Secondee, Cape Coast and Accra are the further

ports at which stops are made, and at 7 a.m. on the

sixteenth day from leaving Liverpool we are at

anchor about four miles off Lagos, the capital of

Southern Nigeria. Passengers going up-country

tranship to a branch steamer of about eight hundred

tons which takes them over the sand-bar, which the

liner cannot pass, and across the large lagoon,

depositing them at Iddo Wharf, the railway terminus.

CHAPTER II

FROM THE COAST BY TRAIN — THE WEST AFRICAN

PULLMAN

Iddo Wharf — Strange sights and thoughts — Umbrellas —

" Niggers " — Train luxuries — Liquor permits — The iron-

horse at the Niger — Ferry and bridge — Budget details.

Passing the length of the lagoon — a mile wide at

its broadest point — leaving the town of Lagos, with

its busy wharves and crowded streets, on his right,

less than an hour's steaming from the Roads and the

traveller is at Iddo Wharf. The train is drawn up

near the water, and passengers walk a few steps

from marine to land locomotion.

Strange sights appear to the traveller as he

stands at Iddo Wharf. The strangest — or the

strangest thought — of all is that there should be a

train running in West Africa on which there is every

reasonable comfort and luxury, and that this train

should be in existence — the first of its kind in this

part of the world — a few months after the extension

of the line had been opened. First, however, a

word or two on the surroundings at the terminus.

The train leaves at 9 p.m. on whatever day the

ocean ship arrives. The vessel is due in the morn-

ing, but people have not the inconvenience of

loafing about a strange town for hours. The boat

train is an ark, available all day as a resting-place

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FROM THE COAST BY TRAIN 18

for the sole of the foot. All its resources for meals

can at once be utilised.

By nightfall most of the luggage will have been

stowed in the vans. A few late arrivals, perhaps

persons who have not come by the ship, will be

having their belongings attended to. Black wharf

labourers, who have been working late and are

going home, put their umbrellas on the ground in

order to give a hand in packing the vans. These

labourers, whose attire is usually like that of the

Wandering Minstrel in " The Mikado," " a thing of

shreds and patches," almost to a man carry an

umbrella as they go home o' nights — bless you ! not

for protection against rain, but as an article of

adornment. It is as much a matter of course with

them as the clay pipe and the cloth cap are with

their counterpart in Great Britain. Different

countries, different customs.

Nearly all the other officials at Iddo Wharf are

also indigenous West Africans — clerks, inspectors,

foremen, porters. There are as many grades and

degrees of education among any one Coast people

as there are with our folks in Europe. Were this

fact always recognised and remembered, perhaps a

little more tact might be exercised by individuals

who regard all black men as " niggers " and suit

their actions to the word. I stand as no apologist

for the smatteringly-educated native, who dressed

in uniform takes up an attitude truculent and offen-

sive towards white men. It is British policy and

systems of education which are responsible.

There is also at Iddo Wharf at least one first-

class, white railway official on duty to attend to any

matter requiring his attention.