With the Compliments of the Author, who hopes the reader will not criticize too severely so feeble a production

With the

West African Frontier Force,

in

Southern Nigeria.

BY

Captain Lord Esmé Gordon Lennox,

Scots Guards.

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Ujo-oko
Allan Choppoi
Keffi
Ogugu
Adani
NIGER
Obudari
Oberum
L. Oberum
Gloria Ibo
Onitsha
Ekoza
Ikeji
Igorra
Oru
Aibu
Oguta
Omo-dru
Oka
Ama-kohe
Oborji
Olako
Ahnamoje
Nkwala
Ulele
Elimini
Iba
Endelli
CALABAR
6°
10
20
30
New Calabar R.

With the West African Frontier Force.

I LEFT England from Liverpool, on May 9th, in one of Messrs. Elder, Dempster & Co.'s mail boats, the "*Olenda*," which was to take me to the West Coast of Africa. It was typical English weather when we left—cold and wet, and it was not until five days later that we got into anything approaching warmth and sunshine. During those five cold days I realized that the Elder, Dempster boats were noted for many things, their size is small, their accommodation limited, the food is horrible, and the speed of these mail boats would always ensure an excellent race with an ordinary snail. Our first port of call was Sierra Leone which we reached on May 21st, disembarking a few passengers and taking on board a great number of natives for destinations further down the coast. We did not stay many hours there, and left in the afternoon, and proceeded down the coast calling at many places on the way. At Grand Sestern on the

Coast of Liberia we took on about 100 Kru boys who were engaged by the ship in order to work the surf boats, as the landing at all these places is done by surf boats, and only those who are well experienced in the handling of these boats can manage them in the very heavy surf all along the coast. At Cape Coast Castle we had an unpleasant experience as our anchor chain snapped in the middle of the night and we were very nearly wrecked on the rocks. We reached Lagos on May 27th, and the following day arrived at Forcados which is the mouth of the Niger proper. Forcados itself is only a custom house and post office lying about 30 miles up the river or rather 30 miles up from the bar which can only be crossed at high water. Such a dismal looking place, where most of us landed to stretch our legs. Anyone going to Northern Nigeria has to disembark here and do the rest of their journey by launch up the Niger, going through part of Southern Nigeria to Lokoja. As I was going to Southern Nigeria my destination for disembarking was Old Calabar which we reached on May 31st, and on the way we went and called at the island of Fernando Po—a very pretty little Spanish possession—very much like Teneriffe to look at with a high peak 10,000 ft. rising out of the sea; the little harbour is formed by a crescent of low rocks which they say was at one time the mouth of a crater and, from the appearance of the shore around it, it looks very much as if this were true. Most of us went ashore to see the place—the most noteworthy feature being a wonderful avenue of mangrove trees.

It was about 11 o'clock that we dropped anchor off Old Calabar, which is 40 miles up the river, and I must confess that I was very

agreeably surprised at my first view of the headquarters of Southern Nigeria. It stands on a piece of ground about 400 ft. above the river, with all the Government and public offices looking over the river—while all the trading company's stores and sheds lie at the foot of the hill. The only other officer who had come out to Southern Nigeria was Mackay, who had won the V.C. in South Africa, at Rustenburg, for saving some of our guns. Venour, the Adjutant came off to meet us, and after taking us to lunch, on the High Commissioner's yacht, the "Ivy," we went ashore and up to headquarters, where I made the acquaintance of Colonel Montanaro, who commands this battalion of the West African Frontier Force. Mackay has to wait here a few days with me and then he has orders to go round to, and up the Niger to Asaba, while I have got orders to go up the Cross River and take over the command of the troops at Bende, which is one of our most distant stations in the hinterland. The only person I knew here on arrival was de Crespigny, 2nd Life Guards, who is shortly leaving for home invalided, and he certainly looked very much pulled down. After being at headquarters a few days it was decided that instead of sending me up to Bende I should remain here and take command of the Service Company, which is better in one way, that it means I have to be ready to go off on active service at practically a moment's notice, so for some days I had my time fully occupied in acquiring knowledge of how the Military Administration is worked and getting used to my new and interesting surroundings. Two officers arrived on June 13th, both of whom I had met before very often on the cricket field at Burton's Court. Moorhouse, R.A., who had come round from the Niger, and Turner, R.A., of Essex cricket fame, who

has arrived out from England. Curiously enough, it was by saving Turner's guns that Mackay had won his V.C. On the 18th some little excitement was caused by a cable arriving from the Colonial Office telling us to send at once a contingent of 300 men and 2 guns round to the assistance of Northern Nigeria, but giving us no details at all as to what the trouble was about. Colonel Montanaro had meanwhile gone away up to Bende and was not returning till the 21st, so we could do nothing until his return but make preparations for an immediate departure. When he retnrned, on the afternoon of the 21st, he sent me orders to get all my men with a maxim gun ready to embark on the homeward bound mail boat by 7 a.m. the next morning, and that all officers were to take a limited amount of kit and provisions for three months. It was a very busy night for all of us, and by 8 a.m. next morning we had embarked the whole of my commands, the two millimetre guns with a detachment of native R.A., and the following officers:—Colonel Montanaro, Major Venour, Turner, R.A., Mackay, R.A., Beverley, Elliot, and self. We left the river as soon as the embarkation was completed and steamed out to sea, calling in at Bonny on the 23rd, but could learn nothing there as to what was happening in the North, and speculation as to what has occurred is very heavy. We arrived off the Bar of the river at Forcados at daylight on the 24th, and there the Captain of the "Oron" anchored to enable us to tranship everyone on to a smaller boat which was to take us over the bar and up the river to Forcados. It took us about six hours to complete the trans-shipping and a very ticklish job it was. Everyone had to climb down the side of the mail boat and drop into one of the surf boats, then

solely represented by the Company's officials. And thirdly, that the West African Frontier Force which had previously been controlled by the Company but officered by Imperial officers would have to, in future, be under direct Imperial control. But this is entirely a digression on my part.

Colonel Montanaro and Turner returned to Asaba from Lokoja on the evening of July 2nd, and the news they brought was not at all encouraging towards our prospect of going up to Northern Nigeria. The whole rumour seems to have been a false report, and the authorities at Lokoja expressed their entire ignorance about there being any trouble, and also gave them to understand that even if there was likely to be, they would probably be able to cope with it themselves without feeling the necessity of calling for the assistance of other troops. I wonder, and so does everyone here, who was the originator of the telegram which has put all of us to such extreme inconvenience and to no purpose. Probably some official in one of the Government offices in London, who on his own initiative and without knowing the true facts of the case, has caused us to undertake a useless and expensive journey for the Government. Our one consolation however came in the form of a message down from Lokoja to say that we might remain at Asaba, in case anything did happen, but adding that if we were not called upon by August 7th, we might take it for granted we should not be required at all.

For the next four weeks I had a very slow time of it, because here we remained with practically nothing to do—always expecting the summons from Northern Nigeria which never came. Turner went up again to Lokoja to get the ponies which he had been unable to procure at his first visit, and brought them down on July 12th. They were curious

little beasts, and looking fairly hardy if they can only stand the climate down here, which is vastly different to what they have been accustomed to. As a matter of fact, all these ponies died at Asaba except mine which only lived on till December, and died at Old Calabar. They all seemed to get fever the same as the white man, and do all we could —we were totally unable to cure them in any way. Finding he would not be required at Asaba, Colonel Montanaro left on July 13th, on his return to Old Calabar, as there was nothing at Asaba which required his presence there. During this month of inactivity, I found time enough to learn many interesting facts and customs with regard to the country and the inhabitants thereof, but I will not give an account here of it, as I have reserved that for later on.

It was not until August 12th, that anything of interest to myself took place. I received orders on that date, to take an escort of 50 men and one maxim gun, for the purpose of assisting the District Commissioner from Abo, in collecting a fine of £25 from a town in his district called Ebradi. This town had been fined the above amount at least ten months previously, and no one had taken the trouble to go and collect it, and now when the town had been informed that payment was urgently desired, they flatly refused to have anything to do with the orders of the district commissioner. So he applied to Asaba for assistance to recover this debt, as being the nearest troops at hand. I left with the district commissioner, Simpson-Grey, on the 14th, in a launch, transport being found for the troops by attaching a lighter to the side of the launch.

We got down as far as Abo on the 14th, and staying there that night, went on next day down to Asseh which is a trading station at the mouth of the Asseh creek, up which Ebradi lies about 4 hours by launch. We left Asseh just on daylight on the 16th, and arrived off Ebradi about 9 a.m. The town itself we could not see, as it lay about 400 yards from the river bank, surrounded by dense bush. However we fastened the launch and lighter to the bank, and leaving a few men as a guard there, I landed all the rest and marched into the town. On arriving there most of the natives were discovered clearing off into the bush, and taking all their goods and chattels with them. This was soon stopped by my putting a ring of sentries round the place, and then we sent for the chiefs of the town. With the aid of our interpreter we discovered that the chiefs had all run away and were much too frightened to return and face us.

One drunken brute, displaying more courage than the others, came reeling up and asked us what we wanted. He got his answer by my knocking him down with the butt of my revolver, and then giving him 24 lashes for daring to address the white man, which had a wonderful sobering effect. I then told the natives I must have meat and yams for my troops, but they showed persistent ignorance as to where I could obtain either. However, I sent some of the soldiers through the town to collect cows and goats, and very soon a plentiful supply of fresh meat arrived which was conveyed to the launch.

Calling a few of the townspeople, we told them that they could have 24 hours in which to consider whether they cared to pay or not,

and then we went back to the launch. The soldiers all camped on the bank while Grey and myself made the launch our headquarters. Some of the fresh meat was killed and distributed amongst the men, and never, as long as I live, shall I forget the odour of that cooking meat, because the soldier never takes the trouble to skin it before cooking.

Next day as soon as the 24 hours were up I sent in to say that unless they took immediate steps to pay the fine, they would have to suffer for their disobedience. The only reply I got was that the chiefs had all run away and were too frightened to return; so we decided that the first part of their payment would be done by our destroying their entire yam crop. We went down by launch to their yam fields, and having collected a plentiful supply for ourselves, destroyed all the remainder, which was an occupation lasting some hours as it necessitated digging the yams up ourselves. To add to our task it was pouring with rain the whole time, and never have I engaged on such a dirty job.

Having done this we returned to a town a few miles below Ebradi where we stayed the night. The next morning it was raining harder than ever and we went up to Ebradi as soon as it was light. Arrived there, I sent in to say what I had done to their crop, but they refused to let the interpreter go anywhere near the village, but shouted out to him that they would not pay but fight. When he returned with their message I hesitated about landing and burning the place until it cleared, but realized that the wet was more to my advantage, as their powder would become almost useless. Everyone was disembarked and the place rushed; meeting with very little resistance on their part, and,

after posting a ring of sentries round the entire town to prevent sniping, the whole place was burned which took us some time to accomplish as all the roofs were so wet. Leaving nothing but a heap of ashes and cinders behind, we returned to the launch, and left the next morning on the return voyage to Asaba, which took us rather longer to accomplish than coming down stream, as we had a heavy load and a very strong current against us, and we did not arrive back until the evening of the 21st.

I often think now whether the Ebradians do not regret their refusal to pay, and about 8 weeks after the above events, I met Simpson-Grey again who told me he had revisited Ebradi in a friendly capacity, and that when he got there, they offered to give him the equivalent in stock amounting to over £100, and were then quite friendly to him, but he only accepted the amount equal to their original fine. On my arrival back at Asaba, I found that Turner had been very bad with fever and had been sent round to Old Calabar; also poor Mackay very ill, but wonderfully plucky, the result of four operations for some internal complication.

On August 28th Baron von Pfutkamer paid us a visit on his way up the Niger to get to his most northern districts. It seems a curious policy on our part to allow the Governor of the German Cameroons to travel all through our territory to get to his own districts, and if you look at the map at the begining you will see that it is decidedly a roundabout way for him to go. He went up to Lokoja and then up the Benue river to Yola, and even when he reaches his own land he must needs be allowed to return home again down the Niger. Baron

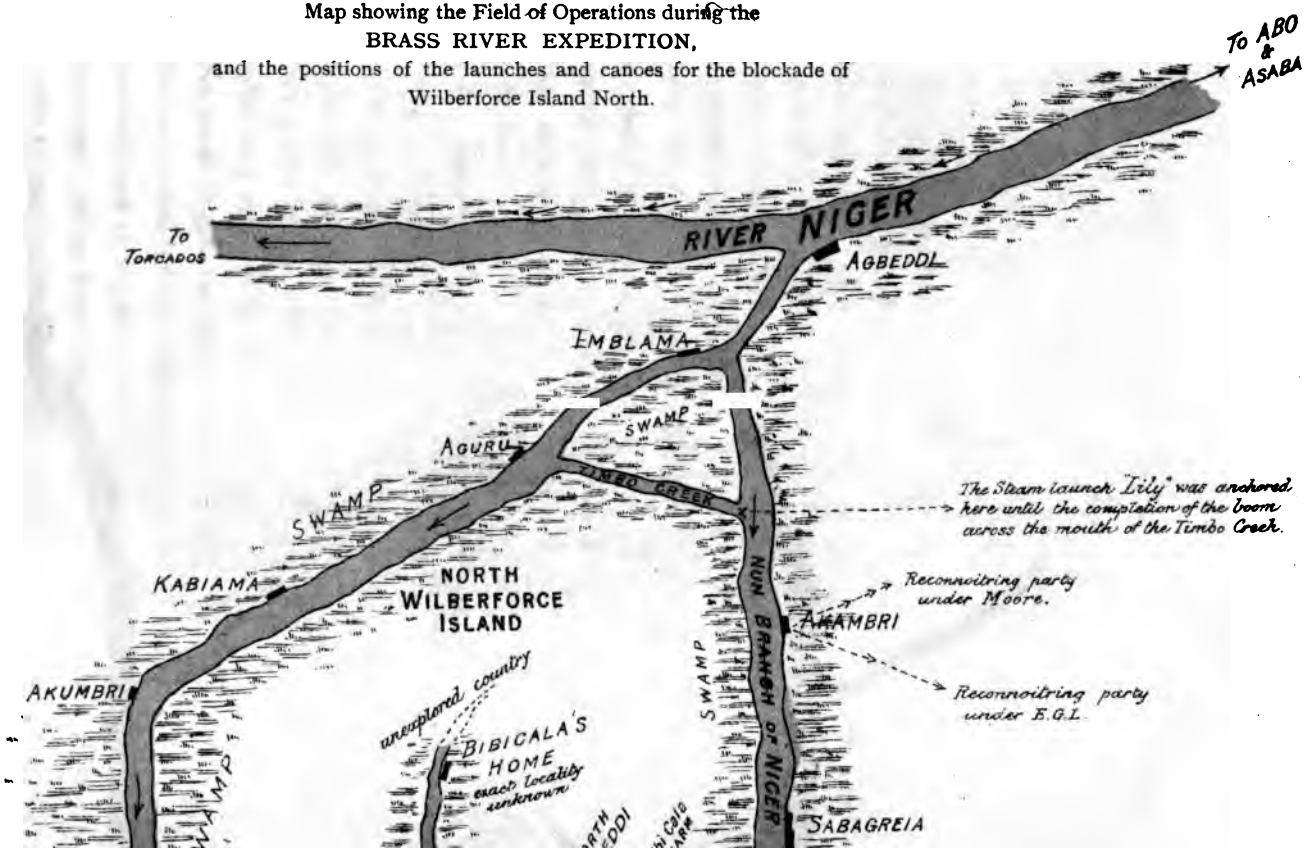
von Pfutkamer is a very fine type for a German, and has lived many years on the West Coast. In fact I am almost certain he commenced his career in these parts as a trader. At any rate he has excellent cause to remember that the trade on the Niger was under British control because it is not so many years ago that he was arrested for the illicit smuggling of ivory, and for that offence had to pay a fine of the best part of £1000. Now he holds the most important German Colonial appointment, of which however there are not a great many. The annoying part of the whole thing though is this, that if it had not been for the crass stupidity of a certain English official on the West Coast about 20 years ago, the Cameroons would to-day have been British instead of German, and the importance that such an addition to our West African possessions would have been, cannot be overestimated.

The following day, August 29th, H.M.S. "Dwarf" which had gone up to Lokoja about a week before, passed here on her way down river, and sent us a message to say that she had over 50 per cent. of her white crew down with fever, but the only thing we could do was to send her some medicine, as it was quite impossible for us to spare our doctor.

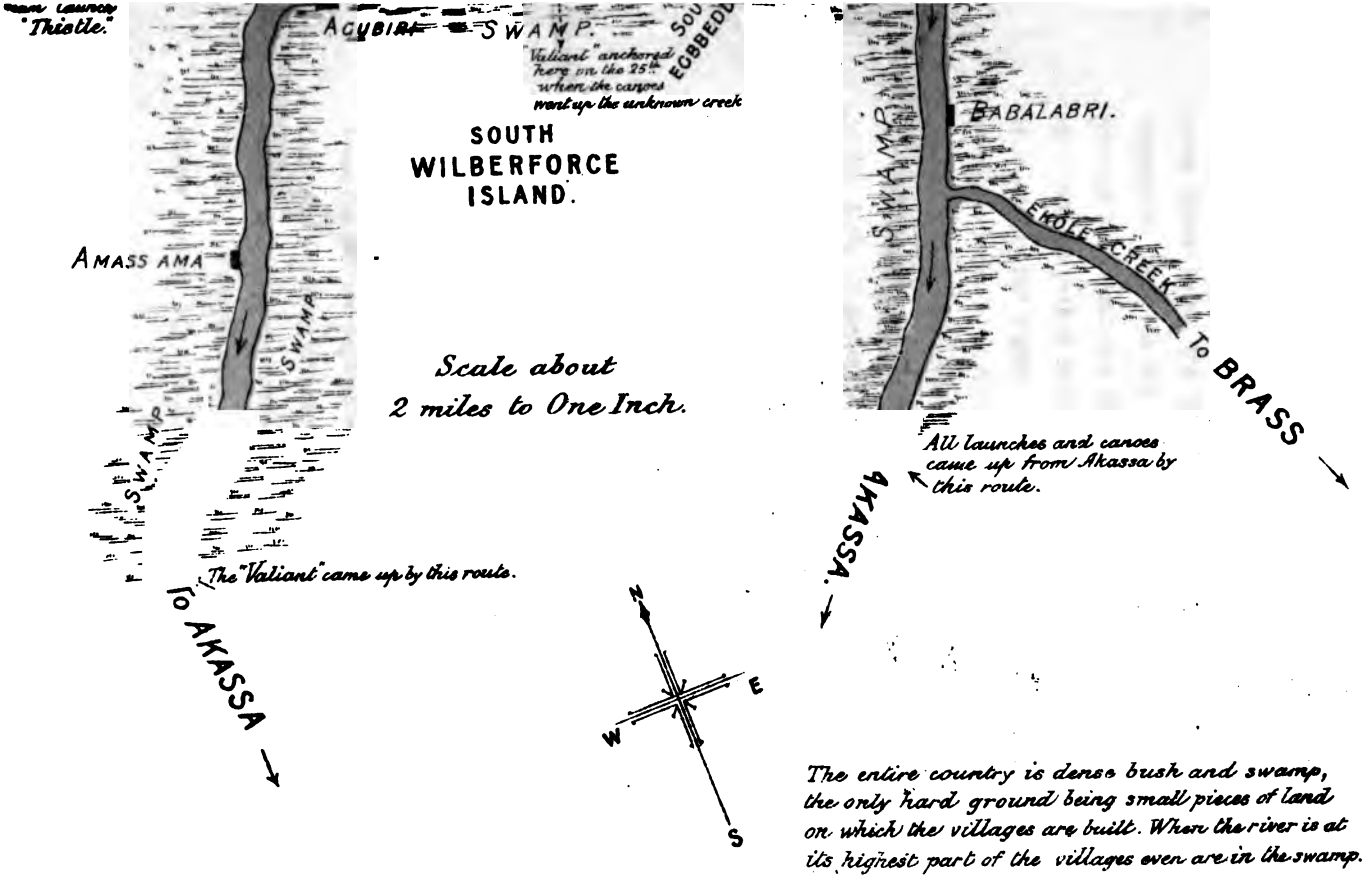
It was not many days after this, I think the exact date was September 7th, that much to everyone's surprise Colonel Montanaro returned to Asaba and informed us that we must all get ready to start on the Brass river expedition. The next few days were fully occupied in making all the necessary arrangements, and it may turn out to be as unpleasant an undertaking as any one could wish for, on account of the swampy nature of the country in which the expedition is going to operate. The object of this expedition is this—For some years past a powerful

Juju-man, by name Bibi Cala, has been exercising his influence on all natives in the country around the Brass river, and up to the Niger. He has now become such a power in the land that it is unsafe for anyone to trade, and he has not only defied all British authority, but is rapidly causing all the native population in these districts to do the same. In order to effect his capture two expeditions have already within the last few years gone against him but all to no purpose, and in consequence he not only thinks himself all-powerful, but the failure of these two previous expeditions has almost convinced the ignorant and superstitious native that Bibi Cala is possessed of some extraordinary power by which he can always avoid capture. This, then, is the object of the expedition, but why it has ever been called the Brass River Expedition I fail to see, as the actual field of operations is nowhere near the Brass river, as the map will show you. This man is supposed to live on North Wilberforce Island, and all our efforts are to be directed against that place. No one knows much about the country there except it is entirely swamp. The importance that has been attached to this expedition is enormous, and the preparations made most elaborate, as Colonel Montanaro is determined to either capture the Juju-man or make the whole of the native population round Wilberforce Island suffer. How we all fared, and the wonderful schemes that were made to bring it to a successful end are so engrossing that I feel bound to give the whole period that this expedition lasted in detail. The troops detailed to take part in the expedition were the whole of my commando and all Moore's, totalling about 300 men, with one gun and its detachment, and our two maxims. All these were taken from Asaba, but in order to complete the arrangements a concentration of

Map showing the Field of Operations during the
BRASS RIVER EXPEDITION,
and the positions of the launches and canoes for the blockade of
Wilberforce Island North.



launch "Thistle."



The entire country is dense bush and swamp, the only hard ground being small pieces of land on which the villages are built. When the river is at its highest part of the villages even are in the swamp.

all troops and guns was ordered to take place at Brass and Akassa, the latter place being the headquarters of the Marine department. On September 14th the big Sternwheeler "Valiant," which was to act all through the expedition as a flagship, arrived at Asaba, and all troops, etc., were embarked on board, and in about four hours we dropped down to Inkisi for the night. Leaving Inkisi at daylight, on the 15th, we steamed on down to Abo, where we waited for three hours in order to take on board some coal and also, because we have to pass through the enemy's country on our way to Brass, it has been decided to run through in the dark. Leaving Abo about 4 p.m. we went on down the Niger and turned left handed into the Nun Branch at Agbeddi about 7 p.m., when it was getting dark. Consequently, all lights were extinguished and absolute silence ordered on board—rather a hard thing to enforce when you have over 300 black troops on board. To add to the difficulties of navigation it came on to pour in torrents, and having reached a point below Sabagreia we anchored for the night in mid-stream. I am sure no one on board could help congratulating Cross, the captain of the "Valiant," for the successful way in which he managed this very risky and dangerous proceeding, as one small mistake on his part would have sent the entire boatload to the bottom of the river. Just before daylight next morning we steamed on down to Akassa, arriving there about 3 p.m. Here the Marine department have been very busy constructing armoured canoes and putting armour plates on a number of launches for our future use, as all the operations will be carried out entirely by river and swamp. On the 17th we steamed through to Brass where the "Valiant" was made secure against any attack, by having a sandbag revetment placed all

round her upper and lower decks. We had expected the acting High Commissioner—Leslie Probyn—to meet us here on the "Ivy," but on our arrival he had not turned up.

I hear that I am to have an independent "naval" command of my own consisting of two steam launches, and four armoured canoes all fully armed and equipped. What a noble command for an Infantry Officer, and I really hardly know whether to assume the title of Admiral or something equally appropriate to my command.

On September 19th, the Acting High Commissioner cabled to us to go back to Akassa, where he would come and meet us, so off we went, and just as the "Valiant" anchored at Akassa the "Ivy" came in and dropped her anchor close to us. I had been warned that I might be required to depart with my "squadron" at any moment, so, late as it was when we arrived, I was certainly not prepared for the chaos that reigned in about an hour's time. No sooner had we anchored at the Pier than orders were sent to me to go off at once with my flying squadron. I had to disembark my Marines (I feel bound to use Nautical terms) off the "Valiant" and then embark them again into the launches and armoured canoes, each of which held about 30 men and 16 paddlers. It was about 8 p.m. when I did manage to start with written orders as to what to do and where to go. To show on what an extensive scale the operations were supposed to be conducted, I have written below an exact copy of my orders which, on reading the next few pages, may be of interest.

"Akassa, 19-9-03.

"To Captain Gordon-Lennox, S. N. R.

"You will proceed with the steam launches "Thistle" & "Lily"

and the four armoured canoes to Sabagreia. On arrival there you will detach the canoes and anchor them at the mouth of the Egbeddi creek. A sentry will be posted day and night on each canoe and you will stop all traffic out of the creek. Should any native canoes attempt to run the blockade, you will fire on them. The steam launch "Thistle" will proceed to the Agbeni end of the Egbeddi creek in charge of Sergeant Phillips, who will anchor the launch in such a position as to prevent any canoe coming out of the creek. He will select a suitable spot on one or the other bank where he will pitch his tent. He will post one sentry on land, and if necessary one sentry on the launch, and as above will prevent any canoes coming out of the creek. By means of his interpreter, Sergeant Phillips will explain to all natives whom he stops, that the blockade of Wilberforce Island will continue until Bibi Cala is given up. Similarly the steam launch "Lily" will proceed to the mouth of the Timbo creek leading into the Nun branch of the Niger in charge of Sergeant Francis, who will carry out the same instructions as those you have given to Sergeant Phillips. You will please give written instructions to Sergeant Phillips and Sergeant Francis to this effect.

By order

(Signed) ———"

You will see the places mentioned in those orders on the rough sketch I have made of the two Wilberforce Islands. I made the "Thistle" my flagship for the time being, and took with me one of the marine department officials, Clough, who had been ordered to act as my navigating officer. Elliot and Sergeant Francis went on the "Lily" while the other, Sergeant Phillips, came with me. Each launch had a

maxim gun mounted in the bows and also the armoured canoes had one each, similarly mounted on a revolving stand specially constructed for their use from canoes. Owing to the strength of the tide in the river, the canoes had to go a different way to us and I sent them off at once with orders to wait for the launches at an appointed place about four hours up river where they emerged into the main river again. The two launches started off very soon afterwards, and what a tremendous job we had—it was blowing a gale, and there was such a heavy tide against us, that we scarcely made any headway at all, and it was not until 11 p.m. that night, that we dropped anchor at the rendez-vous, but not a sign of the canoes. About 2.30 a.m. the next morning the canoes turned up and anchored alongside us. At daylight we started off on our long and weary journey up stream, each launch towing the canoes lashed on either side and they made no light burden. My flagship was very much the faster of the two, but I was always slowing down to allow the "Lily" to catch up. We anchored about 7 p.m. in midstream for the night and commenced our onward journey again at daylight on the 21st. About mid-day Elliot signalled across to us to say that his "cruiser" was leaking in the coalbunker and could not stand the heavy strain of towing the armoured canoes. I sent Clough across in the dinghy to fix matters up, which he very successfully did, enabling us to proceed after half an hour's delay, and when he returned to me, said he strongly suspected the black engineer of having purposely manufactured the leak. Unable now to reach Sabagreia that night we again anchored for the night, and started off again at 4 a.m. on the 22nd. I arrived with my "squadron" at

Sabagreia at 9 a.m, and here disembarked everyone in order to redistribute the soldiers into the four armoured canoes—one of which I made my own headquarters. While this was being done, I sent for Chief Ijor the powerful head-chief of the town, and told him what was going to take place, and also that unless he gave every possible assistance the British Government would make him pay heavily for it. He talked very sensibly to me, and said he would help as much as possible in the capture of the renowned Bibi Cala, but that he had no idea where he was. This I did not believe for a moment, and told him that I could not possibly believe that so powerful a man as Chief Ijor was unaware of the present whereabouts of so famous a scoundrel as Bibi Cala. At Sabagreia I also "commandeered" 40 bags of rice from the Niger Company which were all distributed as rations to the men on the launches and canoes, and then having put everyone in their respective places, I had the four canoes towed to their stations and anchored so that they would command the exits to the creek. I stationed Elliot with two canoes at the lower creek, and took the other two canoes and anchored at the mouth of the upper side of the island, retaining Clough with me. An armoured canoe is not the most luxurious of places to make ones temporary abode in, and our discomfort was supreme. Not only was our space very limited, but there was also a contingent of native soldiers on board, who under the best of conditions do not make pleasant companions. However, we had to make the best of an unpleasant job. Having put the canoes in their places, I sent the "Thistle" & "Lily" off to their respective stations. In about an hour's time Chief Ijor came down to me in his own canoe from Sabagreia,

having apparently had time to think seriously over what I had impressed on him, and had the audacity to say that he knew Bibi Cala was away from his home and had gone away up the Niger. I wonder to this day if he thought I should really be fool enough to believe him. All I told him was that if Bibi Cala was not caught within a month the English Chief (Col. Mantanaro) would burn the whole of Sabagreia, and send him (Chief Ijor) to prison. He returned rather disconsolate to his own town, muttering curses on Bibi Cala's head, but fully determined I am sure, not to render any assistance towards effecting his capture. Soon after mid-day I was rather surprised to see the "Vixen," another powerful steam launch, turn up towing another armoured canoe and having Moore on board with about thirty of his men with orders to report to me. As I could quite well block this entrance of the creek with my canoes, I sent him down to help to block the lower entrance where Elliot was stationed, as that was much the wider part of the two. I went on board the "Vixen" and found Cheetham, also Crosthwaite, the captain of the "Ivy," who have come up to build a boom across the mouth of the Timbo creek where the "Lily" was. I went on up with them on the launch to find this entrance, which was no easy job as the actual mouth of the Timbo creek was a very narrow one and hardly visible. To add to our difficulties of observation it was simply raining in torrents all the time. Cheetham and Crosthwaite disembarked at the place where the "Lily" was, and having left them there to construct their boom, I returned to my canoe in the "Vixen," which left me there, and then she proceeded in search of the "Valiant." So far our entire operations have been conducted in

mid-stream, and as the whole of the country is practically swamp, it seems likely we shall see no dry ground for some time to come. Later that day I signalled Moore to come up to me, in order that I might find out where the "Valiant" was, and what was likely to be our next move. Each armoured canoe had an ordinary native canoe attached for sending messages, and it did not take Moore very long to come up. He told me that when he left Akassa, the "Valiant" was just leaving there to come up by the Amassama creek, on the west side of South Wilberforce Island, in order to warn most of the towns there what our purpose was, also that the "Valiant" might be expected to turn up late the next day. I have spent many uncomfortable nights in my life, but I don't think any can equal the night of September 22nd, 1903. The only little consolation I had was—there was a white man as my companion to share it. Imagine, if you can, Clough and myself cooped up in this armoured canoe, our immediate companions 20 black soldiers—no facilities for cooking any food, water and swamp all round us, mosquitoes by thousands, and the rain coming down in torrents; under those conditions I leave you to guess how much sleep we got. Still raining heavily next day when Cheetham and Crosthwaite came down about 11 o'clock, having finished making their boom, which was a very tedious undertaking. All day we sat in our armoured canoes waiting for what might happen next, and heartily wishing Bibi Cala in a warmer place than this hot climate. Delight is a mild expression to use to describe my feelings when I saw the "Valiant" steam up and anchor near Moore's armoured canoe, about 7 o'clock in the evening. So Clough and myself jumped into our little native canoe and paddled down to the headquarter flagship. Going on

board to report progress, I found a crowd of people on board, including Probyn the acting High Commissioner, Colonel Montanaro, Whitehouse the district Commissioner, and Childe the head of the Marine department, besides various Military officers. I dined with Probyn, and afterwards we had a meeting to decide what our next move was to be. I related my two interviews with Chief Ijor, who was then promptly sent for to come to the "Valiant" and see the "big White Consul" as Probyn was called.

On the way up they had taken the head Chief from Amassama, who with Chief Ijor were two of the most influential men around. These two were confronted with Probyn, and a very amusing palaver it turned out to be—during which Chief Ijor told Probyn exactly the reverse to what he had told me the day before. I mentioned this, but all Ijor did was to smile pleasantly and then refused to say anything more unless he consulted me first, which he was allowed to do. During this long palaver there was one rather amusing incident—as Chief Ijor, in answer to one of Probyn's questions, gave a most palpable lie. Probyn thereupon said to Whitehouse—"Tell Chief Ijor that I do not think he has told me the truth." So Whitehouse turned to Ijor and said—"Chief Ijor, you lie." But before he had hardly got the words out of his mouth, Probyn turned to Whitehouse with the following remark—"No, Whitehouse, I don't want you to tell him that, but tell him, I think he is a false man." This was really more than most of us could stand, and it was very hard to keep a serious countenance, as most of us, to this day, are wondering where the exact difference was! Well, elaborate plans were made for the next day, and when I went off back to my armoured canoe that night,

about 11 o'clock, I carried the following order with me:—

"S.W. Valiant."

23/9/03.

"Captain Gordon-Lennox, S.N.R.

1. You will proceed to-morrow morning, at daylight, in command of the three armoured canoes up the north Egbeddi creek past Bibi Cala's farm to north Egbeddi.

2. You will lay waste the country between the mouth of the creek and north Egbeddi with the exception of the latter place, which you will occupy and in which you will billet the men.

3. You will make reconnaisances to the north and along the banks of the river from Egbeddi and you will furnish me as soon as possible with a report as to the whereabouts of the enemy, the nature of the country etc. etc.

By order,

(Signed) ———

Orders Nos. 2 & 3 rather amused me as I already knew that the entire country was swamp except those few yards of ground on which the native villages were built. I thought it would be an extraordinary achievement if I did manage to get off at daylight without having some more instructions and I was not far wrong. Soon after daylight when all necessary arrangements for proceeding had been completed, I was signalled to delay starting until further orders, and to go and see the Colonel on the "Valiant." Off I went, saw the Colonel, and received the following:—

1 Corroborative news has just been received that Bibi Cala and his wife are up at Emblama. I am proceeding there forthwith and hope to be back at Egbeddi by nightfall.

2 Your orders of last evening hold good, but in addition the two other armoured canoes must accompany you up the creek. Some paddlers for them have been sent for, and you must delay moving until these paddlers arrive. If the Sabagreia people delay too long in this matter you will use all necessary force to compel them to do this work. The steam pinnace will remain to assist you.

By order.

(Signed) ———"

The consequence of this was that I could not effect a start until 9 o'clock. It was a very pretty sight to see the "Flotilla" paddling down the creek—(See Map, Diag. A.)—in their order ready for any resistance which might occur. But the sight of an armoured canoe alone would be sufficient to strike terror into the hearts of the most determined fighters. By the time we got to Egbbeddi, which only took us about two hours, the rain was coming down in proverbial buckets. The town itself was entirely deserted—not a living soul to be seen anywhere. I landed all the men, put them to live in various houses and cleared about 50 yards of the thick bush all round the town to the waters edge. What a quagmire the place was with deep mud almost up to our knees. The next morning (September 25th) I detailed two reconnoitring parties to go out at daylight. Moore and Clough to go in a Northerly direction with 12 men to spy out the land, while I took Cheetham and Crosthwaite with 12 men to go East and try and get overland to Bibi Cala's farm. What a time of

Two diagrams depicting the advance of the canoe flotillas on Sept. 24th, and the lower diagram (B) the advance up the unknown creek on Sept. 26th by the whole force, under command of Colonel Montanaro. The diagram (A) shows the force under my command moving from the river up the Egbbeddi Creek to the town of Egbbeddi.

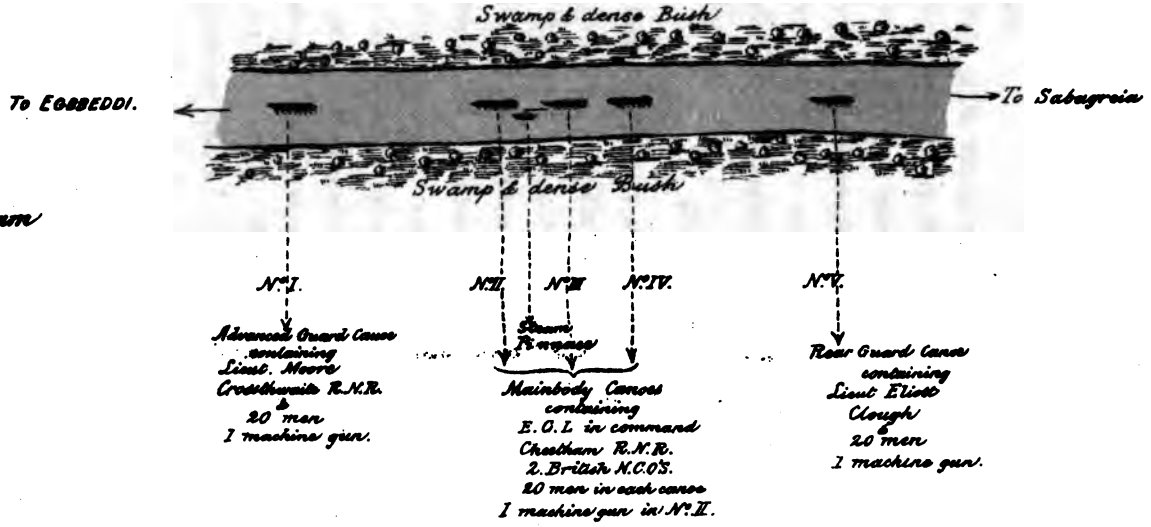
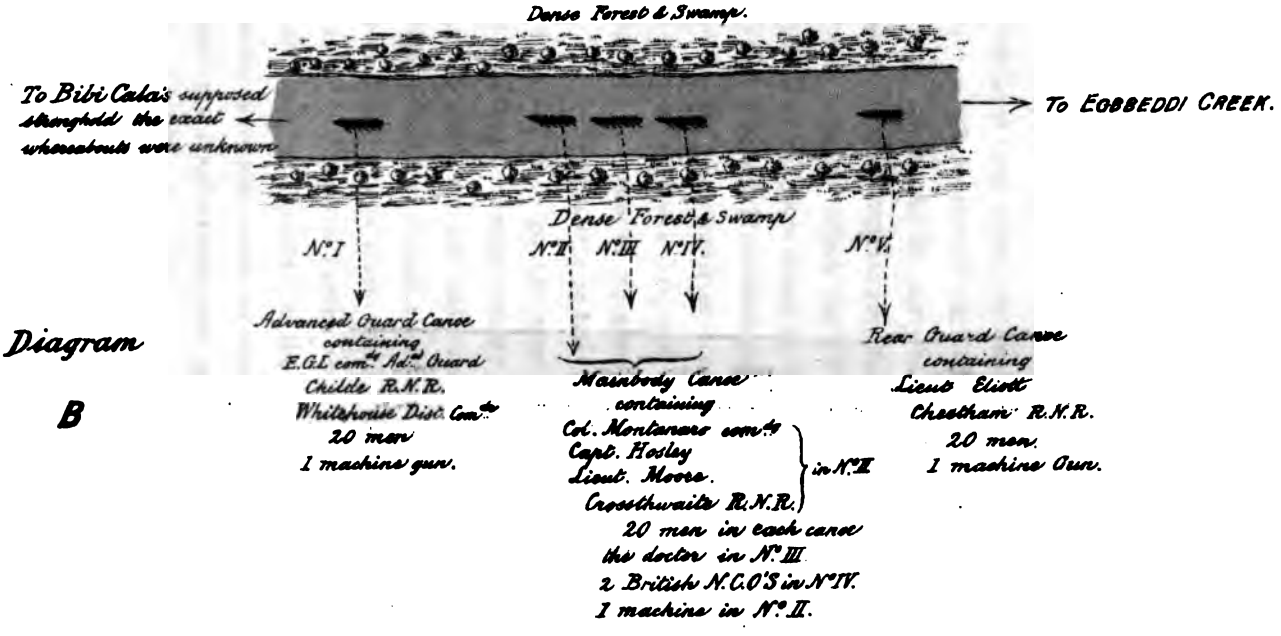


Diagram A

Diagram

B


Dense Forest & Swamp.
To Bibi Cala's supposed stronghold the exact whereabouts were unknown
To EGBBEDDI CREEK.
Dense Forest & Swamp
N°I
N°II
N°III
N°IV.
N°V.
Advanced Guard Canoe containing
E.G.I. com.dg Adv.d Guard
Childe R.N.R.
Whitehouse Dist. Com.dr
20 men
1 machine gun.
Main body Canoe containing
Col. Montanaro com.dg
Capt. Hosley
Lieut. Moore.
Crossthwaite R.N.R.
in N°II
20 men in each canoe
the doctor in N°III
2 British N.C.O'S in N°IV.
1 machine in N°II.
Rear Guard Canoe containing
Lieut. Eliott
Cheetham R.N.R.
20 men.
1 machine Gun.

it we had. There was no path of any sort to guide us, so all our reckoning had to be done by compass, and we not only had to wade the entire distance in swamp up to our waist, but most of the way we were obliged to cut a path for ourselves through the thick bush. We did get there eventually, and great was our disappointment to find on arrival a few dilapidated huts which we destroyed, and also a few stray goats and fowls, which we carried back with us to Egbbeddi, arriving there about 2 p.m. Moore and his party had got back much earlier in the day, as they could not penetrate very far on account of the swamp becoming too deep. About 5 o'clock the "Valiant" returned having, as I thought, been on a wild goose chase, as Bibi Cala was no more at Emblama than I was. Colonel Montanaro told me that I should be required now on the "Valiant" to assist in the future operations, so I shifted my few belongings on board her, and was by no means sorry to leave the uncomfortable shelter of my armoured canoe.

Probyn was still on board, and a council of war was held, at which it was decided to go and attack the place marked on the map as Bibi Cala's Home, the exact locality of which was quite unknown, but was up a creek which no one had ever yet ventured to explore. All we knew about it was that it was situated about three miles up a creek, which came into the main creek about half-way between here and Agbeni. It was decided that the canoes should all be towed down to the mouth of this creek at daylight, on the 26th, by the "Valiant." She was to anchor there and await our return. We started off before dawn so as to reach the mouth of the creek about daylight, and the "Valiant" then anchored there in mid-stream. We moved off in the order as shown on

Map Diagram B. It was a weary job for the paddlers, as what little stream there was up this dark, dismal and unknown creek was against them. There was a humorous side to this weird procession of canoes—all armed to the teeth as we were. Hardly had we gone a mile from the main creek when we all spied the acting High Commissioner coming up hand over hand, rowed by four lusty sailors in a gig, comfortably seated under a white umbrella. How we all laughed at this, as it was such a very striking contrast to the five heavily-armed canoes. When we arrived at what was thought to be a well fortified place we found about half-a-dozen very dilapidated huts, all in the last stage of decay. Just before arriving there a man jumped into a canoe from the bank and made off. I had a shot at him with my rifle, but missed him. All we had to do here was to complete the destruction of this mysterious place and burn all the huts. While this was going on I indulged in one of the best rat hunts I ever had, as the place was swarming with them, some of the brutes being simply enormous. Having reduced Bibi Cala's home to a state of cinders this great flotilla of war canoes returned the way it had come to the "Valiant." Probyn, Childe, and Crosthwaite returned by launch from here down the Amassama creek to Akassa to rejoin the "Ivy,' while the "Valiant" towed us all back to Egbbeddi. Leaving the canoes at Egbbeddi, which was now made a sort of base, we returned and burnt Agubiri, where we annexed all livestock we could lay hands on, in the shape of chickens and goats. So far we had done no good at all as to getting any nearer the capture of Bibi Cala. Not only was our information at fault, but not a single native would say a word which would lead us to effect his capture. Such was their reverence and fear

of this Juju-man that they would rather their own town was entirely burnt than give him away. Therefore the Colonel held another council of war, and we decided that we would burn every village and farm round North Wilberforce Island and reduce the entire native population to such a state of desolation that they would be bound to give him up. How this was done I have related in the next few pages. The "Valiant" was to be our only means of moving about now, so all the armoured canoes were left at Egbbeddi with a garrison of men, only taking on board sufficient men for our future plan of campaign. The first thing to do was to go down to Babalabri and fill up with coal, and steam up past Sabagreia to Akambri, where we discovered a few natives, whom we informed that they must render every assistance to us to capture Bibi Cala. We remained here the night, and the next morning, the 28th, the Colonel ordered two reconnoitring parties to go out and see what the hinterland was composed of; one under myself to go East and South East, and the other under Moore to go out North East. Both parties left the "Valiant" soon after daybreak and returned about 5 hours later — and what a pleasant 5 hours it was — the entire hinterland was one continuous swamp, always up to our waists, and sometimes we waded along with only our head and shoulders visible, and finally I was forced to retrace my steps on account of the swamp becoming too deep to proceed. It was all thick forest, and at times we floundered about in this stinking swamp, stumbling over the roots of the trees. I had a white man with me, as Ball, the engineer of the "Valiant," showing great keenness, had asked leave to accompany me in the morning. He had not been with me very long before he heartily

wished he had not shown such keenness, but I would not let him turn back. However, previous to starting he had fortified himself with a bottle of lager beer, and it was a comical sight to see him indulging in a little light refreshments with only his head and shoulders above water. In the afternoon a third party was sent out under Hosley, but returned with exactly the same result as the two previous ones, and from what we could all make out the entire hinterland for miles round was one huge swamp. We left in the evening and dropped down again to Sabagreia for the night. Leaving early next morning we went to Egbbeddi, took on board a few more men and steamed to Agbeni which we found quite deserted. Again the Colonel detailed three reconnoitring parties to go West, North West, and South West, to see what the hinterland was like. I went North West with my lot, but we all came back in the afternoon with the same tale, that the hinterland was all swamp, but not such a bad one as the day previous. Towards evening a timid looking native turned up in a canoe and informed us he was the chief of the town. We asked where all his people had gone, and he told us they had all made off as they were too frightened of the soldiers to remain at home. He, like the others, promised to give us assistance, and we told him that if he did not, his town would be burnt. Next day (30th) by way of a diversion to show we meant business we steamed down to Amassana, which was a big town supposed to be friendly, and fined them 25 goats and 20 chickens for non-assistance; then returned to Agbeni, burned half of it and left a small garrison of 1 non com. and 12 men to keep the natives out of their homes, went on to Akumbri and Kabiana where

the same procedure was gone through of burning half the town and leaving a small garrison, and then we went on up to Agura where we anchored for the night, all of us tired out with this incessant incendiarism. Our work for this day was not over yet, as about 9 p.m. Colonel Montanero conceived the extraordinary idea of burning a town at night. Here was a nice game. What men we had on board we had put into some of the houses for the night so the "fall in" was sounded to get them on board again, When the town was fully ablaze it was a magnificent sight, but as an effective method of capturing Bibi Cala it was worse than useless. October 1st was spent in a continuance of yesterdays incendiarism by burning every town or farm we could see I shudder to think how many homes we have destroyed in these two days. On our way back to Egbbeddi in the afternoon we passed by Sabagreia and told our old friend Chief Ijor that most likely we should burn down Sabagreia the next day. Late that evening the old scoundrel sent down to us to say that he thought he knew where Bibi Cala was hiding, and that if Colonel Montanaro would reward his men they might possibly be able to capture him. They went off in their own canoes about 9 p.m. and returned about 3 a.m. on the 2nd, making an unearthly noise of yelling and shouting. At the bottom of one of the canoes lay the famous Bibi Cala, tied hand and foot. They had found him asleep all by himself in a hut about 2 miles away. He was brought on board the "Valiant" and a strong guard put over him to prevent his escaping. Later in the day he was brought up before the Colonel to be interrogated. He was a very fine type of man standing well over six feet. The interview proved to be a very interesting one, as he showed the

greatest contempt for all of us, and freely expressed his opinion by means of our interpreter. He informed us of one or two interesting facts, one of which was that four days previous he had been fired at by a white man when he was escaping from his hut, but that his juju was too strong for the bullet which had only struck and splintered his paddle. This was the shot I mentioned as having fired on the 26th. The other fact he told us in answer to our question, how he came to be caught, is both interesting and curious as showing the intense belief of the native in things spiritual. I give his own words—"The white man would never have captured me, but does the white man remember the day the canoes went up and burnt my own huts? Well, when my hut was burnt all my medicines were destroyed, and I could not on my return make myself any more into a bird and fly away." Asked where he had been all the time, he told us he had been living in a canoe and had never been anywhere near the towns we have burnt.

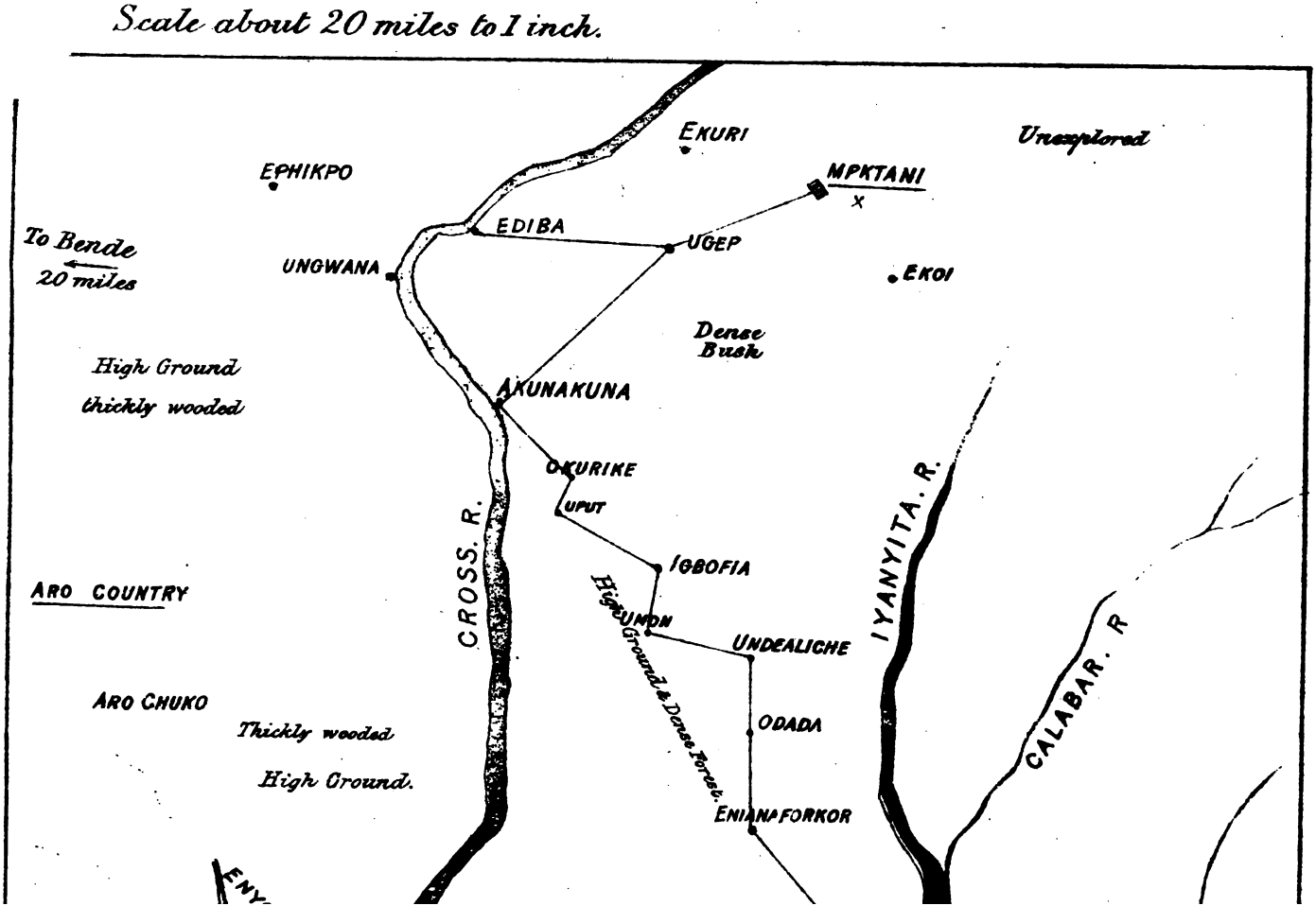
We now went round and picked up all the little garrisons that had been left in these places, and went on up to Asaba, where Moore's lot were disembarked, and Bibi Cala handed over to the Civil authorities to be tried for murder and sedition for which he was eventually hanged. Asaba was reached on October 4th, and the following day we returned down river to Brass, arriving there on the 6th, when all my commando were disembarked to await transport back to Old Calabar. On the 7th, the Colonel, Hosley and myself, with Whitehouse and Harrison, the two district commissioners, returned to Sabagreia, arriving there about 8 p.m., in order to hold a big meeting of chiefs. The meeting took place at 7 a.m., on the 9th, and an enormous concourse of natives attended to

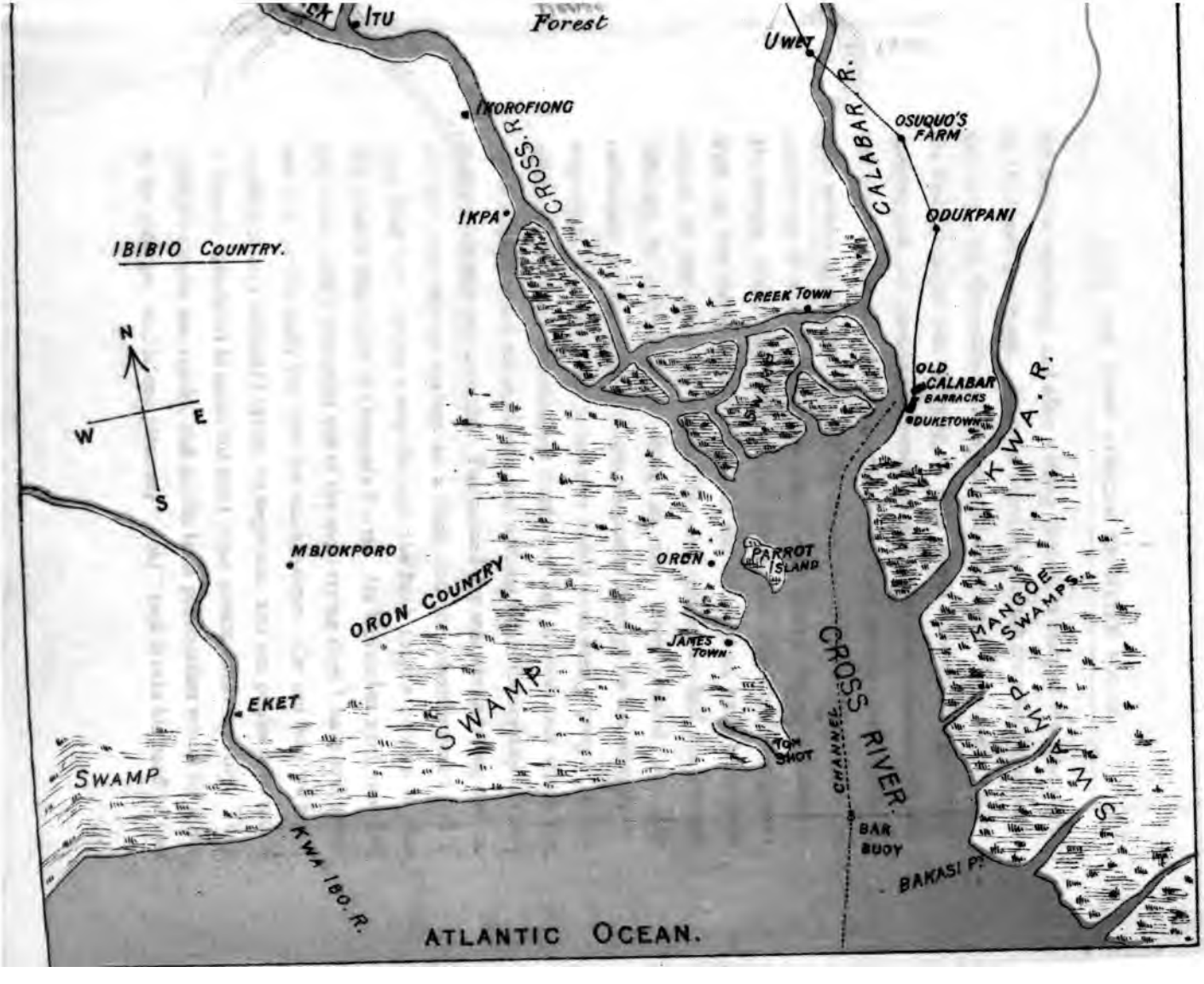
hear what the white consul, Whitehouse, was going to say. He informed them by means of an interpreter that Bibi Cala had been captured, after having for years disobeyed the British Government, and that he would be very heavily punished. With the capture of Bibi Cala peace must now reign in this district and they would now be able to trade freely with the white man and amongst themselves, and above all they must listen to the words of the white man, which were law. The meeting lasted about two hours as there were various matters to be discussed, and at the termination we all returned by the "Valiant" again to Brass to await means of returning to Old Calabar. Thus ended the much-talked-of Brass river expedition, but I wish that the capture of Bibi Cala had been effected in a more sportsmanlike manner. What chance had these wretched natives against such a heavily equipped expedition. I am convinced, though, that had matters been arranged and carried out in a more satisfactory way at the commencement of the campaign that all this unnecessary burning of villages could have been entirely dispensed with. Everyone was very glad it was over, as it had been a very unpleasant and trying time for all of us. We had not been still one second during the entire three weeks, and on account of the nature of the work and the country we had to work in it is astonishing how well everyone lasted through it. Naturally we all had attacks of fever, which is not at all surprising considering we had been living for three weeks in the swamps. The wonder is we did not all die from the effects. Colonel Montanaro took me back to Old Calabar with him, in order that I might fix up various matters in connection with my men and then start off again immediately on another expedition in a country no white man has ever

yet been to, which lies between the Cross river and the sources of the Calabar river. We left Brass on October 11, and late next day arrived at Old Calabar, but a shock awaited us on arrival, namely, that all operations are to be suspended for a time on account of the expected arrival of General Kemball the Inspector General of West Africa, who reaches Old Calabar about Nov. 18th, on a tour of inspection. My commando turned up at headquarters three days after me, having come round by sea on the "Ivy," and neither the men nor myself are sorry for a few days very welcome rest, before starting off again. General Kemball arrived at headquarters on November 14th, and inspected us there, leaving on November 18th, to go round and inspect various other detachments quartered at out stations. I now come to the Mkptani expedition commanded by Major Mackenzie, R.A. As there are now no facilities for transporting the troops up river, we have got to march the entire distance to Ugep, which is to be made a place of concentration for us and the other troops from Bende and Efikpo, who are to join us there on November 30th, in all a force of about 450 men, with 10 European officers.

In order to give you a good idea of the country and of bush fighting, I will give a detailed account of this expedition, as it bears a very striking contrast to the expedition which has recently concluded. The portion of the expeditionary force from headquarters left Old Calabar on November 21st, on its march of 100 miles to Ugep. Each officer is allowed to have five carriers for his own personal use, and these five have got to carry one's entire outfit and provisions for two months, which is about the average margin settled on as regards time, as you can never tell how long or how short these expeditions will be. It was a terrific

Map showing the country round Old Calabar, and also the march taken by the troops on the Mpktani Expedition.




Forest
ITU
UWET
IKOROFIONG
CROSS R.
CALABAR R.
OSUQUO'S FARM
IKPA
ODUKPANI
IBIBIO COUNTRY.
CREEK TOWN
OLD CALABAR
BARRACKS
DUKETOWN
N
W
E
S
KWA R.
MBIOKPORO
ORON
PARROT ISLAND
ORON COUNTRY
JAMES TOWN
MANGROVE SWAMPS
EKET
SWAMP
TOM SHOT
CHANNEL
CROSS RIVER
BAR BUOY
BAKASI Pt
KWA IBO R.
ATLANTIC OCEAN.

hot day for marching, and after a tiring march we camped the first night on Odukpani (see map). It was a weird sight to see the start from head-quarters. All the soldiers wives tramped along beside their husbands for the first two miles out, carrying on their heads such various articles as cooking pots and pans, or any small necessary that the soldiers might like and when we turned all the women back, they gave to their husband, such articles as they had carried for them, which gave them more the appearance of a tinker's barrow than a well armed force of Infantry. Mackenzie, Mair, who acted as staff officer, and myself took our ponies with us, but owing to the nature of the country we have been quite unable to ride them at all, and in some places we had the greatest difficulty in getting them along at all. They created no little excitement at the various villages we passed through on the way, as the majority of the inhabitants have never before even seen a pony. At one village we three all mounted our steeds and had a short race which the entire village turned out to witness, but nothing would induce any of them to approach near the animals. The second day was also a trying one, as our path was only an apology for a track, and the advance guard had a very busy time cutting a way through the bush for the column in rear We stopped that night at Osuquo's Farm. On November 23rd, the road got worse, and it was quite one of the most trying days I have ever spent not only for the body but also for one's temper. On our way we had a number of very awkward creeks to negotiate, and our ponies behaved in a manner calculated to make the most pious person swear heartily. They refused to swim the creeks, and on the least provocation would lie down in the swamps, and in one place my " doki " took it into his head he was

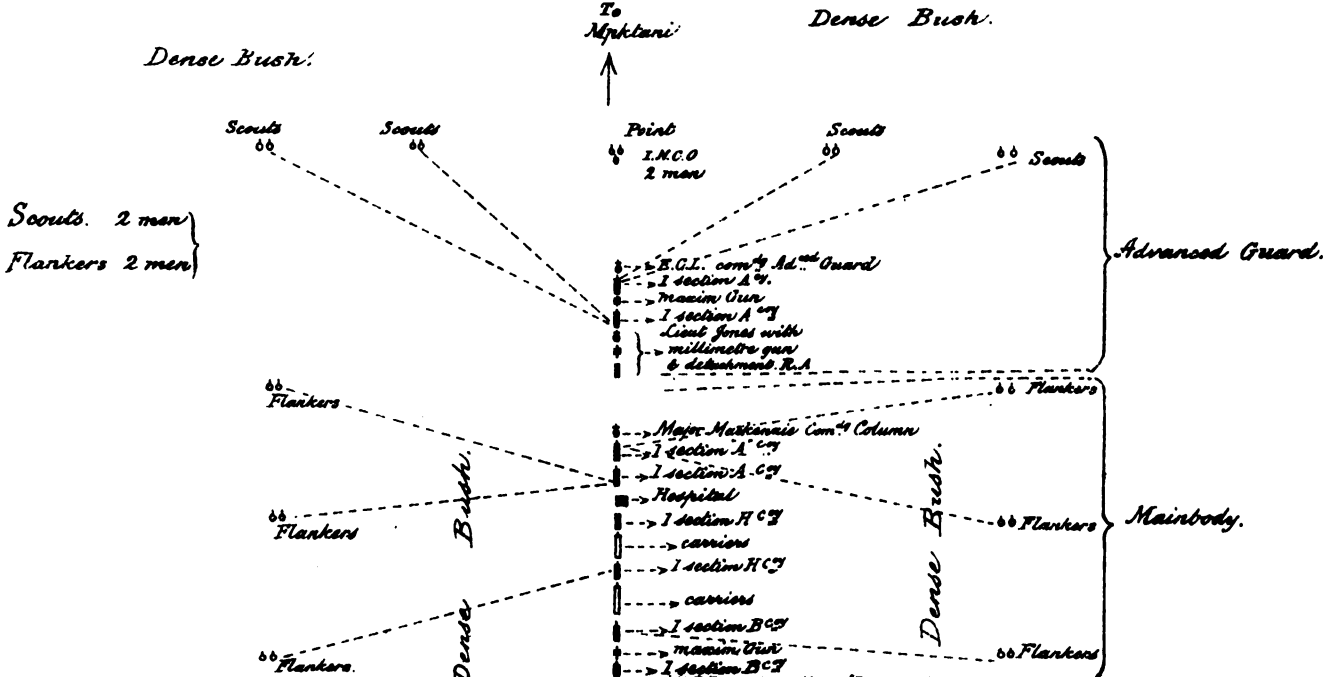
tired and would like to rest in a creek. I have seen some obstinate animals but nothing compared to the pig-headedness of my pony on that occasion. We eventually arrived at the Old Calabar river where the entire force, ponies and all had to be ferried across by canoe, which took sometime, and Mackenzie's pony here took it into its head to fall out of the canoe, and had to swim the rest of the way across. After all had crossed, we marched on a short distance to Uwet, where we camped for the night. I won't detail the remainder of the march, but we did eventually arrive at Ugep, on the 28th. All the way up we had passed through many kinds of country. Sometimes we marched for hours through the black darkness of the silent and uncanny forest, where not a sound was heard except that made by the men tramping along; at other times our way led through the endless bush, where a path had to be cut to let us pass, or else up steep and stony hills or through the thickly planted yam fields bordering some native village. Here and there we had to cross a creek by means of a native bridge which is one of the most perilous proceedings I know of. The bridge only consists of a long straight tree, cut down so as to fall from bank to bank, and over this you had to walk ; one false step means good-bye, as below you is a raging torrent. As the country changed in aspect so did the natives in regard to their style of dress ; sometimes nothing but the loin cloth adorned their bodies, at other times you would find them decked out in the most gorgeous and fantastic clothes. It all depended upon how deep civilization had penetrated or how progressive they might be. Another style of personal adornment was the different ways the women had of doing their hair, which were too many and varied for me to give a description

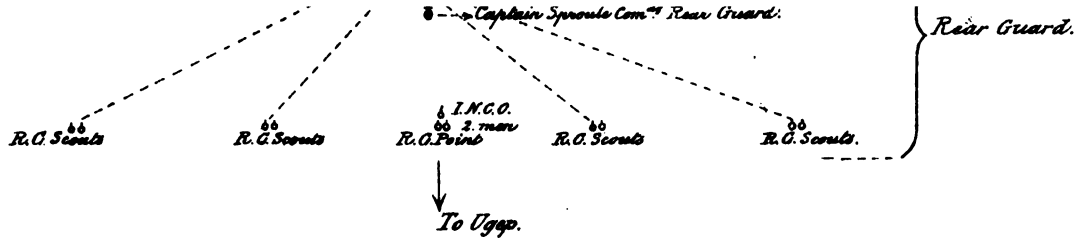
of, any of which must be seen to be properly appreciated. At one place we arrived at, all tired out, our midnight slumbers were rudely disturbed by some of the villagers "making juju" which consists of getting drunk on gin and marching round the town about midnight shouting and yelling at the top of their voices. Hearty curses on our part had no effect at silencing the pandemonium and the next morning we discovered they had been celebrating the anniversary of the death of a big chief; what a nice cheery way of doing it! Interesting as were the various phases of native life we passed through on that march, no one was sorry to reach our destination at Ugep. This is one of the biggest towns in Southern Nigeria containing an enormous native population, who are the best of friends with the white man. Considering this fact it is an extraordinary thing that the chief peculiarity about Ugep is that none of the women wear any clothes at all. We asked the reason and they told us that it was a "juju" that if the women put on any clothes they would at once die! Many of the people here had never before seen a white man, and the curiosity they exhibited when we all took our evening bath was certainly flattering if rather embarrasing. The day after our arrival that is on Nov. 29th, we all took a rest and awaited the arrival of the other detachments who turned up the next day. On this day (29th) I was sitting talking to Mackenzie outside his tent when all the head chiefs of the town came down to give us greeting and squatted in a half circle opposite to us. After they had all bowed and touched the ground with their forehead, which is their way of saying good-morning, Mackenzie asked if the head chief would like a drink. The old boy readily agreed and Mackenzie proceeded to mix the following ingredients in a tin mug:

whisky, gin, Worcester sauce, tabasco sauce and chutney, pepper, mustard and salt—stirred it all up and gave it to the old man to drink. You may not believe me when I tell you that he drank it down without a blink, stroked his stomach and asked for more! It was a perfect study in expressions to see the faces of all the other chiefs while he drank this awful mixture, and after he had said a few words to them in his own tongue, which was evidently to say how good it was, they all clamoured to be given one. This could not be agreed to at all as it meant our wasting too much good stuff. None of us thought for a moment that the chief would drink it, but then a native's inside is made of cast-iron and nothing affects them. All day long they kept bringing us gifts of eggs and fowls; the former were always a doubtful luxury as it was long odds on the majority being bad. Sproule and the Efikpo detachment arrived on the 30th, and the following day, December 1st, Macdonnell arrived with the detachment from Bende which enabled us to leave Ugep and march into the Mpktani country on the 2nd. The village of Mpktani is about 8 miles away and the boundary between there and Ugep about 4 miles off. I will give a detailed account of that day as showing what real bush fighting is like, and I have also given a sketch-map of the exact appearance of the column in the bush, in order to give you some sort of idea of how a column marches along when it is actually engaged in fighting.

It was about 6 a.m. on the 2nd when the column started, while all the Ugepians turned out to see us move off. Our order of march was the same as shown on the map with the exception that we had no scouts or flankers out till we reached the boundary between the Ugep country

Sketch showing the exact dispositions of the force when marching through the Mpktani country, and also giving the composition of the force. The entire country is dense bush, and for the greater part of the march the advanced guard, in addition to its fighting, had to cut a path through the bush to facilitate the advance of the column in rear.





Strength of Column.

Column consisting of British Officers - 10
„ N.C.O.'S. - 5
Political Officers 1
Doctor 1
Total Europeans 17

Guns
1 Millimetre Gun.
3 Maxim Guns 303.

Native Soldiers "A" company 140
"B" „ 140
"H" „ 80
R.A „ 30
Total Fighting Force = 390 men.

600 Carriers.

and the Mpktanis country. Before starting, six Ugep men were taken as guides to show us the way, and they appeared fully dressed in all their war-paint and were handed over to my charge as commanding the advance guard. I warned them that if they showed any sign of fear they would be shot, and also noticed that one of them carried an egg in his hand, the use of which I discovered later. Our progress was very slow, because the entire column had to march in Indian file owing to the narrowness of the bush path.

When we got to the boundary, I sent back to Mackenzie to say I would halt and put out my scouts here, which would also enable the main body to put out their flankers as shown on the map. While this was being done I discovered the use of the egg which the guides had brought and which may be of interest to relate. Each of the six men took the egg in his hand and gently rubbed his face with it. When all had done this, they knelt down and scraped a small hole in the ground just off the path, and into this hole they put the egg, leaving it exposed, —at the same time they all bowed to the egg, touching the ground with their forehead. At the conclusion of this ceremony, I asked the interpreter what it all meant, and he told me that this was the juju of the Ugep people against the Mpktanis' bullets, which meant that none of them would be struck by the bullets. As one of these men was badly wounded about an hour afterwards, I often wonder if their faith in this juju is as strong as ever.

When we started on again our rate of progress was slower than ever, as the bush became much thicker and the leading "point" had to keep in line with the advance scouts, who have to cut

their way through the dense bush—one man cutting a path with his "machete," which is a kind of very big carving knife, and with which all troops are supplied, while his companion keeps beside him ready to shoot anyone in front. It is quite wonderful the pluck that these soldiers show in the bush; and to do scouting well it requires a very great deal of courage, as you never can possibly tell where a bushman may be lurking to have a pop at you at about 5 yards' range. We very soon found out that we were in for a stiff fight, because shots were being exchanged pretty freely in front, and then the Mpktanis started shouting and yelling at the top of their voices. I asked the interpreter what it all meant, and he said some of them wanted to give in but they could not make up their minds; however, their courage apparently prevailed, as when we dashed forward with half a dozen men, we came into a pretty hot fire which killed one man and wounded the guide. All this time the fighting was becoming pretty heavy all round, but the bushmen did very little more damage.

We found out that they were occupying some trenches close to the path, and by a flank attack on the right under the command of my sergeant-major, Suberu Ilorin, the bushmen were turned out and routed. We then found that their stubborn resistance had been to defend their yamstacks, and when I reached them I sent back to Mackenzie to say I would halt and let him close the column up; then we decided to take a short rest and have a bite of food. We had then been at it for about four hours, although it has taken so little time to write it down, and were congratulating ourselves on having got thus far with comparative little loss when suddenly a terrific fire was opened on us from the bush on the

left of the yamstacks, which caused all the carriers to stampede, and it was all we could do to get the brutes to lie down, while we turned the bushmen back again and restored a temporary quiet.

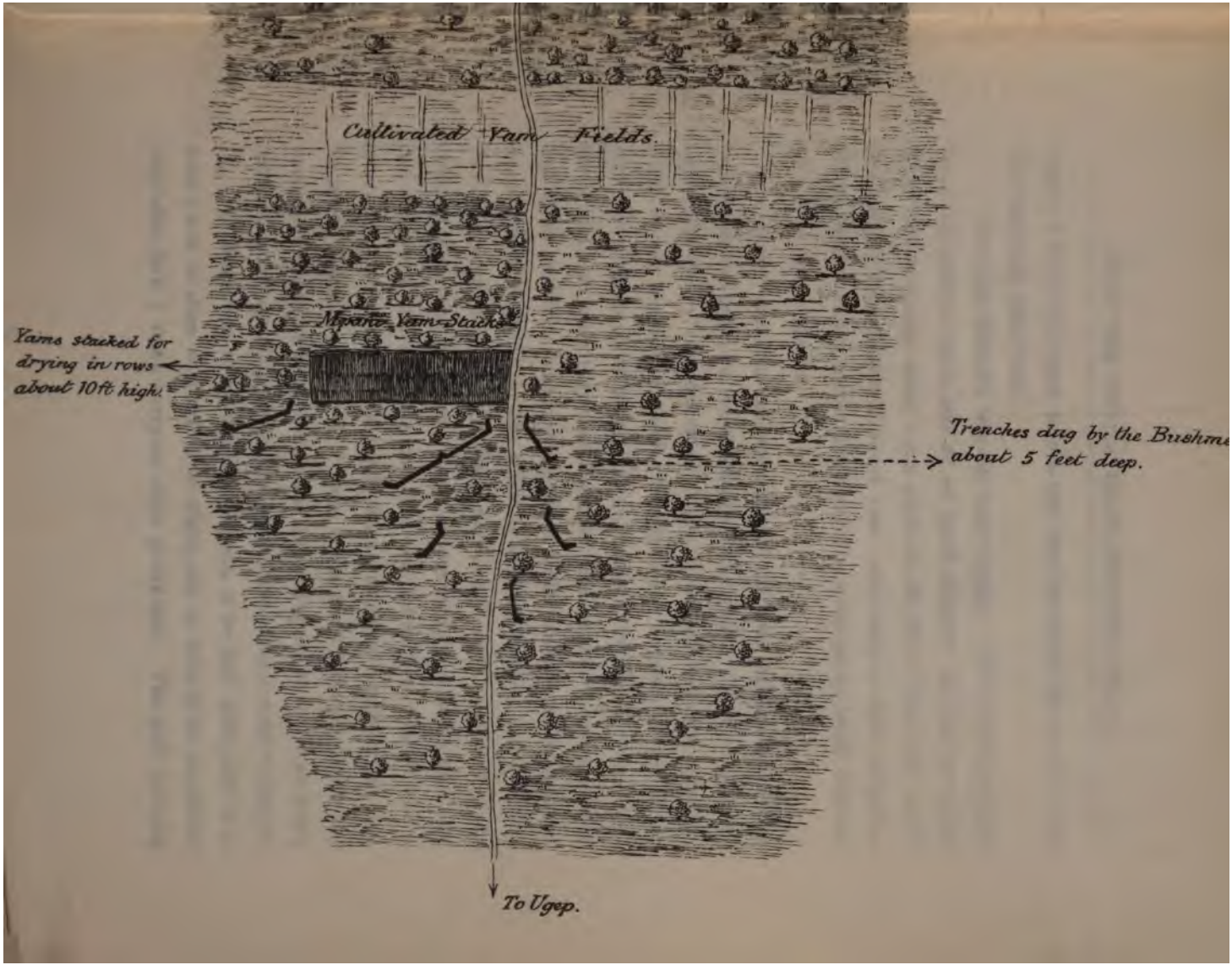
Thinking the bushmen might give us more trouble than we cared about if we remained here, Mackenzie sent word up to me to go on as soon as possible. I had not gone many yards with the "point" when an infernal bushman fired at me about five yards off, but fortunately aimed too high. The Mpktanis did not give us much trouble now for a bit, which made us think they were reserving their powder and shot for another determined stand nearer their town. It seemed a long way on to their town, and whenever the interpreter asked the guides how far it was he always got the same answer, "short far," which may mean any distance you like to name. However, we found out soon enough that we were getting nearer by the advanced scouts being fired on, and very soon a pretty heavy fire on my right flank told where they were thickest.

I had to reinforce my right flank scouts with about 12 more men and then the firing became pretty general all round, as I could hear the mainbody flankers getting it pretty warm and also the Rearguard, in fact we were being attacked all round, and could only advance at a snail's pace. The bushmen were trying on a very favourite game of theirs, which is to cut the column in half, a fairly easy thing to do, but Mackenzie was more than a match for them and soon put an end to that game. Finding that everything was all right behind me, I went on again and found the Mpktanis again occupying trenches on both sides of the path which necessitated another flank movement by Suberu Ilorin who, old soldier as he was, soon turned them out. A short

distance behind these trenches lay the town, which now and then I could catch a glimpse of through the bush, so sent back to Mackenzie to say I was close on the town and would rush it if he agreed. I called up all the available men I could spare, and rushed on to the place through it, and lined out on the opposite side, sending Sergeant Francis to do the same on the left flank, and Lieut. Elliot to the right to join up with the right of my line. So we had taken their town, but it we thought for a second that the fighting was over, it was a great mistake. The town was surrounded by dense bush, and these cunning bushmen kept on creeping up to the edge and blazing at the troops, and by this means killed and wounded a good many more men.

I then went back to Mackenzie and found him clearing a large space for the camp by cutting down all the bush, but leaving the trees standing. I told him things were getting rather warm for me in front, and asked if the millimetre gun might be taken up, which he granted. Sergeant-Major Klee brought it up and had no sooner fired a shot with it than he was badly wounded through the thigh, and had to be sent back. Mackenzie soon afterwards sent up to say he had made a camp —that I was to retire my men to the camp and burn the town as I retired. What a bonfire it made!—which seemed to exasperate the bushmen to such an extent that they crept round the very right-hand corner of the town and went for Sproule and the rearguard for all they were worth, but inflicted very small damage. Each commando was then told off to guard certain sections of the camp, keeping a ring of sentries round the entire perimeter, which had our tents and the hospital and carriers in the centre. These bushmen were the most persistent

Sketch showing the two positions held by the Bushmen, first at the yam stacks, and secondly a short distance from the town; also showing the trenches dug by the Bushmen. The RED LINE shows the place occupied by our camp after the town had been destroyed X is the spot the Bushmen collected at for their night attack on the 3rd, and the waterhole is shown on the left about 1,500 yards from the town, which was our only water supply.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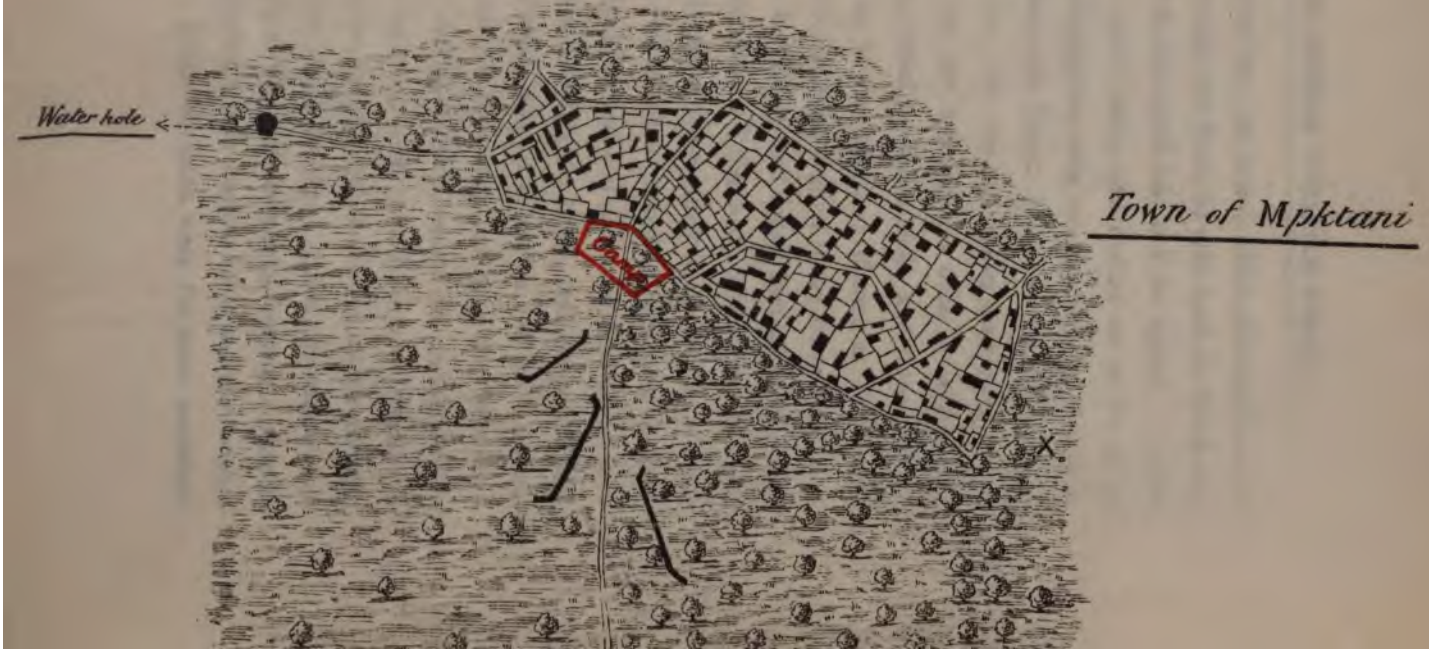
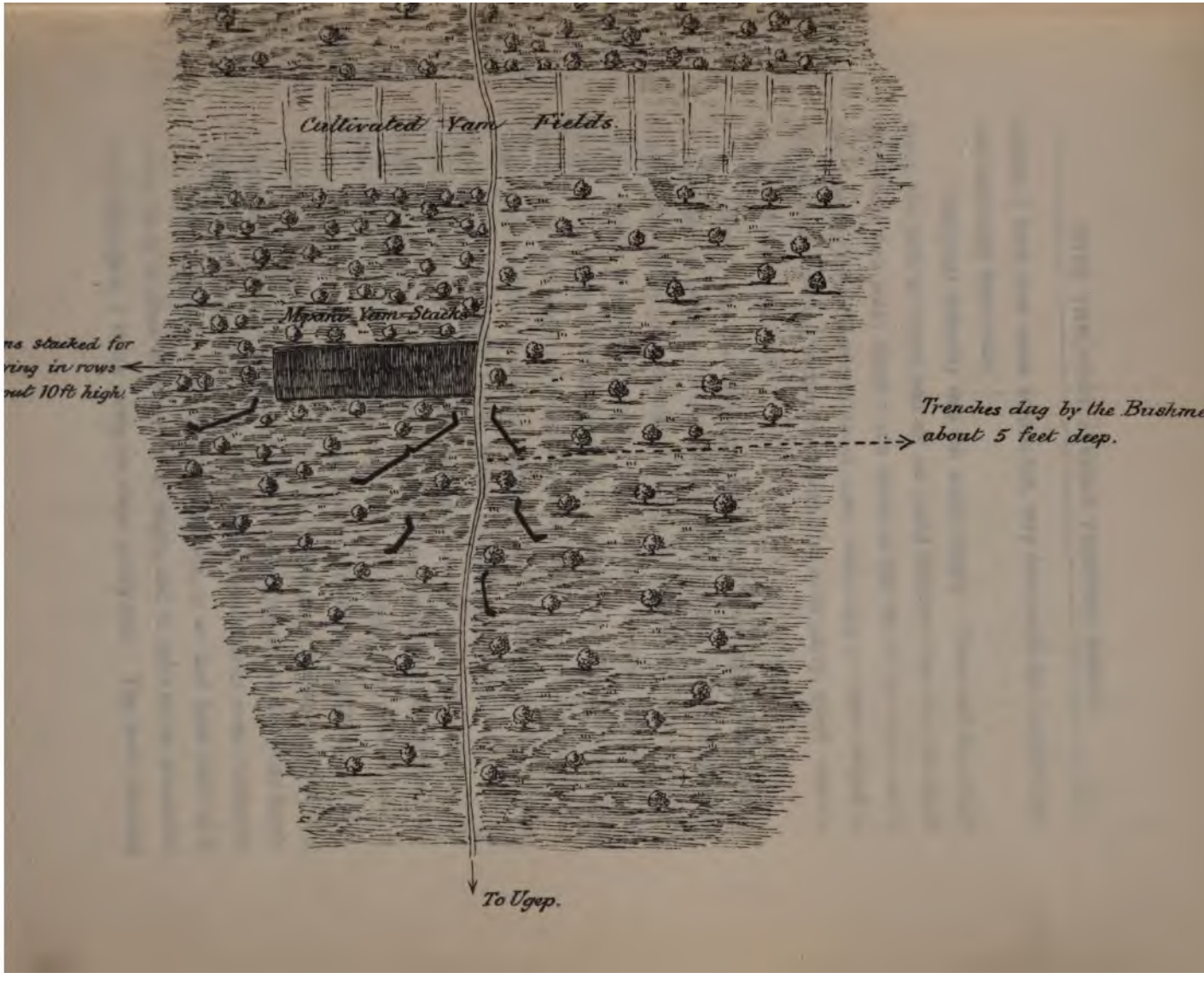
Myiarte Yam-Stacks.
Yams stacked for drying in rows about 10ft high.
Trenches dug by the Bushmen about 5 feet deep.
To Ugep.

Sketch showing the two positions held by the Bushmen, first at the yam stacks, and secondly a short distance from the town; also showing the trenches dug by the Bushmen. The RED LINE shows the place occupied by our camp after the town had been destroyed X is the spot the Bushmen collected at for their night attack on the 3rd, and the waterhole is shown on the left about 1,500 yards from the town, which was our only water supply.

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snipers I have ever come across, but, very fortunately for us, their aim was extremely inaccurate.

One great difficulty was our water supply. There had been none along the path we came, and all we could discover here was the small water-hole (see map) about 1,500 yards to the left of the town—not a great supply for a column of about 1,000 men—and we were obliged to always send a strong escort down with the water-party, which meant a good deal more fighting.

About 7 p.m. the bushmen slacked off their sniping and left us in comparative peace for the remainder of the night. Our casualties had been rather heavy, considering all things, as we had two men killed and about twenty wounded, including Sergt. Klee. A good number of the latter were results of the sniping from the bush after the town had been taken, and also when they went down to fetch water—the reason being that these particular bushmen are much better shots than the average, on account of their call in life, which is elephant-hunting, and owing to this they acquire the use of their guns much more readily than the ordinary hinterland bushmen. A rather interesting fact about this town and country is that no white man has ever before been near it, and it is largely due to this fact that the Mpktanis made such a good fight of it, for which I admire them. If I were in his place I should object very strongly to the white man coming and subjecting me to the white man's rule, and would certainly not let him come there without some resistance.

It was a very tiring day for everyone, as we had been hard at it from 6 a.m. to close on 8 o'clock at night, and in spite of an occasional shot after dark, I think everyone slept pretty well. The next morning

(3rd) I took a party of men to escort the carriers back to the yamstacks to fetch yams for the consumption of the troops, and Sproule went with a party to the water-hole to fetch water. I had a little fighting, but no casualties, and Sproule also experienced some resistance. While we were both away, Mackenzie had collected all other troops available and completed the destruction of the town, during which he suffered a good deal from the bushmen sniping, and had another European wounded—Sergeant Pritchard, of the Coldstream, who was badly hit in about twelve places, but fortunately not serious.

Late that evening, about 9 p.m., we saw and heard very suspicious movements on the part of the bushmen, whom we could faintly see assembling in the south-east corner of the town (at X on the map). It looked very like preparations for a night attack, so Mackenzie ordered the Millimetre gun and two Maxims to be turned on to that spot. When he gave the word we all fired as hard as we could—Jones working his gun and Sproule and myself each handling a Maxim. You never heard such a noise, but it had the desired effect of making all the bushmen disperse and leave us in peace. Just to inform them we were awake we fired a couple of star shells right over the trees into the bush, which must have caused immense astonishment to the savages.

As long as I live I shall never forget the comical appearance that fusilade must have presented—all of us in pyjamas working our respective guns. We heard later that our surmise was correct, and that the bushmen were actually concentrating for a night attack, but they failed to deliver it on account of our fire, which killed about 100 of them, completely demoralising them—at least, so the Mpktanis told us when they finally gave in, but personally I believe they exaggerated the figures.

On the 4th I again went down to the yamstacks to collect food, and also went on to the Ugep boundary to pass a runner with despatches through, but neither going or coming back did I encounter any resistance. On my return to camp one of the bushmen had been shot by our sentries, and I witnessed an act of cannibalism the details of which I will not disgust my readers by repeating. Don't for a moment suppose any of the soldiers took part in it, as the guides we had taken from Ugep were the only actors in it. It was very speedily put a stop to, and the men all subjected to a good flogging—much to their annoyance, as they failed to see that their act was contrary to all laws. Out here it is the native custom that, when two villages are at war with each other, they may eat any of their opponents whom they kill. It is one of the principal native customs which we are doing our best to stamp out, and so far success has been pretty general; but in these hinterland towns, where interference in native customs is not by any means welcomed, it is very much harder to convince the native that cannibalism is a thing that the white man will not countenance. They say that when the white man takes the native for a guide to show him the road, and when they indulge in their right, that all reward they get is a flogging. It will be many years before this cannibalism is completely crushed, and even then I have no doubt at all that where the native is not allowed to exercise his custom in public he won't hesitate to do it secretly.

On December 5th I left Mpktani at 6 a.m. and escorted all our sick and wounded through to Ediba, about 16 miles; sent them all down by canoes to Old Calabar on the 6th, and then returned to Mpktani on

7th, where I found that the bushmen had given up the unequal contest and surrendered. A big meeting was held of all the chiefs of Mpktani, Ekoi, Ugep, Ediba, and Akuri on the 8th, at which Harcourt, the political officer, gave an address, setting forth the usual thing—that they must obey the white man's law and trade, and remain at peace with their neighbours.

On the 8th the Expedition broke up, all the detachments going back to their several stations. The headquarter contingent marched down to Akunakuna and thence by river in canoes to Old Calabar. On the way from Mpktani I got very ill with fever and blood-poisoning, and on arrival at headquarters had to be sent into hospital, where I remained till January 1st, 1904, on which date I was put on board the homeward-bound mail. Thus ended my time in Southern Nigeria, and a most interesting experience it had been. I have often been asked if I liked being out there, and I can without hesitation say "yes," because it is an experience of great interest to anyone who cares to risk going to an unhealthy country for it. One word more, and that is a word of praise to the black troops. To realize their pluck and their devotion to their white officer is a thing to be seen to be appreciated.

BRITISH NIGERIA.

I have very little doubt that the majority of English people have practically no idea of where Nigeria is, or what sort of a country it is. If anyone cares to read the following pages, they will find that in them I have endeavoured to give some idea of the country, its various inhabitants and their many ways and customs, and, in addition, have tried to point out that Nigeria has a great future before it, not only commercially, but in a small way politically.

Nigeria is situated in the very corner of the Gulf of Guinea, and is bordered on the west by the colony of Lagos and on the east by the German Cameroons. It has a hinterland comprising an area of about 400,000 square miles, or more than three times the size of the British Isles. Of the two Northern Nigeria is much the larger, being 320,000 square miles against the 80,000 of Southern Nigeria. Its climate is bad and always will be, because of the fact that the whole of the coast line is a belt of low-lying, swampy ground, varying in width from a few to perhaps a hundred miles. The climate varies a good deal, because the further into the hinterland you go the higher the ground becomes, but nothing will ever alter the badness of the climate.

One of the chief characteristics of Nigeria is its rivers. There are not a great number of them, but they are chiefly remarkable for their immense length and size, which rise to an enormons height in the wet season, and so make up a magnificent waterway for commercial and other purposes. If it were not for these rivers, the interior of West Africa would probably be to-day an unknown land as far as we are concerned. To describe Nigeria briefly as I have seen it, you have for a commencement the Niger Delta, a land of low-lying, swampy ground, intersected by a network of streams and creeks and impenetrable forest, and inhabited by a variety of pagan tribes, addicted to every kind of vile customs including cannibalism and human sacrifices. In this Delta land the principal tribes are the Idzo, nearest to the sea; then further inland the Ibo, up to the confluence of the Niger or Benné, where the Igara tribes live. After this the country changes in a marked degree, not only in the type of people, but also in the country itself, where high, rocky hills and open plains take the place of the low-lying swamps. This is mainly the difference between Northern and Southern Nigeria. In Northern you have this high-lying country open and fertile, while the majority of the country in Southern Nigeria is composed of these deadly swamps, with small parts of it high ground. Northern Nigeria consists of those territories with which the Niger Company made treaties, while Southern Nigeria consists of all those districts of the Delta and the countries previously known as the Niger Coast Protectorate. Such is briefly a description of Nigeria, and now I will deal mainly with Southern Nigeria, of which I was much better acquainted than with the more Northern parts.

CIVIL ADMINISTRATION.

The headquarters of the Civil Administration of Southern Nigeria are situated at Old Calabar, a town lying at the confluence of the Cross and Calabar rivers, and about 50 miles from the sea. It is in the very South Eastern corner of the protectorate, and it is here the High Commissioner resides. With Old Calabar as his headquarters, Southern Nigeria is divided up into four separate divisions—(1) the Western division at Warri, (2) the Eastern division at Bonny, (3) the central division at Asaba, and (4) the Cross River division at Old Calabar. Each of these divisions is under a Divisional Commissioner who has under him various district and assistant district commissioners located about his division according to its size, and the temperament of the various tribes in it.

In all these places, there are formed European courts for the maintenance of peace, and for the settlement of the various questions, and in addition to these, there have been formed within the last few years, Native courts and councils in order to render assistance to the European Commissioners. Such is briefly the administration of Southern Nigeria, but before proceeding, I should like to say a word about the situation of the headquarters. I must say that I fail to see that Old Calabar possesses any merit as a place from which to govern the rest of colony. To begin with it is in the farthest possible corner, there is no cable to it, and it is impossible for anyone to go from Old

Calabar to any other part of the Protectorate, not on the Cross River unless a journey by sea is taken round the coast. In fact at present, Old Calabar is the most isolated spot in the whole of Southern Nigeria. Whether the headquarters will ever be moved to a more central place, I do not know, but even if not, I do think steps might be taken to bring Old Calabar nearer to the rest of its country, by having at least a cable to it. If the High Commissioner wishes to communicate with the authorities at home—it may be of the very greatest importance—he has to send round to Bonny by sea, before he can cable; and there is not always the means to send round by sea.

MILITARY ADMINISTRATION.

The Third Battalion of the West African Frontier Force, or, as it is more generally called, the Southern Nigeria Regiment, was only started about four years ago, and is composed of about 25 officers, 10 British N.C.O.'s, and 1,000 men, including the headquarter staff and artillery, with permanent headquarters at Old Calabar. The rank and file are all taken and recruited from various parts of the colony, but chiefly from the more northern parts, and are taught their work and broken in by the European officers and N.C.O.'s. They make first-rate soldiers and splendid fighters in the peculiar style of fighting which one gets out there—unlike any other warfare that I know of. The reason that the men are mostly recruited from away north is because they make far and away better soldiers than if we recruited from the districts in the south, and also because the majority of the fighting which now takes place occurs against the tribes in the south, and it is of great advantage to have men who are in no way connected with those against whom the fighting is taking place. If treated in a proper way, these black troops become the most devoted of men, and will always follow their white officers. They will very soon tell what sort of an officer you are, and will act accordingly. If they don't care for you they will very soon show it, and then trouble arises, but if treated in a proper spirit there is nothing you can ask of them and they would not do. Another curious thing about them is they will always give their officers a nickname, which generally took the form of a native name, and when translated

into English would be a very fair interpretation of your character. I remember one officer had a native name which, when translated, meant "the man who gives a small punishment when he smiles." This was what they called an officer of artillery, because if a man was brought before him for some trivial offence he would as a rule admonish him with a smile. Another officer I know of, whom the men did not care much about, was called by a name which, when translated, meant "who make too much palaver," which signifies their displeasure at his always finding fault. My own men used to call me "Kai Lofia," but my modesty forbids me giving the translation of it, and let it suffice that it had a more flattering interpretation than the bearer deserved. By this name I was known to all the men under me, and if any man ever wanted to see me he would always ask for "Kai Lofia," in fact, I had no other name out there. The chief reason of the soldiers' devotion to his white officer out there is that the work of the officer is entirely different to what one has to do at home; you are everything to them and your work not only consists in looking after them in a military sense, but also all domestic affairs connected with your men are entirely in your hands. If any man wishes to take an extra wife into his already somewhat turbulent home circle, he has to ask his captain's permission, or *vice versa* if a man desires to divorce his wife and send her back to her own tribe, it is by your decision that he abides, and many are the intricate cases that I have had to deal with and give judgment on; and I will say one thing, he will always abide by the white man's decision, for his great ruling out there is the maxim that "what the white man says is law." This may give you some idea of what the little black soldiers are like.

But to go back a little to recruits. Most of our men are taken from practically two chief tribes, namely, the Yorubas, whose country extends at the back of Lagos, and from the Haussas, who come from Northern Nigeria, and before I go on I should like to say a little about these two tribes. Take the Haussas first. Where the Haussas originally came from no one really knows, but it seems pretty evident that, like many other tribes who live in this territory, they had many years ago migrated from the north to what is now known as the Haussa States. Their language is more widely used than any other in Africa, and also they have had a written language for over a hundred years. The Haussa is far and away superior to any other west coast tribe, both intellectually and physically. They have been and always will be known as the merchants of the Western Soudan. They are practically all Mohammedans, which may account for their possessing a certain amount of intelligence, compared with the pagan tribes, such as the Fulahs. And now comes a curious fact, that although the Fulahs completely conquered the Haussas about 1800, the conquered race still remains superior in many ways to its conquerors; the trade of the country is in the hands of the Haussas, and the Court language at Sokoto is Haussa, although Sokoto was the capital of the Fulah Empire.

The Yorubas, unlike the Haussas, are all Pagans, and their country is all the hinterland of Lagos Colony. Their disposition also is as unlike the Haussas as possible—the latter always a quiet and reserved person, while the Yornba is always cheerful and light-hearted. This part of their character is especially noticeable in camp, where you find that the Yorubas will all start dancing and singing at dusk and keep it

going till midnight, while the Haussa seldom, if ever, indulges in such gaiety. I don't suppose there is another tribe in the whole of Africa which is more superstitious than the Yoruba, who will cover himself with all kinds of charms previous to going to fight, in order to keep off the enemy's bullets. The Haussas are also superstitious, but not nearly to such an extent as the cheerful and ever-merry Yoruba. To hear the laugh of the Yoruba is a thing in itself, and I have seen men before going on parade laughing and dancing (for no reason) that you might really think they were mad. All these tribes are distinguishable by some peculiar trait of character, and in addition you can easily tell one from the other by their tribal markings. Every tribe has its own peculiar marking, generally executed by slashes across the face. The Haussa has three fine cuts down the cheeks, while the Yoruba has several cuts across the cheeks, and in addition the Yoruba has his two front teeth cut away so as to form an inverted V with what is left of these two teeth. Of these two tribes as fighters I think I prefer the Haussa. He is much steadier than the Yoruba, and can be depended on to a greater extent when in a tight corner.

The Southern Nigeria Regiment is divided up into about eight companies, each having its own British officers (generally two) and one British N.C.O., and in addition, there are various native N.C.O.'s with a company Sergeant Major who is a native. As a rule this C.S.M. is superior in class to all the others, and also an old soldier who can speak many different tribal languages. He is the most useful person possible, as he has tremendous influence over the men.

These eight companies are spread about all over Southern Nigeria in some places as an entire company and in others as detachments to keep the peace where there happens to be any European official resident. Only one company has its headquarters at Old Calabar, and that is the service company, which, except during the wet season, is hardly ever there, as it is all the rest of the time away on expeditionary work. Usually one particular company is kept at its station about a year, and then changes places with another, and so on each year so as not to keep the men too long in one place.

With regard to making oneself understood by the men, it is wonderful how quick they are at understanding the English word of command, and in case of any difficulty in that respect, your C.S.M. can come to your rescue, by giving whatever you say, its native rendering. My own particular C.S.M. went by the name of Suberu Ilorin, an old soldier, a wonderful fighter, and an excellent disciplinarian who knew more native languages than any man I ever met and what he did not know about bush-fighting was not worth knowing. Even now I often think of Suberu Ilorin and wonder if he has ever forgotten the day he had to swim half a mile through a swamp, not far from Sabagreia, fully armed and carrying 150 rounds of ammunition. It does not sound a very arduous task, but let anyone just try it and see how far they will get.

The thing that puzzled me more than anything out there was my first grappling with the names of my men. Nearly all of them are named according to the name of their tribe, This tribal name becomes their surname, and to explain it better I will give one or two instances.

"Suberu Ilorin." Ilorin is the name of his tribe, and Suberu is his own name, but he is always known by the two. "Adedeje Lagos," which shows you where he comes from. "Oje Momolosho," the last name being the name of a tribe. "Atta Igarra." Igarra being the name of the tribe, and, unless my memory has played me false, "Atta" means "King of," although the man I am writing of was no more king of Igarra than I am. A great many men will give themselves fancy names and then add on their own tribal name. Of course, in a number of cases you have men with just their plain native name, such as my pony-boy who was called "Awudu," or who give themselves fancy names in no way connected with Africa at all, such as "Revolver."

Two of the very best natives I had out there were my own personal boy and my orderly. The latter was an excellent old man who went by the rather jaw-breaking name of Issaarkar Kojairie, but as he had a few white hairs on his head and a little beard exactly like a goat, he was always called "Baba," which signifies beard. He was a Haussa and a most useful person, and never left my side the whole time I was out there; a more devoted retainer I have never seen. There was nothing he could not do, from scouting through the thick bush to cleaning my boots or waiting at mess. There was one thing I could never get him to understand, and that is that the right boot is meant for the right foot, and likewise the left boot for the left foot. It never struck him the boots might be different, because they don't wear any, and their chupplies, which are sort of sandals they wear in the bush, have no difference at all.

My own personal boy was a treasure not easily picked up out there, and he, too, stayed with me all the time. Also a Haussa, he was called "Pickon"—his real name was Pickon Lokoja, as he came from Lokoja, and he obtained the name Pickon from having started life when about two foot high, as boy to a British N.C.O., who called him by that name on account of his height. All little children are called pickons, derived, I suppose, in some way, from pickanniny. This boy Pickon, in addition to being an excellent servant—he was about twelve years old when I had him—was also a brilliant linguist, could understand and talk English very well, and on account of his intimate knowledge with many tribal languages, he many times acted as my interpreter. He always showed an intense curiosity to know what England was like, or as he always called it, "the white man's country," and as I had my own papers sent out to me, his curiosity was only increased by seeing the illustrated papers.

I remember so well on one occasion finding him sitting outside my tent engrossed in looking at *Black and White*. It happened to be the Ascot-week number, and he was gazing at one of those well-known double-page illustrations of the Enclosure at Ascot, depicting all the ladies walking about in the sun. I asked him what he now thought of the white man's country, but he rather surprised me by saying, "Massa, your country be no good." So I asked him why, whereupon he said, "Massa, your country be no good. I tell you why. You see all these mamies (women)—they be no good for them place, as they all go make too much palaver." He could not understand why they could possibly be all walking about and not fighting each other, as is the native custom

out on the West Coast. Whenever you get a few women together there is certain to be a fight.

There is one other story about Pickon which is rather touching. He always used to curl up in a corner of my room when I was in hospital at Old Calabar, and when it was decided to send me home I asked him what he would do. He implored me to take him to England, but I refused, and then he said he would not be anyone else's boy and would go back to his own country. I asked him what he would do there. His answer was, "Massa, I go back now to my own country and I sit down there and think all time of my massa, and I ask Allah all day to make massa quite well that he no be sick any more."

It is curious the lingo one talks out there to the natives who partially understand English. They can understand this pidgin English perfectly, whereas if you spoke to them as you do here at home they would not understand what you were talking about. To quote one instance, if you told your boy to go and get your helmet he would not understand you; but if you said to him "Go, catch them thing that live for my head," he would do it at once. Perhaps one of the best pidgin-English names I know of is what all missionaries are called, which is "God palaver man."

CIVIL AND MILITARY ADMINISTRATION.

I have mentioned in some previous pages the civil and military administration under two separate headings, and here I have combined the two together for a very special reason, which you will understand when you have read a little further. Being a soldier, perhaps I was, during the time I was in Nigeria, rather prejudiced against the civilian official; but on the other hand, if I had been a civilian official the conditions might have been reversed. One thing struck me in particular out there, and that was the feeling that existed between the two departments. It is to be very much regretted that any ill-feeling does exist, but there the fact remains—it does. And why? For the simple reason that each department thinks it can run the country without the assistance of the other.

Taking it from a military point of view, I will confess that if it was not for the soldiers there would not be a white man alive in Nigeria. All the natives out there are more afraid of, and show greater respect for, the soldier than all the civilians put together. All the expeditionary work of opening up the hinterland is done by the military, and in many places where the native would peacefully live under the eye of a military officer, there is placed in authority a civilian official for whom they don't care a little bit, whom they won't respect, and whom they will kill on the first available opportunity. This has happened times out of number—where, after an expedition is finished and the troops withdrawn, a civilian goes

there to try and impress the natives with his own importance. What happens? He is massacred, and then we have to go there again with an expedition. The authorities at home are to blame to a great extent, because they send out young civilians who have no idea of the country or what their work may be, and these youths suddenly find themselves placed in a very responsible position to which they are quite unaccustomed, and if anything goes wrong they are promptly dropped on to. It is not their fault. How can you expect a young fellow not to think he is of some importance if he suddenly finds himself ruler, more or less, of a district as large as Wales.

Again, too many of the older officials show the greatest dislike to having soldiers in their district at all, but it is generally very lucky for them there are soldiers there, otherwise they would all be massacred. They hate the soldiers because they try always to make out that they can rule their districts so well, and it is all so peaceful, that the soldiers are not required. I remember very well indeed when I was at Asaba, a certain district commissioner, who shall be nameless, and who had knocked about this world a good deal, was always boasting before all of us and before his own subordinates that his district was one of the most peaceful in Nigeria, and he was known all over it and respected by the natives, and could go anywhere by himself. About two days afterwards I was intensely surprised to get a note from him asking if I would provide an escort of soldiers to take him to visit a town about 15 miles inland from the river, as he did not consider it safe to go without any soldiers. Whether I gave him an escort or not I leave you to judge, after his previous boasting, but anyhow, my answer to him was forwarded to headquarters,

and I will confess that I not only got the best of it, but my friend was removed to another district. This is only one of many instances that I could quote, and it is a state of things very much to be regretted in a country in which the climate does not tend to improve one's temper or disposition.

MISSIONARIES.

There are four principal societies who have established missions in West Africa. Three of them are Protestant—namely, the Church Missionary Society, the Wesleyan Missionary Society, and the Scotch United Presbyterians—and the fourth is the Roman Catholic Mission, the chief representatives of which are the French, who have various stations on the Lower Niger. I feel that I am going to embark on rather a delicate subject, but one which appeals to every European who goes to the West Coast, because more trouble arises among the natives owing to these missionaries than to anything else. In some of their doings I have no doubt they do a tremendous lot of good by teaching the natives various trades, if they would only confine themselves to this. It is when the missionaries start and interfere with old native customs and ways that the trouble begins. You will never Christianize these natives, and it is here that so much trouble has occurred. As long as polygamy and domestic slavery exist, it will be an impossibility to attempt to Christianize the native. Do these missionaries expect a chief to discard twenty-nine of his thirty wives, and to free all his domestic slaves in order to become a Christian? Not a bit of it—he won't. When any trouble does arise the missionaries are the first people massacred, and because in many places the native connects him with witchcraft, and thinks all native trouble originates from him. No one is more superstitious than the native, and no living being resents

interference with their own particular customs and mode of living more than the native. No European would ever take as servant a boy who had been to a mission school, for the simple reason that by making them become Christians you soon teach them to become as cunning as monkeys, and to steal and do everything they ought not to. It is a subject open to a good deal of discussion, but for anyone who has been out to Nigeria and seen the work of the missionaries, I am certain they will say they do a lot more harm than good.

NATIVE CUSTOMS AND JUJUS.

The word Juju is used to indicate anything in connection with fetish or charm of any description, and some of the various native jujus are very curious indeed. Each man has his own little juju, each house, native quarter and village itself, have their own distinctive juju. The native priest is the Juju man, his temple is the Juju house, and if any native is required to take an oath, he "swears juju." Every native soldier when on an expedition carries something as a juju as a preventitive against disease or being shot, and their faith in them is wonderful. I have seen various jujus composed of old gin bottles, old skins of wild animals, or old shells, old bits of cloth, and even common stones and grass put up over the doorways of native houses, and if any family confab is held, it is held by the members near their juju. The native Juju house was as a rule, the best house in the village, open on three sides, against the back of which were placed colossal representations in mud or clay, of a man, woman, and child. All village disputes were held by the Chiefs in front or inside the Juju house. Above all these Jujus there was the Supreme Juju Court, known as "Long Juju" which was situated in the Aro Country, to the West of Old Calabar, and which was the cause of the famous Aro expedition in 1901. It was supposed to be near the town of Bendi, but the only people who knew its exact whereabouts were the head priests, and they would never divulge the secret. It was left to this Aro expedition to find out and destroy the most extraordinary native Juju.

The reason for the existence of this "Long Juju" was this: that if any local jujuman did not feel competent to deal with a case before him, he would refer the man to the Long Juju. He was then sent on his journey accompanied by a jujuman, who took him to this fatal spot blindfolded. What actually took place when the man arrived at Long Juju is unknown, and I doubt if it ever will be divulged. Two accounts which were supposed to be the facts were spread about, more to frighten the natives that anything else. The first was that the Supreme Judge was a priestess who possessed the power of knowing all things, and if the offender was guilty of his supposed offence when brought before her, he was supposed to become transfixed to the spot, then water was supposed to slowly rise around him until he was drowned. The other account was that the place was on an island, and when the victim arrived he had a sort of mock trial which always convicted him, and he was then immediately cast into an open tank of boiling human blood. Jujumen stood round this tank, armed with two-edged swords, with which they hacked his body to pieces and stirred up the contents of the tank.

Can you imagine how these two accounts must have overawed the superstitious native, and how great must have been the terror of being sent to Long Juju. No one was ever supposed to return alive after being to Long Juju, and even if a man did return he would never confess it, which would be of little use if he did, because his friends would never believe him, as anyone who went there was supposed to cease to live on entering this mysterious place, and that if he returned he came as either a spirit or some entirely different person. How it resulted in an expedition being sent against the Aros was this:—In 1899 a party of about 140

natives came in one day to the British official at Eket and asked for protection. They told him the extraordinary tale that they were the remnants of a party of about 800 natives who came about five years previously from the country round Abo, and had been sent from there to consult "Long Juju." They had been accused of witchcraft and various crimes, and had been promised absolution on the payment of heavy fines. When they had been taken near the place, they had been conducted for three months along winding paths in the bush, and finally accommodated in a village. Each day ten or a dozen of them had been taken to consult "Long Juju"—never to return to the village. Finally the others became suspicious and made a bolt for it, with the result that they were sent back to their own country under escort, and then was organised the Aro expedition for the purpose of locating and destroying this den of iniquity.

The Expedition, which was a large one, had a great deal of fighting, and when they eventually found this famous den at Aro-Chuku (see map), the appearance of it was simply extraordinary. In the middle of dense bush there was a hollow about 100 yards in circumference, surrounded by precipitous cliffs, some of them 70 feet high. It was approached by a narrow gorge at one end, and, just before the hollow was reached, the members of the Expedition found on the left the altar on which the sacrifices took place, under the shade of a palm tree on which was hung a live goat, while on the right was an enormous pile of skulls and jujus. In the centre of the hollow was a pool of water about two feet deep, full of crocodiles and catfish; a wall of altars round the pool, in the centre of which was an island. On this island were two altars—one composed of old trade guns and skulls, the

other of wood covered with bones, feathers, blood, and various kinds of votive offering. At the far end of the hollow, with a stream flowing beneath it, stood the great altar, composed of native matting. Native cloths were hung at the back of it, and it was surmounted by an enormous pile of human skulls, telling plainly what happened to all those who went to consult Long Juju.

What actually happened to anyone who went to Long Juju is to this day unknown, and years must pass before the native will have sufficient courage to reveal the secret. Some of the chief Juju-men are now in prison at Old Calabar; some have since died. Why the secret has been so well kept is partly that the native is too superstitious of future results to divulge it, and partly because any native who was let off at the Long Juju was usually blindfolded throughout the ceremony, and could not tell what took place. Such is a brief account of one of the greatest and most disgusting of all African jujus, and it is hard to believe that all this went on for years within 150 miles of Old Calabar.

Another story of a juju, which is vastly different, may amuse you, as I was partly the cause of it. When I was in Southern Nigeria I used to have my cigarettes sent out from England in small hermetically-sealed tins of 25 each, and when I had done with the tins I used to tell my boy to throw them away. One day I was rather astonished to see a native woman wearing one of these tins suspended from her neck as a locket. I asked my boy what he did with the empty tins, so he said, "I sell them to the mamies and they wear them for juju; they be good juju as they belong white man." I have no doubt you will find even now various of my old tins acting as juju out there. A cute boy was

Pickon! The natives have many forms of dancing and celebrating any important event, and the noise they make on these occasions is terrific. One of the chief occasions when they become particularly hilarious is when anyone of note dies, or on the anniversary of some chief's death. Well do I remember at Asaba the din that went on on these occasions. If some big chief dies all the village turn out in the gayest attire, with guns and tomtoms, and they usually start the day by putting more gin into their bodies than they are capable of holding. Then this drunken crowd proceeds to march round the town, shouting and yelling, firing off their guns and beating their tomtoms, as if they all seemed more than glad that the chief had departed this life. As a rule they generally had either a death or anniversary of one about four times a week, and, as they kept up this din till well after midnight, it was not a peaceful life by any means.

Another great occasion in the life of a native, is their Yam feast. The yam in Africa, is what corresponds to a potato in other countries, and each year they have a mighty celebration of the new yams. While I was at Asaba, one of the big chiefs asked me if I would care to go and witness their Yam dance; so I said "Yes." On the day of this function I went with another officer, Moore, accompanied by a small escort, as I had a very strong objection to going about 4 miles inland unprotected on such a festive day. We soon knew how near we were getting to the place by the noise the natives were making, and when we arrived at the place, we found an enormous open space about 80 yards square at the end of which was the Juju house. There must have been fully ten thousand natives there of all ages, and

we were soon the centre of a very bibulous and curious crowd. Having regard to the state the natives were in, I told Moore we must keep our eyes open. While we were waiting for the chief to come to us, a man more intoxicated than the rest, came up shouting in his native tongue, which I found out meant to ask what we wanted. I told him to go to—a warmer place than Nigeria, upon which he stood up in front of me and began to get so annoying that I pulled out my revolver and knocked him down with the butt end. Fortunately for us, the head chief came up and saw what had taken place, so I blamed him for allowing his natives to dare speak to a white man whom he had asked to witness the dance. He had the offender taken away and flogged, and meanwhile asked if we would go to the Juju-house and witness the dance. But after what had already taken place, and seeing how intoxicated the natives were, I said I would stay where we were.

You have no idea the extraordinary variety of dress the natives had garbed themselves in—some of it certainly scanty, but where a marked absence of dress was visible, curious designs in paint had been worked on their bodies which gave them a grotesque and hideous appearance. We did not stay very long, as the dance itself was a drunken orgie more than anything else, and Moore and myself were both very glad when we got back safely to Asaba.

All marriages between natives are also the subject of much revelry. When a girl reaches the age of marrying, she puts on all her finest clothes and marches round the town accompanied by a host of other girls. This, as a rule, produces some suitor for her hand, who immediately goes off to her parents and makes his offer. The marriage

is then arranged on purely business lines, the man paying the girl's parents so much. During the engagement the future bride is taken in hand by her relatives and very carefully fattened, as her beauty is estimated according to her fatness and the glossiness of her skin. Meanwhile the bridegroom is busy sending presents and intoxicating liquors to all the bride's relations and friends, and on the day itself feasting, dancing and revelry are kept up for a long time.

Deaths and burials are also the occasion for much dissipation. When any chief dies, all his relatives and friends at once celebrate the occasion by dancing and feasting, and sing the praises of the deceased; the only noticeable difference before burial being that, although a fast is proclaimed among the members, no abstinence from liquor takes place, so that on the day of burial everyone is in an advanced state of intoxication. In former years no chief was considered properly buried unless a certain number of his wives were buried with him, in order that, according to native custom, the man might enter on his new life properly attended by his wives according to his rank. But now human sacrifices are dying out, although I remember a certain town on the Niger where sacrifices were made of infants to the crocodiles in the river, and to my knowledge this still exists.

The principal ornaments worn by natives consist of rings, necklaces, bracelets, anklets, and nose ornaments. Probably the ones that are most noticeable are the anklets and nose ornament, for they have massive anklets of ivory, sometimes as much as eight or nine inches deep. They are generally formed from a hollowed-out tusk, through which their feet are passed before they stopped growing, so that when

they are grown up they cannot possibly be taken off. The discomfort of always wearing an article of this kind must be awful, as the weight of the ivory is so great. The people who generally wore these were the wives of more or less wealthy chiefs, and I believe the object was to prevent the wife running away, which it would very effectually do. Another form of anklet was one made of brass, and which looked more like a cymbal than anything else. These are welded on to the woman's foot and can never be taken off. A much rarer kind of decoration is the one in the nose. I saw a good many up the Cross River, especially at Ugep. They appeared to be small pieces of ivory cut like, and about as long as, an ordinary penholder. One of these sticks was put through each nostril, protruding up towards the eye, and made them look as if they had horns growing out of their nostrils. It did not, as you can imagine, improve their appearance.

Perhaps the commonest form of body adornment is the tattooing for decoration and also the tattooing for the distinctive tribal marking. It is all beautifully done, and done when they are very young by cutting into their flesh and then rubbing some colouring stuff into them to make the marking permanent.

THE TRADE AND FUTURE OF NIGERIA.

In dealing with the trade of this vast country it must be borne in mind that the country is only as yet in its infancy, and that there is still a great deal of it unexplored, which it will take some years of very hard work to open up, in order to make the country a paying colony of its own. The two chief difficulties with regard to the trade of this country are, first, the continual hostility of various tribes towards the idea of British rule and civilization; and, secondly, the enormous difficulty of transport. The only stretches of country that are at present open to trade are all along these various rivers which flow down to the Atlantic, from the Niger to the Cross River, and of course down these the transport is comparatively easy, on account of all the goods being brought down by canoe. It is when you commence to trade away up through the hinterland that the difficulties commence, because as soon you leave the river you are done. The natives are all an indolent, lazy lot, and they would rather die than trudge overland to trade.

They will always sit comfortably in their canoes, and trade up and down the river as this requires little exertion : but unless something is done to bring the hinterland natives nearer these trading centres, I do not see how they can even realize the profit to themselves by trading with the European.

Ths same difficulties always arise, with regard to transport, when any hinterland expedition starts, which necessitates at least half the column, consisting of these carriers, who give one more

trouble and bother than all the wild tribes put together. Whether any railway will be a feature of the country in the future remains to be seen, but the difficulties in connection with this would be enormous, as such a tremendous lot of the country consists of swamps, over or through which no railway would ever be possible, and as for ever being able to drain these swamps, as I have heard some people suggest, it would be an impossibility. The people whom I have heard put forth this suggestion, are men who have never seen a West African swamp, and whose idea probably consists of a bit of marshy ground of no very wide extent. To realize these swamps, go out there and walk about in them as I have done, and see the result.

With regard to the trade as it is at this date, the chief item is in connection with the palm tree in various forms, such as palm oil, palm nuts and palm kernels. Palm oil, you might say, is the principal article of trade and therefore the principle article of exportation. There are hundreds of uses for this palm oil, perhaps the most common being in connection with soap. The natives also use it a great deal among themselves for cooking, for burning in their granit lamps, as a pomade for the hair and as a lubricant for the skin.

The next chief article of export trade is the India Rubber, which is an item of only a comparatively recent development.

Other well known articles of export are as follows:—Ebony, Solah, used for making pith hats, etc., Galan, a kind of oil used chiefly as a subsitute for palm oil. Pepper. Kola nuts, used in connection with cocoa. Hemp. Ground nuts, whose oil is used for the manufacture of soap, pomade, etc., and also for very delicate machinery.

I won't enumerate all the variety of articles used for trading purposes out there, but the above are I think the principal. But the two which I have not yet mentioned, and are articles which will be of immense value when time has been given for them to develope. They are Cotton and Timber. It was only very recently that cotton has been started in Southern Nigeria, and in fact the development only began when I was out there. Up at Asaba and Inkisi, steps have been taken to start large cotton growing districts, and some American experts were out there to superintend its growing. It did extremely well that in various other districts the same thing has been done, and it will be interesting to see how it does.

One great difficulty in its development will arise from the native. It will take a long time to impress on him the value of the cotton as an article of cultivation, and also cotton requires a good deal of care and nursing and the native has a horror of overwork, especially of this kind.

The cultivation of cotton was started in other parts of the West Coast at the time of the American War, but it was only in 1903 that the first experiments were made in Southern Nigeria at Asaba and Inkisi.

The other article I will refer to is the Timber. Throughout the whole of Nigeria there are these vast forests, which so far have never been touched, and which contain all kinds of trees of very valuable timber. But again the great difficulty of a rapid development of the trade is a want of transport, and for many years to come only those forests which lie alongside the waterways can be worked with any degree of success. When I was in Southern Nigeria the Forestry department was

only then beginning to realize the value of this trade, and the Government had sent out officials to report on the prospects of this trade. What happened was this. Three or four men arrived out, and were sent up the Cross river to inspect and report on the forests; about a fortnight after they returned to Old Calabar, said they had had fever and that this was no white man's country and took the first steamer home. A very useful person indeed to send out for a reliable report. Two of the principal trees are the Mahogany and Ebony, and when one sees them in the forests one longs to transplant them to England. I feel sure that in a few years there will be a large and valuable timber trade with Nigeria, in spite of the difficulties to be overcome, but it is useless to send out men to work it if they are only going to run away directly they get fever.

I will here conclude my feeble attempt at describing a very interesting country. The country itself is as yet only in its infancy, and although the country has a great future before it, there will always be a certain amount of trouble with the natives. Punitive expeditions will for some time to come be necessary as long as these pagan tribes continue their inhuman practices, and as long as slave raiding lasts. The future of this country depends largely on our own friendship with the natives; but there is no doubt that England must govern this land through the native chiefs themselves, and not try and supplant the black man by the white. There is already proof enough of this by the satisfactory way in which the Native Councils and Courts govern their own people.

The life itself out here is a hard one on account of the country, climate, and the work to be done—but it is a very interesting one, of

which I fear my account does not in any way give an adequate idea. If I have made too frequent use of the first personal pronoun, I must ask forgiveness; but it is very hard to write an account of personal experiences without being egotistical.


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