations on the character of the African expressed in his report.

3. The Lapai Expedition commanded by Lieutenant-Colonel Pilcher took the field at the moment when the crisis with the French was at its acutest stage. The assistance of the Frontier Force was claimed as an equivalent for the Royal Niger Constabulary serving in Borgu, and the representations made by Acting Agent-General Drew were of such a nature as left me no option but to add to the responsibilities of that anxious time by detailing the troops required. I was informed by him that any

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delay in so doing might produce a disaster of the gravest possible nature. The expedition was conducted to a successful issue by Colonel Pilcher, who brought to notice the valuable services done by Major Festing, Captain Wilkinson, and Lieutenant Molesworth.

4. I concur in the value of fatigue work as a part of the training of a native soldier, more especially in view of the saving in expense to the State.

5. The difficulty of recruiting Hausas has prevented the Battalion from reaching more than three-quarters (900) of its establishment (1,200), but the excellence of the training imparted by Colonel Pilcher and his officers is proved by the fact that already in so short a period a thoroughly serviceable force has been created—"fit to go anywhere and do anything."

6. The amount of work which devolved upon Colonel Pilcher and upon Captain Wilkinson, the Adjutant, and Lieutenant Molesworth, the Quartermaster, before the formation of the Transport and Accounts Departments, and of a separate Headquarters, was very great, and these officers worked indefatigably and unceasingly. Subsequently I appointed Captain Goldie-Taubman to the charge of the Station Staff Office at Lokoja, in addition to his regimental duties, and to the ability and untiring energy which he displayed the order and system which rapidly grew up was largely due. After his death he was succeeded in the discharge of these duties by Captain Marsh, concerning whose work I have received the most satisfactory reports from Colonel Willecks and Colonel Pilcher. There was no better and more conscientious officer in the force than Captain Taubman; he never spared himself, and his death was a great grief to myself and to the whole force. I desire to endorse the terms of praise in which Colonel Pilcher has alluded to the work of Captain Blackader, Lieutenant Bryan, and other officers, and to add the expression of my own great regret for the sad and untimely death of so promising an officer as Lieutenant Keating. All ranks have worked loyally and well, in spite of constant sickness and great discomfort and exposure in mere grass houses during tropical rains (until the erection of the huts), and the greatest credit is due to Lieutenant-Colonel Pilcher and the officers and non-commissioned officers under him for the results achieved in the formation and training of the 1st Battalion.

7. As directed by you, I add a few remarks on the organisation of the other corps and departments of the West African Frontier Force, and the general work and results of the first year.

Artillery.—This branch of the service has been organised as a separate unit from the Infantry, under Major W. A. Robinson, R.A. It consists of three batteries; two of these (field batteries) are armed with four 7-pr. M.L. guns each, the present establishment being 1 captain, 2 subalterns, 6 British non-commissioned

officers, and 53 rank and file. The third, under Major Robinson, has six British non-commissioned officers and 49 rank and file, and is equipped with six .75mm. B.L. guns. Major Robinson and his officers showed the utmost zeal and energy in the raising and training of their men, but were much delayed by the initial difficulty of obtaining suitable Hausa recruits and by the non-arrival of the guns till last autumn. I have to record with sorrow the death of Lieutenant Porcher, Sergeant-Majors Francis and Bell, and Corporal Sheeley. Captain Armitage did good work on the expedition under Major Festing to the Anambra Creek. Lieutenant Ker, R.A., did excellent service in the Niger Company's Expedition in the Ibo country (Illah), which was brought to notice by the Officer Commanding the Expedition. The casualties in that affair were heavy, and it was of an arduous nature. Good feeling and contentment under difficulties and hardships—they were among the last to be housed, and were for long disappointed at the non-arrival of guns and recruits—were especially noticeable in the Artillery, and much credit is due to Major Robinson. The services of Battery Sergeant-Major H. Webb, Battery Sergeant-Major J. Heffernan, and Battery Sergeant-Major T. Matthews, have been specially mentioned by Major Robinson.

Engineers.—A small company of Sappers, under Lieutenant R. L. McClintock, R.E., consisting of 5 British non-commissioned officers and 26 local natives—to which, later, were added 20 Madras Sappers and Miners—were placed in charge of the erection of 54 wooden houses, sent out from England during February and March last. About 40 West Coast artisans (carpenters and masons) were attached to this company to assist in the constructions. On February 23rd last 26 of the small three-roomed houses for officers had been completed, one officers' mess, two hospitals, three large officers' houses, 18 non-commissioned officers' houses, and 160 ft. of storehouses. The houses have been well and carefully erected. The delay in the erection has been great, for it has taken a year to put up the houses now erected, but the difficulties to be contended with—more especially in the matter of transport—were very great. Lieutenant McClintock was handicapped by lack of experience in dealing with tropical conditions and labour, but no officer in the force has shown a greater energy and disregard of self, even when physically unfit to do his work. I desire also to mention the good work done by Corporal Greenway.

Telegraph Section.—The work done by Captain E. V. Turner, R.E., has been excellent. Under his superintendence the air-line from Lagos to Jebba has been constructed, and extended to Fort Goldie to the north, and a considerable distance towards Lokoja in the south. The efficiency of the line thus hastily constructed in a country of hurricanes, through continuous forest and cutting—and in spite of tropical rains—is evidenced by the fewness of the periods during which interruption has occurred.

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But, apart from technical skill, Captain Turner has proved himself unusually successful in handling native labourers and coast clerks and operators, and in traversing without friction the territories of the Emir of Illorin and in avoiding the suspicions of his fractious chiefs. He has specially mentioned the good work done by 2nd Corporal Rubery, and Sapper F. J. Lewis. Of this corps I have to record with regret the death of Sergeant J. Collins.

Transport Department.—The work thrown upon this Department has been altogether too heavy. Mr. Dangerfield, the Chief Transport Officer, has worked hard under overwhelming difficulties, but the details which should have been undertaken by a subordinate have occupied his time to the exclusion in some instances of weightier matters. Sergeant Jones has been reported upon in terms of high praise. The Department suffered a great loss in the death of Store-keeper Reynolds, an upright, hard-working, and very efficient man, who formerly accompanied me through Borgu.

Medical Department.—I cannot speak in terms of too great praise of the work and efficiency of the Medical Department, and were I to attempt to name the medical officers who have done first-class work I should be compelled to enumerate the names of almost every one without exception. During the operations in Borgu preceding the Convention with France, the Medical Department (most ably represented by Dr. Rock) tended the sick, and later (subsequent to the Convention), when a large number of posts from Illo to Jebba, and from Jebba to Okuta, Ashigiri, and Kiama, were held by British troops, the Department detached officers and non-commissioned officers to the medical charge of these detachments. This threw very heavy work on the headquarters of the hospitals, but the call was met with ability and unflinching energy. Of the senior officers, Dr. Poole and Dr. Rees not only earned the complete confidence of all, and were unceasing in their attention, but by microscopic research have endeavoured to elucidate the obscure origins of malaria and "blackwater." Of the juniors, none was more insistent in his work and regardless of himself than the late Dr. Rock, whose loss was felt by all as a personal grief,—while Drs. Ensor and Mottram and Tichborne all proved themselves efficient and zealous. The work of the nurses is summarised in a recent telegram to me from Colonel Willcocks, who says: "Dr. Poole recommends four female nurses instead of three, and attributes to them all recent recoveries of blackwater fever." Of non-commissioned officers, the names of Sergeant-Majors F. Wakefield, G. Nosworthy, and G. Hew deserve to be specially mentioned.

Accounts Department.—If I have used terms of strong praise for the Medical Department, I desire to express no lesser approbation for the work done by Messrs. Glossop and Harrison, Chief and Assistant Accountants. Practically without assistance,

they have laboured indefatigably to clear up tangled arrears. In this connection Mr. Harrison perhaps deserves special praise. Mr. Glossop has shown that he possesses two qualities, which I venture to submit mark him out as qualified for larger responsibility. He is jealous of the public expenditure, and shows anxiety on all occasions to check expenditure and to insist on adequate authority, and he has initiative by which he has effected several minor reforms and simplification of procedure without sacrifice of principles.

Headquarters.—During the crisis in Borgu, from the beginning of May to the end of June (which was coincident with the expeditions against Lapai, Anam, &c., and the initial work of local organisation), the Headquarters was deprived of the services of Colonel Willcocks, Staff Officer and Second-in-Command, and of Captain Crutchley, A.D.C., who were in Borgu, and I therefore was left single-handed. To Colonel Willcocks' indefatigable energy and his unrivalled experience and capacity as a soldier is largely due the efficiency of the West African Frontier Force as a fighting force. By constant inspection on parade, exercise in "field days," daily attendance on the musketry range, he stimulated the energy of all, and secured uniformity in practice, training, dress, and routine. He has been ably seconded by the Officers Commanding Battalions (Lieutenant-Colonels Pilcher and FitzGerald), and the C.R.A. (Major Robinson), and by all British officers and non-commissioned officers. To these latter is due the credit of the training of their corps and the smartness and discipline of all ranks. Captain Booth has proved a model Staff Officer, and has more than maintained the reputation he made as Adjutant of the 5th Fusiliers. No better man could be found for the post. Lieutenant Abadie has equally proved himself an exceptionally good officer. Mr. King has done extremely good service as Confidential Clerk, and is ever ready to work, whether well or ill.

8. I have found it difficult to curtail my remarks within the compass I had intended, for, though I have left Lieutenant-Colonels Pilcher and FitzGerald to speak for the officers and non-commissioned officers of their own battalions, my necessary observations on the other corps and departments have unavoidably occupied your time, since the number concerned is large. I conclude with a few remarks on the work done.

(A) *Organisation of Force.*—I have already, in a previous dispatch, called attention to the services of Majors (temporary Lieutenant-Colonels) Willcocks, Pilcher, and FitzGerald, pointing out how successfully the arduous duties performed by these officers had been carried out. The two latter raised and brought to a comparatively high state of efficiency the two new battalions, while, as I have stated, to the former is mainly due the efficiency of the force as a whole, and the success of the operations in Borgu. I submit that the raising of a force so large as this and its ability to take the field in so short a time as a thoroughly

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reliable brigade, with efficient Medical, Transport, and Accounts Departments, with a complete body of standing orders and regulations available for the instant action of each new arrival, is a result which reflects the greatest credit on the three officers whom I have named, and represents an amount of work in an enervating climate which is hardly appreciable in England. That friction with existing local authorities, and the risks of insubordination or mutiny inherent in the enlistment of so large a body of raw natives, have been avoided, that good feeling and "camaraderie" prevail among all ranks, and that the native troops are contented, while houses have been erected, and a coinage introduced—all these bear witness to the tact and patience of the senior officers, and the admirable class of officers, non-commissioned officers, and civilians, to whom their success is so largely due.

(B) *Operations in Borgu.*—I have submitted full despatches to you upon events in Borgu. The situation there was delicate and difficult in the extreme. Colonel Willcocks was in actual command of the Expeditionary Force, and, with the assistance of Major Arnold, D.S.O., Commandant of the Royal Niger Constabulary, and with such first-class officers as Captain Welch, Lieutenant Glossop, Lieutenant Brodie, and others, British rights were upheld, and the extension of French posts into territory held by H.M. Government to be under British protection, which had up to that time been continuous, was checked. From the day that the expedition reached the neighbourhood of Kiama, it is not too much to say that the position as between the British and French was entirely changed. Further advance on the part of the French in the face of the firm attitude of Colonel Willcocks became impossible. Numerous occasions, as you are aware, offered themselves upon which a collision, which would probably have resulted in a conflagration, was only averted by the patience and tact of the officers on the spot. Their attitude, which was one of uncompromising firmness, combined with unfailing courtesy, was fast rendering the French position untenable, when the welcome news of the conclusion of the Convention arrived. The goodwill of the local population was completely won over to the British by kindness and fair dealing, which contrasted considerably with other methods of which they had had experience; so that when the time came to occupy the positions evacuated by the French, the British troops were received everywhere with demonstrations of pleasure. The rapidity with which these posts were occupied, and the fact that no untoward incident whatever occurred either as regards the French or the people of the country, proves the efficiency of the expedition (for forced marches had to be made over long distances in the rains) and the friendly attitude of the people. The most onerous, and in a sense the most difficult, task in connection with these operations was the supply of the troops from a base 60 miles distant, through dense jungle and roadless bush. For this purpose 500 carriers were constantly employed. They were a hastily-collected batch

of men, who gave incessant trouble by desertion, &c, while the difficulty of feeding them, in addition to the troops, in a country producing no supplies was very great. Provisions alike for every whiteman and every blackman, whether soldier or carrier, had to be pushed up from Jebba to Fort Goldie, and thence overland. To Lieutenant Brodie, who commanded at Fort Goldie for the greater part of the time, the greatest credit is due for his success in the organisation of the Transport Corps.

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(c) *Other Operations.*—The West African Frontier Force detached officers to assist the Royal Niger Company's troops in the Argungu Expedition,—the punitive expedition to the Anambra Creek,—and to Illoh, while the Lapai Expedition was almost entirely composed of its officers and men. In each of these affairs our soldiers behaved admirably. Their fire discipline and the accuracy of their volleys were particularly noticeable, as also their steadiness and the complete control which their officers had over them. A very rapid, effective, and well-managed expedition was conducted by Major Morland to punish the murderers of Lieutenant Keating and his party.

(d) Considerable changes in the appearance of the military centres have been effected. All Europeans are now housed in temporary houses raised from the ground; the surrounding ground has been cleared; roads have been made; rocks blasted and cleared away, and the whole sanitary conditions of the camps improved beyond recognition. The telegraph progresses daily towards Lokoja, and is most efficiently served between Jebba and Lagos, while a training school of operators has been established. Detachments at short intervals stud the whole of Borgu, the chief centres being at Illo, Boussa, Fort Goldie, Kiama, Okuta, and Ashigiri. The strict sanitary rules and the conditions of life instituted at headquarters are being gradually approximated to at each of these out-stations. I have alluded to the introduction of a coinage. I cannot here enlarge upon the especial difficulties—and even risks—attendant upon this step of progress, but I am glad to be able to report that Her Majesty's coinage is now, I believe, firmly established in the Niger Sudan, and is daily extending further into the interior and becoming more popular. It is to the great personal interest shown by Company Commanders and Company Officers in the welfare of their men, and their watchfulness in seeing that they suffered no loss by this innovation, that its success is due.

Considerable areas have been roughly surveyed, both in Borgu and the Upper Niger, more especially by Major Lowry-Cole, and in Bautshi and the Upper Benue by Lieutenants Bryan and Clive.

9. I cannot conclude this report without an acknowledgment of the most efficient and invaluable co-operation of the gunboats. Lieutenant Melvill, R.N., at some personal risk, succeeded in taking the "Heron" from Jebba to Fort Goldie, where its

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presence had an undoubted moral effect, while the landing party of bluejackets who proceeded to Kiama were most useful. The naval officers were ever ready to assist, no matter under what difficulties, in the transport of stores and in every way. I have to record my great personal sorrow for the death of Lieutenant Bellairs and Dr. Barter—and I speak the feeling of the whole Force—two out of the complement of four officers. Each was a type of the very best class of his service, and gave his life for his country, as many others of their comrades of the West African Frontier Force have done in Nigeria during this past year, so full of initial difficulties to be overcome.

I have, &c.,

F. D. LUGARD.

REPORT by Lieutenant-Colonel T. D. PILCHER, Northumberland Fusiliers, of the work done during 1897 and 1898, in raising and organising the 1st Battalion West African Frontier Force.

About the middle of September, 1897, when holding the appointment of Deputy Assistant Adjutant-General of the Dublin District, I was asked by the Military Secretary whether I would raise and command a battalion of Hausas and Yorubas in the Hinterland of Lagos. I accepted, and proceeded without delay to the Colonial Office, where, until the time of my departure to West Africa, I was employed with matters concerning the organisation of the force.

Start for
West Africa.

On November 13th the first detachment of the 1st Battalion left Liverpool, under command of the late Captain Goldie-Taubman. This party consisted of six officers and nine non-commissioned officers, and was ordered to proceed direct to Ibádan, in the "hinterland" of Lagos.

Destination
of the
Battalion.

On November the 27th the Battalion Staff and the officers and non-commissioned officers of the remaining four companies of the battalion (which at this time was to consist of only six companies) left Liverpool under my command. This party consisted of 17 officers, 23 non-commissioned officers, and was accompanied by Dr. Ensor and the late Dr. Rock. At the time of leaving Liverpool our destination had not been definitely settled. On arriving at Cape Coast Castle on December 20th I received a telegram from the Secretary of State, in which he told me that,

after consultation with His Excellency Lieutenant-Colonel McCallum, C.M.G., Governor of Lagos, I was to determine how many, if any, extra officers and non-commissioned officers I would send to Ibádan, and that with the rest I was to proceed to Lokoja, on the Niger. His Excellency Lieutenant-Colonel McCallum at the same time telegraphed, strongly advocating my detaching officers and non-commissioned officers for at least two more companies to Ibádan.

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Since the month of June the Governor of Lagos had been enlisting Yorubas at Ibádan, which is in the centre of the Yoruba country.

On December 22nd I had an interview with Lieutenant-Colonel McCallum in Lagos Roads. He commented on the undesirability of moving the men enlisted at Ibádan to the Niger. At the same time, His Excellency strongly advised me to send more officers and non-commissioned officers to Ibádan. Under these circumstances, being unable to satisfy myself on the matter, I had no alternative but for the present to leave at Ibádan the recruits enlisted there. I knew, however, that the ultimate destination of the battalion I commanded was to be the valley of the Niger, and, having only the previous day received a telegram telling me that over 200 recruits were waiting for me at Lokoja and that more were coming in, I determined to proceed there at once, with the whole of the Europeans on board, detaching only Dr. Ensor to go to Ibádan in medical charge of Captain Taubman's party. During the interview His Excellency promised to send me to Lokoja 150 Hausa recruits, who had been enlisted as supernumeraries to the establishment of the Lagos Constabulary. I informed His Excellency that on the first opportunity I should come from Lokoja to Ibádan, and should avail myself of the powers vested in me of deciding as to the advisability of moving the recruits he had enlisted there.

I had under my command officers with whom I had never previously served, and belonging to different regiments, and as I was most anxious to inaugurate one system throughout the battalion, I wished to bring the whole of it together to Headquarters. I told His Excellency that I would cable home for officers of one company of the 2nd Battalion to be sent forthwith to Ibádan, that they might take over from Captain Taubman the recruits remaining after the ranks of the Yoruba Companies of my battalion had been filled.

On December 23rd, the steamship "Volta" arrived at Forcados, at the mouth of the Niger.

On December 24th we embarked on two of the Royal Niger Company's river steamers, which were awaiting our arrival at Forcados, and reached Lokoja on December 29th, where we were most hospitably received by the Agent-General, and by Major Arnold, D.S.O., Commandant of the Royal Niger Constabulary, Arrival
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who had with the greatest forethought made every provision in his power for the wants of the officers and non-commissioned officers.

During the next two days our time was principally spent in looking for a good camping ground in the neighbourhood of Lokoja. We were for the time being in tents on the Royal Niger Constabulary's parade ground.

On December 31st, after mature deliberation and consultation with Mr. Wallace, C.M.G., Agent-General of the Royal Niger Company, and with Major Arnold and Mr. Watts, I telegraphed home for permission to move my battalion to Jebba from Lokoja, my reasons being that it was reported to me to be healthier for men and for horses, was a better base in the possible contingency of operations taking place in Borgu, and was on the main caravan route from Lagos to the central Soudan.

Recruits received from Royal Niger Constabulary.

System of decentralization...

On January 1st 350 recruits, Hausas, Nupes, and Yorubas, part of whom had already received some slight instruction in drill, were handed over to me by Major Arnold, and the work of drilling them commenced in earnest. The number of officers and non-commissioned officers at my disposal enabled me to divide these men into small sections, and with the amount of individual attention which could be thus given to them, they progressed rapidly. The principle I at first adopted, and have since rigidly adhered to, was to decentralize as much as possible. Separate companies were formed of Hausas, Yorubas, and Nupes, who all speak different languages. On being enlisted a man was posted by my order to a certain company; from that day I held the Captain entirely responsible for him. I told Captains of Companies what I required, and left them to achieve the results I demanded in their own way, forbidding the Adjutant to interfere with any Captain except by my express orders. This method gave birth to a spirit of friendly rivalry amongst companies, and officers, knowing that they would be judged by results and had a free hand, worked with a zeal which never flagged, and I doubt if any other system would have gained the results achieved by this.

Courtesy of Royal Niger Constabulary.

In thinking of this period I cannot sufficiently express the gratitude I feel for the manner in which Major Arnold assisted me, by the loan of native non-commissioned officers and in many other ways.

Work during January.

On January the 6th a punitive expedition, composed of some 300 men of the Royal Niger Constabulary, under Major Festing, started for Asaba. I gave Captain Lewis permission to accompany this expedition as a volunteer, for, his company not yet having been formed, I had no need of another Captain's services at Lokoja, though I could utilize all my subalterns by attaching three or four to each company, and thus hastening the progress of the drill.

During the first three weeks of our residence in the country we suffered considerably from malaria, nearly half the Europeans of the force on one occasion being down together. I took every step to have the country in the neighbourhood of Lokoja carefully reconnoitred in order to find the best possible site for a camp. My task was rendered much more difficult owing to the fact that the grass was still high, and in most places not dry enough to burn.

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The surface of the country in this part of West Africa, The country presents at different times of year very different aspects. In December the whole country is covered with grass, varying from four feet to ten feet in height, the "one man paths" which intersect the country being the only means of passing through it. By February most of the grass has been burnt, and the view is only intercepted by small trees, which are dotted over the whole country, generally with an interval of a few yards between each. The exceptions to this rule are that the ground for a few miles round a Foulah stronghold has generally been cleared in order to suit their tactics, and that in the neighbourhood of watercourses, and in marshy ground, there are often belts of forest varying in width, and consisting of magnificent trees, with an almost impenetrable undergrowth. From 50 miles below Lokoja to the coast forest of this description abounds. There are all round Lokoja and Jebba many ranges of table mountains about 1,000 to 1,200 feet in height.

When I cabled to England on December 31st, asking permission to move to Jebba, I worded my cablegram so as to say that if I did not receive orders to the contrary I should proceed there. On January 18th the steam wheeler "Liberty" arrived at Lokoja, bringing 98 Hausa recruits from Lagos, under command of Lieutenant Leet, but no answer to my cablegram of December 31st. Therefore, after consultation with officials of the Royal Niger Company, who told me that 18 days was ample time to allow for an answer to reach me, I decided to move to Jebba, for I was most anxious to commence building the best houses available, before the rainy season commenced. I made arrangements with the Royal Niger Company to procure me builders and send them to Jebba, and was assured that if building were at once commenced, mud houses with thatched roofs for all Europeans would be complete in three months. The difficulty in building these houses is that not more than a foot of wall can be built every two or three days, in order to allow it to dry before being added to.

I started for Jebba in the "Liberty," with 4 officers, Dr. Rock, and 220 men. On the 24th we arrived at Jebba, and on that and the following day selected and laid out what I considered a good camp on the right bank of the River Niger. On January 26th, after giving Captain Blackader, whom I left in command, instructions as to clearing the bush, making paths, &c., I re-embarked for Lokoja.

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On the way down river I only saw one possible camping ground between Jebba and Lokoja, viz., at Piafatu, near Shonga, which is a large town, and through which a caravan route passes across the Niger.

On reaching Lokoja on January 28th I received a cablegram from the Secretary of State ordering me not to proceed to Jebba, and on the first opportunity I instructed Captain Blackader to return.

Despatch of
Major Reade
to Ibádan.

Seeing that it would for some time to come be impossible for me to leave Lokoja, and go to Ibádan, much as I should have liked to do so, I ordered Major Reade, my second in command, who was at this time near Illórin, buying ponies, to proceed there, giving to him the full powers vested in me with regard to the movement of the Yoruba recruits enlisted there, and informing His Excellency the Governor of Lagos that I had done so.

Clearing a
camp at
Lokoja, &c.

The day after reaching Lokoja I decided to occupy a camp to the south of the town, and about a mile from it down the Niger, it being, in my opinion, by far the best position in the vicinity, and the work of clearing at once commenced. For those who do not know African bush, it is hard to comprehend the difficulties which clearing presents. Our tools were few, and we had principally to rely on the matchets (knives with a handle and blade, 14 ins. by 3 ins.) issued to the men, and "trade" gunpowder, lit with impromptu trains, which made agility a necessary qualification of the engineer. With these means, and working eight hours a day, partly in the fierce sun, and always under Europeans, the men succeeded in removing rock and roots, cutting down small trees, clearing stones, levelling, and making drains in anticipation of the rains. After three weeks of this work, we had prepared a parade ground so large that I was able to say that no more clearing was to stand in the way of morning and afternoon parades, and all else must give way to drill.

It must be borne in mind that at this time it was considered possible that the men I was commanding might soon be required for service, and it was on this account that I was so eager to push on their training.

At this time and until the month of May, when some mud houses privately built by officers had been completed, officers and non-commissioned officers were living in small tents, or in houses constructed of grass and mats, neither of which were proof against the tornados and the heavy rains which accompanied them.

The question of water proved a great difficulty; this had all to be conveyed from the Niger, and boiled and filtered before it was wholesome and sufficiently clear to be drinkable. Before long the strain wore out the filters and rough-sieves with sand had to be devised.

In order not to interfere with the drill, and at the same time to construct a range, I hired outside labour for this purpose, and for carrying water.

On February 17th Captain Blackader returned from Jebba, whence he had come in canoes, having been much assisted by the kindness of Lieutenant Melvill and the late Lieutenant Bellairs, the officers commanding Her Majesty's gunboats "Heron" and "Jackdaw."

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Return from
Jebba.

Captain Blackader reported that when he had received orders to return he had already done much towards clearing the site of the proposed camp at Jebba. He also reported that two days before leaving a fight had taken place between his recruits and the detachment of the Royal Niger Constabulary stationed at Jebba, under command of Lieutenant Carroll, that the constabulary had behaved excellently, and that order had within five minutes been restored by the Europeans, who were quickly on the spot.

By the 12th February my force at Lokoja had swelled to 450 men.

On February 21st arms were issued to companies for drill purposes. At night the arms were returned, and put in tents in the vicinity of the European lines, with a guard over them. Later, rough houses were built under company arrangements for the storing of arms, but the principle of returning arms at night was always adhered to, as in the Royal Niger Constabulary. It was found that men progressed much more rapidly when arms had been issued to them, and when they first received them their faces beamed with joy and pride. They are big children, and should be treated as such. They require to be treated with kindness, but sometimes with severity.

Issue of
arms.

Nature of
the men.

They fortunately neither understand nor take any interest in the technicalities of law, which the educated native is so fond of, but are ready to accept and abide by a decision, even if adverse, as long as they have confidence in the judge, and everybody has been allowed "to have his say." A great matter for regret is that a European is so much in the hands of his interpreter. In hearing one case five languages are often spoken.

I and many officers under my command thought that our former Indian experience would be of use to us in West Africa; of this we were, however, soon disillusioned.

Indian ex-
perience of
little use in
West Africa

About the beginning of March, a case which seemed to be one of grave insubordination arose. A certain native lance-corporal, a man of influence, being the son of a chief, stepped forward and exhorted the men of his company not to touch some loads they had been ordered to carry, and they refused to execute the order. The men were marched back under an escort, and compelled to do as they were ordered, the lance-corporal severely punished and the men not allowed to drill with their rifles for a week.

Insubor-
dination.

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This at the time exposed them to so much ridicule that they would rather, I believe, have passed the week in prison. I mention this incident to show the nature of the men who have to be dealt with. At this time they, of course, had only some two months' service.

French in
Argungu.

On February 16th I sent a cablegram to the Under-Secretary of State, saying that a reliable report had reached me that a party of French soldiers, under European officers, had crossed the Niger into Argungu. The contents of this cablegram were afterwards confirmed.

Arrival of
hutting
material.

On March 1st Captain R. L. McClintock, R.E., arrived at Lokoja, bringing with him a large amount of material for constructing huts. He had orders to collect all the material near the camp, and to sort out the component parts of each hut, but not to commence erecting any until Colonel Lugard, who was expected to follow immediately, should personally select the sites for the same.

Until their actual arrival I had no idea that the sending out of such huts had been contemplated. The mud houses now approaching completion were, however, of great use, for they were occupied until sufficient huts to shelter the whole of the Europeans were erected, viz., about July 1st, and were then utilised as store houses and Government offices.

On March 4th three non-commissioned officers were invalided to England, the result of malarial fever.

Expedition
to Argungu.

On March 14th I gave permission to Lieutenants Dibley, Rigby and Taylor to accompany an expedition then starting for Argungu, under Major Arnold, Commandant of the Royal Niger Constabulary.

Rifle ranges.

The camp and its vicinity were daily being improved, and by April a musketry range had been completed, butts erected, and targets on trollies constructed with the rough tools we had. By this time a wharf had also been made on the banks of the Niger, below the camp.

Increased
establish-
ment.

During the month of March half the officers and non-commissioned officers who were to compose the 2nd battalion, and the officers and non-commissioned officers required to bring the battalion, under my command up to eight companies of 150 natives each, which I now heard was to be its establishment, arrived at Lokoja. The Head-quarters of the 2nd Battalion had proceeded to Ibádan, viâ Lagos.

On March 28th our first death occurred, viz., that of Corporal Steuart, who died of malarial fever.

Arrival of
Yorubas
from Ibádan.

On reaching Ibádan, to which place, as I previously stated, I sent him, Major Reade, after consultation with His Excellency the Governor of Lagos, decided to move the recruits enlisted there, who were intended for the battalion under my command,

and on April 3rd and April 4th this party, consisting of six officers, one doctor, eight European non-commissioned officers, and 485 men, arrived at Lokoja by river. N
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Before leaving Ibádan, Major Reade handed over the remaining recruits to Lieutenant-Colonel FitzGerald, commanding the 2nd Battalion.

I take this opportunity of stating that the course Major Reade pursued throughout the time he was acting for me in Lagos territory has my entire approval, and I am of opinion that he acted with tact, judgment, and discretion.

The Yorubas from Ibádan were a fine body of men, and the knowledge of their duties which they had already acquired was most creditable to Captain Goldie-Taubman and those who had been in command of them, and also to Captain F. de V. P. Creighton, who had charge of them in the first instance.

On April 10th Colonel Lugard, C.B., D.S.O., accompanied by Lieutenant-Colonel Willcocks, D.S.O., arrived at Lokoja, from Forcados, and on the following day inspected the battalion. Arri
Colon
Luga

On April 13th Colonel Lugard and Lieutenant-Colonel Willcocks left for Jebba, and soon afterwards, as opportunity occurred, all officers and non-commissioned officers of the 2nd Battalion were gradually sent up there by river.

During the month of April disturbances on more than one occasion took place between the Hausas and the newly-imported Yorubas. The former were generally the aggressors; they are naturally quarrelsome, and, looking on soldiering under the white man as their monopoly, objected to men whom they regarded as intruders, both in their profession and in their adopted country. These disturbances were all quelled without any serious consequences, and all hostile feeling soon disappeared. Ill-fe
betw
Haus
Yoru

If properly used, the racial feeling in a battalion composed of different races is a powerful weapon in the hands of a commander, but it is one that must be used with great caution.

About the beginning of May I was ordered by Colonel Lugard, who had come from Jebba for a short stay, to send 100 men to the Niger Coast Protectorate, in accordance with orders to that effect received from the Secretary of State, and in consequence 100 Yorubas were sent. It was naturally a great disappointment to have to transfer these men, with whose training so much trouble had been taken. Draft
Niger
Prote
torate

On May 3rd Major Reade, Capt. Lewis, and Lieuts. Clive and Johnson, with 100 men from the battalion under my command who had already been put through a short course of musketry, left Asaba to assist in a punitive expedition, under command of Major Festing, Royal Niger Constabulary, which had been ordered to punish the tribes in the neighbourhood of Anam, about 100 miles below Lokoja, and on the Niger. From Anam
exped

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Musketry
course.
- the report subsequently received from Major Festing, I consider that the behaviour of these recruits reflects great credit on their company officers, Capt. Lewis and Lieut. Johnson.
- During the months of April and May, rapid progress was made with the musketry and drill of the battalion. The course of musketry I instituted was an adaptation of the German course, the guiding principle of which is that the bad shot requires much more practice than the good shot, and gets it, firing many more rounds, and not being allowed to go on to another distance until he has qualified at the previous one. Company commanders who put their companies through this course are unanimously in favour of its advantages. This course was continued until July, when another for the whole force was drawn up by the Commandant.
- On May 11th Colonel Lugard left Lokoja, and did not return until he passed through on his way home, towards the end of August.
- Fall of the**
Niger.
- The Niger by this time had dropped to such an extent that up to July only one steamboat on the river could travel between Jebba and Lokoja, and this one, a small launch, and canoes which took from three to five weeks to do the double journey, were the only means of communication between these places.
- Reinforce-**
ments for
Jebba.
- On May 16th, in accordance with orders received, I despatched the whole of the Royal Artillery then present at Lokoja, and also 120 Yorubas, under command of Captain Gillespie, of the battalion under my command, by canoe to Jebba. Captain Gillespie, on arrival at Jebba, was pushed further north, to garrison certain points on the river north of Jebba.
- Tornados.**
- The tornado season commenced in March, and from this time tornados gradually became more frequent, until in August they gave way to the heavy rains. These rains were, however, by no means incessant, a storm seldom lasting more than six hours, though while it lasted it was often very violent.
- A tornado consists of a violent wind, followed by heavy rain. The effect is local, and the tornado occasionally within a few hours returns from the other direction.
- These tornados were, until we were properly housed, a source of great discomfort. Papers and light articles had to be covered up, and the inmates of the tents and grass houses, which in many cases were not impervious to the tropical rain, were often compelled to pass the night cowering in some corner, covered with a waterproof, in order to keep a little dry.
- Deaths.**
- During March and April four deaths occurred at Lokoja, all being attributable to malaria.
- Lapai**
expedition.
- Before leaving Lokoja on May 11th, Colonel Lugard told me that on the Agent-General of the Royal Niger Company desiring me to do so, I was to furnish 200 men, with a certain proportion

of Europeans, and was myself to take command of an expedition which might be required to take the field against the Emirs of Lapai and Argayeh.

On June 2nd Mr. Drew, the Acting Agent-General (Mr. Wallace, C.M.G., the Agent-General being seriously ill and absent from Lokoja), informed me that since Mr. Wallace had seen Colonel Lugard the aspect had become much more serious, that the Emirs of Lapai and Argayeh had been slave raiding, and razing towns down to the very banks of the Niger, and that unless immediate action were taken, a blow would be dealt to British prestige, the consequences of which would be far-reaching and disastrous. He further informed me that reports led him to believe that considerable resistance would be offered, and that in his opinion the force for which Mr. Wallace originally asked Colonel Lugard would not be sufficient to cope with the opposition which might be encountered.

On these representations, and taking into consideration that any reverse would bring upon us the whole forces of Bida, whose adherents were unofficially aiding Lapai and Argayeh, I determined to increase the force to be sent from my battalion to a total of 300 men in the ranks, as well as three Maxim guns and their detachments. In addition to this the Royal Niger Constabulary placed at my disposal 60 infantry, with one Maxim, and 40 gunners, with one 9-pounder Whitworth gun and three 7-pounder mountain guns, the whole under command of Lieutenant Carroll.

Concerning the work of the expedition, a special despatch has been sent to the Secretary of State, and it will suffice here to say that, by a forced march, the enemy, consisting of some 600 horsemen and 3,000 footmen, were completely taken by surprise, and routed with considerable loss. Their camps and strongholds were destroyed, and their power completely broken, with practically no loss on our side, except from sickness.

The behaviour of my recruits was good, their volleys being perfect, and their conduct soldierlike.

On July 1st the expedition returned to Lokoja.

We now reached the sickliest time of the year: nine deaths among the officers and the European non-commissioned officers, whose total strength only averaged about 55, taking place at Lokoja, and on the expedition, during the six weeks which included July and embraced the end of June and commencement of August. Sickness.

During July there was great mortality among the horses, but with this subject I intend to deal in a separate paragraph.

Between the months of July and December great progress was made with the drill and musketry of the battalion, and the camp and its vicinity were greatly improved. More ground was cleared, Bahama grass was planted, an extended parade ground and a Work from July to December, 1898.

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fair polo ground made, the range was completed as a six-section range, and firing points constructed at 500 and 600 yards. The neighbourhood of the hospital, which had been built on the space adjacent to the one on which the camp was erected, was cleared, wells were dug, and various other improvements made. The above was all done by soldier labour.

There is at present, and for long will be, much useful labour for the men of the battalion to perform, but if there were not, I should advocate work being made for them. If never called upon to perform manual labour, the West African soldier is apt "to get above himself," and if allowed to do this he soon becomes useless.

A strict rule should, however, be made that, when performing fatigues, men should always work under the direct command of their officers, or non-commissioned officers, white or black, who must invariably treat them as soldiers.

The work above mentioned was all performed without interfering with the drill or training of the men.

Inspections.

On August 11th Lieutenant-Colonel Willcocks arrived from Jebba, and remained in Lokoja until August 16th, when he was unexpectedly recalled to Jebba. During his stay at Lokoja he thoroughly inspected the battalion, and also the whole system on which the business of the Station Staff Office, the Orderly Room, the Transport Department, &c., was transacted.

On August the 29th Colonel Lugard arrived at Lokoja on his way to England, and on the following day saw the battalion on parade, and expressed his very great appreciation of the soldierly appearance of the men and of their drill and smartness on parade.

Deaths of
Lieutenant
Keating's
party.

On October 18th news reached me of the deaths of Lieutenant Keating, Corporal Gale, and fourteen native non-commissioned officers and men, at Helo Island, about 30 miles above Boussa. Lieutenant Keating, with 30 men, was sent up in July to reinforce the company under Captain Gillespie, which left Lokoja for Jebba in May. The detachment of which Lieutenant Keating was in command was stationed at Rafia, on the Niger.

The Chief of Helo Island having behaved in a manner which rendered it necessary that he should be arrested, Lieutenant Keating, with the above-mentioned party, proceeded to Helo Island to perform this duty, expecting no resistance. The party proceeded to the town, when it was suddenly fallen upon by overwhelming numbers. With difficulty a way was fought back to the beach. Here ammunition ran out. Lieutenant Keating killed the Chief with his own hand, but the party was overpowered, and, on attempting to get into their canoes, all except two were killed or drowned. These two escaped wounded to tell the tale.

The only consoling feature in this sad affair is that all died fighting, and that the men (Nupes), from all accounts which can be gathered, fought with determination and courage, until they fell at the side of their leaders.

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On October 5th two companies, consisting of 222 men, were dispatched with 50 ponies to Jebba.

During the months of October and November events in other parts of the world made it appear possible that troops might be required in Borgu, and during these months I was prepared at six hours' notice to send off another 400 fully trained and equipped men, ready in every sense to take part in a campaign.

Readiness
for active
service.

On December 21st I left Lokoja *en route* for England, accompanied by those officers and non-commissioned officers who had completed the year in West Africa, for which they agreed to serve, and who did not wish to prolong their tour of service.

When I left Lokoja the battalion which I handed over temporarily to Captain Crutchley was 907 strong, this number being made up of 430 Yorubas, 400 Hausas, and 77 Nupes. The majority of the Nupes can now speak a certain amount of Hausa.

State of
battalion in
December,
1898.

Of these 907 men, 700 were trained to such an extent that I should be proud to command them anywhere, either on service or on a field day at Aldershot, where I am convinced they would drill as well as half the battalions out. The native non-commissioned officers were thoroughly capable of taking command of their sections, and of drilling them or the company.

The musketry was very fair and the fire discipline good. On several occasions companies firing volleys at ranges of 500 and 600 yards, at a target 5 ft. by 12 ft., have got over 50 per cent. of hits on the target.

During the first four months we were in Africa I held neither a commanding officer's nor an adjutant's parade, leaving everything to the company commanders, Captains Goldie-Taubman, Marsh, Blackader, Webb, Hall, Lewis, and Gillespie; and it is entirely to their capacity and energy, and to the increased interest generated by the fact that they found themselves left alone to think and act for themselves, and to the spirit of rivalry which this system of decentralization gave birth to, that I attribute the results obtained.

In December, at the request of the Agent-General of the Royal Niger Company, and with the permission of the Commandant, I sent Captain Marsh's company to assist the Royal Niger Constabulary in an expedition then taking place in the vicinity of Illah, which is situated on the Niger about 100 miles below Lokoja.

Expedition
to Illah.

The Commandment of the Royal Niger Constabulary, at the termination of this expedition, spoke to me enthusiastically of the discipline and drill, as well as of the fire discipline, of this company.

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Delay in
filling
vacancies.

During the last two or three months of my tour in West Africa work was impeded by the fact that vacancies caused by death and invaliding were not filled as they occurred, and after the officers whose year expired in December left West Africa, out of an establishment of 28 officers, only 13 remained in the country, and only 19 non-commissioned officers out of an establishment of 44. This staff would in no way be adequate to satisfactorily carry on necessary duties in a healthy country, but in West Africa a considerable portion of the Europeans are always on the sick list.

The native soldier becomes attached to an officer or non-commissioned officer whom he knows, but when handed over to a man whom they have never seen before, a company for some time is like a dog which has lost its master. Knowing the feeling of the men in this matter, I was especially anxious to dovetail officers who were coming out with those who were going home, so that they might for a few weeks at least work together in the same companies, and that the fresh arrivals might, if possible, take over some of the results of the old hand's experience, at the same time as they took over the arms and accounts.

The non-arrival of reliefs defeated my efforts, and was a bitter disappointment to me, as well as to the officers who had trained, and for one year lived for, their companies.

Only 60 per cent. of those who started from England in 1897 completed their year in the country, for 18 per cent. died and 22 per cent. were invalided.

Situation
of the
Imperial
camp at
Lokoja.

The camp at Lokoja is situated on the advanced slopes of a spur, which juts out from the mountain in rear of the camp, and runs down to the Niger. The hospital is on a similar spur. These spurs are drained by watercourses between and on either side of them. The site of the camp looks a particularly healthy one, and undoubtedly is the best in the vicinity of Lokoja, the view in front of the camp both up and down the Niger, and up the Benue, is magnificent and those to the rear and flanks are almost as beautiful.

It is difficult to conceive why a situation with so many apparent advantages is as unhealthy as is actually the case. The country round and to the north of Lokoja is covered with high grass, and with trees of the size and at the distance apart that trees usually are in an English orchard. In the neighbourhood of watercourses, in marshy ground, and generally in the country drained by the Lower Niger, the vegetation becomes dense, and the soil is covered with big trees, and impenetrable undergrowth, which absolutely binds travellers to the paths through the entangled bush.

Horses.

Not only is the valley of the Niger unhealthy for mankind, but also for horses and cattle. The African disease resulting from the bite of the tsetse fly and the Indian disease of Surra, which have similar symptoms, and give birth to a similar microbe

in the blood, are, I fully believe, both present, or, to be more accurate, I am convinced that the symptoms which prove fatal are on the Niger the result in some cases of eating rank grass, as in Surra, and in others of the bite of the tsetse fly, which carries the germs of this disease from impregnated to healthy animals. Of the 160 horses bought at Lokoja during the year I was there, not more than 60 were living when I left. I feel certain that the presence of a good veterinary surgeon would have done much to prevent this high death rate.

Horses are not bred in the immediate neighbourhood of Lokoja, and those we obtained came either from the neighbourhood of Illerin or from the country round Ibi, on the Benue. The soil in all parts of West Africa which I have traversed is extremely stony, and I am more convinced now than when I wrote for horseshoes, of the great advantage which would arise of shoeing horses on their fore feet. I would not recommend their being shod behind, as the concussion on the hind feet is less, and unshod horses get a better foothold on the rocks, which have often to be climbed.

The question of the uniform of the force is one into which I do not here intend to enter, except to say that, whatever the material or pattern, I consider kharki colour preferable to blue.

The Martini-Enfield carbines used are excellent, and well adapted, in my opinion, to the requirements of the force. The fact that they are of small bore and fire cordite, thus requiring great and constant care in cleaning, in the damp climate of West Africa, is not an unmitigated disadvantage, for as long as these rifles remain in our hands the requisite care will presumably always be bestowed on them. If, on the other hand, any should be stolen with a view to being used against us, it is equally certain that a want of proper attention will speedily render them almost useless.

Before concluding, I think that a few remarks on the chief characteristics of the natives with whom I had to deal would not be out of place.

Rudyard Kipling's words "half child, half devil," applied by him to the Filipinos, apply equally to the soldiers I commanded, for they are a strange mixture of both. They seem to have absolute confidence in a white man whom they like, but they take strong likes and dislikes. They love to be taken, as it were, a little into their captain's confidence, and if this be done, and they are given a reason for a supposed hardship, they will readily bear it. They, however, very naturally like to hear facts from the white man's own lips, for they possess sufficient discernment to have but little confidence in the probity, or disinterested reasons, of their own native non-commissioned officers, who can drill them and exercise discipline, but who, if they have opportunity to do so, seldom fail to presume on their position, and to exercise extortion from those under them. Unfortunately the chance of

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detection of malpractices is much decreased by the fact that the non-commissioned officer, being the better educated man, is often the interpreter through whose medium the case against himself is in the first instance heard.

For native non-commissioned officers or soldiers travelling unaccompanied by Europeans to extort blackmail is, in their eyes, a matter of course, in spite of the white man's orders and ideas as to the rights of property, which are mere foolish prejudices in the native's eyes.

The manner in which we regard slavery, moreover, tends to complicate the question in the minds of men who fail to see a difference between slaves and other property.

To sum up, the men I commanded are naturally brave, vigorous, fairly intelligent, excellent marchers, hardy, and of good physique, but they are inclined to be cruel, do not tell the truth, and are dishonest. Neither they nor any other natives of West Africa whom I have met are, in my opinion, fit for positions of trust, where constant supervision is not exercised. They require tactful, but very firm treatment.

Hausas.

The Hausas are more quarrelsome than the Yorubas or Nupes, get into trouble more often, and are not so quick at picking up drill or musketry. They are more excitable and harder to keep in hand, but they are a race whose courage has been tried, and is highly spoken of by officers better able than I am to give an opinion on this point.

Yorubas.

I make a great difference between the agricultural Yoruba from the neighbourhood of Ibádan and the men enlisted on the outskirts of the Yoruba county, or so-called "Bush Yorubas."

The former are physically, morally, and intellectually the better men. They are quick, intelligent, good shots, clean and neat in their appearance, and on fatigue duty are much better men than the Hausas or Nupes. Those who have seen them highly tried on service speak well of them, though opportunity has seldom occurred for putting their courage to the same test as has been done in the case of the Hausas.

Nupes.

The Nupes are physically the finest men of all; they are very intelligent and shoot well. On the one occasion on which their courage has been tried under European leadership they are reported to have behaved well.

The Yorubas of Ibádan are said to be a race never conquered by another tribe, and for many years they waged a war with the Foulah Chief of Illórin, in which neither party was victorious. I have often doubted whether there really is any great difference in the fighting qualities of the different tribes who inhabit the countries near the middle Niger and the Benue, or whether the prestige which at a certain period a certain people hold is not owing to the accident of that people recently having had a leader

capable of organizing his forces, and thus leading his tribe to certain victory. After the death of such a man the tribe lives on its reputation, until another leader rises and turns the tide.

During the month of March Lieutenant Bryan was sent on a recruiting tour up the Benue, and was afterwards followed by Lieutenant Clive. These officers traversed and mapped much previously unexplored country in the neighbourhood of Bautshi, north of the Benue; they also succeeded in sending to Lokoja a considerable number of Hausa recruits and some horses. Lieutenant Bryan has submitted a most clear and interesting report on the country through which he and Lieutenant Clive passed, as well as the sketches above referred to.

Before concluding this report, which has already reached a greater length than I intended it to assume, I wish to bring to notice the excellent work done by the officers and non-commissioned officers I had the honour of commanding. I never wish to have a more capable, conscientious, and hard-working body of men under me.

My special thanks are due to my Adjutant, Captain P. S. Wilkinson, Northumberland Fusiliers; to Captain Blackader, Leicestershire Regiment; Captain Marsh, Royal West Kent Regiment; Captain M. Hall, P.W.O. West Yorkshire Regiment; Lieutenant Tomlin, P.W.O. Yorkshire Regiment; and Lieutenant A. B. Molesworth, West India Regiment; to Sergeant-Major A. F. West, Rifle Brigade; Colour-Sergeant J. R. McIntosh, 2nd Battalion Seaforth Highlanders; Colour-Sergeant J. McKenzie, Depot, Seaforth Highlanders; Colour-Sergeant W. Tyson, Royal Lancaster Regiment; Colour-Sergeant J. Humphries, West Riding Regiment; and Colour-Sergeant E. H. Dinham, Gloucestershire Regiment; also to Lieutenants Bryan, Lincolnshire Regiment, and A. F. Clive, Grenadier Guards, who executed an excellent combined sketch of unexplored country north of the Benue, which was supplemented by a well-drawn-out and useful report by Lieutenant Bryan. My thanks are, moreover, due to Major Reade for the manner in which, as I have already stated, he acted for me whilst at Ibádan, and to Captain Gillespie and Lieut. Rigby, R.M.L.I., who, under trying circumstances, did good work on the Niger, north of Jebba.

T. D. PILCHER, Lieutenant-Colonel,

West African Frontier Force.

Naval and Military Club, London,

March 9, 1899.

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COLONEL LUGARD to COLONIAL OFFICE.

Haslemere,

11th April 1899.

SIR,

I HAVE the honour to forward herewith the report which, in accordance with your instructions, I directed Lieutenant-Colonel FitzGerald to submit on the raising of the 2nd Battalion West African Frontier Force, and the work done by the Battalion.

2. In doing so I desire to endorse most heartily the praise given by Lieutenant-Colonel FitzGerald to the officers and British non-commissioned officers of his battalion. The march from Ibádan to Jebba—166 miles—in ten days (picking up a hundred good recruits on the way) without any trouble or friction on the road, or difficulty regarding supplies, speaks for the tact and forethought of the Commandant and his officers. The method and order with which from the first all the correspondence and orderly room work was conducted, and the infrequency of severe punishment (though discipline was fully maintained) prove on the one hand that indefatigable personal effort was expended by all European ranks, and on the other that the men understood their orders and worked well for their officers.

3. These results were due to the zeal and ability of Lieutenant-Colonel FitzGerald, the Commandant, and of his Adjutant, Captain Booth, in particular, supported by such excellent officers as Major Morland, Captains Baker, Somerset, and Fremantle, and Lieutenant and Quartermaster O'Malley. It is due to the memory of the late Captain Baker and the Hon. R. Somerset that I should record the great personal sorrow which we all felt at the deaths of these—two of the very best and most popular officers in the force—and the great loss which the battalion sustained. Colonel FitzGerald has described the "Farm" of which Captain Somerset took charge, and the boon which it proved to his brother officers and to all white men at Jebba. It was no light task to undertake this in addition to his very onerous work as Adjutant and President of the Mess, which he had brought to a state as complete, comfortable, and orderly in all its accounts, &c., as though instituted in a civilized country.

Captain and Adjutant Booth was promoted Staff Officer on the Headquarter Staff, and a more efficient and better Staff Officer could not be found.

Lieutenant O'Malley, as Quartermaster, was efficient and indefatigable, and he has shown great care of Government property and accuracy in the difficult conditions inherent in the post he volunteered to fill.

Colour-Sergeant Bradley (2nd Royal Irish Fusiliers) has been continuously employed as Military Clerk on the Headquarter Staff, where he has worked hard and well; and, in addition to the non-commissioned officers mentioned in Lieutenant-Colonel FitzGerald's report, Armourer-Sergeant Chapman (Durham Light Infantry), Colour-Sergeant Barton (Royal Lancaster Regiment), and Colour-Sergeant Wingate (Rifle Brigade) have been mentioned to me by Colonel Willcocks as having done good service.

4. My former report contained some remarks upon the work done by the 1st Battalion and the other Corps and Departments of the West African Frontier Force. As a whole, it would be difficult to find a more zealous, efficient, and cheery set of officers than those who have raised and brought to its present state of efficiency the West African Frontier Force. Selected from different regiments of the army, they brought with them the best traditions of every corps, but the influence which has welded this material, however excellent, into a single effective force full of *esprit de corps*, and in which differences and quarrels (even in a climate and conditions like West Africa) were unknown, was that of Colonel Willcocks, C.M.G., D.S.O., who has for many months past been officiating as commandant. The rapidity with which the officers housed themselves and the British non-commissioned officers (precedence being given to the latter) with mere grass and poles from the jungle, and the equally rapid progress made in drill and musketry, form a record upon which comment from me is needless. The results were seen when I had to order a company of the 2nd Battalion at midnight to march 26 miles, crossing swollen streams in the rains, a company which had barely emerged from the recruit stage, and had but finished their recruits' musketry a day or two before. Their Captain (G. Fremantle), though suffering from fever, was on the march within two hours of the receipt of the order, and the distance was covered in 24 hours. Emulation and rivalry, without demur at the hardship of the task, was the response to the call I had made. Again, in the well planned and executed little campaign by a company of the 1st Battalion under Major Morland to punish the murderers of Lieutenant Keating and his party, the Battalion proved what its training had done for it. It was undoubtedly due to the exceptional rapidity and excellency of all arrangements made in this expedition that so few casualties occurred, and the results were so decisive. For his success in this difficult task, and his able command of the 1st Battalion since the departure of Lieutenant-Colonel Pilcher, Colonel Willcocks has strongly recommended the inclusion of Major Morland's name among those submitted for special consideration.

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I fully endorse Colonel's Willcocks's recommendation, for I had myself selected Major Morland for the difficult post of Commandant in Eastern Borgu and the relief of the garrisons held by the French—a task he carried out most ably and without friction.

5. Portions of both battalions and of the artillery have had other opportunities of proving their efficiency in the field; on all occasions with most satisfactory results, as I have had occasion from time to time to report to you.

I have, &c.,

F. D. LUGARD.

REPORT by Lieutenant-Colonel H. S. FITZGERALD, Durham Light Infantry, of the work done during 1897 and 1898, in raising and organising the 2nd Battalion West African Frontier Force.

1. On the 24th November, 1897, I took up the appointment of Commandant of the 2nd Battalion West African Frontier Force, which it had been decided to raise, and until my departure for West Africa, I was employed at the Colonial Office in organising the battalion.

Start for
West Africa. 2. On the 5th February, 1898, Headquarters and three companies (consisting of 15 officers and 19 non-commissioned officers) embarked for West Africa, and reached Lagos Roads on the 3rd March, where orders were received to disembark, and proceed inland to Ibadan.

March to
Ibadan. 3. After laying in two months' supply of provisions for my party, I proceeded on the 10th March from Lagos up the lagoon in launches to Èpé, and thence by route march through Jebu Odé, Aha, Elikou, Odo Anakekri, to Ibadan. Here I took over the surplus Yoruba recruits from the detachment 1st Battalion West African Frontier Force, and commenced recruiting for the battalion. A few days later the detachment 1st Battalion left Ibadan for Lokoja *viâ* Lagos.

Oyo. 4. On the 23rd March I proceeded to Oyo (the nearest place in telegraphic communication with Lagos), where I received orders from Colonel Lugard, C.B., D.S.O., to be in readiness to march at short notice either to Lokoja or Jebba.

5. I returned at once to Ibadan, and dispatched Major Morland and Lieutenant Buxton to report on the roads towards Jebba as far as the Yoruba-Illorin boundary, and I directed Captain Hon. R. Somerset and Lieutenant Pope Hennessy to proceed as far as Kabba in the direction of Lokoja with the same object.

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I would here mention that part of the country traversed by Captain Hon. R. Somerset's party had not previously been explored. He submitted a most clear and interesting report on the country passed through, and received the thanks of the Commissioner and Commandant for the "excellence of his reconnaissance." Captain Somerset's report has been forwarded to the Director of Intelligence, War Office.

Despatch
officers on
reconnais-
sance duty.

6. On the 7th April the recruits were inspected by His Excellency Lieutenant-Colonel H. E. McCallum, C.M.G., R.E., who expressed on parade his appreciation of the turn-out of the men (strength on parade, 23 Europeans, 444 natives), which were formed into three companies, as follows :—

Inspection
by His Ex-
cellency the
Governor of
Lagos.

"A" or Captain Hon. R. Somerset's Company.

"B" ,, Guy Fremantle's ,,

"C" ,, P. G. Rigby's ,,

During our stay at Ibadan recruits came in at the rate of about 60 or 70 a week, of which, perhaps, 50 per cent. were rejected.

7. Whilst waiting for orders, I laid in a supply of yam flour for the men, as I was informed that, whichever route I should be ordered to take, the country could not feed the force I should have with me. I also bought horses for the officers and British non-commissioned officers to ride on the march, and had picked men from each company put through a short course of musketry.

Preparations
for the
march.

8. The news that we were to leave for the Niger led to a good many desertions, which it was impossible to prevent. The men had been allowed to live in the town, and, although I had put a stop to this as regards the recruits enlisted after our arrival, I was very strongly advised against forcing those already enlisted away from the town and into the barracks. Also the men were frightened by the rumours of trouble with Illorin, started by the men of the detachment 1st Battalion who had been marched two or three marches towards Jebba and then brought back to Ibadan. The desertions during this period numbered 95 in all.

Desertions.

9. On the 27th April orders were received from Colonel Lugard, C.B., D.S.O., by telegraph from Jebba, to march with all Government stores, as quickly as possible to Jebba, and on the 29th, the Battalion (30 Europeans and 461 natives strong) left Ibadan, leaving behind Captain Eden and 3 non-commissioned officers (British) to form a recruiting depôt, and passing through Evoko-Oyo-Ajawa, reached Ogbomoshó on the 2nd May.

The march
to Jebba.

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Here the battalion was halted for a day, and the men marched through the town, and the Head men interviewed. 105 good recruits were obtained here.

[*Note.*—Ogbomosho was the Yoruba war camp against Illorin, and I strongly recommend it as a recruiting depôt for Yorubas, in preference to Ibadan. My reasons for coming to this opinion (together with a sketch of the site selected for the barracks) were submitted by me on arrival at Jebba to the Commissioner and Commandant.]

The march was continued next day, passing Buda Egba, Obanisawa, and round the town of Illorin. [I had received orders that the battalion was not to enter Illorin, and that I was to interview the Emir with reference to the cutting of the telegraph wire and the safety of the telegraph station outside the city wall.] With a small escort I entered the city and had a long and satisfactory interview with the Emir. I then marched the battalion to the banks of the Oyan River, where we halted for the night. Thence the march was continued viâ Ayetoro and Oshado to Jebba, which was reached on the 9th May, and the men and horses crossed over in canoes to the island the same day. Total distance marched, 166 miles, in 10 days' marching.

Although no opposition was expected, the march was conducted throughout as if in an enemy's country, as a training for the men, and I think the distances covered each day speaks well for their powers of marching.

A Frontier Force Order was published by the Commissioner and Commandant, conveying "his appreciation of the rapid and successful manner in which the march from Ibadan was conducted."

Increase of
establish-
ment.

10. On arrival at Jebba we were joined by Major Lowry Cole and the remaining officers and British non-commissioned officers of the battalion. They had come from England, viâ Forcados, and up the River Niger.

The making
of the camp
on Jebba
island.

11. Jebba Island at this time consisted only of the Niger Company's factory, and the native village. As the rainy season was coming on, our first work was to house ourselves and the men and horses. Daily working parties were sent out across the river to cut grass and wood, while others cleared and prepared the ground. It was a time of incessant trial for everyone. Parades could not be remitted, as it was possible that we might be required for active service at any moment, so morning and evening saw us on parade; the rest of the day was spent by the men in building their lines and clearing the parade grounds, and by the Europeans in supervising and directing the labour of the men and the hired labour.

Life at
Jebba.

12. Our life at Jebba for the first four months consisted of recruiting, drilling, clearing ground, and building. These months

saw a great change in the regiment, and also in the appearance of the island. In June the dépôt company joined from Ibadan with 60 good Yoruba recruits, and a fourth company of Yorubas was formed. By the end of August two companies of Hausas had been enlisted, and the battalion consisted of six companies. Three companies had gone through a recruits' course of musketry, and a fourth was being put through. Lines for the men, good grass huts for the officers and British non-commissioned officers, hospitals (native and European), an orderly room, an officers' mess, a non-commissioned officers' mess, and stables for the horses had all been built. Two parade grounds had been cleared and levelled, and we were beginning to play cricket and to hold gymkhanas, with races for the men. A two-section musketry range had been constructed and was in daily use, and the island had been cleaned to a certain extent.

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13. In spite of all the exposure and hard work, this period was not an unhealthy one for the officers and British non-commissioned officers. Two deaths had occurred—Lieutenant Headlam, drowned, and Corporal Wintle from fever. The latter arrived from Lokoja in a bad state of health and died shortly after. There had been no cases of invaliding. Health of the Europeans.

14. But the regiment was short of several officers and British non-commissioned officers from other causes. Major Lowry Cole was on the frontier as commandant of S. Borgu; Major Morland commanded in E. Borgu; Captain and Adjutant Booth had been posted to the Head-Quarter Staff, and Captain Hon. R. Somerset had been appointed Adjutant in his place. Captain Lynch was away recruiting up the Benué, and Captain Welch, Lieutenants Glossop, Blair, Mangles, and Porter, and several British non-commissioned officers were serving in Borgu. Changes amongst the officers and British non-commissioned officers.

15. On the 1st of August a permanent camp was formed on the left bank of the river, consisting of three batteries of Artillery and "B" Company of the Battalion and the R.E. Company. Record of movements

On the 6th August, about 10 p.m., news was received that a disturbance had occurred amongst the troops of the Royal Niger Constabulary at Kiama, and "B" Company was ordered to proceed at once to Fort Goldie to prevent its spreading. At 1 a.m. on the 7th August Captain Fremantle, Lieutenant Buxton, Colour-Sergeant Moran and 60 rank and file with 20 rounds per man left by route march and arrived at Fort Goldie (26 miles) at 1 p.m. the same day. On this march two rivers had to be crossed. It was dark and there were no canoes on the near banks. Lieutenant Buxton swam both rivers and procured canoes, in which the men and horses were transferred across. The remainder of "B" Company followed the next day, and relieved, in accordance with orders, the detachments at Fort Goldie, Kiama, Leaba, Yangbassa, and Boussa, hitherto held by the Royal Niger Constabulary. "B" Company returned to

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Jebba in January 1899, having done good service in the expedition to punish the murderers of Lieutenant Keating and his party.

In September "A" Company proceeded on special service to Illorin, under Captain Somerset, and I was informed by the Commandant that he carried out a delicate mission with great tact, and returned the beginning of November, and on the 25th November "A" Company, under Captain Welch, proceeded up river for duty in E. Borgu.

In October "D" Company proceeded up river under Captain Eden to reinforce the troops in E. Borgu.

On the 5th December Lieutenant Robertson with an escort proceeded to Ogbomosho and returned on the 20th December with 125 recruits.

On the 7th January 1899, Lieutenant Pope-Hennessy returned from the Benué with 70 Hausa recruits, enlisted by Captain Lynch.

On the 12th December Major Lowry Cole returned from duty in S. Borgu and assumed command of the battalion. (I had left a few days previously for England, to take up the appointment of second in command Durham Light Infantry.)

On the 7th February 1899, the regiment commenced its move to Lokoja in relief of the 1st Battalion.

Annual
inspection.

16. The annual inspection of the battalion took place at Jebba in January, Colonel Willcocks, C.M.G., D.S.O., the officiating Commissioner and Commandant, expressed himself pleased with everything he saw.

Presentation
of Royal
Humane
Society's
medal to
Corporal
Taylor.

17. At a general parade of the West African Frontier Force on the 23rd January 1899 at Jebba, Corporal W. Taylor, of the 2nd Battalion, was presented with the bronze medal of the Royal Humane Society, for gallantry on the night of the 12th May 1898, when he dived into the River Niger and brought to the surface the body of Lieutenant T. E. Headlam, the river at the time swarming with crocodiles.

Strength of
battalion.

18. When I left Jebba the battalion was about 800 strong, and, now that the Hausa recruits from the Benué enlisted by Captain Lynch have arrived, it should be 1,000 strong.

A 7th company was formed in February.

The men.

19. There is a great difference between Hausas "born slaves, the sons of slaves" and those born free. The latter only should be enlisted. The best Yorubas come from the war camps of Ogbomosho and Ikerun; Ibadan men are also good. The men from Oyo (the capital of Yorubaland) are no good as soldiers. Both Hausas and Yorubas are imitative and learn very quickly. They also forget quickly. They are wonderfully amenable to discipline, but they can be easily made discontented and mutinous by an officer who does not listen patiently to what they have got

to say. They are quite satisfied with their officer's decision, however adverse, once they have had their say. If shouted at and bullied they are apt to become cowed and stupid. For this reason I think all officers and British non-commissioned officers require supervision and careful tuition on first arrival in Nigeria; otherwise the results will not be lasting, and men will be unjustly punished through misunderstandings on both sides.

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20. My great aim was to create a regimental feeling in the System. battalion, and to teach the men that they belonged to the same battalion. It must be remembered that Hausas and Yorubas are long-standing rivals, and if they are to live peaceably together in the lines, and to fight side by side, they must be associated together on all possible occasions. From the very beginning, therefore, though only squad drill could be done, all the companies paraded together as a battalion, and a general supervision was exercised over them. This was especially necessary if any uniformity of system of training was to be obtained, when it is considered that the officers and non-commissioned officers came from so many different regiments. As the Company commanders got to know their men, and I was satisfied with their methods of handling them, this supervision was relaxed, and I then told them that I should judge them by the results they obtained. Officers and non-commissioned officers once posted to companies were kept as much as possible with their companies, and even with their sections or squads, but, owing to the exigencies of the climate *i.e.*, sickness, they were (except Company commanders) perforce interchangeable. It had this advantage, however, that the natives got to know all the white men, and they in turn had experience of both Hausa and Yoruba squads. The battalion interpreters attended every parade and all orders were carefully explained to the men, and they were told to go to their officers if there was anything they did not understand.

21. A two-section range was built at Jebba by the labour of Musketry the men. Pending the completion of this range the men were instruction. exercised at floating targets on the river. These targets were moored at 100 and 200 yards and afterwards at unknown distances. As the impact of each shot on the water was so plainly marked, the men improved very rapidly, and the task of teaching the men to shoot (which I had expected to be a difficult one) was by this means made an easy one. It is an ideal way of teaching recruits and improving the shooting of third-class shots. As soon as the range was finished, the companies were put through the recruits' course laid down in F.F. Orders.

22. The early education of natives in sanitary matters leaves Sanitary much to be desired. As the health of the Europeans depended arrange- so much on the Island being kept clean, floating latrines were ments. built at the river's edge and the natives coerced into using them. While not pretending that Jebba Island is yet clean, "Soldier

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Water
supply.

Town" was a model in this respect when I left. The difference between my first weekly kit inspection and my last was most marked.

23. The preserving the health of the Europeans of the battalion naturally occupied much of my thoughts. A pure water supply was a great difficulty. The drinking water was fetched from the centre of the stream above the Island, and boiled and filtered, but even then it soon became impregnated with germs, and was with difficulty kept pure. Under regimental arrangements a soda-water machine had been brought out (the only one, I believe, in West Africa). This was, of course, too heavy to be marched up from Lagos, and a considerable delay occurred in its coming up the river. Once started, however, my troubles about the drinking water were at an end. The soda water was sold at a nominal sum. The water was filtered and boiled under the supervision of an officer.

Regimental
farm.

24. In order to ensure a good supply of fresh meat, a regimental farm and poultry yard was started shortly after our arrival at Jebba. A big yard was fenced in, and a deserted Nupe village enclosed, and the houses used as cattle sheds and the granaries filled with fodder and Guinea corn. The results were most marked. The beef and mutton were both excellent. Sheep doubled their weight in a short time by careful feeding, and the mutton was equal to the "grain fed" mutton of any Indian mutton club. The meat latterly was sold to all corps in the station, the profit being credited to Government. The farm was entirely managed by Captain Hon. R. Somerset, who gave up every moment his other duties permitted to it.

Messing
arrange-
ments.

25. Although I knew we were liable to be split up in many detachments, I decided before leaving England on starting an officers' mess and a non-commissioned officers' mess, and made arrangements accordingly. From the day we landed in Africa (at headquarters) all the officers messed together, and all the non-commissioned officers messed together. By having only these two messes, instead of company messes, we were able to keep down prices by the absence of competition, and the officers and non-commissioned officers were kept cheery and made comfortable, which is half the battle of health in West Africa. A complete kit was brought out for each company, but until it was necessary men did not dine alone; moreover, a man who did his work would have had no time to think of housekeeping, and if he had left it to his servant his health would have suffered.

Uniform.

26. Before leaving Jebba I was asked for my views on the future uniform of the W.A.F.F. and I submitted two sketches, one showing the undress and the other the full dress I proposed. The former consisted of a khaki cotton blouse and pants which was made into full dress by the addition of a red Zouave jacket. The objection that cotton was too cold was met by the proposal to issue a flannel shirt. All accoutrements were of brown leather,

pouches to be done away with, and cartridges carried in the belt, and in the head dress (as is done by the French native troops) a red tarbouch with a tassel of the regimental colour, and a kammerbund of the same colour completed the equipment.

27. Before concluding this report I wish to bring to notice the excellent work done by the officers and British non-commissioned officers I had the honour of commanding. I was indeed fortunate in having such a capable, hardworking, cheery body of men under me.

My special thanks are due to my Adjutants, Captain A. W. Booth, Northumberland Fusiliers, whose promotion to the Staff was a great loss to the regiment, and the late Captain Hon. R. Somerset, Grenadier Guards, whose work was unceasing, and his place will be very hard to fill; and to Captain Guy Fremantle, Coldstream Guards. These officers have already been mentioned in the "London Gazette."

Also to the late Captain A. W. Baker, Durham Light Infantry, who did excellent work recruiting in Kishi and in the training of his company; Captain Lynch, South Lancashire Regiment, whose knowledge of Hausa is unique and who brought us many Hausa recruits; Lieutenant H. M. Blair, Seaforth Highlanders, Assistant Adjutant; Lieutenant L. H. R. Pope-Hennessy, Oxford Light Infantry; Lieutenant R. H. Buxton, Norfolk Regiment; Lieutenant and Acting Quartermaster C. O'Malley, 3rd Middlesex Regiment; to Sergeant-Major F. Walker, Manchester Regiment; O.R. Sergeant C. Thomas, South Wales Borderers; Colour-Sergeant J. C. Heafield, Durham Light Infantry; Sergeant Blair, Northumberland Fusiliers; Corporal W. Munro, Seaforth Highlanders; and Corporal W. Taylor, Scots Guards.

H. S. FITZGERALD, Lieutenant-Colonel,

West African Frontier Force.

Aldershot,

31st March 1899.