



46.30
7303



TRAVELS AND EXPLORATIONS
IN YORUBALAND 1854-1858



William H. Clarke

TRAVELS AND EXPLORATIONS IN YORUBALAND 1854-1858

by

WILLIAM H. CLARKE

EDITED AND WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY

J. A. ATANDA, Ph.D.

Lecturer in History, University of Ibadan

IBADAN UNIVERSITY PRESS

1972

NC
DT
513
.CGI
- 2

Copyright © Ibadan University Press, 1972

Published by Ibadan University Press,
University of Ibadan, Ibadan, Nigeria

Cover Design by L. A. Anifalaje

PRINTED IN 10 PT. TIMES ROMAN ON 12PT. BODY
AT THE IBADAN UNIVERSITY PRESS
NIGERIA OCTOBER 1972

CONTENTS

	<i>Page</i>
List of Illustrations	viii
Editor's Preface	ix
Editor's Introduction	xi

PART ONE

CHAPTER

1	JOURNEY FROM LAGOS VIA ABẒOKUTA TO IJAYE	1
	Lagos in 1854—Impressions of AbẒokuta—countryside between AbẒokuta and Olokemeji and between Olokemeji and Ijaye—First Impressions of Ijaye.	
2	JOURNEY FROM IJAYE TO LAGOS AND OGBOMỌŞO	14
	Scenery between Ijaye and AbẒokuta—Short stay at AbẒokuta—in Lagos again—Visit to Ota—Christmas at AbẒokuta—Journey to Ijaye—Meeting with Ilorin traders in Ijaye—Journey to Ogbomọşo—Cordial Reception at Ogbomọşo—Proposed visit to Ilorin abandoned—Return journey to Ijaye.	
3	TRAVELS IN NORTH-WESTERN YORUBALAND	38
	Desire to visit Saki and Igboho—Journey from Ijaye to Işeyin—At Erin, Ado and Awaye—Visit to Okeiho—Ferry system in Yorubaland: the Ofiki River example—At Oke Amọ—Hostile reception at Ilẹsàn and Iluku—Saki and its environs—At Ogbọro—Igboho: its former glory and present decline—At Igbẹti—First visit to Ilorin—At Ogbomọşo again—Back to Ijaye.	
4	TRAVELS IN CENTRAL YORUBALAND	92
	Journey from Ijaye via Fiditi to Iwo—Iwo and its environs—Ileya festival at Iwo—Return journey from Iwo to Ijaye—Visit to Oyo, the King's City—The umbrella incident at the Afin (palace) and aftermath—Third visit to Ogbomọşo—Second visit to Ilorin—More favourable visit to Oyo: site secured for mission station—Fear of Jesuit intrigue in Oyo—Back to Ijaye.	

- 5 TRAVELS IN EASTERN AND NORTHERN YORUBALAND ACROSS NUPE TO RIVER NIGER 107
- From Ijaye to Ede via Iware, Aró, Ará and Ilobu—Ede and its environs—With the Timi of Ede—Interview with Ede Mohammedans—Egúngún (Masquerade) and Politics in Ede—From Ede to Osogbo via Ido Osun—The Itadan Ajele (Consul) in Osogbo—The Sierra Leonean George and his 'history' of the Yoruba wars—From Ede to Ilesa via Oke Bode and Ará—At Ilesa—Protocol and court etiquette at the Owa's palace—Roads and building styles of Ilesa—Difference between the Oyo Yoruba and the Ijesa—Ibadan expansion to Ijesa—Journey from Ilesa to Ila via Osogbo, Ikirun, Ire and Otan—The decline of Ila, capital of Igbomina—Departure from Ila—Journey through Ofa—Ofa and its environs—At Ilorin again—Journey from Ilorin through Nupe country—On the River Niger with the crew of Baikie's Expedition—Crowther and the genesis of evangelization in the Niger region—Journey from the River Niger via Ilorin to Ijaye.
- PART TWO*
- 6 HISTORY OF THE YORUBA PEOPLE FROM THE EARLY TIMES TO THE 1850s. 188
- The place of Yorubaland in Southern Sudan—Origin of the Yoruba—Subsequent History—The Fall of the Yoruba Kingdom of Oyo and its Aftermath.
- 7 PHYSICAL FEATURES AND VEGETATION OF YORUBALAND 198
- Topography—Rivers—Water Courses—Mountains—Soil—Tropical Features—Scenery.
- 8 CLIMATE OF YORUBALAND 205
- General characteristics—Temperature—Seasons—Rain—Winds—Effect on Health.
- 9 GEOLOGY OF YORUBALAND 216
- Primitive Formation—Granite—Gneiss—Sandstone—Absence of Lime—Iron Ore—Oronstone—Other Metals.
- 10 PLANTS AND ANIMALS OF YORUBALAND 218
- Lily—Palma Christa—Fruits not numerous—Elephants and Lions very rare—Other animals—Snakes—Birds—Insects.

- 11 SOCIAL LIFE OF THE YORUBA PEOPLE 231
 General conditions of life—Towns and Cities—Patriarchal states—Styles of Building—Manners—Customs—Marriage—Burial—Amusements.
- 12 GOVERNMENT OF THE YORUBA PEOPLE 252
 General characteristics—Laws—Judiciary—Police Regulation—Order—Crime—System of punishment.
- 13 AGRICULTURE AND COMMERCE IN YORUBA-LAND 259
 System—Kind and Extent of Cultivation—Production—Commerce—Markets.
- 14 THE LANGUAGE OF THE YORUBA PEOPLE 269
 Character—Fullness and variety.
- 15 ART AND INDUSTRIES OF THE YORUBA PEOPLE 272
 Smelting—Manufacturing—Weaving and Spinning—Dyeing—Extracting Oils—Leather work, Carving—Pottery—etc.
- 16 RELIGION OF THE YORUBA PEOPLE 276
 General condition of heathens—Notions of the Supreme Being among the Yoruba—Nature of idolatory—Peculiarities of Yoruba idolatory—Some of their deities: Ifa, Şango, Orişà Oko, Eşu, Orò, etc.
- 17 THEORY OF ORIGIN OF THE AFRICAN RACE IN GENERAL AND OF YORUBA CIVILIZATION IN PARTICULAR 287

LISTS OF ILLUSTRATIONS

MAPS

<i>Fig.</i>		xxxviii
1	<i>Yorubaland in the 1850s</i>	
2	<i>The Old Oyo Empire in the 18th Century</i>	xxxix
3	<i>Ruined Towns of the Oyo Kingdom</i>	xl

PLATES

	<i>William H. Clarke</i>	<i>Frontispiece</i>
I	<i>Tabitha Jennie Clarke</i>	<i>Facing Page 186</i>
II	<i>Amule Hill</i>	" " 187
III	<i>Alafin in State</i>	" " 202
IV	<i>Ifa Divination Bowl and Plate</i>	" " 203

EDITOR'S PREFACE

THE decision to publish Clarke's century-old manuscript was taken in 1968 by the Ibadan University's Publication Committee. I was requested through Professor J. F. Ade Ajayi to edit and write an introduction to it, but I could not carry out this task as early as I wished owing to my absence from Ibadan to serve as Visiting Lecturer at Makerere University, Kampala, Uganda in January-August 1969 and as Visiting Assistant Professor of African History at the University of Chicago, Illinois, U.S.A., during the 1969/70 academic year.

Fortunately, while in Chicago, a travel grant provided by the Rockefeller Foundation enabled me to visit the Headquarters of the Foreign Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention in Richmond, Virginia. There I was able to read, in the original, letters written by William H. Clarke, while he was in the service of the Board as well as other relevant documents. My research in Richmond was greatly facilitated by a generous offer of a gratis accommodation in one of the Foreign Mission Board's missionary apartments and by the kind treatment and co-operation I received from the staff of the various departments where I did my research. In this connection, I wish to express profound gratitude specifically to the following: Dr H. Cornell Goener, Secretary for Africa; Dr Eugene H. Hill, Secretary for Missionary Education and Promotion; Mrs Eunice A. Smith of the Africa Office; Mrs Grace Kainakian of the Records Department; Miss Neil Stanley of Jenkins Memorial Library; and Mrs June P. Carter of the Press Office who publicized this publication project among Southern Baptists in the U.S.A. and Baptists in Nigeria.

I also received valuable assistance from Dr Leo T. Crismon, the Librarian of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky while I was in Louisville on a short visit to check a few facts relevant to Clarke's work at the Seminary library.

The descendants of William H. Clarke received the news of the proposal to publish their grandfather's manuscript with enthusiasm. Dr Coleman Clarke, a grandson, helped to secure the family's permission to publish this work. Mrs Josephine Clarke Eden, a grand-daughter, gave, through correspondence, useful family history to the editor. She also made available relevant photographs of the author and his family. But the views expressed by the editor in the introduction are in no way influenced by family consideration.

Since Clarke's work is a primary source material on Yorubaland in the nineteenth century, the editor considered it better not to reduce the original size of the manuscript. Editorial work, apart from the introduction and annotation, has been limited to correcting obvious errors in spelling, sentence construction and rearranging, where necessary, a few chapters to give the work a more logical sequence than is the case in the manuscript. The ideas and expressions in the main text remain essentially Clarke's, but in preparing the work for publication it was considered appropriate to use the Yoruba orthography in spelling Yoruba names in place of the anglicized forms found in the manuscript. Hence, 'Ogbomoṣo' is used instead of 'Ogbomoshō' or 'Ogbomoshaw', 'Oṣogbo' instead of 'Oshogbo'. 'Ileṣa' instead of 'Ilesha', etc.

It only remains to thank all who, as indicated above, have made possible the publication of this work. In addition, I thank Professor J. F. Ade Ajayi and Professor E. A. Ayandele both of the Department of History, University of Ibadan, for reading the draft of the introduction and making useful comments. Mrs R. M. Essien-Udom the Editor, Publishing House, Ibadan University Press, promptly attended to administrative problems that would have delayed the publication of this work. Finally, I thank my wife for her assistance in various ways during the period of preparing this work for publication.

J. A. ATANDA

*Department of History
University of Ibadan
14 April 1971*

EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION

IN view of the magnitude of his labours as a pioneer Baptist missionary in Yorubaland and in view of the quality of the detailed account of his study of the Yoruba country and society in the mid-nineteenth century, William H. Clarke ought to have featured prominently not only in the history of Christian missions in Nigeria but also in African historiography. Unfortunately in both capacities, as a pioneer missionary and as a profound student of the Yoruba country and society, Clarke has remained hitherto virtually unknown. His obscurity was of a worse nature than that of his co-labourer, Thomas J. Bowen. Although as a pioneer missionary, Bowen was not as much known in Christian mission circles as the pioneer missionaries of the Church Missionary Society and the Wesleyan Methodist Mission,¹ he was very well known in the Baptist Mission for which he worked. But William Clarke was not only unknown in comparison with the other missionary pioneers, he was also hardly remembered, even in the Baptist Mission for which he, like Bowen, also worked. Besides, while Bowen has been known in African studies through his published works,² Clarke has been little known because his own manuscript has remained unpublished for over a century.³ It is therefore considered necessary that this introduction should not only contain an evaluation of his work, which is now being published, but should also throw some light on the man's life and career.

¹ Bowen's relative obscurity is discussed by Professor E. A. Ayandele in his "New Introduction" to the second edition of T. J. Bowen, *Central Africa: Adventures and Missionary Labours in Several Countries in the Interior of Africa from 1849 to 1856*, Frank Cass, 1968 pp vii-viii. The first edition was published by the Southern Baptist Publication Society, Charleston, 1857.

² T. J. Bowen, *Central Africa . . .*, and *Grammar and Dictionary of the Yoruba Language* Smithsonian Institute, Wash. D. C., 1858.

³ The manuscript was completed in typewritten form before Clarke died in 1871.

glad by the arrival of Wm. H. Clark[e], as a missionary of our board".¹ In a sense, therefore, he was next to Bowen as a pioneer missionary of the Southern Baptist Convention in modern Nigeria.

From the time of his arrival in September 1854 till his departure for the U.S.A. on furlough in 1858, Clarke devoted all his energy to the propagation of the Baptist work in the country. Not only did he join hands with Bowen to lay the foundation of the work, he, in fact, became the field leader of the project when Bowen left "Central Africa" for America in 1856.

In this period of beginnings, missionary labours inevitably consisted largely in constant (and sometimes indiscriminate) preaching and exploratory travels to areas where permanent mission stations might be established. Clarke had an impressive record in this respect. As can be seen from his book² and his letters to the Secretary of the Foreign Mission Board, he seized every opportunity he had to speak of Jesus Christ as the only Saviour. Besides, like Bowen, Clarke envisaged the establishment of a chain of Baptist mission stations throughout Yorubaland and beyond. He hoped, like Bowen, that the most successful of these stations would eventually be in "the cities of Şaki and Igboho" which were located in higher latitude than the forest areas and "surrounded by the Kong mountains where air, temperature and elevation were more favourable to health..."³ But his approach was a practical one: he travelled extensively in Yorubaland and in parts of Nupe country up to the Niger to see where good reception of the mission project was forth-coming. As a result, Clarke was responsible for making the first contacts on behalf of the Baptist Mission with the chiefs and people of all but one of the major Yoruba towns north of Ijaye where Bowen had established the first station. The only exception was Ilorin which Bowen visited in April 1855 before Clarke did so about three times later. Even in this case, Bowen's visit was made with a view to ensuring the success of the proposed establishment of a mission station in Ogbomoşo where Clarke had "resolved [because of the cordial reception accorded him in that place in February 1855] to make his field of labor"; for, as Bowen said, the "propriety

¹ *ibid.*, p. 182.

² See Part I below.

³ p. 38 below.

of this location depended somewhat on the willingness of Ilorin to allow us an open road to the interior".¹ In some of these towns Clarke actually negotiated for land on behalf of his Mission. The most successful of these negotiations was in Ogbomoṣo which is *de facto* now the most important centre of Baptist work in Nigeria. It must be said that apart from acquiring land there, Clarke did not have the honour of being the first Baptist missionary to establish a station in Ogbomoṣo. That honour went to Bowen, who, as the senior and more experienced man in the field at that time, decided to establish this new station himself; and he went to settle there in the autumn of 1855, leaving Clarke in charge of Ijaye. But Clarke moved to Ogbomoṣo as soon as Bowen left Yorubaland early in 1856 and made that place his station until he left for America on furlough in 1858. Had he been able to return to Yorubaland, there was every possibility that he would have chosen to stay in Ogbomoṣo where he would have put into practice his project of medical evangelism for which he trained while on furlough.² But his resignation from the service of the Board in 1860, which will be discussed later, ended his contribution to the development of Baptist work in Nigeria.

CONTRIBUTION TO AFRICAN HISTORIOGRAPHY

Apart from his labours as a pioneer missionary of the Baptist Mission, Clarke rendered an invaluable service in the field of African studies. During his four years' stay in Yorubaland, he studied the Yoruba country and society in detail. The outcome of his research is *Travels and Explorations* which has remained in manuscript form for over a hundred years.

It is not certain why Clarke could not get this work published before his death in 1871. There is evidence to show that as early as August 1858, he had started to make plans for its publication. To this end, he presented the manuscript to the Southern Baptist Publication Society in Charleston (the publishers of Bowen's *Central Africa: Adventures and Missionary Labours in Several Countries in the Interior of Africa from 1849 to 1856*); but they only promised to examine the manuscript "as soon as convenient and report".³

¹ Bowen, *Central Africa* . . . , p. 185.

² For further information on the project, see pp. xxix-xxx below.

³ Clarke to Taylor and Poindexter, 26 August 1858.

There is no evidence that this promise was fulfilled. At the same time, Clarke himself was of the opinion that "it would be good policy to give it [the manuscript] to the South West Publishing House, in order to secure the influence of the West in our Mission course" [sic], and wanted as a matter of urgency the views of the secretaries of the Board on this.¹ There is also no evidence in the records what the reply of the Secretaries was to the request. The publication project was in this fluid stage when circumstances which led to Clarke's resignation early in 1860 began to gather momentum.² His resignation meant that he lost the patronage of the Board which was essential, at least for financial reasons, in getting a publisher to risk undertaking a publication on Africa in an age when the market for books on African studies was very limited. Another possible obstacle in getting the work published is the fact that Clarke expressed in it radically liberal views which were out of tune with the popular, albeit ill-conceived, notions held in his days about Africa and Africans. Besides, as the events leading to his resignation will later reveal, Clarke was a misunderstood man and, for all practical purposes, had become a *persona non grata* to the Secretaries of the Board, and so they were not willing to publicize his name. Otherwise, it is difficult to see why, at a time the Board was short of information about Africa, Clarke's valuable work was apparently turned down. It should therefore not be thought that publishers rejected the work for lack of merit.

Indeed, there is no doubt as to the good quality of the work, when compared with other contemporary writings. In assessing the value and quality of Bowen's book³ *vis-à-vis* other nineteenth century works by missionaries and travellers, Professor Ayandele rightly asserts: "The only manuscript of the century that would have compared with Bowen's publication in value and quality is the account on the Yoruba by W. H. Clarke, another Baptist missionary. Unfortunately, this work still remains unpublished."⁴ One may go on to say that as a study on Yorubaland, Clarke's work, which is

¹ *ibid.*

² For information on the resignation issue, see pp. xxx-xxxvi below.

³ Bowen, *Central Africa*.

⁴ Ayandele, "New Introduction" to 2nd edition of Bowen, *Central Africa*, pp. ix-x.

now published, gives more information about the country than Bowen's. There are two reasons for this. First, while Bowen devoted a substantial part of his book to the description of Liberia and its peoples as well as to a treatise on how to evangelize Africa, Clarke's book was devoted solely to a description of the Yoruba country and society. Secondly, Clarke saw more of Yorubaland than Bowen did. It is true that Clarke did not visit important areas, in south-west Yoruba, such as Badagry, Ketu, Eruwa and Bôlörunpêlu, which Bowen visited. But he was able to go to areas in north-west Yoruba such as Şaki, Igboho and Igbeṭi, areas which Bowen was prevented from visiting by the decree of the mighty Arẹ Kurunmi of Ijaye. In addition, Clarke visited eastern Yorubaland up to Ileşa which Bowen did not see. It was probably in consequence of this fact that Clarke saw more of Yorubaland than Bowen did that made the latter advise Clarke in 1858 to enlarge his manuscript to give a more detailed account of the areas he had seen.¹ Although Clarke gave an indication of receiving this suggestion favourably,² how much more material he added to the original version is not easy to say.

In its final form, the form in which it has now been edited for publication, the book comprises two parts. Part I is a vivid account of the author's travels in many parts of Yorubaland in the years 1854-58. Part II is a descriptive analysis of the history, the environment, and the political and cultural organization of the Yoruba society on the basis of the information and experience which the author had during his travels.

The dominant and significant feature of both parts is Clarke's reaction to the pre-conceived and erroneous ideas commonly held in his days in Europe and America about Africa and Africans. Such ideas as Africans being no more than barbarians, savages, uncivilized people, etc., which are found in a number of books written by European travellers and missionaries to Africa are too well known to require elaboration here.³ Clarke, as he himself confessed, was

¹ Reference is made to this advice in Clarke to Taylor and Poindexter, 26 August 1858.

² *ibid.*

³ For those interested, a very good account of the literature on the subject is in Philip D. Curtin, *The Image of Africa*, Macmillan, 1965.

'imbued with those sentiments concerning Africa' which had been "so firmly rooted in my childhood".¹ Thus, he approached Yorubaland with a picture of "such a condition of things as is generally supposed to exist in Africa—vile hovels, filth, nakedness, indolence and want".² But when he left the swampy coastal area, which he did not at all like, to see the city of Abeokuta and its environs in 1854, he declared: "so greatly and so happily was I disappointed that I was almost ready, even at this early period, to exclaim how poor Africans have been belied".³

This experience made him highly suspicious of stereotype descriptions of Africa and Africans. And with respect to the Yoruba, among whom he had come to work, he decided to undertake a thorough and careful study of the people, their country and their society. After this careful study for four years, he came to the conclusion that what he saw in Abeokuta area was not just the result of first impressions. What he saw during his extensive travels in most parts of Yorubaland "adds not a little to the confirmation" of his "previous conceptions [formed on seeing Abeokuta] that there are in the interior of Africa countries fair, productive, beautiful and healthy".⁴ Towards the end of his travels, during which he visited among other places, "the mammoth city of Ilorin", he was convinced that the Yoruba people were not the barbarians that Africans were generally believed to be in Europe and America. And for those who would wish to perpetuate the old prejudices, Clarke had a short address:

Dear sirs, your conclusion is wholly illogical based on a false hypothetical premise. They [the Yoruba] are not barbarous. They cultivate thousands of acres. They eat corn, rice, yams, potatoes, peas, etc., etc., mutton, kid, beef and butter: [they] drink milk and ride fine horses, and sleep and drink and rejoice as the rest of mankind.⁵

Clarke's liberal views were not confined to the standard of living of the Yoruba, it was also extended to the environment in which the people lived. In an age when the popular belief in Europe and

¹ p. 23 below.

² p. 6 below.

³ *ibid.*

⁴ p. 35 below.

⁵ p. 186 below.

America was that whitemen could hardly survive in Africa—particularly tropical Africa—because of the debilitating climate and general unhealthy environment, Clarke's experience in Yorubaland led him to a different conclusion. As he declared, from "a four years' observation of the climate and its effects in my own case and in those of others I feel I should do injustice to the country not to say that it is one highly favoured of providence with many of the elements of health, and if it be not enjoyable to a great extent by the white race the cause is not so much in the peculiarity of the climate as [in the] natural principles involved in extreme changes".¹ Some of the points he would readily use to illustrate this argument are over-exertion, "so often the ruin of missionaries and others in a tropical clime",² "excessive work, over-anxiety [and] unnecessary exposure".³ Clarke was of the opinion that, whether among Africans or among white visitors to the Yoruba country, the principal cause of sickness should be "attributed to imprudence and the want of such comforts and convenience as are necessary to protect the system amid the changes of season that are generally attendant with more or less danger to the physical constitution and not to certain conditions of the country as to its locality".⁴ The point Clarke was making may be better illustrated by saying that if a man, already used to a warm climate in either Florida or California, went to either Wisconsin or New York during winter without adequate preparation for living at sub-zero temperatures, he should not blame the locality but himself for the consequences. Thus, while Clarke occasionally expressed the fear of the much-dreaded "African fever"⁵ he, on the whole, believed that with adequate precaution—the use of quinine, proper dress, etc., in this case—the place was not the death-trap that all parts of tropical Africa were believed to be by most people in Europe and America of his time.

Another aspect of Yoruba culture which Clarke showed a deep understanding of was religion. Although a Christian missionary who necessarily looked at other religions, particularly the accursed

¹ p. 213 below.

² p. 16 below.

³ p. 17 below.

⁴ p. 212 below.

⁵ p. 95 below.

"paganism" as inferior to Christianity, Clarke, like his co-labourer T. J. Bowen,¹ realized that Yoruba religion possessed one of the greatest virtues of other world religions: that is, it was not only transcendental but basically monotheistic. The most popular belief in Europe and America about African religion was that Africans worshipped idols not as a means to an end but as an end in themselves. It was not seen by most travellers in Africa that Africans really regarded the idols and other objects of worship as intermediaries between them and God. This was why, even as late as the twentieth century, Emil Ludwig, a European visitor to Africa, posed the question: "How can the untutored African conceive God?"² But like his co-labourer, T. J. Bowen, Clarke recognized the fact that the Yoruba people "do not rely upon any inherent virtue possessed by these dumb idols as able to save, aside from that mystic intercourse and communion they are supposed to have with Divine Being".³

There can be no doubt as to the fact that as the Yoruba people were not Christians Clarke regarded them as heathens, benighted people whose salvation he came to seek by preaching Jesus Christ to them.⁴ But he realized that the Yoruba religion was rooted in monotheism—belief in one Supreme Being—which was (and still is) the essence of all renowned religions. What was therefore wrong with the religion was the way the people chose to approach this one Supreme Being. Therefore if the Yoruba are classified as heathens because they chose idols, nature objects, ancestors etc., as intermediaries between them and God, instead of Jesus Christ the Son of God, then their religion seemed to him to be "peculiar heathenism". As he stated:

The peculiarity of their heathenism is that it places every idol in an entirely subordinate position to the Deity, who uses them as mediators, to reconcile a sin-avenging God [with man]. The account given by them [the Yoruba] of their idols is, that

¹ Bowen's views on the subject are given in his *Central Africa . . .*, Chapter XXV and in some of his letters.

² Quoted in E. G. Parrinder, *African Traditional Religion*, Hutchinson's University Library, London, 1954, p. 9.

³ Excerpts from Clarke's letter quoted in *The Commission: a Journal of the Foreign Mission Board*, Vol. 1, No. 9 (March 1857), p. 273.

⁴ p. 31 below.

God made them in the beginning, with their mediatorial position, as being suitable to the black man, while another dispensation has been conferred on the white man. In their confession, whatever may be their practice, they acknowledge the impotency of their deities, that they have no saving power, and ascribe to God the creation of all things and all perfection.¹

It is true that we have had to wait till the publication of Professor E. Bolaji Idowu's *Olodumare: God in Yoruba Belief* to see a systematic analysis of the place of the *oriša* (i.e., the divinities, etc.) *vis-à-vis* that of the Supreme Deity in Yoruba religion. Yet Clarke's understanding of the Yoruba religion was unique in an age when, as he confessed, people of the white race "have been so accustomed to associate with the African race everything that is corrupt and debased in morals and religion that it seems almost an impossibility that there should be any tribes of this people removed any degree from that condition".² Clarke's exposition on Yoruba religion is valuable in another respect. It helps to weaken the false argument, sometimes put forward by some non-Africans, that when modern scholars of traditional African religion (most of them ordained ministers of the Christian religion) speak or write that African religion is ultimately based on the belief in one God, they are merely projecting their Christian ideas into their studies.³ In this connection, it is pertinent to point out that at the time when, and the places where, William Clarke collected his information on Yoruba religion, Christian influence was virtually nil.

His liberal attitude notwithstanding, Clarke was not entirely free from the prejudices against Africans commonly held by people of his race in his age. He still approached issues in Yorubaland with the idea that he belonged to the "superior [white] race",⁴ in spite of what he himself said about "being continually forced to

¹ Excerpts from Clarke's letter quoted in *The Commission*, Vol. 1, No. 9 op. cit., p. 274. For Clarke's fuller treatment of the subject, see Part II, Chapter X.

² p. 276 below.

³ Dr Taylor, current Secretary of the C.M.S., London, echoed such a view recently in an answer to a question posed by this editor in a public lecture given during the Spring quarter at the University of Chicago School of Divinity and in which Dr Taylor had suggested that African religion lacked transcendence.

⁴ Excerpts from Clarke's letter quoted in *The Commission*, Vol. 2, No. 1 July 1857, p. 235.

observe among these people [the Yoruba] the same human nature as among the whites, and that if the two races are not identical, they must bear some such relationship as first cousins".¹ Thus, to him, the Yoruba, like the other Africans, were still just "the natives" with all the derogatory implications of that terminology. He even at a time referred to the Yoruba as "untamed Sudanese".² Similarly, in writing about the Yoruba civilization for his American readers, he considered it necessary to do so not entirely on the merit of that civilization but on a rather paternalistic basis, namely, that Yoruba civilization should not be judged by "unfavourable comparisons with the standard of civilized and enlightened nations of Europe and America".³

Yet, in view of the pre-conceived ideas he had about Africa generally before he left America, Clarke was so bewildered by what he found in Yorubaland in the mid-nineteenth century that he, like Frobenius in a similar circumstance in the early twentieth century,⁴ attempted to look for a non-African origin of the Yoruba civilization. Thus he propounded a theory which traced the origin of the Yoruba in particular and of the African race south of the Sahara in general to Canaan.⁵ He wrote: "they are only the descendants of Canaan whose several tribes were the possessors of the land of Canaan and [who were] living in considerable splendor when it was wrested from them by the conquering Israelites".⁶ According to him, it was as a result of the Israelite invasion of their country that these Canaanites fled their homes, moved via Egypt and settled on that country's borders, settlement within it being impossible owing to the size of the existing population. But, owing to great increase in the emigrants' population and the desire

¹ p. 41 below.

² p. 87 below.

³ See Excerpts from Clarke's letter, quoted in *The Commission*, Vol. 2, No. 1, op. cit., p. 235.

⁴ Leo Frobenius, *The Voice of Africa*, Hutchinson, London, 1913. Vols. I & II; particularly Vol. 1, Chap. XV.

⁵ Part II, chap. X below. Cf. Sultan Bello's theory of the origin of the Yoruba in Major Denham & Captain Clapperton, *Narrative of Travels and Discoveries in Northern and Central Africa in the years 1822, 1823 & 1824*, John Murray, London 1828, Appendix No. XII, Section IV. Clarke might have been influenced by this account which, in all probability, he read before leaving America for Yorubaland.

⁶ p. 288 below.

to avoid Egyptian taxation, they moved southwards across the Sahara to settle in Bornu area and the surrounding countries (including Yorubaland).¹ Coming from Canaan and passing through Egypt, the migrants must have, according to the theory, been familiar with Israelite and Egyptian civilization. Hence, the similarities in their culture with those of Israelites and Egyptians.²

It is pertinent to remark at this stage that Clarke's theory is similar in one respect to the theories propounded by some Yoruba themselves. An example is that of Dr Olumide Lucas who, as late as 1948, asserted that Yoruba religion in particular and their civilization in general had an Egyptian origin.³ The only and, of course, important difference was that while Lucas looked at Egyptians as Africans and Yoruba civilization therefore deriving from people of African descent, Clarke traced the Yoruba and their civilization initially to non-Africans. He was thus lending support to the Hamitic hypothesis, popularized since the 1930s but now discredited, that civilization in pre-twentieth century Africa was the work of a white group of people known as Hamites.⁴

These points notwithstanding, the radically liberal views which Clarke expressed in his work about Yoruba culture show a far greater understanding of African civilization than can be found in most contemporary works. This makes his work of great value in African historiography.

The value of the book goes beyond an appreciation of Yoruba culture. It is an informative source material on the condition of the Yoruba country as a whole in the mid-nineteenth century. In the detailed accounts of his travels as recorded in Part I of his book, Clarke gave useful information on many aspects of Yoruba life and the country. There are, in Part I, good descriptions of many Yoruba towns and villages—their location, general appearance, estimated population, the way of life of the inhabitants, and so on. Prominent among the towns described were Lagos, Abeokuta, Ijaye, Ogbomoṣo, Igboho, Iṣeyin, Okeiho, Ṣaki, Igbeti,

¹ p. 288–9 below.

² *ibid.*

³ J. Olumide, Lucas *The Religion of the Yorubas*, C.M.S. Bookshop, Lagos, 1948, pp. 14–30, Chaps XV and XVI.

⁴ For an exposition of this theory, see C. G. Seligman, *Races of Africa*, Thornton Butterworth, London, 1930.

Ilorin, New Oyo, Iwo, Ede, Osoḡbo, Ila and Ilesha. Apart from being informative, these descriptions serve as a useful starting point for those interested in studying the changes that have taken place in these towns severally or jointly from the mid-nineteenth century till date.

Besides, Clarke's travel accounts throw much light on the pattern of trade routes (mainly caravan routes) that traversed Yorubaland in the mid-nineteenth century. These were mainly land routes, but some of them lay across rivers of considerable size or others which, during the rainy season, became so swollen that they could only be crossed by ferry. As a result, Clarke was able to give us the nature of the ferry system used in Yorubaland in the mid-nineteenth century. This description of the trade routes is a useful complement to Chapter XV in Part II which treats in consolidated form the nature of the trade of Yorubaland in this period.

Furthermore, Clarke's accounts of his reception by various Yoruba chiefs throw much light on the nature of Yoruba hospitality, the mode of court etiquette and protocol required at the palaces of Yoruba rulers.

The above points should make Clarke's work of particular interest not only to historians but also to economic geographers and sociologists. Besides, his description of the country life—its configuration, vegetation, animal life and so on—should interest people of other disciplines. Indeed Part I and Part II of the book together contain useful information in the fields of History, Sociology, Geography, Botany, Zoology and traditional African religion.¹

Except in the field of political history, the sections of his work on the fields enumerated above are descriptive accounts which are so straightforward that they hardly require any comments in this introduction. However, in the field of political history of Yorubaland in the nineteenth century, Clarke's interpretation of events are off the mark. Like most of his contemporaries, Clarke wrongly believed that the dynamic force of all Yoruba politics at that time was the slave trade. For example, he attributed the destruction of the pre-Abeokuta Eḡba towns and villages in the early part of the nineteenth century solely to the "dire and inhumane effects of the

¹ See relevant chapters in Part II below, in addition to scattered information in Part I.

accursed slave traffic".¹ Slave raiding was regarded as the sole cause of the fall of so many cities, the ruins of which Clarke saw throughout most of his travels in Yorubaland.² The expansion of Ibadan to eastern Yorubaland in a bid to build an empire was seen mainly as an attempt to catch slaves,³ in spite of his seeing what duties Ibadan *ajeles* (political residents) were performing in subjugated areas.⁴ Similarly the wars between Ibadan and Ilorin for hegemony in north-eastern Yorubaland were regarded as merely "predatory",⁵ and Ilorin expeditions to Efon area were seen as a design to catch slaves to sell to the French.⁶

Indeed, like most of his contemporaries, Clarke missed the point that the politics of Yorubaland in the nineteenth century was dominated largely by the power struggle consequent upon the fall of the Old Oyo Empire. There is evidence that Clarke could have avoided this error if he had taken time to collect more information, or if he had subjected the information he had to a more careful analysis. For, in his rather brief history⁷ of the Yoruba from the earliest times to the death of Alafin Abiodun, he wrote *inter alia*:

About this period [of the death of Abiodun], supposed to be near the year eighteen hundred⁸ was inaugurated a state of things the influence and effect of which are felt to this day and which presents materials, could they be collected, of one of the most thrilling and eventful periods within the history of any people.⁹

Clarke was right in saying that the post-Abiodun events in the history of the Old Oyo Empire had grave consequences on developments in Yorubaland during the nineteenth century. But why this was so can only be properly understood against the background of the dominant position of the empire in Yorubaland prior to its fall. It also calls for a brief examination of the consequences of the fall of this empire.

¹ pp. 7

² Instances abound in Part I.

³ p. 119.

⁴ p. 145

⁵ p. 23

⁶ p. 184

⁷ pp. 190-196 below.

⁸ The date of Abiodun's death is now known to be 1789, thanks to Professor Akinjogbin's researches.

⁹ p. 193.

Ilorin, New Oyo, Iwo, Ede, Osoybo, Ila and Ilesha. Apart from being informative, these descriptions serve as a useful starting point for those interested in studying the changes that have taken place in these towns severally or jointly from the mid-nineteenth century till date.

Besides, Clarke's travel accounts throw much light on the pattern of trade routes (mainly caravan routes) that traversed Yorubaland in the mid-nineteenth century. These were mainly land routes, but some of them lay across rivers of considerable size or others which, during the rainy season, became so swollen that they could only be crossed by ferry. As a result, Clarke was able to give us the nature of the ferry system used in Yorubaland in the mid-nineteenth century. This description of the trade routes is a useful complement to Chapter XV in Part II which treats in consolidated form the nature of the trade of Yorubaland in this period.

Furthermore, Clarke's accounts of his reception by various Yoruba chiefs throw much light on the nature of Yoruba hospitality, the mode of court etiquette and protocol required at the palaces of Yoruba rulers.

The above points should make Clarke's work of particular interest not only to historians but also to economic geographers and sociologists. Besides, his description of the country life—its configuration, vegetation, animal life and so on—should interest people of other disciplines. Indeed Part I and Part II of the book together contain useful information in the fields of History, Sociology, Geography, Botany, Zoology and traditional African religion.¹

Except in the field of political history, the sections of his work on the fields enumerated above are descriptive accounts which are so straightforward that they hardly require any comments in this introduction. However, in the field of political history of Yorubaland in the nineteenth century, Clarke's interpretation of events are off the mark. Like most of his contemporaries, Clarke wrongly believed that the dynamic force of all Yoruba politics at that time was the slave trade. For example, he attributed the destruction of the pre-Abokuta Egba towns and villages in the early part of the nineteenth century solely to the "dire and inhumane effects of the

¹ See relevant chapters in Part II below, in addition to scattered information in Part I.

accursed slave traffic".¹ Slave raiding was regarded as the sole cause of the fall of so many cities, the ruins of which Clarke saw throughout most of his travels in Yorubaland.² The expansion of Ibadan to eastern Yorubaland in a bid to build an empire was seen mainly as an attempt to catch slaves,³ in spite of his seeing what duties Ibadan *ajeles* (political residents) were performing in subjugated areas.⁴ Similarly the wars between Ibadan and Ilorin for hegemony in north-eastern Yorubaland were regarded as merely "predatory",⁵ and Ilorin expeditions to Efon area were seen as a design to catch slaves to sell to the French.⁶

Indeed, like most of his contemporaries, Clarke missed the point that the politics of Yorubaland in the nineteenth century was dominated largely by the power struggle consequent upon the fall of the Old Oyo Empire. There is evidence that Clarke could have avoided this error if he had taken time to collect more information, or if he had subjected the information he had to a more careful analysis. For, in his rather brief history⁷ of the Yoruba from the earliest times to the death of Alafin Abiodun, he wrote *inter alia*:

About this period [of the death of Abiodun], supposed to be near the year eighteen hundred⁸ was inaugurated a state of things the influence and effect of which are felt to this day and which presents materials, could they be collected, of one of the most thrilling and eventful periods within the history of any people.⁹

Clarke was right in saying that the post-Abiodun events in the history of the Old Oyo Empire had grave consequences on developments in Yorubaland during the nineteenth century. But why this was so can only be properly understood against the background of the dominant position of the empire in Yorubaland prior to its fall. It also calls for a brief examination of the consequences of the fall of this empire.

¹ pp. 7

² Instances abound in Part I.

³ p. 119.

⁴ p. 145

⁵ p. 23

⁶ p. 184

⁷ pp. 190-196 below.

⁸ The date of Abiodun's death is now known to be 1789, thanks to Professor Akinjogbin's researches.

⁹ p. 193.

The Old Oyo Empire, whose rising influence began to be felt in the late fourteenth or early fifteenth century¹ was just one of the many kingdoms founded by the Yoruba people. The others of importance were the kingdoms of Ijebu, Egbá, Egbado, Ife, Owu, Ijesá, Ondo and Ekiti. But in the eighteenth century, when it was at the height of its power, the Old Oyo Empire was by far the most important of all the Yoruba kingdoms. In terms of extent it was the largest, incorporating within its borders some of the Yoruba kingdoms like the Egbá and Egbado, as well as the Aja kingdom of Dahomey.² Besides, it was the most powerful in Yorubaland, being highly respected for its military power and sound administrative system. It also controlled the major trade routes linking Yorubaland with the north and those running to the sea in south-west and south-east directions via Egbado and Ekiti-Benin respectively. Coupled with its agriculture, Oyo's control of, or strategic position on, the trade routes made it economically the most powerful of the Yoruba kingdoms. With its sheer size, its political, military and economic importance, the Old Oyo Empire, as long as it remained stable, could not but be a factor making for peace and concord in the whole of Yorubaland. Conversely, a crack in the empire resulting in its fall as it did in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, inevitably had to have grave consequences for the whole of Yorubaland.

The cause of the crack is already a subject for polemics, which has been examined in greater detail elsewhere.³ It suffices here to say that a combination of internal and external factors brought about the fall of the empire. The internal factor was a crisis which developed in the late eighteenth century, among the Alafin and his senior civil and military chiefs and which led to a breakdown of the central authority in the empire. The external factor was the

¹ Old Oyo, which became the capital of the Empire is believed to have been founded around the late eleventh or early twelfth century. Its power must have been spreading in thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. But the influence of the empire that grew from it began to be felt in late fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries.

² See J. A. Atanda, "The New Oyo Empire: A Study of Indirect Rule in Oyo Province, 1894-1934", Ibadan Ph.D. thesis, 1967, Chap. I. See also the map facing page xxxix below.

³ See J. A. Atanda, "The Fall of the Old Oyo Empire: A Re-consideration of its cause", *Journal of the Historical Society of Nigeria*, Vol. V, No. 4, June 1971.

intervention of the forces of the Fulani *jihad* in the crisis of Old Oyo, with a view to Islamizing the people and their territory. The result was not only the sack of the Old Oyo, the capital of the empire, but also a systematic attack on the towns of the empire as a whole by the jihadists.

As a result of these attacks (or the fear of them), people began to desert their towns in northern Yorubaland to move in various directions to other parts of Yorubaland, mostly southwards, south-westwards and eastwards. It was as a result of these attacks and desertions that many towns and villages were left in ruins.¹ Many of these ruins Clarke came across in his travels as mentioned in Part I of his book. While most of the northern Yoruba towns were left in ruins, the majority of the refugees from them moved southwards into the forest area occupied by the Egbas. The pressure on the Egbas and the attack on their towns by the refugees forced the Egbas to move farther south to found a new place of abode in modern Abeokuta. Within the area evacuated by the Egbas, the Oyo refugees began to found new states. The most important of these were Ibadan and Ijaye, the latter of which was the base from which Clarke operated. With the old capital destroyed a new one was founded within the border of former Egbas territory. This was Ago d'Oyo, that is the New Oyo.

But this new capital lacked the power to play a dominant role in the politics of Yorubaland in the nineteenth century as did its predecessor in the eighteenth. The result was that a power vacuum, as it were, was created which the new states, particularly Ibadan and Ijaye, struggled to fill. Each started to expand its sphere of influence. Ibadan was more active, as it started building what amounted to an empire of its own in eastern Yorubaland by appointing *ajeles* (resident political officers) over areas it had subjected to its authority. Clarke came across many of these *ajeles* during his travels. Ijaye was doing the same thing in the western and Upper Ogun areas. Both kept watchful eyes on each other. Although the struggle for power between Ijaye and Ibadan had not reached its climax by the time of Clarke's travels, tension was already mounting between the two states.

¹ See many of these ruins in the map facing page 195 below.

From this brief survey, it can be seen that the many ruins Clarke saw, the fear and rumours of wars which he noticed and heard were largely the results of the fall of the Old Oyo Empire and the consequent struggle for power in Yorubaland among the new states. Clarke was therefore not correct in attributing all this wholly to a desire for slave raiding.

It is not denied here that enslavement and trade in slaves accompanied the political turmoil in nineteenth-century Yorubaland. In fact, the capture of Ajayi,¹ later Bishop Crowther, was effected at that time. But that and similar incidents should be seen as the by-product, and not the real cause of developments in nineteenth-century politics. The real cause was a struggle for power.²

One other issue which Clarke wrongly saw as one between "those for and against the slave trade" was the tussle in Lagos politics in the mid-nineteenth century.³ As Professor Ajayi has fully explained,⁴ the conflict was essentially between the contending parties for the throne of, and political power in, Lagos and not between those for and against the slave trade.

In spite of these shortcomings in his interpretation of events, Clarke produced a work which is unusually liberal, considering the general prejudices of his race of that time against Africans. He was a real Africanist, and the publication of his work should be a great asset to nineteenth-century African historiography.

For the benefit of missionary-inclined readers, it is pertinent to point out that the work is not a treatise on evangelism and should not be looked at from that viewpoint. Nor should any comparison on that basis with Bowen's work be contemplated. Bowen was specifically requested by the Secretary of the Foreign Mission Board to put in his book two or three closing chapters to stress "the importance of combined endeavours to evangelize Africa".⁵ But

¹ See J. F. Ade. Ajayi "Samuel Ajayi Crowther of Oyo" in Philip D. Curtin (Ed.), *Africa Remembered: Narratives by West Africans*, Ibadan University Press, 1967, pp. 289-316.

² See J. F. Ade. Ajayi & Robert S. Smith, *Yoruba Warfare in the 19th Century*, Cambridge University Press, 1964.

³ pp. 2-3 below.

⁴ J. F. Ade. Ajayi "The British Occupation of Lagos, 1851-1861: A Critical Review", *Nigeria Magazine*, No. 69, August 1961, pp. 96-105.

⁵ Taylor to Bowen December 1856, in "Correspondence Volume" containing letters of the Secretaries to Missionaries, available at the Records Department in the Foreign Mission Board, Richmond, Virginia.

the sole purpose of Clarke's work, as he himself stated, was to give "narrations and descriptions of the [Yoruba] people", making only "incidental allusions to our mission work".¹ However, from such incidental allusions, his labours in the field, and his letters, what his missionary ideas were can be briefly given. As has been shown earlier, he envisaged the establishment of Baptist Mission stations throughout Yorubaland and beyond. Through these stations, he hoped that the Gospel message of salvation through Jesus Christ would reach all parts of "Central Africa". In advocating and working for this type of expansion, Clarke was only following the footsteps of Thomas J. Bowen, his senior pioneer missionary in the field. But he did not agree with Bowen on what means to employ to ensure the success of this expansion. For the success of Christianity in "Central Africa", Bowen advocated, as Professor Ayandele has pointed out,² a change in the social structure of the society through a theologico-liberal and technological education. To this end, as early as 1857, Bowen had urged the Foreign Mission Board to establish a Theological and Industrial High School in Yorubaland. But Clarke considered such a step inexpedient and unfeasible at that early stage. Thus through his influence, the Yoruba Baptist Mission under his leadership opposed the plan of the Foreign Mission Board to implement Bowen's recommendation for the establishment of a Theological and Industrial High School to be conducted by Rev. T. J. Bowen and an assistant whom he desired to obtain.³ Instead, Clarke was of the opinion that medical evangelism was more appropriate at that time as the handmaiden of spreading the Gospel. It was for this reason that he took advantage of his furlough to acquire a sort of medical training at the Medical College, Augusta, Georgia, U.S.A. for eight months in 1858-59, with a view to using the knowledge for the benefit of the Yoruba people on his return to Africa.⁴ Unfortunately,

¹ p. 14 below.

² Ayandele, "New Introduction" in Bowen, *Central Africa*, p. xxx.

³ Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Yoruba Baptist Mission held at Ijaye on 10 May 1858, Enclosure in Clarke to Taylor & Poindexter, 21 May 1858.

⁴ Clarke to Taylor, 20 November 1858; same to same 12 September 1859; also correspondence with Mrs J. C. Eden as cited earlier.

his resignation in early 1860 from the service of the Foreign Mission Board nipped in the bud the implementation of any programme he had in this respect.

RESIGNATION FROM MISSIONARY WORK AND LAST YEARS

Clarke's resignation was reported to the members of the Southern Baptist Convention in a manner that hardly did justice to his labours as a missionary. The last statement published about him in the *Annual Report* of the Foreign Mission Board in 1860 was that:

Brother W. H. Clark[e] of the Yoruba mission had returned to this country under a provision, 'permitting the missionaries of that mission to return within four years for the reinvigoration of their constitution'. Brother Clark[e] was not sick, but he felt it to be necessary to prevent the breaking down of his strength, to avail himself of this permission. At the meeting of the Convention, he was expected to return to Yoruba this year, but he has since determined to remain in this country, and the relation between himself and the Board has ceased.¹

It was true that Clarke was not sick at the time he decided to return to America on furlough. But apart from his desire to prevent a breakdown which staying too long in the field at a stretch could cause, there were possibly fundamental reasons why he decided to go to America at the time he did. Clarke himself gave that much hint when he declared that: "I do not wish to return to America, but my peculiar circumstances demand that the step should be taken..."² Although he would "not argue the case",³ there are enough hints in the records to suggest what his "peculiar circumstances" were.

In the first place, returning to America at that time would give him the opportunity to know why he was receiving embarrassing letters from the Secretaries in the home Headquarters. On one occasion, the Rev. J. B. Taylor communicated to him a view the

¹ *The Fifteenth Annual Report of the Board of the Foreign Missions of the Southern Baptist Convention*, 1860, p. 4.

² Clarke to Taylor, 6 April 1858.

³ Clarke to the Secretaries (Taylor & Poindexter), 21 May 1858.

Secretary credited to Clarke's friends who were said to have thought and predicted that Clarke would "yield to discouragement" and that it was not in him "to endure hardship as a good soldier of Jesus Christ".¹ Such a view was at variance with what Clarke was doing in the field, and he was certainly right in telling the Secretary that those who expressed the view "knew but very little about me, . . . and had never known my private feelings".² On another occasion, Clarke received a letter from another Secretary, the Rev. A. M. Poindexter, containing "the strong insinuations" that Clarke was "selfish and sensual"; and all that was written for no expressed reason other than that the Secretary "happened to think about them".³ Clarke was particularly shocked on this occasion because instead of "kind, christian counsel" which he expected from headquarters, he was receiving insinuations which, as he said, were "sullyng my reputation".⁴ He was therefore obliged to tell Poindexter that there was something in the Secretary's letter which "I cannot comprhend and [which] evidently leads me to believe you have given ear to the garrulity of someone else".⁵ A visit to the Headquarters would therefore give him an opportunity to counter such garrulity.

In the second place, Clarke as the field leader (after Bowen's departure in 1856) of the Yoruba Baptist Mission would take advantage of his visit to America to sort out with the headquarters matters concerning the operational policy of the Mission in Yoruba land. Four issues were at stake in this respect. The first concerned the salaries of missionaries. In April 1853, the Board decided to pay their missionaries a regular stipend of \$750 per couple and \$500 per single, it being understood "that if any change be hereafter deemed necessary, the amount be increased or diminished".⁶ A few years later, the Southern Baptist Convention requested the

¹ Quoted in an undated Journal of the Rev. W. H. Clarke, copy in the file containing his letters.

² *ibid.*

³ Quoted in Clarke to Poindexter, 11 September 1857.

⁴ *ibid.*

⁵ *ibid.*

⁶ Quoted in George W. Sadler, *A Century in Nigeria*, Broadman Press, Nashville Tennessee, 1950, pp. 58-9.

Board to consider "the propriety of increasing the salaries of missionaries".¹ Accordingly, the salaries of missionaries in Shanghai, China, were increased.² But the missionaries in Yorubaland were informed by headquarters that one of them (unnamed) had written to the Secretary to suggest that "rates of allowance may, in consequence of the cheapness of 'livery' be properly reduced" and the Secretary would want them to consider the suggestion in a favourable manner.³ Naturally, the missionaries reacted unfavourably to this suggestion, arguing that if the Secretary had got his information from a properly informed person, he would see that their salaries at that time were barely adequate for their needs.⁴ The second point was that the Board, without adequate consultation with the missionaries in Yorubaland, took a step which amounted to a reduction in the missionaries' salaries. It happened that in the Spring of 1857, the missionaries were informed "that either 20 per ct. of [the] goods taken by missionaries would be chargeable to them or [they would bear] the expenses of [the] said goods from Lagos to the several points in the interior".⁵ At that time, the Treasurer of the Yoruba Mission was appointed to make queries on this point, as the step was contrary to the existing practice in which they had not been called upon to pay any expenses on goods. But the Board appeared to be expediting this scheme without further discussion, and the missionaries in Yorubaland felt that a change in policy which amounted to a "reduction of salary" up to 20 per cent required a full explanation to, if not consent of, the missionaries.⁶ The third point was the objection of the Yoruba Mission to the decision of the Board to prosecute Bowen's scheme of establishing a Theological and Industrial High School in Yorubaland. The missionaries in that area in 1857-58 led by Clarke not only felt that the project was "inexpedient and unfeasible" at that time

¹ Quoted in Correspondence Volume July 1858 to June 1859, A. M. Poindexter to M. T. Yates, 16 September 1859.

² *ibid.*

³ Details are in Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Yoruba Baptist Mission held at Ijaye 10-12 May 1858. Copy in Clarke's letter file.

⁴ *ibid.*

⁵ *ibid.*

⁶ *ibid.*, See also Sadler, *A Century in Nigeria*, p. 62.

but were also annoyed that they were not at all consulted.¹ The fourth point was the inconvenience experienced in conducting field operation in Yorubaland because the Secretaries of the Board at headquarters often forwarded appropriations late and sometimes such appropriations were not available for the year they were voted, forcing the Mission in Yorubaland to operate "on credit" and "at a loss".²

These problems in operational policy forced the Yoruba Mission to pass, in their 1858 annual meeting, resolutions in which they suggested to the home Board how operations in Yorubaland might be facilitated.³ In one of these resolutions, the members of the Yoruba Mission requested Clarke, "our esteemed brother and co-labourer in Africa" who was "about to leave us for a short season to visit his native land in America", and who "is familiarly acquainted with the wants and demands of the [Yoruba] Mission, and its finances and other individual financial embarrassments, the difficulty of procuring funds, and the misunderstandings regarding the expense on money and goods . . . to lay all these matters and whatever else he may see proper, before the [Foreign Mission] Board, and endeavour to make them fully understand our wants and concern".⁴

In view of this, it is reasonable to believe Clarke when he declared that in wanting to return to America on furlough in 1858, he was not only doing what his peculiar circumstances required but also "acting for [sic] the best interest of the Mission".⁵ There is no direct evidence as to what step Clarke took on getting to America concerning the resolutions of the Yoruba Mission or what was the result of any such step. However, indirect evidence indicated that he made an unsuccessful attempt to convince the Secretaries of the Board to see the adverse effect of their operational policy on the work of the Yoruba Mission. For, in an attempt to find an alternative reason to the one of feeble health which Clarke gave for his

1 Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Yoruba Baptist Mission held at Ijaye 10-12 May 1858, op. cit.

2 *ibid.*

3 *ibid.*

4 *ibid.*

5 Clarke to Taylor, 6 April 1858.

inability to return to his field of labour in Africa, the Board's Secretary, the Rev. J. B. Taylor, referred to what he called a supposition by some that Clarke was "not altogether hearty in your approval of our present mode of conducting the mission work, and that, in going out [back to Africa], you will feel some hesitancy in reference to the regulations by which the Board are governed".¹

There seems to be no basis for accepting as valid the Secretary's insinuation that Clarke's inability to return to Africa was due to his unwillingness to obey the Board's regulations. Clarke might advocate a modification, or even revision, of such regulations in order to improve field operations as he did while acting as the leader of the Yoruba Mission, but he was not known to contemplate organizing any opposition to the executive authority of the Board. The best proof of this was Clarke's attitude to the controversy raging in about 1857-59 as to whether the Board should be abolished so that missionaries could deal directly with the Associations which sponsored them. As soon as Clarke saw signs of anti-Board attitude among some of his co-labourers in Yorubaland, he quickly informed the Secretary that "some missionaries of our number, we fear, do not seriously understand their relation to you as the *only executive* and that no other body can assume your position without a conflict".² And because he believed that many missionaries did not understand this, he advised the Secretary to write an article on the subject.³ There is no evidence that Clarke had changed this attitude of strong support for the Board's authority at the time he took the decision not to return to Africa.

The first indication that he would not be able to return, at least immediately, was given in August 1859. In a passionate letter written during that month, Clarke informed the Secretary of the Board that, much as he would like to return very quickly to Africa to continue his missionary work in Yorubaland, he could not do so because of "enfeebled system". He attributed this to the amount of labour⁴

¹ Taylor to Clarke, 12 September 1859.

² Clarke to Taylor, 24 October 1857.

³ *ibid.*

⁴ Apart from the medical course he took, he spent considerable time on a lecture tour of Southern Baptist Churches to publicize, and raise money for the mission work in Yorubaland.

he had "felt compelled to perform within the last twelve months" with the result that the period of his furlough had "been of little or no avail to me for recruiting [my health]".¹ Even at this stage, Clarke was still contemplating an eventual return to Africa, as can be judged from the fact that he was asking the Board in the same letter whether his wife would be due for an out-fit allowance in preparation for the journey to Africa. For, in October 1858, he married Tabitha Jennie Strong, a graduate of College Temple, Newman and Wesleyan Female College Macon, Georgia and who had a short experience as a teacher of music and literature.² Clarke had thus secured a good wife with whom he intended to return to Africa. However, as an interim measure, Clarke asked for the post of an agent in America. The Board refused to grant this request on the grounds that the work was too tedious for someone with an "enfeebled system" and that, in any case, "in view of the necessity of a speedy reinforcement of the Central African [Yoruba] Mission the Board...request him [Brother Clarke] to take such measures as will most speedily reinvigorate his constitution with a view to returning as soon as practicable to his field of labor in Yorubaland".³

The decision of the Board to "respectfully decline appointing brother Clarke as agent" may be considered to be sound, bearing in mind that the work required greater exertion of energy than Clarke could afford, especially as he himself was reported to have confessed that his "agency would probably not be productive" because of his poor health.⁴ But it should also be seen as a reflection of the fact that Clarke's sincere quarrel with the Secretaries of the Board over policy and over salary was misunderstood and engendered a negative reaction. He was no longer trusted. Thus, when he asked for an agency to maintain himself while recouping his health, the Board thought he was malingering. In any case, the decision of the Board meant that Clarke would probably have no means of supporting his wife and himself without gainful employment before he was strong enough to return to Africa. This was the more

¹ Clarke to Taylor 18 August 1859.

² Correspondence with Mrs Eden already cited.

³ Details in Taylor to Clarke 12 September 1859 & Poindexter to Clarke 15 September 1859.

⁴ *ibid.*

likely to be the position since he suffered a great financial loss through theft in late 1858 in America.¹ Although this problem of how to survive this interim period without a source of income was not mentioned by Clarke in correspondence relating to his resignation, it must have been one of the factors that led to the resignation which occurred in January 1860.²

The only reason given by Clarke for his resignation was ill health.³ Although the Secretary of the Board hardly believed that ill health was the cause,⁴ there can be no doubt that it was a strong factor in the decision taken by Clarke to resign his appointment as a missionary. There is the family evidence that he became a victim of malaria fever. Part of the evidence is the report that after completing all preparations to return to Africa as medical missionaries, Rev. & Mrs Clarke were advised by their doctor not to return because of William Clarke's condition: that, in fact, the doctor advised that William Clarke would "not live a year if he returned because of the African fever..."⁵

Whether the doctor's prediction would have come true or not if Clarke returned to Africa is hard to say. But the family seem to believe, in view of the affliction which befell them later, that the doctor's prediction was more than prophetic! William Clarke and his family stayed at Albany, Georgia, where he worked for about twelve years as pastor in Dougherty and Baker Counties. He was holding the pastorate of the First Baptist Church, Thomasville, Georgia, when he died on 12 November 1871⁶ at the age of 42. The family evidence indicated that he died of malaria fever, which also killed, that same year, three—two daughters and one son—of his five children.⁷

His widow, Tabitha Jennie, bore this loss with fortitude and survived her husband till 1894 when she died. What is more, she educated their remaining two sons, ensuring in the process that she

¹ See various letters in his letter file concerning this financial loss.

² A copy of his letter of resignation is not in his letter file, but there is indication in Taylor to Clarke of 20 January 1860 that he resigned as early as January 1860; the Board officially accepted the resignation in April 1860

³ Clarke to Taylor 15 March 1860.

⁴ See evidence of such disbelief in *ibid.*

⁵ Correspondence with Mrs Eden already cited.

⁶ Tupper, *op. cit.*, p. 392.

⁷ Correspondence with Mrs Eden already cited.

kept alive the light of missionary zeal and dedication to the Gospel ministry already kindled in the family by her husband. Thus, we see that one of the two surviving sons, William Harvey Clarke, after graduating from Mercer University and the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky, became a missionary to Japan. One of Harvey's own children, Coleman D. Clarke, also served until recently as Baptist missionary to Japan. Similarly, a great grandson of William H. Clarke, Clarence A. Eden Jr., is also a Baptist minister at Richfield, North Carolina.¹

It was not only within his family that the missionary labours and visions of William Henry Clarke survived his death. In Yorubaland where he laboured, Baptist establishment has grown in all the areas where he cherished the hope of planting Baptist mission stations. Besides, medical evangelism which he contemplated as a vital handmaiden of the Gospel ministry has grown as a major aspect of Baptist work in Nigeria, the most important centre of this being the Baptist Hospital in Ogbomoso where Clarke would have first experimented with his own scheme of medical evangelism. Indeed, William Henry Clarke was a worthy Baptist pioneer missionary who should come next to the premier Baptist pioneer missionary, Thomas J. Bowen, in any ranking of those who laboured to establish Baptist work in modern Nigeria.

Besides, Clarke's century-old work which is now published is a major contribution to nineteenth-century African historiography. As a departure from the jaundiced stereotypes which filled the pages of many missionary and travellers' accounts of Africa, the work should be a most welcome one to Africanists. It is with this hope that the *Travels and Explorations* of William H. Clarke is presented to the public.

J. A. ATANDA

Department of History
University of Ibadan

¹ *ibid.*

likely to be the position since he suffered a great financial loss through theft in late 1858 in America.¹ Although this problem of how to survive this interim period without a source of income was not mentioned by Clarke in correspondence relating to his resignation, it must have been one of the factors that led to the resignation which occurred in January 1860.²

The only reason given by Clarke for his resignation was ill health.³ Although the Secretary of the Board hardly believed that ill health was the cause,⁴ there can be no doubt that it was a strong factor in the decision taken by Clarke to resign his appointment as a missionary. There is the family evidence that he became a victim of malaria fever. Part of the evidence is the report that after completing all preparations to return to Africa as medical missionaries, Rev. & Mrs Clarke were advised by their doctor not to return because of William Clarke's condition: that, in fact, the doctor advised that William Clarke would "not live a year if he returned because of the African fever..."⁵

Whether the doctor's prediction would have come true or not if Clarke returned to Africa is hard to say. But the family seem to believe, in view of the affliction which befell them later, that the doctor's prediction was more than prophetic! William Clarke and his family stayed at Albany, Georgia, where he worked for about twelve years as pastor in Dougherty and Baker Counties. He was holding the pastorate of the First Baptist Church, Thomasville, Georgia, when he died on 12 November 1871⁶ at the age of 42. The family evidence indicated that he died of malaria fever, which also killed, that same year, three—two daughters and one son—of his five children.⁷

His widow, Tabitha Jennie, bore this loss with fortitude and survived her husband till 1894 when she died. What is more, she educated their remaining two sons, ensuring in the process that she

¹ See various letters in his letter file concerning this financial loss.

² A copy of his letter of resignation is not in his letter file, but there is indication in Taylor to Clarke of 20 January 1860 that he resigned as early as January 1860; the Board officially accepted the resignation in April 1860.

³ Clarke to Taylor 15 March 1860.

⁴ See evidence of such disbelief in *ibid.*

⁵ Correspondence with Mrs Eden already cited.

⁶ Tupper, *op. cit.*, p. 392.

⁷ Correspondence with Mrs Eden already cited.

kept alive the light of missionary zeal and dedication to the Gospel ministry already kindled in the family by her husband. Thus, we see that one of the two surviving sons, William Harvey Clarke, after graduating from Mercer University and the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky, became a missionary to Japan. One of Harvey's own children, Coleman D. Clarke, also served until recently as Baptist missionary to Japan. Similarly, a great grandson of William H. Clarke, Clarence A. Eden Jr., is also a Baptist minister at Richfield, North Carolina.¹

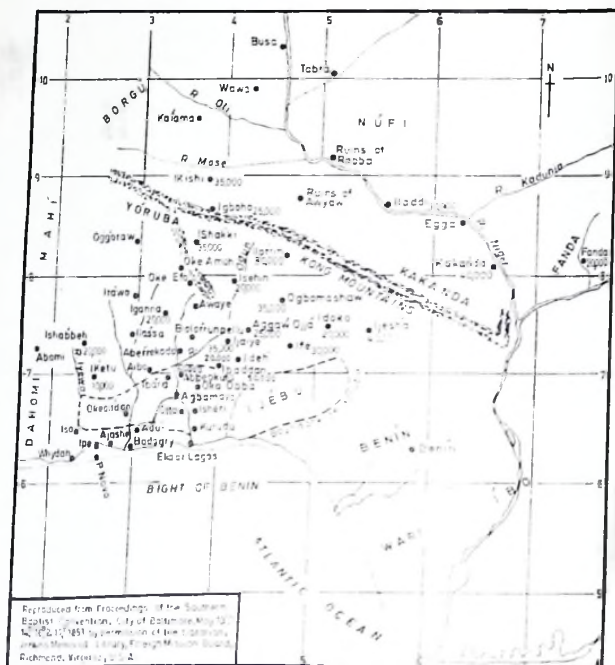
It was not only within his family that the missionary labours and visions of William Henry Clarke survived his death. In Yorubaland where he laboured, Baptist establishment has grown in all the areas where he cherished the hope of planting Baptist mission stations. Besides, medical evangelism which he contemplated as a vital handmaiden of the Gospel ministry has grown as a major aspect of Baptist work in Nigeria, the most important centre of this being the Baptist Hospital in Ogbomoso where Clarke would have first experimented with his own scheme of medical evangelism. Indeed, William Henry Clarke was a worthy Baptist pioneer missionary who should come next to the premier Baptist pioneer missionary, Thomas J. Bowen, in any ranking of those who laboured to establish Baptist work in modern Nigeria.

Besides, Clarke's century-old work which is now published is a major contribution to nineteenth-century African historiography. As a departure from the jaundiced stereotypes which filled the pages of many missionary and travellers' accounts of Africa, the work should be a most welcome one to Africanists. It is with this hope that the *Travels and Explorations* of William H. Clarke is presented to the public.

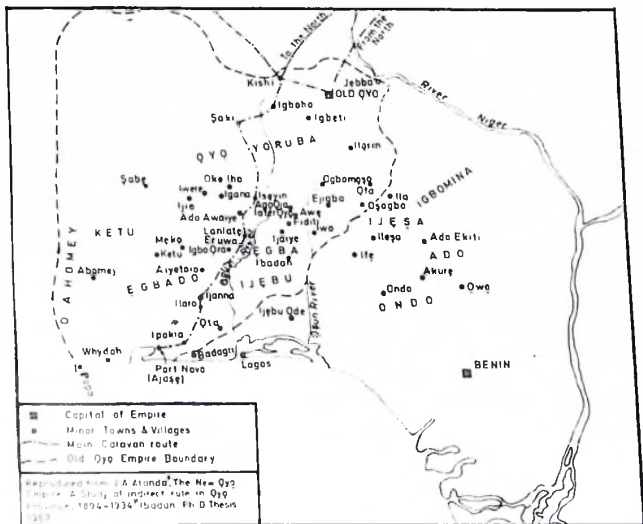
J. A. ATANDA

Department of History
University of Ibadan

¹ *ibid.*



Yorubaland in the 1850s



The Old Oyo Empire in the 18th Century

CHAPTER I

JOURNEY FROM LAGOS VIA ABEOKUTA TO IJAYE

It was about the middle of September, 1854, when I reached that part of Lagos, whither I had been brought from Monrovia¹ by Captain Sloop of *War Marrion*, to whose kindness and that of the officers of the ship I shall ever feel greatly indebted. A little incident occurred as the ship was weighing anchor, and, as I was hastening to depart, that made a very strong impression on my mind; as it served to show how beautifully religion shines forth in the character of the sturdy sailor and the veteran *Man of War*. I had advanced to the quarter deck for the purpose of asking the amount of my passage money and bidding the captain farewell. I had scarcely made known my request when, with a burning soul and sincere excitement, he said in a subdued tone, "Hush, hush, pray for me". I dropped into a native canoe, thinking to myself, "Have we such men, genuine Christians, in the navy?"² For a few days I was detained in the shallows on board a lardman barque because of the roughness of the barque and the dangers which are greater than at any other point on the coast. The bar and breakers are not only bad, but rendered doubly unsafe and dangerous because of the number of sharks that fill the waters, and wound or destroy everyone so unfortunate as to be capsized. Not a week, scarcely a day passes, but some unfortunate person falls a prey to these rapacious monsters. No sooner had I landed, than my heart was deeply

¹ He reached Monrovia, Liberia, on Wednesday 18 July 1854 after, as he said (in Clarke to Taylor 9 August 1854), "a lengthy voyage of fifty-one days" from America.

² He was surprised to see an exception to the general belief in those days that sailors were men of vicious character!

saddened on hearing of the demise of my esteemed friend and brother, I. S. Dennard,¹ with whom I had fondly anticipated to labour, to rejoice, and to sorrow, if need be, and whose early death could not but for a moment cast over me a shadow of gloom. I would do violence to my feelings if I did not here pause and pay a tribute of respect to that noble and consecrated spirit. In the course of a few short months he had already won the affections and esteem of whites and Negroes, and was just entering after the severest of afflictions on a career of usefulness when he received from on high the plaudit of a faithful servant. Though his days were short and few, the name of that sainted man of God will be forever embalmed in our memories, and the inscriptions of his monument will be written on the hearts of a circle of grateful people, that will widen until time be no more.

I found Lagos to be a place of considerable size, with a population estimated at from fifteen to twenty thousand inhabitants; the outlet of very important and growing native trade,² and a point in many respects demanding some attention. It is an island peculiarly situated, with a fine basin of water of sufficient size to contain a respectable marine and a lagoon, the confluence of the Ogun and Oşun rivers, that continues its course towards the Delta of the Niger, and unites with the lagoon that skirts the coast from Badagry. It was in former years under the control and auspices of the Portuguese and the Spanish and was one of the most prolific centres for the prime article of trade. It lies in the Bight of Benin 3 degrees east longitude and 4 degrees north latitude, and about two hundred miles north coastwise from the mouth of the Niger. About one year before my arrival, the city underwent a change from the old, abnormal state of things, and from the crushing effect of the slave trade to the consequent establishment of legitimate commerce. The battle of 1851 between the contending parties—those for and against the

¹ Born 27 August 1817, in Twiggs County, Georgia, Dennard was educated as a lawyer and admitted to the Bar in 1839. Converted and baptized in 1845, he joined the Gospel ministry and was appointed a missionary to Africa in 1853. Both he and his wife died in 1854 shortly after reaching their field of labour.

² Precisely because of its position, Lagos rapidly grew in importance both politically and economically; it is now the capital of modern Nigeria and its present population is over one million.

slave trade¹—had the very happy effect of placing in ascendancy the anti-slave trade party, and of confirming an English consulate that has, for the most part, by energetic measures, kept the city in peace, free from attacks, and thus to a very considerable extent has aided in developing the resources of the interior country. But it is not my purpose here to speak of the benefits thus accruing to this place or the rapid changes that have taken place in Yorubaland during a sojourn of nearly four years.

After spending a day or two in Lagos, making ready for my journey to the interior, I embarked early in the morning with two canoes, my only companion being a little boy brought with me from Liberia at the earnest solicitations of his parents. To me everything was new and strange and I could not but be all observation at this new world I was now entering, and which was to be the theatre of my future labours. The tide was ebbing when my trusty oarsman pushed out from the wide bay of waters spread out before us, stretching north and east for ten and twelve miles, and presenting a view which in any other part of the world would be lauded as charmingly beautiful. As we moved gently along, my attention was drawn to a cave or recess of semi-circular form, whose boundary was lined with that rich, green foliage such as is to be found only in a tropical country. The sun was rapidly declining when we left the open bay for a small, narrow creek leading through one of the most dismal, malarious, miasmatic swamps the imagination could picture. The narrow defile or natural canal shortens the distance a day's travel, as it leaves the Ogun a considerable distance from its entrance into the lagoon. If all Africa was like this swamp,² then the idea of many persons would be quite correct, that nothing but beasts and reptiles, and the lowest order of the human species could dwell within its limits. The impenetrable marsh of mango trees, and aquatic plants, with the general gloom hanging over the whole swampy scene, aside from atmospheric poison, were enough to induce any malady dependent on hysteria or hypochondria and to force a foregone conclusion as to this land of mystery. Even to

¹ The issue was fundamentally one between rival claimants to the throne of Lagos. See p. xxviii above

² Fortunately, Clarke's observation, as is shown later in his work, went beyond the swamp.

this day, the scenes almost haunt me. The darkness of evening, only making the wilderness look more sombre and gloomy, was setting over us as canoes with light-hearted natives were sweeping to and fro along the narrow channel, as if they were skimming the broad bosom of the Niger, with the genial sun, and with all nature smiling around them. Night was rapidly setting in, as we reached a small native village situated on the bank of this vile stream, and was presenting an external appearance almost intolerable. Every object seemed wild and gloomy; and though whites frequently traversed the narrow channel, yet, oppressed with the sense of loneliness, I was ever watchful and suspicious. Not being able to communicate with anyone, nor over anxious to place myself under native protection, being at this time wholly inexperienced, I erected a rude hut, spread my mattress, arranged my implements of defence, and closed my eyes in sleep. With an occasional wakefulness attendant upon one in such a situation, I passed through the night, perfectly willing next morning for an early departure.

As it was in the midst of what is here termed the rainy season¹ the morning was gloomy, dark and damp. We swept on through this dreadful swamp, severing aquatic plants that flourished in dense water, breathing the densest atmosphere and longing to see some object that could cheer and enliven. Fortunately, this connecting link of water, quite a providential arrangement between the river and the open bay, soon terminated and we were making headway up the far more interesting Ogun. The rains had culminated, and the streams, though considerably swollen, were continually falling, thus leaving exposed to the rays of the powerful sun such decaying matter as was anything but pleasant to the olfactorys. This stream is neither so large nor so beautiful as the St Paul's or the St John's in Liberia, but more muddy, with a tropical scenery precisely similar adorning its banks. For several days, travel on the river was shut in by heavy forests of tall, majestic trees, heavy undergrowth and interminable vines, that very much obstruct the view and diminish the variety of scenery. Amid this sameness, not at all intolerable however, the mind is very greatly relieved by other objects continually attracting the attention—varieties of birds,

¹ See Part II, Chapter 8 below for information on the seasons of the area.

some noted for beauty, others for their sweet or startling notes, families of busy and amusing monkeys, the views of small villages, and the frequent passage of canoes laden with various articles of commerce, propelled by joyful paddlers as they make the woods resound with their songs and salutation going down to town.

The banks of the river became higher as we advanced, villages increased, and the country assumed a more open appearance, while the formations observable in the uprising banks indicated a marked change from those formed nearer the sea. Thus for several days we toiled slowly along, with the same scenes continually recurring, some times in tramping on land, then lodging in a native hut, but at all times, in the night season, greatly tormented by mosquitoes, until the morning of the fifth day we reached Abomaga, a landing place about eight miles distant from Abẹkuta. Up to this time, though I had visited nearly every habitable place in Monsterrado and Bapa countries in Liberia, and had seen a coast of fifteen hundred miles, my observation had been so confined to water courses, where the country is generally flat and swampy, that I had scarcely the slightest idea of what I was soon to see as the interior of Africa. My two canoes were well filled with trunks and packages, which of course were considered to be not a little troublesome in a country where the people were all believed to be savages, and indifference, indolence and selfishness were supposed to reign supreme. Imagine then my surprise when I saw the banks lined with carriers eager for employment, and in a few moments each package of my baggage was allotted by my canoe men to its proper bearer, and all en route for Abẹkuta. As for myself there was no alternative but to walk unless I had chosen to wait for the arrival of a horse. Powerful as was the sun, I could not forego the pleasure of this walk, after being put up in a canoe for four or five days, and moved on apace, admiring the fields of corn, flourishing in the valleys of the river, and other productions that were also lending a charm to scenery already beautiful. The change from a river enclosed by heavy forests to an open cultivated country, with a light sandy soil, was wonderful and agreeable, and could not but enthuse into my whole system. Owing to my preconceived notions, I was wholly unprepared for such a change as my eyes were continually beholding in the rolling

undulating surface, the open country of sparse timber, the productive soil, the cultivated farms, the waving grass and the beautiful scenery. So prejudiced was I to everything African.

When Abeokuta came into view my astonishment was so much the greater in seeing a city of so wonderful dimensions, encircling the granite rocks that rise in its midst and covering an extensive plain, the very appearance of which seemed to indicate a state of things as "old as the hills". I had already presented before my mind such a condition of things as is generally supposed to exist in Africa—vile hovels, filth, nakedness, indolence and want, and expected to see everything stamped on the population and city the impress or picture of this state. So greatly and so happily was I disappointed that I was almost ready, even at this early period, to exclaim, how the poor Africans have been belied!

It was full mid-day when I reached the station of Mr Townsend¹ of the Church Missionary Society, whose kind hospitality and aid I was permitted to enjoy. Much is due to this gentleman for his zeal and enterprise in pushing on from Badagry on the coast to this place, and occupying it with considerable success amidst many difficulties. Though I do not admire the religious views of the Church of England,² and though I believe its forms and ceremonies and some of its doctrines are decidedly injurious among the civilized and enlightened, to say nothing of its deceptive and blighting influence on the native mind, it is but just and right to acknowledge the first pioneer efforts and onward steps of Townsend and Gollmer,³ in unlocking the first gate that opens to this part of Africa. The history of Abeokuta is so interesting, yet so little known,⁴ that I shall be pardoned for this apparent digression in stating a few of the important facts connected with it, and thus showing the first labours of the C.M.S. missionaries in the Egbaland Kingdom.

¹ A pioneer missionary of the C.M.S. who had settled in Abeokuta as early as 1846. See more information about him in J. F. Ade Ajayi, *Christian Missions in Nigeria, 1841-1891: The Making of a New Elite*. Longmans, 1965.

² As a Baptist, Clarke was a Puritan of a sort and shared most of the prejudices of Puritanism against the Anglican Church.

³ A pioneer missionary of the C.M.S. in modern Nigeria. See more information about him in J. F. Ade Ajayi, *Christian Missions...*, particularly pp. 34, 68-70, 77-80, 112-13.

⁴ Much information has been added since Clarke wrote. The best account thus far of the foundation of Abeokuta is in S. O. Biobaku, *The Egbaland and their Neighbours*, Oxford University Press, 1957, Chapters I & II.

I suppose there are people yet living within the Eḡba territory who can tell from actual observations and experience the origin and rise of this immense city. The dire and inhumane effects of the accursed slave traffic, lie not so far back in the past, for nearly every kingdom in Africa could relate stories and adventures connected with its subjects, at the same time marvelous and overwhelmingly touching. Among those that suffered the most is the small Eḡba Kingdom, whose size and contiguity to the coast and to that old slave mart, Lagos, once rife with hellish horrors, rendered it easy prey of the strong and powerful. It was during the ravages caused by this miserable traffic—not exceeding fifty years ago—the poisonous blood of which coursed through every vein in the whole country that this territory, fair, productive and beautiful, with a hundred and twenty villages, towns and cities with thriving, industrious and happy populations, was overrun, devastated, and enslaved and made to flow with the blood of its inhabitants. It was at this time when there was safety nowhere, but danger everywhere, when jealousy and mistrust were rife, and all confidence lost, that a few highly favoured ones escaped to the rocks and mountains and secluded themselves in those retreats most secure from the prowlings of slave-thirsty and heartless kidnappers. Abḡokuta, as its name implies (“Abḡ” under and “Okuta” stone), is derived from the number of hiding places furnished by the large granite rocks that are enclosed within the walls of the city. On the clefts of these rocks are now to be found a happy family, perched high above the houses below, engaged in the active duties of a religious nature. Very likely they are the descendents of the first terrified fugitives that found there (in the rock) a security from the ravages of the slave traffic. Under a projecting ledge of this rock, within a few feet of a dwelling, are to be seen twenty-five or thirty native drums preserved for the occasion and set apart for perpetuating some of their time-honoured superstitions and ceremonies.¹ As the number that fled to these retreats increased, small villages from various parts were formed, each preserved its own independence and was ruled by its own chief. In process of time the people of the several towns saw fit to merge the whole under one general government, in the

¹ Reference is probably made to the worship of the Olumḡ Rock.

name of a king or chief ruler for the purpose of better security, and to prevent petty broils and difficulties. So that the city, though now ruled by a nominal king, is virtually controlled by the several chiefs of the United Villages.¹ Hence it may be easily perceived how this combined force would serve to inspire confidence and infuse vigour into a people fighting for life, liberty and security of property.

It was under such circumstances, and a little after this time, that a few events of a providential character occurred which, though of little value and importance in the eyes of the world, are destined to exert no little influence on the subsequent history of this country. As is well known, England, which had been converted from the error of its way in the nefarious traffic in slaves, had with the most commendable zeal and spirit, founded on the western coast of Africa, a home and an asylum for the free men of colour, for the fugitives in the foreign lands, and for recaptured slaves. The many fragments of old broken vessels, taken in the process of combatting this traffic, are now in the back part of Sierra Leone, which go to prove what was done in giving to it a death blow, and supplying the city with a large part of its population. It was during the many efforts made to check the trade that a number of recaptured slaves from the interior kingdoms: Eḡba, Yoruba [Oyo] and others, determined to return to the land of their fathers. Though the distance was about fifteen hundred or two thousand miles, none of the inducements at Sierra Leone could keep them from those who had been saved during the raids and from the scenes and recollections of their childhood—thus showing they have common sympathies, desires, aspirations and common nature with ourselves. Many of them reached Abẹkuta in safety, and within a short period made such a representation of the state of things that many others were induced to go: and after them others, with higher and nobler purposes, we trust, of preaching the glorious gospel of the blessed God, left Sierra Leone for Abẹkuta. Thus began the missionary work in this part of Africa, under the auspices of the Church Missionary Society.² This work was prosecuted with a worthy and commendable zeal. C.M.S. missionaries had been

¹ For an account of the system of government adopted, see Biobaku, *op. cit.*, Chapter II.

² See a better and fuller account in J. F. Ade Ajayi, *op. cit.*

labouring here in this city but a few years when my worthy colleague and brother, T. J. Bowen,¹ appeared among them. As my design at this stage is to state the facts regarding the condition of things when I reached Africa, the reader will go on with me towards the interior.

After a day's rest I left the city of Abeokuta, taking an easterly direction, with nearly every object before me striking and new. All around within the vicinity, could be seen bold granite rocks of primitive formation, such as are peculiar in this country, and a view in every direction of open fields stretching out as far as the eye could see. My mode of travelling was in a hammock swung on a pole, and borne on the heads of the carriers—a plan adopted because of my inexperience, and wholly unsuited to the traveller who desires a correct idea of the topography and scenery of the country. My little Monrovia boy alternating with me in riding, an opportunity was thus afforded of seeing the fine country through which I was passing. Its general appearance was open, elevated and slightly undulating with a somewhat prairie feature, and in many places resembling extensive fields once under cultivation but now "turned out".² Generally wood was very scarce except an occasional oasis-like spot, while the water courses were sufficient for every necessary purpose. Much of the soil I found in a state of cultivation, and being generally light, sandy-free and productive, exhibited some fine specimens of the production of the country. Indian corn, ground peas, Dana corn, cotton and other crops were flourishing and added another charm to the park-like scenery, so common and extraordinary in the Sudan. The palm tree, in its unsurpassed greenness, beauty and luxuriance, dotting the rolling plains, stood out conspicuous, verifying its claim to the position of the fir tree or the cedar of Lebanon. That which most attracted my attention was the extent of the farms and their admirable cultivation, though I had seen nothing in this department at all to be compared with what I was to behold. I had

¹ The first pioneer missionary of the Southern Baptist Convention of America who reached Abeokuta in 1850. For information about him, see Professor Ayandele's "New Introduction" to T. J. Bowen. *op. cit.* . . .

² In the shifting cultivation system of agriculture which was in vogue in Yorubaland at that time, such "turned out" areas were left to lie fallow until they regained fertility by natural process.

been so taught to believe, from all the knowledge I had gathered respecting Africa, that indolence, stupidity and wretchedness reigned supreme, and therefore could scarcely give credit to my eyes in beholding the varied manifestations of thrift, skill, industry and happiness.

The sun was sinking low when I reached Atadi, a small village well known by all traders as a fine place for gormandizing, which was situated about twelve miles from Abẹokuta. The large caravan of several hundred that had preceded us in the morning were now spread out over the village, some under shanties, others reclining on mats in the open air, while many were loitering or sauntering about, and as many were testing the flesh pots of the dainties of the shopkeepers. I was disposed immediately to overestimate the population of the place because I had not in the first instance known the large crowd to be mere sojourners. Through the kindness of a Sierra Leone man, who could mutter a little English, I obtained a room, and with the aid of his good wife such fine, fried fowl as the weary traveller knows how to appreciate. Before closing my eyes in sleep a little incident occurred that only tended to confirm my views of the religious disposition of the African race. Tired and sleepy, and not knowing—not even inquiring—if any of my attendants were professing Christians—I did not offer to pray with them before retiring. Imagine then, my surprise when I heard these poor people engaged in prayer before committing themselves to rest. Astonished, confused and rebuked, I arose and but with an awkward apology requested that we again join in prayer when all united. Some of these Christian people were connected with the Church Missionary Society, others with the Wesleyan Society.

Refreshed and invigorated, I was ready for the day's travel, full as it was with so much that was new, interesting and charming. A few farms attracted notices for a short while when I was engaged with those peculiar features of soil and scenery that constituted a very fair portion of this part of Africa: a coarse, prairie grass; a sandy, loose free soil; a level surface, sometimes undulating; and a low, scrubby brushwood of Blackjack kind of wood are the features to be observed with such variations as one would naturally expect to see. In many parts of the section where the sparsely wooded prairies resemble an old apple or peach orchard, it is difficult to resist the conviction that all such looking countries

must once have been under the hands of the cultivator. The Georgian,¹ for instance, would not infrequently find himself transported, in imagination, back to the days of boyhood, as he surveyed some old field lying out, or lingered with his eyes following some beautiful meandering stream of a harvest field, or longed to rest in some shady glen to which the refreshing coolness invited.

Before midday there was another change. Every feature above described had ceased, and I was on the threshold of a heavy African wilderness, in places almost impenetrable from the excessive growth of vines and trees of immense size and height. The soil, as everything else, being diametrically opposite to that just described, was black, loose and rich, and capable of producing the heaviest crops. It resembles, more than another, that quality of land called hammock,² in that it is dry and free from swampy features. The silk cotton tree, which grows to an immense size, with wide, extended buttresses—a provision of nature against tornadoes and winds—sometimes of sufficient width, if opened three feet from the ground, to admit the passage of two coaches abreast, and is the only tree in common with those of America. As we were making our way through this wood we came upon a large crowd in considerable confusion and chattering enough to frighten away all the monkeys in the wood. The cause of all this commotion was a custom-house officer, or a man appointed to receive tribute or duty from those engaged in trading from one town to another.³ He had solicited quite a suitable position for his business very near a large creek or arm of a river, where the traders could not in haste elude his grasp. The River Ogun, that flows around a part of Abeokuta, is now very distinct, and at times running in such a close proximity to afford additional interest to the scenery of the heavy forest. As night came on, we found ourselves encamped on the very bank of the stream, and in such a wilderness as is generally supposed to be abundant in Africa. After doing a little for the appetite, my next duty and pleasure was the preparation for a night's rest.

¹ One from the state of Georgia in the U.S.A. such as Clarke was.

² In southern U.S.A., an area with deep, rich soil in hardwood vegetation.

³ In the absence of direct taxation, tolls, for which collectors were stationed in strategic places, formed a substantial part of government revenue of Yoruba towns at that time.

Early next morning we were on the wing, following the little winding path that traverses the heavy forest, listening at one time to the arousing notes of some trumpet bird that made the wood fairly echo; then startled at the tremendous noise of a company of monkeys moving off amid the boughs of the trees with a locomotion truly astonishing. At other times the dead stillness and silence that pervaded the whole forest were almost intense enough to be felt. At an early hour in the morning the scenery again changed and the prairie, with occasional woods, was the order during the day. Frequent streams with wooded banks added another charm to a scenery already interesting. The general surface was level, with slight undulations, and a soil apparently impoverished but free and unproductive. In looking back several miles over the country, it was evident we had passed over and near land somewhat elevated, though the rise of our road was so gradual as to deceive one unacquainted with the route. There could be seen two mountains rising up from our camping ground in the valley—one on either side of the river—and known in the language of the country as Olokemeji, meaning two hills or mountains. In the rainy or wet months known as the rainy season, few countries can present finer natural views than this rolling section of Sudan, the varieties of which are always sufficient to attract attention and interest the eye.

Though the traveller almost invariably appears to be on a level, he knows that this is not the case as is seen in every sign around him—the rolling plains and the mountainlike elevations in the distance; and at the same time he has the satisfaction of knowing that though he traverses the rise and fall of the country, he will not more than be aware of it. The sun was disappearing in the west when I saw spread out on a beautiful grassy plain crowds of people in squads; some making fires, others bringing wood, some doing one thing and some another, but all bright and happy. I thought that we had reached a town at last, but not so. This was the large caravan of several hundred that travelled in advance of us and was now making ready to spend the night. The evening was beautiful, everyone seemed cheerful and in good spirits as I was partaking of the meal after the day's work, and the whole scene was truly interesting to a novice as I was in night camping in these wilds. I pitched

my tent with a feeling of just pride, though I was on an African plain; and though I heard the howling of wild beasts and was surrounded by the natives of the country, I was safe.

No one except a man in a similar situation could appreciate the feelings upon which I entered on this last day's travel, bringing me as it did to the end of my journey and into a relationship with those of sympathies and feelings common to my own. The heavy forest again intervened, making the second belt since leaving the coast. I found the farms of Ijaye extending to this forest at a distance of ten to twelve miles from the city; and saw even at an early hour, the laborious and thrifty farmers at their work, thus giving me some clue to the character of the people and the way in which the affairs of life are transacted in this part of the world. One of my servants had made use of a remark that I found literally true before reaching my destination. He said, "Black man love to eat too much", meaning that the Yoruba were excessively fond of eating. Hence, a stranger need not be surprised to see them stop at every place where the fruits and knick-knacks of the land are to be bought. The good women, being aware of this strong, uncontrollable appetite of the travelling public and knowing that they generally have ready cash, are to be found at many points on the road with their supplies ready to cater to the tastes of the many hungry carriers who are never so well pleased as in taking down their loads to feast their bodies. So we found several miles from our longed-for city this accommodating class, with their fruits and provisions ready for customers. If there be no reason or philosophy in the unity of the human race, it is passing strange that those at the antipodes of each other eat, sleep, drink, think and act just alike, thus destroying the necessity of a theory that has no differences to adjust but what may be fully explained without the intervention of fanciful hypotheses. At an early hour in the day I reached the wall of the city and made haste for the station, in process of which I found Brother Bowen who had now been here toiling alone [with his wife] for twelve months. Strange to say, not only were they not aware of the time of my arrival, but they were also not even aware of my departure from America. Ready for any kind of work in Africa, and expecting sacrifices of every description, I was most agreeably disappointed in what I saw of civilized comforts around me already to hand.

CHAPTER 2

JOURNEY FROM IJAYE TO LAGOS AND OGBOMOṢO

As it is not within the scope of my purpose to make more than incidental allusion to our mission work, I shall continue such narrations and descriptions of the people as circumstances from time to time have induced me to note, and as such hope they may prove somewhat interesting to those who have a desire to become better acquainted with Africa. As we were in the very incipiency of our missionary undertaking, it became necessary to make suitable and comfortable accommodations for living, and for the reception of those yet to be associated with us. Situated at a distance of one hundred and twenty miles from the coast, and without those reliable agencies generally secured by a line of stations, we found it so difficult to receive funds for our purposes that it became necessary that I return to Abeokuta and the coast to stimulate the agents in our employ, and push forward the funds already on hand. Thus another opportunity was afforded me of becoming better acquainted with the general face of the country, and of adding to my little knowledge of the character and customs of the people. On the trip, as I was mounted on a horse, I could extend continually my observations of scenes and objects, and not infrequently as far as the eye could reach. A new traveller has one advantage over an old one in the fact that everything to him is novel and attractive. So I left Ijaye with almost as much enthusiasm and delight as I did Lagos a few weeks previously, willing to suffer inconvenience and privation if I could only acquire a knowledge of this deeply interesting country. It was now in the midst of winter and in the dry season when nature wears a garb altogether different from that to be seen in the summer or rainy season. A few months before every object

bore the impress of a tropical climate—that luxuriant greenness, which is one of its peculiar features; now the grass and the herbage and the foliage of the trees to a great extent, were following nature's law, and assuming the dress peculiar to autumn.¹ To speak plainly, vegetation, having reached its maturity, was dry and yellow, and ready to undergo the order to which it is generally subjected by the natives—the burning of the prairie. As the second crop of the year had been gathered, and the farmers were making ready for another planting season, the scenery, now visible, did not appear altogether so attractive. It was a fact worthy to be noticed that these industrious, laborious people, not satisfied with the easily cultivated soil of the open prairie lands, were felling the trees of the forest and reducing those fertile regions which are capable of supporting the heaviest population with all the necessaries of life, and for any length of time, to a state of usefulness.

Near the Osin, a large, clear, limped creek that flows around the city of Ijaye, I saw a small village that had sprung up as with magic power under the influence of some strong will to receive the tribute money or custom duties of the caravans that are continually passing to and fro. The lives of all such places are so very ephemeral that they exist only during the passage of the road through them; and not unlike some of our railroad towns, of mushroom growth, though they are today green and flourishing, almost the very hour the caravan ceases to pass, scarcely an inhabitant is left behind.

The change in the general appearance of the country from one season to another is so great, and the way-marks so few that it is frequently very difficult to identify such parts of the country as a few weeks before were of considerable interest. Once or twice I saw the spoor of elephants where they had crossed the path and made wide their way through the dry grass; but neither did I then, nor have I ever since, come within gunshot of one of these magnificent creatures of the wilderness. I passed on over plain after plain, so strikingly similar as to be scarcely distinguishable, with the small brushwood growth so much like a peach orchard, and such marked resemblance to land once cultivated that, in musings, I could but ask myself if it was not highly probable that this soil

¹ The dry season is meant.

had been cultivated at different times for ages. Again, I passed through the second heavy belt of forest from Lagos in which, from the intense silence and stillness generally prevailing, one is frightened at nothing more than the recollection of his intense individuality, or the noise made by his own person.

My stay at Abeokuta, the city of rocks, was only a few days, but during that time I had an opportunity of preaching in the Wesleyan chapel to a large and attentive audience with a young Yoruba, no doubt educated in Sierra Leone as interpreter. It is astonishing the memory of some of these young men who act in this capacity. In this case the interpreter, after my remarks had been made, rose and repeated, it would seem from his promptness and fluency, almost verbatim everything I had spoken.

After a few days' delay in Abeokuta, I proceeded by way of the River Ogun to Lagos. In consequence of over-exertion, so often the ruin of missionaries and others in a tropical clime, I was but poorly prepared for the hot sun of several successive days, and such restless nights as are generally spent on the banks of the Ogun. In the lower parts of the river we find, as has been already stated, a heavy, almost impenetrable forest lining the banks, thus excluding from view everything beyond the immediate vicinity. As your altitude and latitude increase, the country becomes more open and elevated, with varying scenery, such as cultivated fields, open banks, occasional palm trees and prairie grass. My canoe man, happening to be a groom, according to civilized forms, was to take on board his young bride at some point down the river. As we stopped to partake of some refreshments after her accession, it was gratifying to observe the gentlemanly, kind and polite attention of this sable son to his new wife, with the additional proof that genuine politeness is not the monopolized article of court circles and civilized countries.

During this passage down the river I had an opportunity of observing something of the kind, unsophisticated dealing of the genuine native, and of the comforts sometimes gathered around them. Aware of the fact that I should suffer intolerably from mosquitoes unless I observed all precaution, I tried to secure a situation as advantageous as possible for the enjoyment of a little sleep. According to the usual hospitality of the African residents, I was

soon conducted into a house, neat enough for a native, assigned the best place and accommodated with some fixtures to mitigate the intense annoyance of the inveterate insect [mosquito].

Notwithstanding all my precautionary steps, and my endeavours to shake off the bad feelings creeping on me, induced at Abeokuta and now increasing, very early in the morning I found myself almost ready to succumb to an inevitable attack of fever. I continued on my way until failing strength and considerable weakness and pain forced me to repair to a few shanties on the banks of the river where I could relieve myself. By good care, and the use of quinine, our great specific in Africa, I was enabled the next morning to proceed on my journey. In this enfeebled condition I was compelled to take the narrow little channel that passes through the most gloomy, offensive mangrove swamps the eye ever beheld, and through which no man could once pass without carrying with him a vivid recollection of it to the grave. As the tide affects the lagoon or bay even to this little creek so as to endanger small loaded canoes by the roughness of the water, there are but periods during the day, early morning and late evening, that these small vessels can enter the town. The lateness of the morning compelled us to wait in a secure retreat until evening brought with it a tranquil scene, when we pushed on apace to reach Lagos at nearly dark.

As for myself my first and only attack of diarrhoea followed, causing no little anxiety and inducing a watchfulness and caution so necessary to a recovery. In this case, as in almost every attack happening to me during my sojourn in Yorubaland, I could point to the direct proximate cause as being excessive work, over-anxiety, or unnecessary exposure.

After a short stay in Lagos I determined to take the land route and travel by hammock, a plan I found to be far preferable whenever it is practicable, and certainly more interesting and pleasant, varying as it does the scenery of nature as well as the position of the traveller. Crossing again the fine bay, we entered immediately such a country as is sometimes seen in the interior—a plain, sparsely wooded with stunted brushwood growth and tall coarse grass. This, however, was but a small belt and gradually changed until it was merged into a heavy forest extending northward more than a day's journey. As it was now the dry season and no obstacle was

presented by ponds of water, travelling in this fine, luxuriant shade was delightful, and inspiring enough to drive away all the terrors of an African wilderness—terrors, in fact we had none, unless we may rank as such intense stillness of an occasional traveller, a singing bird whose note waked the echoes as they swept over the tops of the trees, a town by the wayside, or a jolly crowd of contented, sleek Africans. It agrees perfectly with my experience and observation that the dangers from wild beasts in African forests reported by some travellers are the creatures of fancy, or overwrought pictures of imagination. In the first place, the wild beasts are comparatively few; secondly, they are cowardly, afraid of the human species; and thirdly, their attacks and the loss of life arising therefrom are of the rarest occurrence.

After travelling all day through this fine wood we reached the town of Qta, the entrance to which is marked by a beautiful wall lined with shade trees that seemed to have been planted by the hand of art. The first object that attracted my attention was the station of the Church Missionary Society now in its incipiency, and opening, we would fain hope, like a blossom in the wilderness, but not to lose its fragrance on the desert air. I pitched my tent in an open yard where I could be free and easy, and receive the visits of the natives. It is by no means complimentary to the influence generally exerted by civilized people over the natives to say that the latter contract the vices of the former much more readily than they imbibe good impressions. As a general rule, the thievish propensities of the native are not to be feared until his familiarity with you blunts his natural caution and takes away his fear. I had placed my medicine chest, containing some virulent poisons, near the edge of my tent, not thinking anyone would be so bold as to trouble that. On examination, however, next morning I was not a little surprised to find that my chest had been overhauled, some of my simplest and most useful medicines stolen, but the poisonous ones left behind as if the selections had been made by someone acquainted with their qualities.

As no search instituted could possibly have been of any avail, we left the thief with the stolen property, and made an early start for Abeokuta, passing on through a country still more interesting than that we had seen yesterday. At times we had an open section,

with some cultivation; then little paths, lines with pretty shade trees, such as are sometimes seen on old hedge rows in America; then again we would find ourselves travelling the deep heavy forests of the coast. About midway, we emerged from these scenes and entered one of those agreeable little places that might be well termed wayside restaurants or eating houses. From this point to Abeokuta the country began to assume a different appearance as regards soil, scenery and general appearance. The open prairie grass feature, with sandy soil, a scattered palm growth, an occasional palmetto, with frequent skirts of wood, were now the peculiar characteristics. The palmetto is a fine species of the palm though much larger in size and height than the ordinary species, with that central bulb or protuberance that marks some of the ancient Egyptian pillars, large stems of fanlike leaves shooting out from the top, and large yellow fruit very much resembling the orange. The flat level surface, covered with a sparse growth, greatly obstructs the view and sometimes led to the belief that the country was heavily wooded. Water courses, branches and creeks were very common, giving abundant proof that the land was well suited to more than one useful purpose. A fact worth noting in a country so uniform and level is the entire absence of swamps. Other than the scenery, which is as variable as can generally be found in other countries, there is but little to attract the attention. The excitement usually attendant upon travelling fraught with dangers and lively adventures soon subsides from the entire want of everything to feed it, and the traveller must content himself with the squalling of a crow, or the gruff barking of monkeys as his only tokens of danger. If he would turn his attention to scientific observations: search for rocks, examine the soil, or cull flowers I opine he would find in these low regions so little to interest for any length of time. As night approached we found ourselves again favoured by being near one of those convenient little places the native knew so well how to appreciate. Here he finds what as well suits the calls of his appetites as the New Yorker or the Parisian does in his most splendid and sumptuous restaurant.

Passing this little resting place which supplied our wants for a night, we left behind the low flat country and entered a region more elevated and fertile, and smiling under a cultivation that had not yet been seen. The palm tree became abundant, and, now standing

scattered thickly over the beautiful and interesting farms, inspired me with thoughts and excited emotions that could but make me rejoice in view of such exhibitions and manifestations of improvement in a land I had always been taught to regard as degraded in the extreme. As I passed over the beautiful, rolling undulations, my eye stretched out into the far distance, now scanning the open prairie like a scene that seemed to have no end, and resting on some distant mountain rising high and jutting up against the sky as a relief to monotony far away in the interior. Busy men and women were seen at work in their thriving farms or passing to and fro, and every sign indicated we were approaching the homes of the laborious and industrious.

At noon we stopped to rest and take refreshments in a small village where crowds of travellers were sojourning for the same purpose. I had by this time collected enough Yoruba words to jabber a little and attract the attention of the people. Not knowing the limited extent of my knowledge and my extreme ignorance, I began to try to convince a Yoruba female, who wore an emblem of one of the idolatrous worshippers, that such idolatrous worship was sinful in the sight of God. How much she understood of my Yoruba I shall not say. At any rate, whether under the influence of my talk or the awkward position in which she seemed to be placed in the surrounding crowd, after some ineffectual effort to deceive me, she pulled the emblem from her head and threw it away. This was one of my first efforts at talking in the language, the success of which, in the serious air of the woman and the effect apparent on the crowd, I, in my vanity, claimed as my own.

Though it was midday and in the midst of a dry season and under burning sun, nothing could detain us as we now had in view the vicinity of Abẹkuta with an increasing prospect of reaching home. The river was now so low that carriers found no difficulty in fording it. As I entered the yard of the Wesleyan Mission I found all in fine spirits in the enjoyment of Christmas, the only objectionable feature being the too free use of Holland gin or some such poison dealt out to the young folks by the missionary himself.¹ In my reflections

¹ In the Baptist denomination to which Clarke belonged, both clergy and laity were expected to abstain from alcohol.

I thought what amount of good it must require to counteract the evil exerted by one who holds himself up as a light and an example to the people. As I could not now tarry in this place I made my arrangements for a very early start on the morrow, designing to make the distance to Ijaye within two days; but, like much of the business entrusted to half-enlightened natives, my departure was a late one and forced on me a very hard day's ride. Passing the same route over which I had passed a few months before, I need not detail other than to confirm my former impressions of the interest and beauty with which the country is invested. Before reaching Ijaye my hammock men had failed and my second resort, a poor African mustang, completely succumbed, leaving me to adopt the native mode of travelling: "foot-in-hand". Night had fully set in when I joyfully found myself in my African home with some of the civilized comforts that are so pleasant in a heathen land.

On looking around next morning I saw the foundation of a large station laid, the walls rising rapidly up, and an activity in the yard quite gratifying. While my colleague was busily engaged in this work I found time to pursue my studies and prosecute the plan of street preaching in which I was so much interested before leaving for Lagos. I cannot let this occasion pass without reaffirming the statement made in our letters and correspondence at this time with regard to the astonishing interest the people seemed to take in the preached word, as many, no doubt, were inclined to consider these statements as the opinions of heated and overwrought imaginations without attaching to us the least intention to deceive. However this may be, there seemed to be at the time a feeling of interest taking hold of the people in all parts of the town; fluctuating, it is true, yet of such a character as to induce the hope that the day was not far distant when multitudes of the benighted people would be turning to the Lord. I continued my efforts until there was scarcely a nook in the city that had not been filled with the name of Jesus.

As these labours were continued, opposition began occasionally to manifest itself in the cries and shouts of children urged on by grown persons intriguing behind the curtains. An appeal, however, to the credit and standing of the parents or elders, generally secured the respect of the children and put them to silence. So very striking now was the opposition of this nature that it seemed as if

Satan himself intended to marshal his forces for a combat. The lion was aroused from his lair and he could not see his prey taken from him without a desperate effort to retain it. Gradually, this manifestation of opposition ceased and the missionary could pursue his labour without these petty annoyances. During the whole time, however, I do not recollect to have seen a single man of prominence take part in these childish demonstrations.

It was at this time that many Ilorin traders from motives of curiosity, no doubt, paid us visits and gave most glowing accounts of that large city under Mohammedan rule, and were consequently opposed to the introduction of Christianity by whitemen. Such were the accounts given on all sides of the interest of the interior and particularly this city that brother Bowen and myself had long been desirous to push forward and test the truth of these stories by actual observation. Yet, in our weak state, already with our hands full, and with no prospect of reinforcement, we could but look forward to the accomplishment of this work as the result of years to come. So we thought and conversed, little thinking what bright prospects were soon to be revealed by a kind and suggestive Providence and that we could accomplish in a few months and years what to human appearances seemed far in the distant future. So true it is, "The ways of the Lord are not as our ways, nor His thoughts as our thoughts".¹

I had been in Ijaye but a short time when I determined on visiting Ogbomoso, then by the caravan route four days north-east and a town and portion of the country never visited,² with the reserved intention also of visiting Ilorin and the northern and north-western part of the Yoruba kingdom. At this time the state of the country³ was such that all the travelling between Ijaye and Ogbomoso and Ilorin was in caravans conducted and protected by armed men sent under the authority of the chiefs of the several towns.

¹ Quoting Isaiah 55:8 which actually reads "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord" (King James Version).

² That is, never visited by a missionary or by any white man for that matter. It was in the early part of 1855 when Clarke took the decision to visit Ogbomoso.

³ Reference to tension between Ijaye and Ibadan as well as the one between Ilorin and Ibadan in particular and southern Yorubaland in general.

Having notified the chief of my intention and secured from him a messenger—a person by no means to be despised in African inter-communication, from the great security and protection it guarantees—I was ready to make my first effort towards opening up some new fields. As I was compelled to travel with the caravan, I resorted early in the afternoon to the gate where the assembling of the traders was to take place in order to be in full time for the departure. As the caravans, during the petty and annoying predatory war now raging between Ilorin and Ibadan, took their departure at intervals of several days, quite a large crowd numbering about four hundred persons, was on the *qui vive* for a travel, exciting and interesting, if somewhat dangerous. Besides the caravan people, quite a large crowd had collected for various purposes: some as mere spectators, others to sell various knick-knacks, while the traders themselves, with their merchandise in packages scattered here and there, were busily engaged in settling the demands of the custom-house officers. The whole interesting life-like scene was rendered doubly imposing and striking by the varieties of costumes, appearances and intense chattering that almost drowned the strains of music continually pealing forth from the native drums. Having ascertained after considerable waiting that it would be late in the afternoon before the departure of the caravan in full, I concluded to move on a pace to reach the resting place in advance of the noise and confusion consequent upon the arrival of a large crowd.

The situation of the town of Ijaye is one of the finest and most interesting in Yorubaland: best adapted to agricultural purposes, being almost equally remote from the sea on the one side and the Niger on the other, it presents much of the surrounding country that singular appearance of a sparsely wooded prairie with a beautiful palm that dots the whole landscape. The eye, from my point of elevation, may gaze with untiring pleasure over the beautiful undulations far away in the distance, and feast itself on scenery which is mountainous, yet always interesting. It was pleasing to note the industry so strikingly exhibited in farms thriving, well cultivated and rendered doubly beautiful, with park-like appearance. As I had not yet seen any very extensive farms and was still imbued with those sentiments concerning Africa so firmly rooted in my childhood, I could hardly give credence to my eyesight in

the continued manifestations and proofs that the Yoruba are civilized people. The soil is here made to pay its tribute in annual and semi-annual dividends while the people rely upon it as their chief means of support as the Americans, Europeans and Asians.

After two hours' ride over an open country, I entered a beautiful wood with a rich black soil but little of which is yet brought into a state of cultivation, though at this time, the idle season of the year,¹ it is not so easy to estimate the extent of land under tillage. All this land can be given the highest improvement; and no doubt, should the country be blessed with peace, will, in the course of a few years, be amply rewarding the hands of the labourer. About sunset we reached a little village, occupying a cleared spot, at the edge of a heavy forest, and now deriving its sole importance from the fact of being a stopping point for the caravans. I soon pitched my tent and retired to rest but could hear for some considerable time nothing but the coming in of the caravan, one by one, as they had settled their accounts at the custom-house.

Morning brought with it an opportunity for forming some estimate of the number in our company, which was considerable. The woods, being very heavy and the road narrow and winding, I took the leave to enjoy my own meditations, scarcely thinking more of dangers and perils than if in my own native land. This is the third belt of forest having every feature and characteristic of those already described, and extends in width some twenty or thirty-five miles. Occasionally in this dense forest, and at places once cleared but now overgrown by a second growth, I could note traces and relics of towns and villages long since destroyed, but the names of which are yet embalmed in the memories of the people.

The large majestic cotton tree is not so common here as near the coast, though the vinous elements equally ramify in a manner perplexing to man or beast that dares attempt to penetrate the forest. Travelling alone about midday, I came to a sudden halt with a very natural "turning back" at what to me was a most unpleasant and disagreeable object. Here lay an old man, a corpse, in the path

¹ So called because it was the time (i.e., around December-March) when the least labour was required on the farm, since the absence of rain prevents growth of crops and weeds, the latter of which often necessitates constant hoeing.

wide enough for one traveller. With the very instinctive sense of self-preservation, I naturally waited for some braver hearts to relieve me, but it did not happen to be in the old woman next to me in the rear. In a subsequent interview with one of my men I learned that the old man, in his peregrinations from one town to another, had succumbed to decrepitude, or some disease, that had now proved fatal.

It was very early in the afternoon when we emerged from the heavy forest into a country rather open, yet covered with a much smaller and altogether different growth of that coarse grass so abundant in all this region of Sudan. Though we reached the river Q̄ba about two o'clock, the caravan and customary business attendant thereon was so large that it was impracticable to proceed further on that day. The little village, situated on the banks of the river with its large yard, was now overflowing with a lively and happy crowd, presenting such varied scenes as were well worth the study of the curious. Men of all classes, conditions and religions could be found here, with all the distinctiveness and cast that may be found in civilized countries. The rich, the honourable, the middle class, the poor carrier or burden bearer, the confirmed idolater of various casts, and the proud, self-righteous, though corrupt Mohammedan might be seen scattered about in groups variously employed, while I spent my time in talking first to one then to another; mingling among the heathen then conversing with Mohammedans to ascertain as far as possible the mind of Ilq̄rin people towards us, and the probability of my succeeding in reaching that town. No doubt understanding my object, instead of affording encouragement, they seemed delighted in arranging before me all the obstacles, and presenting every frightful picture to dissuade me from my contemplated purpose.

As all of this large caravan had to pay the customary tribute before the final departure, the crowd was in motion early next morning, and by ten o'clock had crossed the river, now a mere creek, and were en route to Ogbomoşo. Our road passed through a considerable valley lying at the base of the Q̄ba mountains, which is a chain of four distant conical peaks, distinguished from most of the Kong rocks in being covered with a heavy, dense growth.

These are the highest mountains in the territory, being, as is supposed, about one thousand feet in height. Winding around the base of one of these mountains, we met a caravan from the north, numbering double our own; and about the same time report said an enemy was hovering about us, but our numbers and protecting party seemed so formidable that we passed unmolested. In this valley, at the very foot of the tallest peak, once flourished a large and popular city—judging from its length—but now in ruins, and marked only by broken pottery, crumbling walls, heavy undergrowth and creeping vines. These were results of the slave trade. The prairie was now on fire, sweeping with terrific force over the dry grass and sometimes approached so near us that we were compelled to find retreat in some protecting wood. The country through which I passed today is more wild and romantic than is usual, and unites the features of a sparsely settled wooded prairie and a well-watered and beautifully undulating country. Nearly all the streams are lined with trees larger than, and different from those scattered over the prairie. It was a novel and interesting sight today to see four hundred people, in single file and with loads on their heads, marching over a beautiful plain.

It was now the month of February; the hot season had culminated and the streams were becoming dry. The heat was so overpowering that the caravan could not travel more than eight or ten miles without stopping for rest and refreshments. It was a time when very little shade—even the shadow of a tree—was sought with avidity. About sunset we encamped in a small wood so hedged in that observation was very limited and confined almost exclusively to the busy and chattering crowd, now occupying every available spot. Water was so scarce here that it was with some difficulty we could secure enough for cooking purposes and even this little was quite inferior.

No one, I imagine, regretted in the least the dawn of morning, as every hour brought us nearer to the signs of African civilization and to the town where our many little wants could be well supplied. The country for twelve or fifteen miles was quite a wilderness, more from the excessive undergrowth than the tall and majestic timber sparsely scattered over the woods. It was a close hedge where butting was very difficult, and that gave the leader of the

caravan the opportunity to apply the national "leeches" for the fourth or fifth time since leaving Ijaye. Such intolerable extortion anywhere else would not be suffered a day; but here no one ever thinks of rebellion except against a custom, house officer with whom a few angry words are passed but invariably to the discomfiture and loss of the trader.

While the caravan was thus detained I hastened on to reach the town as soon as possible to see something new and prepare for my reception. At an early hour in the morning, I entered the newly cultivated farms, now doubly beautiful from the contrast they bore to the country through which I had been passing for several days. These farms were fresh and thriving, the soil new and productive, while the natural scenery that was allowed to remain added another charm to the improved condition of things. Natives could be seen scattered here and there engaged at work; but doubly engaged when their eyes caught for the first time the outline of a white stranger.¹ Among them, some bolted, others gazed in breathless awe, while some, no doubt, were conjecturing, "What can it mean?"

As I advanced towards town, the country appeared much more open and elevated and gave marks of a long cultivation in the peculiarity of the grass and the exhaustion of the soil. About four or five miles from town, we crossed a large creek, one of the main tributaries of the Oba, and on the right, lying eastward, saw some fine mountains that afforded relief to the eyes. The ford of this creek lies at the foot of a very long inclined plain from the top of which a most beautiful, open, elevated, prairie-looking country may be seen stretching out in almost every direction, with all the elevations and depressions, running streams, plains, undulations and mountains that render the scenery enchanting. While toiling up this long hill I forsook my poor, worn-out animal, and leaving it to the care of someone that should overtake it, I adopted the "peoples' line"² until I came near the city. Within a few miles, looking before me, I saw what appeared, at first sight, to be a very heavy forest and did not ascertain, until from some continued

¹ On the contrary, the natural reaction would be for the people to stop working temporarily in order to satisfy their curiosity on seeing a strange figure.

² That is, he began to go on foot.

observation, that the sight was the city of Ogbomoso. The sun was now shining with all its might and for once gave me an idea of the power of the tropical sun on an African plain. Fatigued and exhausted, almost as much from efforts to force my poor horse along as from actual travelling, I gladly found shelter under the shade of the palm tree, all the more precious because of their scarcity in this region. I was a little amused at a couple of children sauntering unconcerned towards me with all the air of native simplicity, when, as if a crouching lion had sprung before them, they suddenly became frightened. The reader need not be told that no step was made for inquiries or acquaintance.

Having awaited my interpreter, I proceeded and entered the town gate with something like the freedom of an old acquaintance. There sat by the wall a powerful man that had headed the caravan from Ijaye and was now several hours in advance, and who, no doubt, conveyed the intelligence of the approach of a whiteman. The old gate keeper received me very kindly in allowing my entrance without even an interrogation. I had hardly taken my seat under a fine shade tree when I was surrounded by a crowd ever changing as the news flew far and near with telegraphic rapidity that "Oibo"¹ had come. Feeling that I was getting into the interior of the country, I was most anxious to note every change and every new object, whether in nature, the countenances, actions or character of the people. Now I can look back, after the lapse of time, and well understand how, in my enthusiasm, I was ready to see new beings, new creatures and everything a little superior to what my eyes had hitherto seen; and had I then adopted my first impressions as correct, I would, no doubt, like many mushroom chroniclers of new people and new things, gone far aside of the mark. After waiting several hours, my protector arrived and immediately began the initiatory movement of my introduction to the town. He first notified the chief, who, in turn, and after full preparation, gave notice of his readiness, which was the signal to march. No one unacquainted with the excitement produced by the first appearance of a whiteman in an African town could well imagine the confusion into which everything was now thrown. The chief messenger, in company with

¹ "Oyinbo" or "Ebo", the Yoruba word for whiteman.

my own attendants and carriers, moved rapidly on, followed by a large and eager crowd, whose highest ambition was a view of the pale-faced stranger. Not to have been proud of such demonstrations of kindness and respect would have been less than human, not to say brutish. At every corner and street new crowds were seen augmenting our number and joining in the noise and confusion until we reached the compound of an official character, to whom according to custom, I must be presented before appearing in the presence of a higher authority.

After a walk of a mile or more of narrow and tortuous streets with square houses, I entered an immense crowd of several thousand people surrounding their lord, who was seated on the root of a fine spreading tree between two swords pointing over his shoulders, while the elders and the musicians occupied the post of honour on his right. Immediately in front was the Baálẹ's house and on the left a compound near the walls of which I was requested to sit on the side of a chief until the preliminaries of an introduction were all arranged. My presence being announced, the messenger of Ijaye, in whose care I had been placed, first made his obeisance by humble prostrations, running during the intervals some distance back and rubbing his head with sand in oriental style.¹ At last he prostrated himself before his honour, with mouth in his hands and his hands in the dust, and delivered the message from the chief of Ijaye. When he had finished, I was requested to come forward, but as it was so nearly dark, I could not think of detaining the crowd for more than a short time. This being my first interview with the town and its chiefs I could but feel somewhat impressed with the array of age, wisdom, respectability and numbers now before me, far surpassing, as it did, my highest anticipations. I stated in a concise yet explicit manner the object of my visit; and in order that they might comprehend my meaning, I made use of my few moments in declaring to them the good news of pardon and salvation to which greater silence, respect and attention could not have been manifested in any country or place. The chief, to say nothing of the elders and multitude, was so impressed with the superiority² of a whiteman that he wished to

¹ This was the highest form of respect paid to dignitaries in Yorubaland.

² It was not a question of acknowledging any superiority but rather of showing respect to a visitor who had come from the mighty Arẹ Kurunmi of Ijaye.

know from my interpreter if he should make his salutation by kneeling or prostration. Everybody seemed to be well pleased with the interview which was necessarily terminated by the approach of night and which, after delivering my few presents according to custom, was brought to a close, myself and attendants being led to a house prepared for our reception. In a short time we received the chief's present of five heads of cowries and a bullock, besides what the attendants thought a little better, just at that time, a good supply of eatables.

Thus far successful in reaching Ogbomoso within a day's travel of Ilorin, my Mohammedan friends, who had been bantering me and telling all kinds of stories concerning their town and people, were now very friendly and, I imagine, a little fearful lest I should continue my journey and prove the absurdity of their talk. Of course, everybody was now in a good humour; the chief and elders were pleased; the whole town smiled; and my immediate crowd almost went into ecstasies because cowries were abundant and the bullock was to be slain on the morrow.

Sleep last night and rest from toil and fatigue, even in a close native room, was indeed sweet. My assiduous and attentive host was up be-time in the morning, with both his salutation and that of the chief, while others, in turn also, came to pay their respects to the stranger. It must not be supposed that all the attention and kindness shown a whiteman in a native town is the genuine offspring of hospitality—though the natives possess much of this estimable quality; nor on the other hand, must it be too readily inferred that the "loaves and fishes" are the only or the main incentives to the exercise of a warm heart and open hand. While they generally think a whiteman possesses cowries *ad infinitum* and is able to enrich everybody, you could not more highly insult a respectable native than by insinuating his whole object in his attentions was to secure a present. Our bullock was now slain and apportioned among my own people and the inmates of the compound according to a rule well understood by the natives. Notwithstanding my best efforts to dry my own share thoroughly, it soon spoiled while I doubt not the native, from a knowledge of this art, in a warm climate, had good palaver sauce for some time to come. In addition to this article of food, an abundance of good milk was forthcoming

every morning, a thing which Dr Barth experimentally and properly says must be taken in small quantities in a tropical climate. In a short time my cooking arrangements were all made and I was happily situated for a pleasant sojourn for several weeks.

I paid my respects to the chief with whom I had a pleasant interview and to whom I could more freely speak than was the case yesterday. He and the elders were quite anxious that I should locate among them and gave me choice of any place I might select within their town. Being thus free to roam at pleasure, I gladly availed myself of the opportunity of preaching wherever I went. This was my main object in all my efforts and explorations, and though the culling of flowers, the breaking of rocks and the untold speculations of various kinds would have called forth all the energies of those aspiring to worldly honour, I could but make everything bend to the paramount duty of preaching Christ, the only Saviour, to the benighted people. Besides the frequent opportunities afforded by the visits of the natives for conversation and free intercourse, I spent ten days or three weeks in treading the streets of the city and in talking to anxious and attentive crowds, numbering from two to eight hundred people, from three to six times a day. The city was in an uproar nearly the whole time, and in every section visited, some considerable crowd was in attendance. I would not assert that it was the interest of the gospel that induced the natives to pay such strict attention to the word and manifest on every occasion the greatest kindness and respect; yet I will say, whatever may have been the cause of securing an end so desirable, we could not well feel too thankful for such among a people proverbial for every kind of barbarity and heathenism.

One day, while wandering over the town, I passed by a crowd that soon increased to several hundreds, some of whom had been taking a little too freely of their country beer. Having finished my talk to the people, I felt disposed to pray for them; and astonished would have been any man to have seen the respect paid by that audience under such circumstances. I would not venture to say that this strict attention of listening ears, gaping mouths and stretched eyes for ten days together was the mere effect of curiosity any more than I would affirm the cause to have been their desire to hear the gospel. Whilst, no doubt, it was the result

of two influences, we shall, perhaps, never learn the cause of this strange and wonderful excitement until it shall be explained by native converts and understood by the missionary under a better acquaintance of native customs and character. No man ventured to contradict my statements—no one objected—no one thought of offering an insult. On one occasion, while I was passing by a large tree rapidly decaying, my attention was attracted to it by the respect shown it in the prostrations of the people. It was an object of religious worship and under guardian care of an old woman who continually received small contributions from the crowds hastening on to the markets. No sooner had I attacked this old matron than she manifested a determination to defend her precious trust. We carried on our little controversy for the edification of the crowd and separated without a rupture, but with what success I cannot say as the same old lady, to this day, holds her post of honour and revenue, apparently with as much tenacity as ever near the centre of the city. Adjoining the market is a large park of native growth containing several acres and held by the natives as a sacred grove; and though sacred, I have yet for the first time to see a sacrifice offered in it. Although, it would make one of the best market grounds in affording abundant shade during the heat of the day, this idea seems never to occur to a native, or if so, the sacredness of the place is of more importance than a fine shady market yard. In passing this wood a strange crowd would not fail to notice the immense number of large hawks, measuring five feet from tip of one wing to the tip of the other, that are continually flying over the tops of the trees. In one of my peregrinations I approached a large crowd of people enjoying the antics and witticisms of fifteen or twenty "devil men", the very caricatures of grotesqueness itself. It was a perfect jubilee and afforded, no doubt, as much sport and amusement to the bystanders as is generally enjoyed at theatres and operas in civilized countries.¹ The appearance of these grotesque figures almost defies description, and quite burlesques the

¹ This was an example of travelling theatre performance among the Yoruba. For details, see J. A. Adedeji, "The Alarinjo Theatre: The Study of a Yoruba Theatrical Art from its Beginnings to the Present Day". Ibadan Ph.D. Thesis, 1969.

fantastic displays sometimes witnessed at our colleges. I readily heeded the intimation to pass on without disturbing the crowd, although being the greatest curiosity myself, I could give no assurance I would not carry along with me a large number of the curious.

Ogbomoṣṣo, being built on an inclined plain, has a level apex or top on which was once built one or more compounds, now in a state of utter ruin. The sight is most beautiful; fronted by a fine lawn with tall shade trees, and commanding a view of nearly all the surrounding country. This place suited my fancy precisely and, notwithstanding the warning of the natives that it was so unhealthy that no one could ever live there, I felt very much inclined to test it. There it was on the summit of this rolling plain, but I could not understand how it should be injurious to health when so distant from any intercourse of malarious region. The standing proofs of its unhealthiness and the continual warning of the people finally induced me to relinquish this delightful place as a building site.

During my sojourn, I went out one evening to witness a large caravan bound for Ilorin. In consequence of the insecure state of the country from marauders and the great danger between these two places, a very large number of traders from various routes had been concentrating for several days past in Ogbomoṣṣo, and the one in which I came from Ijaye, having been detained for several days, was now augmented by one or others. The crowd had been collecting at a very early hour in the evening so that when I reached the gate from which they were to depart, thousands were on the ground presenting a scene of diversified interest, various avocations, characters and dispositions neither seen every day nor in every country. I moved about from place to place, first from one crowd, then to another, inside the wall, then outside, studying African character and customs, and deriving, I trust, some information from the way in which Sudans transact business. The custom-house, at which was kept up a continual brawling, with an occasional using of clubs, was besieged by anxious traders, none of whom were permitted to pass the gate without paying the regular duty on goods. The vendors of various eatables in any number,

praising their articles;¹ the drummers, keeping up an incessant rattling,² and thousands of chattering voices produced a roaring that might have been heard at the distant of several miles.

As the evening was rolling away, on passed some horsemen, armed with spears and other things, and footmen with guns, some to head the caravan, others to bring up the rear. So, at a late hour in the afternoon, the crowd began to move and lessen the number that had already increased to several thousands. I suppose there could have been scarcely less than one thousand people in the caravan, no less than several carloads of merchandise, destined to the large city of Ilorin, one day's journey further north. After a full observation of this crowd I turned my footsteps homeward with a stronger and better impression of what the African is, and still more what he might become, than I had ever therefore enjoyed. I saw that in the Sudan people lived and thrived as in other lands; that they were actuated by the same motives, stimulated by the same objects and ends; and impelled by the same affections and desires; and that the only difference in their commerce was that of quantity, not principle. The same life, noise, confusion, energy, enterprise, the same diversity of character, person and talent could here be found as at a railroad depot or steamboat landing in a civilized country. Not that I would say the same in extent but only in kind.

As it must have been very late at night or early next morning before the payment of custom-house duties was completed, this large caravan could not have travelled that evening but a short distance from town, more particularly as the train itself was five or six miles in length. Anxious as I was to proceed with this or some other company to Ilorin, thence to the northwestern parts of Yorubaland and back to Ijaye by way of Okeiho and Awaye, my peculiar circumstance, want of necessaries, inexperience and the dissensions of the natives, constrained me for the time being to abandon my project, although I had left home with the strong desire to accomplish it. Having spent very pleasantly three delightful weeks in this city, and having received the express approval of

¹ Reference to the mode of advertisement commonly employed by the Yoruba.

² The drummers were actually singing praise names, and since Clarke had no knowledge of the talking drum, he described the exercise as "rattling".

the chief and elders as to my locating among them, and also a grant of land gratis for that purpose, I began to think of turning my footsteps homeward. The weather was still charming and beautiful, rendering travelling over the delightful country most pleasant recreation. With an intention some day of passing through Ogbomoşo, via Ilorin, I left in charge of my host two bags of cowries in case I should need them towards the close of the journey, and then bade adieu to the chief and his hospitable city on the best terms and with the remembrance of pleasant and agreeable associations.

The fine, rolling plains, the short ranges of conical mountains, sometimes almost bare, then covered with verdure, the green grass, just peeping from the earth and the fine blue sky, all conspired to make my return a pleasant one, and everywhere enhanced the otherwise lonely travel. The marked difference in the general appearance of the country about Ogbomoşo strikes one immediately and adds not a little to the confirmation of one's previous conceptions that there are in the interior of Africa countries fair, productive, beautiful and healthy. One looks in vain for swamps and marshes, sees no local cause for sickness and almost ready to hurl a denunciation against those travellers or otherwise, who have only spoken or written of Africa but to belie it. As I rode along on my poor animal, scarcely yet recovered from fatigue, I noted here the land once cultivated, now "turned out", there a few acres of woodland, like the primeval forest, and there farms but recently reaped of a beautiful harvest, while the whole surrounding country in its general appearance, could testify to the industrious habits of the natives. On the outskirts of the farms, the new grounds lately brought into a state of cultivation and the clearings now in a state of forwardness encroaching year by year on the primeval forests or lands, gave additional confirmation to the improved condition of the people. What could be more interesting to a traveller seeking the temporal and spiritual welfare of the benighted African than to behold, in these signs of improvement, the stability of the country and the promises of a much better future. A few weeks ago such was the condition of the country between Ijaye and Ogbomoşo that we came in company of a large caravan for better security and protection; now we return almost single handed, regardless of danger or confirmed as to its absence.

The dry season had now lasted to the present time, rendering water at the time so scarce and desirable that there were but one or two streams for two or three days' journey at which we could supply ourselves with drinking water. On the second day, about one o'clock, when riding in the valley of the Oba river, from which rises the Oba mountains, I felt a heat that was to me intolerable and from which there was scarcely any escape. This is nearly the only time that I suffered materially from the scorching, burning sun, attributed in part, no doubt, to a nervousness induced by a lazy, jaded pony, whose strides and rate were sufficient to have taxed the patience of Job. I was some distance in advance of my company and reached the Oba village tired, nervous and feverish, and not a little vexed with some of my people for not doing, just perhaps as they could not have done, keeping up with me. My tent, package, bed, tea, etc., were all behind; there was no spot I could make myself comfortable and I was then burning with fever. Somebody must be blamed and none more than those who were depriving me, by their slowness, as I thought, of the few comforts I possess. As I was then situated, it seemed doubtful whether I should be able to proceed on the morrow, but a little refreshment and a good diaphoretic quite invigorated me for the next day's travel.

The route, though twenty-five miles, lay, for the most part, through a heavy, primeval forest, the shade of which added no little to my comfort. I succeeded in reaching Ijaye in the evening on my poor horse that soon succumbed to the severe travel, while I myself kept going, until disease increased its hold and came very near carrying me to the grave. It seemed that for several days the disease was in a state of incubation, then it laid me prostrate for one month on a bed of sickness from which I should never have risen but for the kind intervention of a merciful God who, I believe, raised me up in answer to prayer. It was now the month of March [1855] when I began to recover and have hopes of accomplishing something more for Africa. As the rains were soon to begin and I could not for some months to come think of travelling again, I resumed my study of the language—a labour assiduously carried on during my stay in Ogbomoso—and my custom of preaching from street to street over the city. So continually did we receive

flattering intelligence from the natives of Ilorin and the interior, and so desirous was my worthy and esteemed co-labourer¹ and myself of learning still more of regions beyond that he soon determined to reach Ilorin before the setting in of the rains, while I was to traverse a few months later the kingdom on the north-west and north and reach the same city by an entirely different route. The very cheering and flattering news brought by him on his return² about the Ilorin people and their apparent readiness to further our attempts at evangelization, confirmed me the more in my determination to push forward my explorations as soon as possible.

At this time, as we had been since my arrival, we were single handed and without any prospect of reinforcements. Abeokuta, a very large and an important city, was lying between us and the coast unoccupied, and called daily for more important services and labours than could be rendered by an agent whose only interest in our affairs could be but of a pecuniary kind. With the very important agency both in Abeokuta and Lagos, I had determined, in my own mind, to move to Abeokuta for the present, and had so concluded a letter to the Board when we received the very welcome intelligence that Rev. I. M. Harden, transferred from Liberia to the Yoruba mission, had reached Lagos to become our missionary and agent at that point. On the reception of this information my whole plan of action was changed and I soon began to make arrangements for visiting the north-western and northern portions of Yorubaland, a part of which had never been trodden by the foot of a whiteman.

¹ That is, T. J. Bowen.

² Bowen visited Ilorin in April 1855.

CHAPTER 3

TRAVELS IN NORTH-WESTERN YORUBALAND

It was during the last days of July 1855, as I then supposed, towards the close of the rainy season¹ that my arrangements for a speedy departure were all made. My health was fully restored and I felt as vigorous as if disease had not touched me. There were some portions of this country, the cities of Şaki and Igboho, I had a strong desire to visit even before leaving America² as there was every reason to believe that a mission located in that latitude, surrounded by the Kong mountains where air, temperature and elevation were more favourable to health, would be more likely to prosper. My carriers having been informed as to my intentions, and their loads being shown to them. I left Ijaye on the 20th of July, mounted on a horse that would bear me safely through the trying scenes that awaited me. Knowing that my route lay in a westerly direction, and confident that I knew the road very well, I started in advance of my carriers that I might induce them to follow my example more readily. Relying on information previously given as to the road leading from the city, I had travelled but a few miles to ascertain that I had missed the road and must return to the city and start anew. I had now no time to lose if I was to reach and cross the Ogun river twenty or thirty miles distant before night. This little loss of time led me to hope that my carriers were in advance and might be overtaken at pleasure by a little extra riding.

¹ Clarke later found that his supposition was wrong since July was only the end of the early rain which, after a break in August, was followed by the late rain in September-October.

² This desire grew largely as a result of Bowen's published letters to the effect that these areas were the most ideal in "Central Africa" for white missionaries to settle.

Being now in the right road, I made use of my little knowledge of Yoruba in asking every crowd of persons if my carriers were ahead, to which inquiry everybody gave a positive answer. In nothing disconcerted, and giving full credence to every answer, I gradually increased my pace, becoming anxious each hour as my people seemed to have distanced me. It could not be that the natives did not understand my simple question, much less would they abandon themselves by lying for no profit. It was nearly dark when I reached the river and learned, to my sad disappointment, that no people of my description had yet appeared. A heavy cloud just coming up and betokening rain, I made all haste to the inimitable plan of crossing on a calabash to secure myself from drenching. The people on the other bank seemed a little astonished at the appearance of a whiteman at so unseasonable an hour, but an explanation of carriers being behind secured their confidence and soon obtained for me a covering from the storm. Scarcely had I seated myself when the rain poured in torrents, so wetting the room occupied by me that a change to another compound became necessary. At every flash of lightning the children sitting around would make a sulking noise, as if, by the superstitious act, they could ward off the danger. I was now without food, mattress, or the least comfort, and must necessarily accommodate myself to such articles as the natives could afford.

The direction travelled today was nearly due west and over a country charming and beautiful, vegetation of every description was in full growth; the undulating plains were covered with the finest grass; the palm tree decking the landscape; the streams lined by trees, vying with the greenness of the surrounding scenery, and farms, now matured and thriving, and adding other charms to nature already beautiful. The continued scenes became so interesting that it was impossible not to be delighted with such a feast of nature. The silk cotton tree, massive and majestic, sometimes to be seen at the distance of several miles in striking groups, presented marked contrast to all the surrounding scenery. As I left the farms, the country, assuming a wild appearance, became more woody and consequently shut out my observations, and the appearance of the wilderness was such as might well have been anticipated. The evening wore on with the sombre cast and increased anxiety.

Having rested on my mat with some native clothes for covering, I awoke in the morning, nothing worsted, and again, in the absence of a better one, partook of some native food. I was now very anxious to learn the fate of my carriers and the cause of their detention. Towards noon, in company with others, my people made their appearance, very much to my satisfaction, and gave for their detention a reason that I had well suspected. Native Africans are not often tricky but on the contrary, when once possessed of your confidence, prove faithful to their trust. I had engaged before leaving Ijaye a cook, formerly in our employ, but dismissed him in consequence of bad conduct, for a satisfactory amount to be paid on my return. But as he owed me a debt, I remarked to my interpreter that the promised payment would be cancelled on my return and requested him not to mention it. This secret he, however, communicated to my cook who then, of course, refused to accompany the party. Fortunately, another carrier was readily obtained and hence the detention by a day.

After all had been ferried across with just the loss of the baggage of an attendant, it was then too late to proceed that day as the next town was at a distance of more than half a day's travel. Seldom are my sympathies more aroused than for the poor woman who had committed all her baggage to the calabash ferryman but to see it sink to rise no more. Splash went the little boys on all sides to recover it while the poor woman landed to break forth in wails and lamentations that could have been heard a mile. As there were numbers looking on at the mishap, clearly occasioned by bad management, the principal agent of the ferry, with a native honesty and a noble generosity, not always to be found in civilized countries, refunded liberally to the loser. In consultation with my interpreter and carriers it was deemed best to remain during the day and spend the morrow, which was Sabbath also, in order both to rest and have an opportunity of preaching to the people. Here is a little village on the west bank of the river, built up by the ferryman and people sent to this crossing by the chief of Ijaye; and though few in number, I felt that a few seeds deposited here might some day result in good. Who can tell!

In the evening, gun in hand, I went out to shoot a guinea fowl, an abundance of which were to be found near at hand. To the traveller in

Africa nothing is more reviving than a little sport of this kind which, on this occasion, afforded a little profit as well as pleasure.

The Sabbath was spent in rest, preparatory to the labours of the following week, and in labouring occasionally among the people. At a suitable hour I called my people together and honoured the day with some appropriate exercises, and such as I hoped may have been in some way profitable to some of the native hearers. I found among the people of this place the same willingness to hear as heretofore witnessed in other towns, and was then, as since, continually forced to observe among this people the same human nature as among the whites, and that if the two races are not identical, they must bear some such relationship as first cousins. While reclining today I was a little amused at a lad, light coloured, delicate and gentle as if he had been raised in the lap of luxury, who, with a long, soft, whining voice, talked as if his mouth was melting sugar or candy. Said I to my interpreter a short time afterward, "What do you call that kind of a boy?" Said he with a smile, "He is called sweet-mouth".¹ Had I been called to name him and had he been puffing a cigar, I should have given him the appellation of the Young American. The great difference between the savage and the civilized will be found in the fact that the latter appreciates everything valuable in nature to his own use and comfort, while the former, unobserving, ignores oftentimes the simplest convenience.²

There flows by this small village the Ogun, rising in the vicinity of the Niger at the northern confines of this kingdom, bearing its waters on to the sea at Lagos; but there is not to be seen a canoe of yams, palm oil, or other articles that would, by exchange of commodities, afford cheap supply of such articles that are now so dear in this region. For several months in the year, it is true, this river cannot be boated even with canoes, but a more civilized people would not fail, during the rains, to make opportunity to carry their small vessels, heavy laden, far into the interior.

With the dawn of morning, myself and a small company, consisting of an interpreter, four carriers, and one female attendant, the wife of a carrier, arose and made speedy preparation for our departure. As

¹ That is a person with a sugar-coated tongue.

² No basis is established for this conclusion which appears to be absurd.

is usual on the regular routes between towns, a small caravan was ready to accompany us, thus adding somewhat to the interest of our journey. According to native information, Iseyin was nearly due west one day's journey from the river, and presented a route passing immediately through a country rather flat, wild and wooded, with variable soil, and without any marks of cultivation or improvement. The open country or prairie, as it is sometimes termed for the want of a more expressive name, alternated with a forest as did the elevated rolling plains with the low-lands, and thus beguiled away the otherwise tedious hours of travelling.

After a few hours' ride I could observe from one of those elevations a rocky mountain across the river, the fine undulating country, even to Ijaye, and Oyo, and the beautiful blue in the background, stretching to the horizon. When coming within the vicinity of the city, I passed the ruins of an old town, another proof of the splendid achievements that marked their glorious era. Now how changed! Just in an opposite direction, I am at a loss to know what is that peculiar appearance extending almost to the very summit of the small mountain. That is where the hardy sons of Yorubaland pour out their honest sweat for a living; which is much more than can be said of thousands of those who, like hungry eagles flying over the intended prey, are ready to pounce upon them right or wrong, and appropriate them to the yoke of slavery.¹ The country now became open and revealed on the south and west bare granite rocks so familiar to Sudan. The city itself, partly surrounded by a wood, much like an oak and hickory forest, presented quite a striking and inviting appearance, though so scattered as to seem to be several towns contiguous to each other. According to native custom, a messenger was dispatched, immediately on our reaching the gate, to inform the chief of my arrival and my desire to salute him. After a little delay we proceeded in company of a guide to the house of the chief who, on my being announced, soon presented himself with an air of importance, it would seem, inherent in men born to rule, and not less in those who sit on the mat's edge of royalty. A small crowd among which was one of the most beautiful African women—

¹ Reference to the Ilorin-based Fulani incursions into Yorubaland in the nineteenth century.

of very bright colour—I had ever seen, had gathered around to witness the ceremony of my reception. The chief, a very fine-looking fellow, who stood six feet or six feet and a half high, was quite agreeable and appeared to be on fine terms with himself, and not at all displeased with the religious talk I gave him. In the evening, I again called on his majesty, who, having solicited an interview, had arranged himself in his finest, no doubt, for the purpose of making as good impression as possible and exercising a covetous spirit for which he has since made himself so noted. His attendants brought a chair, the gift of a former missionary, in which he seated himself with as much dignity as if he had been Grand Duke of Baden, or some other petty prince. But that dignity rather yielded to his covetousness when he remarked that my present was not in proportion to his rank, as he was greater than any chief between Iseyin and Şaki and, therefore, ought to be more highly regarded. It happened, as my good friend had rather a dry bone to pick, that my refusal of his request, having the force of earnestness and simplicity, gave him satisfaction as he relieved me from further annoyance.

I was favoured with tolerable apartments and a kid as a present from the chief, as the acts of hospitality to be shown me by this town. It was a population of twenty or twenty-five thousand souls and so scattered that I was compelled to remain several days in order to accomplish my purpose of preaching over the city. As I had already paid my respects to the ruling power, there was no difficulty in the way of my going at pleasure wherever I desired. The people flocked in crowds at every point and whether from curiosity or desire to hear my talk, there was an enthusiasm well worth noting; and whenever I commenced talking, there was an instantaneous silence, with an attention that lasted until I closed my remarks. At one time, when the crowd, as if astounded, appeared so attentive that every eye and ear were fixed, my interpreter, laughed so as to attract my attention. I asked him what it was? He replied that the attention of the people so pleased him that he could not help laughing. The Mohammedan population has for many years had such a strong hold in this place that nearly all the kindness shown the Christians by the chief is meeting their determined opposition. It so happened that during my first visit I had seen the chief

and secured his good-will before the wiles could be worked by these intriguing demagogues, otherwise I might have been compelled to cater more largely to the covetousness of this most covetous man.

The object of most interest in Iseyin is the beautiful spot where the bazaar is held, and which is marked by the noble and wide-spreading trees, under whose shade is daily found anxious buyers and sellers. The natives are proud of their markets,¹ as they should naturally be, and may be sometimes heard disputing as to the superior claims and advantages of the markets in the different towns. Not knowing what day we might wish to extend our operations in this direction I secured from the chief the promise of a building site situated in an open place near a grove in the northern part of the city.

My present object being now accomplished, I took my leave of Iseyin, not knowing positively whether I should return this way, or pursue my journey via Ilorin. Wishing to see as much of the country as possible, and thus extend an acquaintance with this interesting people, I declined taking the direct route to Okeiho, and pursued my journey in a direct westerly course to Awaye. The morning was fine and inviting and enlivened by the numbers hastening on to the farms, others a little sobered by the thought of a day's journey ahead. The country was all open, covered with grass intermingling with a sparse growth and presented much the appearance of land in a state of cultivation. The objects that most attracted my attention, and on which I could gaze for hours, were the bold, bare granite rocks that rise up singly and alone from the gently rolling plains, and form a part of the well-known Kong mountains. In the distance, after a few hours' ride, I saw a tall mountain, rising high above the surrounding country, and presenting on its top something resembling a town.

As our route passed directly over a part of this mountain or, more properly, wound around its base, I was convinced as we approached, that the indistinct object was a veritable town situated, a part of it at least, on the very top of the mountain. Reaching the

¹ For information on Yoruba markets generally, see Hodder's contribution in B. W. Hodder and U. I. Ukwu, *Markets in West Africa*, Ibadan, Ibadan University Press, 1969.

other side of the huge rock, we found a number of females ready with their various dishes, which they had taken the pains to bring down from the summit to the "passers-by" on the plain. No hotel drummers could be more anxious to secure patronage than these vendors to create a demand for their various articles. While the caravan was here waiting and taking refreshments, I concluded to avail myself of the only opportunity of visiting the town of Èrín¹ and talking to the people. Climbing several hundred feet, I reached the small village whose inhabitants were almost in ecstasies at the appearance of a whiteman, and made immediate inquiries for the chief; but as he was nowhere to be found, some said one thing and some another,² yet all agreed that he would soon return home and that I must not leave without seeing him.

While waiting for his excellency, I went up to the top or peak of the mountain for the purpose of obtaining a view of the surrounding country which could be seen from this point on all sides to the distance of twenty or thirty miles. There are many mountains, among the most prominent of which was Mount Ado. The residence of the high priest of Ifá³ could be seen in any direction and well repaid me for the toil and labour in ascending this point. Nearly opposite was a beautiful well-proportioned, dome-like cone on the sides of which were to be distinctly seen one or two small villages, while in the distance, ten or twelve miles, could be pointed out the locality of Awaye.

On descending from this peak and conversing with these people, I found that so strong were their solicitations for me to remain among them, that but for peculiar circumstances, I must have made an unexpected stay. One young man said if I would only stop until the chief came he would accompany me to Awaye and show me the way, as it was not far and could be reached by dark. It seemed hard to resist such entreaties, but as my time was precious, I collected

¹ The town became one of those that were irreparably destroyed in the turbulence which characterized Yoruba politics a few years after Clarke's visit. See R. S. Smith, "Erin and Iwawun—Forgotten Towns of the Oke Ogun", *Odu: University of Ife Journal of African Studies*, Vol. 1, No. 1, July 1964.

² The ambivalence of their reply could be due to one of two reasons: either the chief was away to his farm or that he was not in a position to welcome a visitor immediately.

³ Ado is believed to be the traditional home of the Ifá oracle in Yorubaland.

the people together and talked to them about the gospel and their soul's welfare. In point of general appearance, mental and physical strength, the people of this mountain would not compare with the inhabitants of the plain.

When I reached my company all were ready to resume the line of march that now passed over a beautiful plain, rendered more so by the granite rocks so appropriate to these peculiar mountains. Mount Ado was now in full view, presenting various forms as my points of observations continually changed. This splendid rock, when seen from the vicinity of Ijaye, appeared to rise several thousand feet from the plain, but now within a mile or two of its base is dwarfed to an apparent height of a few hundred feet. Within the vicinity of the town we came across a large, clear creek, bearing south. On the southern side of the city is a considerable wood, very refreshing to the eye of one who has travelled all day through an open prairie country, whose only growth is a sparse, stunted brushwood.

I had hardly reached the town a little after midday when the rain poured down in torrents, forcing me to take a retreat in the nearest house. On reaching the compound of the chief I found him with a large, white blanket drawn around him, seated in a corner and surrounded, as is always the case with men in authority, by a crowd of flatterers.¹ He gave every manifestation of joy at my arrival, thinking very likely he had seen me before; and as night was fast setting in, he soon gave directions as to our lodgings for the night.

During my stay in Awaye I visited every corner of the place and did what I could in talking from day to day of the gospel of the blessed God. On one occasion I entered the compound of a Fulani and found there a stranger from the far west who gave quite an interesting account of his country, which very likely is a part of the Ibariba or Borgu kingdom, except that he was compelled to flee thither in order to avoid troubles of war. He spoke of this country as enjoying nearly all the advantages found in Yorubaland both as to civilization, trade and the domestic animals. But little reliance is to be placed in an account of natives. Late one evening I happened

¹ These were, in fact, either the chief's attendants or members of his council and not flatters. In Yorubaland, rulers of towns were never alone when receiving public visitors.

to be in a market, after strolling over town, and was attracted to a very large crowd of several thousand people, surrounding an inner compound, engaged in the very common amusement among the natives, dancing. In the centre of this dancing, company, was the corpse of a rich woman, well known to the people, and to whose memory the congregating town was now paying this tribute of respect. The corpse was lightly bound from head to foot, placed at length with a single object, something like an urn, and beautifully covered with cowries at the head. Drums were beating, dancers were singing, the crowd was almost in ecstasies, and the chief too was actively taking part. This woman, who by her own efforts had amassed a native fortune and was much esteemed for her wealth, had exerted a considerable influence in the town. In seeing such an assemblage of people, I was enabled to form some idea of the population, not more than two thirds of which I supposed could thus be gathered together on a single occasion like this in the one crowd that must have numbered five or six thousands souls. In one of my walks around the town I happened to be on a large rock in which are found many small holes of various forms and sizes, evidently scooped out by some designing hand. Some of these holes are occasionally used by the natives, but they readily acknowledge there is no one, not even the oldest inhabitant, acquainted with their origin. This city, Awaye, has a beautiful and healthy situation, being in the midst of an open, well-watered country, and the granite rocks, whose bare sides and tops are ever new to the lover of nature. Situated conveniently to Abeokuta, and on the road direct to Şaki, Igboho and the Niger, it presents considerable claims to those interested in the glorious work of African evangelization. Some years ago, when the caravan from central Sudan passed through the western parts of Yorubaland, Awaye, in the eyes of the natives, was a place of some importance, and bore the same relation to the country that Ijaye does at the present time.

Leaving this city, I found that my route now lay nearly due north to Okeiho, about twenty-five miles distant, now with weather so delightful and life-giving that every object was interesting and travelling itself a pleasure. The country for some distance was very open, with a few trees sparsely scattered over the plain, a short, coarse grass, a thin, sandy soil; but the cultivation in this direction

was not so extensive as the size of the town seemed to suggest. As I advanced in the day's journey the scenery was very materially changed from that of an old to a new country, with the requisite changes of forest, soil and general appearance. On the north-east lay a considerable ridge, elevated and apparently covered with a dense forest. From the foot of this ridge seemed to rise a creek, which at the ford crossed by me, ran with a velocity seldom seen in Yorubaland and whose water was as clean as crystal over a rocky bed. Beyond this creek the change was most marked in the fertility of the soil, the size and kind of trees, and had such an effect as to forcibly remind me of the forests of America, and led me to be continually on the lookout for deer and antelope. I had not proceeded far when I saw rising majestically in the distance lofty mountains, over and by which we were compelled to pass the hour of the day, and the passing caravan now notified me we were about to half-way our distance. With this mountain in sight I now had something by which I could measure time and date, and beguile the fleeting hours. The country gradually assumed a mountainous appearance until it became rough in the extreme, and rendered horseback riding even dangerous. About midday we halted to take some refreshments by a small stream that trickled over a rocky bed and between two mountains some distance from the road, on the top of one of which nestled a small village. Once while struggling up a mountain I was nearly unhorsed, and just alighted in time to save myself from a broken limb; whilst in many places riding was not only impracticable but dangerous. If the mountains are poor and barren there is a compensation in the richness of the villages through one of which I now passed in a shower of rain. Directly in front, or lying north-west, was a considerable mountain, on whose top was located a town and at the base of which seemed to flow a creek or river, and towards which I approached until within a few yards when my route suddenly deflected and prevented me from ascertaining the truth of my conjecture.

Early in the afternoon, after some inquiry, we were informed that the mountains a few miles ahead were the site of Okeiho—the mountain glen. Our approach to the town and first descent after entering the wall signified what we might expect in attempting to scale this rock-girt city. Although within the precinct of the place,

I was compelled to dismount or run a risk entirely unnecessary and fraught with danger. It was at this town, the highest point reached by Bowen, that the people refused his entrance and built him a small house or shanty outside the wall. We advanced some distance into town and asked the way to the governor's house, but received such directions and assistance as if my informants had asked what do you want to see the governor for? After winding my way for some little distance through the tortuous streets I came to a compound in which it was said the chief resided, and took quarters for the night. I immediately made all possible inquiries for his majesty but there were no two that could agree as to his present whereabouts; some affirming he was in one place and others in another, until I began to surmise that something rather extraordinary must be the matter. Persisting in my inquiries, I at last ascertained that the chief had died a short time since and that the present incumbent, quite a young man and younger in office, was ashamed to show himself.¹ This statement was enough to explain the whole transaction and not at all to be wondered at when we remember for a moment the superstitious character that forms a part of the ignorant and barbarous, and this, coupled with the significant and strange fact of the appearance of a whiteman just at the death of a character much revered and esteemed by the people. It was not until a late hour that this young chief could rally sufficient courage to be prevailed on to make his appearance, when we had a pleasant talk and arranged a plan by which we could come together on the morrow. In looking back on the day's travel there was cause for gratitude that I had passed over the rocky and dangerous route with sound limbs.

As my object was to form a friendly acquaintance with the towns through which I passed in order to secure their confidence, and thus promote the cause nearest and dearest to my heart, the chief and the elders or principal advisers through and on whom I was to act, were assembled in his own private apartment where we had a free and an easy interview. I had a very good opportunity to explain

¹ Rather than the new chief being "ashamed to show himself", the more likely thing was that he had not completed the various rituals connected with his succession, in which case he would be forbidden by custom from showing up in public.

my full purpose and of preaching to these benighted idolaters the way of salvation in as much as Ijaye, the place of my residence, was on the best terms with the people of Okeiho. The rulers and small attendant crowd paid marked respect to my statements and seemed willing to adopt almost any suggestion I might make. There is this advantage in having an interview with the rulers of a town immediately on your entrance, that it secures from the proper authorities the right of accomplishing the work intended and averts a displeasure that might otherwise be incurred to the injury of one's cause. Now having seen the chief, I was, of course, according to native custom, free, and by common consent, privileged to go wherever I wished.

For several days, I traversed the town surrounded everywhere by crowds of anxious listeners with an occasional one, whose interest was enough to make one believe the day of Africa's redemption draweth nigh. My mind to this day distinctly remembers a certain old man, whose very countenance indicated a person waiting for the consolation of Israel, and whose apparent interest would well repay for all the sacrifices and toil in a heathen land. There seems to be something in the first efforts of missionaries among the heathen so analogous to the labours of our Saviour, when propagating his glorious faith on the earth, that we would feel proud and rejoice in every hopeful token of the success of the ever-blessed gospel.

Okeiho contains a population of ten or twelve thousand souls and is situated in the valleys of glens of one of the tallest mountains in Yorubaland and commands a view of all the surrounding country. It is built among the rocks, some of whose peaks rise a hundred feet or more from the base of the town, which is itself several hundred feet above the plain below. The compound in which I spent my time lay just at the foot of one of these bare peaks. There was another just opposite in another part of the town, which I visited for the purpose of catching a view of the surrounding country, preceded by a number of lively skipping children, who knew well the path that led to the top. I had no difficulty in reaching a massive projecting ledge only a few feet from the apex, and from which I had full view of the interminable plain below. On the north-west I could trace the routes of Clapperton and Landers in their praiseworthy efforts to solve the then mysterious problem of the Niger's outlet; on the north,

south and west, count the granite cones of the Kong mountains as they rose singly and majestically from the vale, adorning the green landscape and giving rest to the straining eyes; and on the east the prairie, the plain checkered by the palm and apparently unbroken by a single undulation. It was my fond hope on leaving Ijaye that the rains had ceased, and I should be found with the dry month during August; but so far from being the case, so much rain had already fallen that I was compelled to make inquiries with regard to the swollen creeks and rivers to be crossed within a few days.

Somewhat thwarted in my arrangements by the falsifying Yoruba, some of whom had promised to accompany me to the next river, which could be crossed by ferriage, I determined to proceed on my own responsibility and do the best I could. Our route lay directly over this mountain and through the elevated plain for several miles before we descended to the level below. From this elevated plateau I was able to form some idea of the heights of Okeiho, some of whose peaks were nearly correspondingly high above me. After a few miles travel I reached a busy, thriving, little village,¹ swarming with an excited and curious population. This is another one of those little places where many a significant sign is hung out and the shade trees invite the repose the weary and hungry caravans seek. But as our journey had only begun and our stay could be but for a moment, on we went, descending and descending until we passed all the rough rocks and reached the now pleasant and agreeable plain where foothold was more secure and less dangerous. The country was at one time undulating, covered with the tall grass and with sparse timber; then one unbroken level presenting in the latter growth that is, timber and the general appearance a wilderness that had never been trodden by the foot of the pioneer.

Within the immediate neighbourhood of Okeiho I could see some signs and marks of an early cultivation, but after this, there is nothing but an unbroken wilderness until we reach the river Ofiki which, swollen by the recent rains, would have offered quite a serious obstacle to our march but for our timely appearance at the ferry just as a small caravan were passing over. Unfortunately for me, one of my carriers in charge of my dress trunk, on ascending the

¹ Most likely to be Ilero.

opposite bank, let his load fall into the river, wetting my clothes and necessitating me to try the experiment of throwing my key across the stream in order that my trunk might be opened immediately before its contents should become saturated with water. It was my first and only experiment of the kind as I lost my key and failed in my plan. These streams, hardly anything more than a large creek, in Africa could only be crossed by the novel mode of hugging a calabash. So far as I could determine, River Ofiki pursues a northerly course, passes near Iganna and I think forms one of the main tributaries of the Ogun. As one of the young ferrymen happened to be a son of the chief of Oke Amo, and offered his services as guide, we now had no further apprehensions, and pushed on apace.

Crossing the river, I found that the country seemed to vary a little in appearance in becoming more rocky, open and sterile. Through the limbs and tops of the small trees we could see in the far distance the indistinct outlines of a mountain that appeared more and more distinct until we reached its base and saw high up on it the homes of the rude mountaineers who, in stormy and dangerous times, had fled hither for the security of life and property. As there was but one practicable route for a horse, and that quite a circuitous one, I delivered him up to a guide and, placing myself under the direction of another, began the ascent of this bare rock, whose steep, almost perpendicular, sides rendered climbing most difficult and tiresome. I found the town, the population of which does not exceed one or two thousand souls, situated on a level at the foot of a considerable peak, lying on the south, which, anxious as I was, I had not time to visit. On this mountain top, as on all such that I have seen inhabited in Yorubaland, the people are supplied with an abundance of water. My first object being to see him who had the honour to preside over the place, I had halted without my loads and carriers, and sent in a messenger to notify him of my arrival. Had I been a relative or an old tribe friend, this kind old man, with all native simplicity and honesty, could not have manifested greater pleasure in seeing me. I felt at home immediately in the presence of such kindness and good-will, and talked to this good man and those around him whom he had called in, of the glorious and blessed gospel and the hopes of a better life when this shall have passed away, all wrought out and brought to our

knowledge by the atoning sacrifice by Jesus Christ, the Mediator. And can there be no pleasure in this nomadic life, wandering from town to town, over plain, hill-top and mountain, a life which has for its object the regeneration of a race of sinful beings? Yes.

In the deserts let me labour,
On the mountain let me tell
How he died, the blessed Saviour,
To redeem a world from hell.

After the day's travel I was willing to find some quiet retreat where I could enjoy some good palavar sauce and "dumboy", and then retire for a night's rest.

The morning seemed to be so unlikely that it was some time before I could determine as to my course. In the meantime I again visited the chief and enjoyed another interview in which I told the old man my object, and that I could no longer tarry as I had still other places to visit. In the course of an hour the clouds gave the sign of breaking away, and as there was a long day's journey ahead of us, I made all haste to put all things in readiness. We descended the mountain without much difficulty and traversed a country very much resembling in its general features that passed over yesterday, only that it was more open and less productive. We soon passed a town called Ilesan¹ lying a little north-west from the road, but not of sufficient size to demand a stoppage. As we advanced, the scenery became truly interesting, even to the height of sublimity as we passed along the narrow defiles of mountains or crept over their abrupt hillsides or saw all around us the high massive, granite rocks, with sparse vegetation, then some fertile valley, well cultivated and the deeply rich green palm that flourished as few trees can. In this region I beheld the almost exact counterpart to what may be seen on the eastern frontier of the Yoruba kingdom through which run the same peculiar chain of mountains as is here found in the western part. We did not, this morning, feel altogether so much of loneliness as we felt yesterday, as we had not only these marks of beauty and sublimity to behold, but also the animation that attends travelling with natives, and the farmers hastening on their much loved work.

¹ This was lying north-west of Okeiho, but now in ruins.

About midday we met a caravan, mostly women, from Iluku,¹ we supposed, travelling with an entire consciousness, it would seem, of freedom from danger. We had travelled all day through this prairie country without any peculiar attractions, when late in the afternoon could be seen rising up in the distance a grand dome of granite singly and alone as if king of all the mountains in the neighbourhood. The sun was rapidly declining when we began our ascent of this perpendicular, conical mountain, hoping we would receive a kindly welcome as in the towns visited hitherto. We toiled patiently and slowly about half way to the top when we reached the wall that extends around the visible portions of town and stopped to make some necessary inquiries preparatory to our entrance. Not a little surprised were we when refused admittance into the gate and hardly allowed to enter—our foothold outside the gate was sustained with considerable inconvenience. This disappointment was so much the greater because I had anticipated a pleasant rest. I insisted on an explanation but my perplexity only increased because I could get no clue to this strange proceeding. Failing to obtain any satisfaction from the natives more than that the chief refused to see me, I insisted that a messenger should go and notify him of my arrival and a desire to hold an interview. The messenger departed and within as short time as possible returned and passing by me out of the gate, merely commanded us to follow him. By this time a number of people had collected together and begun to manifest a disposition of curiosity and restlessness, not at all pleasant to a stranger who could imagine in their countenances the burning of warlike fire. As to have refused obedience could have been more than folly, we had nothing to do but to take up a line of march behind our black leader down the mountain into the plain whither we were led and where we were left for the night. Before we separated, as we were without any food save a few potatoes that I happened to have, we made all efforts to have some food engaged from our conductor who, though his professions were good, only taunted us and convinced us that it was vain to look for anything from people who had maltreated us without a cause. Uncared for, foodless and houseless, we encamped in the open plain around our fires and,

¹ The town of Iluku, like *Ilésàn*, is now in ruins.

having eaten the small remnant of potatoes, closed our eyes in sleep with nothing more to disturb us than the vain threatenings of the children who cried out from the tops of their mountain fastnesses: "We will shoot whiteman with arrows if he comes here".

Very early next morning as we were about engaged in prayer, according to my usual custom before the travel of the day, this same messenger arrived with a message and, not being attended to forthwith, left us with the threat that we had better not let them meet us that day. Such language, as might have been expected, so intimidated some of my carriers, now strongly disposed to turn back, that, gun in hand, I had to use some decisive language to carry out a purpose in which I was determined not to be thwarted save by marked providence. My decision settled the question and immediately every one of the company was on the line of march. The morning was most gloomy and the mist so heavy in this grassy plain, through which ran our narrow little path, that travelling to everyone, especially to the horsemen whose feet and legs became perfectly drenched by the wet grass that lined both sides of the road and not infrequently lapped across, was most disagreeable. As may be seen in the annexed engraving¹ this granite rock consists of two peaks on the truncated part of one of which is situated a town I was so anxious to visit because of the view it afforded of all the surrounding country, as well as to form the acquaintance of the people. I did not much fear an attack from these mountaineers in the first place, because I did not believe they would make the venture, and in the second place I believed I could make sufficient demonstration of battle to produce a panic in any number they might bring against us if a resort should become a necessity. My double-barrelled gun I carried with me in all my travels on horseback while my revolver I kept by, not that I so much apprehended danger as I desired to prevent the loss of life in any unforeseen emergency. Nor could these native threats, nor the entreaties of my interpreter, who cited what would be the probable course of my colleague,² were he in my situation, induce

¹ See page facing 187, for a substitute engraving. There is no evidence that Clarke left any engraving; and it is impossible to reach the mountain he referred to, the area being now in a wilderness. The substitute engraving is that of Oke Amule near Şaki, and it is typical of the granite hills in this area.

² That is Bowen.

me to take my revolver from its safe keeping. Though I had means of defence and kept my powder dry—to use the old saying—I relied on that gracious overruling providence that has never yet forsaken me. It was hard indeed to travel two long days' journey, thirty or forty miles each, without provisions, yet such was the fate of myself, horse and carriers which I, with a fixed purpose, could well endure but was certainly severe on those whose paramount enjoyment was in the gratification of the appetite.

The soil, growth, configuration and appearance of the country very much resembled that described yesterday, and had sufficient variations and attractions to gratify one fond of the new and strange scenes of nature. No mountains were here to be seen, no hills to climb, nothing but the long, almost imperceptible undulations, or the interminable plains over which were scattered the short prairie grass and intermingling brushwood, or the more dense and lofty forest trees. Occasionally, we would cross a stream that looked formidable but only so because of the recent rains and the fact that we were strangers and unacquainted with the fords.

About three o'clock in the afternoon we saw the first signs of cultivation, and soon after a country, from its open appearance, indicated our approach to the homes of the civilized. When within the precincts of the farms, and not a little troubled as to our way, I happened at a favourable moment somewhat ahead of my carriers to espy some natives, and made towards them for the purpose of making some inquiries; but frightened at my strange and unusual appearance they took to their heels¹ and for some little time could not be assured so as to approach us. Such fear may appear a little strange to one unacquainted with the former condition of the country when marauding parties were prowling in every section and carrying terror into the suburbs of every town, the recollection of which scenes, retained, painted and carried from father to son, still lingers in the memories of the people.² In a short time we were joined by others on their way homeward and felt quite an assurance from their expressions of good-will that we would be received in Şaki with that hospitality common to African towns.

¹ Cf. Bowen's experience as narrated on page 156 of his book, *Central Africa*.

² This may well be true, but the strangeness of Clarke's colour added to the reaction. Cf. Bowen's experience just referred to above.

The country now for miles before reaching the walls of the city had presented a most interesting and enlivening scene in that culture which feasts the eye and an elevation and general character that assures of health. In the distance were to be seen the mountains that entirely encircle the city which give to it a superlatively romantic appearance and on which my eyes lingered long and wistfully. Since it had been reported that the people of Şaki would not receive us, and that we should meet with the same treatment at their hands as from the people of Iluku, the first sign exhibited to us from the gate was a most cheering one, being the outstretched arms of the gate-keeper as a token of welcome. Şaki contains several suburban villages, all of which are contained within the lengthy wall that circles the whole town, and are ruled by subordinate chiefs. It was one of these we had now reached and from which we received a message to conduct us to the governor of the city. Several hundred yards beyond this village was a chain of mountains or rocks that obscured the city entirely from view and over which fell a cataract whose waters ran on through a glade strikingly beautiful. We were led over this rough way to the compound of the chief who, according to custom, turned us over to the second in authority for safe keeping until he should see fit to give me an audience. And where now are you going was the anxious inquiry of each one, now so hungry and fatigued as to be willing to stop anywhere; to which the answer was, "Not far, come on". No alternative but to go, however far. Some wished me to go back to the first village because of informality, but to this, having positively refused, I was led on through the large market now full, and assembled before the king's palace for the distance of a mile, to the house of Arę Ago where another market was full.¹ My arrival being announced to this officer, and his presence not forthcoming, I asked someone what was the matter, to which he replied, that they were discussing the manner in which I should be received. Arę Ago himself, being in favour of a kind and hospitable reception, there appeared within a short time a tall, mulatto-coloured man, six feet tall, well formed, commanding in his appearance, intelligent, and apparently about fifty years of age. No one

¹ In any Yoruba town, there was usually more than one market: there used to be a central market for the whole town and, in addition, a market for each of the quarters in the town.

could have manifested more of the genuine gentleman than this noble native, nor could our situation have been more favourable for the appreciation of such tokens of good-will. He not only furnished us with apartments, but saw us comfortably situated, and then attended to other wants most pressing indeed, upon those who had been deprived of food for two long days' travel.

At an early hour of the following morning, I called on Arẹ Ago for the purpose of consummating arrangements preparatory to paying my respects to the chief who happened, in this instance, to be the son of my good old friend. Around him, in his private audience room, were seated a goodly number of attendants, doing full justice to the large pots of beer that were placed conspicuously in the crowds, and performing well the work of the flatterer. Such feasts as these are the necessary concomitants of great men, and bear a striking similarity to the levees of kings and presidents. On asking why this was the case, I was told that it was necessary that a great man should give the people beer to drink to continue his popularity. In addition to this statement, a practical explanation for the situation was soon given in the appearance of a man whose dress was composed of a variegated Manchester print,¹ and from whom all fled that could, while those that were unable to get away were struck with dumb consternation. This is the most remarkable and influential character that claimed the honour, at the last fair for the tests and exhibitions of poisons, of having the most deadly article. Hence, the willingness with which Arẹ Ago sets forth his gallons of country beer by the day to gratify the appetites of those who will be his staunch friends, so long as he continues this good old national custom. But the character that most attracted my attention was a large, portly old lady that moved about the house, and in the crowd, with the perfect consciousness of self-superiority, and a genial face that makes everyone feel easy, and laugh immediately at all her witty sayings. As I beheld the reproduction of what I had often seen in far more fashionable circles in another land, I thought about human nature over and over again.

¹ Imported materials, particularly cloths, were increasing in number at this time.

After a little morning business had been transacted, Arẹ Ago stated his readiness to conduct me to the chief. On reaching the market yard in front of the royal palace, we took up our position under a shady tree to avoid superior orders, and were soon surrounded by a crowd, among whom was the governor's clown, a man whose trade is to sing his honour, greatness and exploits, and daub on flattery, as was once the case in European courts. This genius, with that sagacity and ready wit common to his class, began in unmeasured terms and a boisterous way to sing the praise of Arẹ Ago, doubting not but a tolerable reward would be the payment for his unqualified approbation as it received the repeated applause of the captivated crowd.

The announcement of his excellency's readiness being made, we proceeded to the reception place accompanied by the rush of anxious spectators common to such occasions and, entering the courtyard that inclosed the royal buildings, we saw reclining before us on a large circular cushion, in that indolent style which a warm, debilitating climate so much favours, a fine-looking, keen-eyed mulatto coloured man, about thirty-five or forty years of age, surrounded by his many wives, who were most obsequious in their attentions, and fearful lest even the refreshing breeze should strike too strongly his delicate face. I had already been informed that the people of Şaki, like those of Iluku, would maltreat and reduce me, and that there was but one prominent man in the city that would take my part. It was with some interest, then, that I scanned and watched the face of the man who seemed to be wary and suspicious, and full of doubt as to what course he should pursue. I pleaded my cause before him and stated my objects, to all of which he gave the best attention, but still hung in doubt as to what course he should pursue. After some reflection and explanation given by his father, my old friend, Arẹ Ago, that appeared so satisfactory as to produce quite a change in his mind, he said, all of a sudden, that he was satisfied with my intentions, welcomed me to the town, gave me privileges and authority to go wherever I wished in the prosecution of my plans. To use something like his own language, he said, "I understand you; Abçokuta, Ijaye, Ibadan, receive whiteman; you are my friend; I will receive you too; if you were my enemy and wished to do me wrong, I would fight you before you could come into my town.

Now, go eat plenty; go run about and play". After this kind reception I went immediately back to my compound in order to commence my labours as soon as possible among the people.

Şaki is built up somewhat like Abeokuta, and comprises the main city and a number of small towns and villages, in one of which I came near falling a prey to my own determined course without thinking that I was carrying my desires to too great an extent. I had preached in two small villages in a distant part of the city, and was proceeding to another small collection of houses when I met an obstacle for which I was not at all prepared. I was walking at a rapid rate in advance of the crowd when coming to two forks of the path I started to take the hand that led to the little village. But no—somebody insisted I could not go there. And I persisted that I should and made motion to go but the native became more earnest in their entreaty which only increased my anxiety and determination not to be foiled, more particularly as I could rest my right on the expressed authority and approbation of the chief. Just at that time came up an old man whose deformity and general features were almost the facsimile of him whom I had imagined from the stories of the nursery was the "old boy" himself. He began to manifest a strong determination and to exhibit such symptoms of malice and rage as convinced me surely something must be the matter or the authority of the ruler of the town would not be so set at nought. Still determined, I started when the heavens seemed to grow black, clouds hovered over us, everybody became intensely anxious; my interpreter and people begged me to desist, and this old vicegerent commissioned one of his men to run ahead, sword in hand, to lay wait on the path and intercept me. Not until this order was given did I think I was going too far and desist from my purpose; and no sooner had I changed my course than every element became perfectly calm and the crowd of attendants accompanied me on to the next village, but a short distance off, with as much life and glee as ever. The usual interest was ever afterwards manifested; crowds flocked around me and testified a kindness and good-will, the very extreme of which I had just experienced. On returning home, and seeking an explanation of this strange course, I was told by an old acquaintance, what had already been intimated, that this was a

sacred place, rendered doubly so by the superstitions of the people, and that only women, with the exception of this old vicegerent, heir lord, were allowed to visit the spot.

During my labours among the people, there was one man especially whose conduct deserves attention because of the intense interest he manifested and the striking effect the proclaiming of the word seemed to produce in him. I shall never forget the way he talked, his clearness, zeal and the small present he insisted I should take, though several times refused, and shall set it down as one of the strange things continually brought to mind among a people that seem ready for the day of the Lord. Şaki had one of the most beautiful market yards and one of the finest markets in the country. The beautiful shade trees and the changing thousands of every appearance, colour, size, dress, etc., and the commercial spirit ever observable, possessed such interest that one could well be entertained with pleasure and profit for hours together.

On returning home one day from a stroll, whom should I meet in company with several others but the identical man who had been so prominent and officious in leading me down the mountain of Iluku into the plain and the next morning in threatening us with an attack on the road. But now, no doubt, having heard my success, he met me with a smile on his face, apparently ashamed of his previous conduct. Having spent about a week in the city of rocks and romantic scenery, I determined on leaving and so notified Arç Ago but to receive the intelligence I must wait one day as on the morrow there would be a general jubilee of the poisoning company. To enforce his injunction he said nobody could go out of town that day, as poison would be placed in various roads and whoever passed that way would be endangered thereby, and that all the gates of the city would be closed. Although there could have been no danger from such a foolish superstition, I concluded to remain one day longer and see the show of these half-mad creatures. Şaki is known throughout the whole Yoruba country as being the city in which the most virulent poisons are made; and if anyone wishes to purchase for some diabolical purpose a virulent poison suited to his object, he must send to this place.¹ This day was now a test occasion for all the

¹ This belief has persisted till today.

poisons that should be introduced into the circle, and for the crowning of him chief of the poisoning company whose poison should prove most deadly. To ascertain this fact every man venturing to play in this hazardous game must taste the poison of someone else until it is determined by death or otherwise whose poison is most dangerous. This man becomes and remains chief of the party until another test day arrives. Early in the morning, I heard quite a noise to which my attention was attracted and which proved to be a crowd paying honour to him who was now the terror of the city by virtue of his poison. He was dressed in loose African gown and trousers and was engaged in performing all kinds of antics and motions, very much to the diversion of the crowd and the fright of those who happened to be near him. On making inquiries as to the numbers generally killed on such occasions, the natives give such reports of the loss of life as must be incredible. Some said today there will be killed ten, fifteen or twenty by taking poisons, but for the truth of such statements I cannot vouch. The whole town was in a state of excitement; whilst over the women, who were afraid to step out of their compounds, terror reigned supreme. Without any desire to await the result of this exhibition of violence and murder—for it could be but little less—I determined on the morrow to take my leave of these hospitable but bold and reckless people.

On making inquiries this morning I ascertained that one of my carriers who had been manifesting some restlessness for days past in consequence of expected dangers in our future route, determined on leaving me. To this I could not strongly object, as he had fulfilled his agreement, and was therefore under no obligation to proceed across the country to Ilorin, a distance of five or six days' journey through a wild and thinly inhabited country. My host, seeing my situation, and that the day was advancing, employed a young man to take the load, now without a carrier, while I hurried on to see the chief and if possible, by my departure, to stimulate those in the rear. It was now nearly twelve o'clock and with nearly a day's journey before me, I could but inquire after the chief who was too slow in his appearance for me to see him. I had not gone more than a quarter of a mile when I heard someone hailing me and, turning round, who should I see but my host a few days ago quite a good friend, but now running almost out of breath, bringing my bed on his head and a bow

in his hand. He had scarcely put it down, evidently tired and out of humour, when up came another man, living in the same house, with the remainder of the weapons of war, showing plainly as language could speak their determination in case a difficulty should arise. My position was now awkward in the extreme. Without a carrier, far away from the town I intended reaching that night, and apparently in the hands of a covetous and greedy people, what should I do? All the passing natives refused to be employed, and to turn back I would not submit, if anything else could be done. Fortunately, it so happened that a wife of one of my carriers had a small load of her own, and that the load of another was a small one. I alighted from my horse and in a few moments effected such an arrangement as was telling to my adversaries, and moved on as if no barrier had been presented, fearful lest all our detentions should force us to spend another night with the canopy of heaven only as our covering.

The farms through which we travelled were beautiful and inviting and presented all those features I have before mentioned as being the peculiar characteristics of this country. With intense anxiety, I stretched every nerve and watched the signs of approaching night in every little change, apprehensive lest in the disagreeable rainy weather I should become again homeless and breadless. Near sunset, I passed around the ruins of an old town, the landmark of which is a conical mountain. I hoped it was the forerunner of a live civilization, but all in vain. I rode on in haste and in advance of my people until the approach of night compelled me to pitch my hut on a rocky eminence and prepare for the worst. It was now becoming so dark that we could scarcely see to gather a few sticks of wood, a work in which I took the lead, to induce my people more readily to follow a good example in order that we might have one comfort, a good warm fire. We built our fire on a large flat rock and had arranged ourselves for the night when we heard in the distance the rumbling sound of approaching rain. Placing a box at the head of my mattress, and holding my umbrella over me, I was prepared as best as I could for the worst, and tried to sleep. At an early hour our rest was disturbed by the dropping of rain. We heard the thunder and lightning, storms and rain, for a good part of the night. With all my care, my clothes and bedding became more or less wet, and my only

comfort was in rolling myself up into as small a ball as possible and drawing close to the fire. To us daylight was not a little relief from such a night of gloom; nor wet grass a very serious obstacle to those already wet, and almost suffering from the pangs of hunger. Contrary to my expectations I awoke as I had done before, with not the slightest hoarseness from this exposure, and rode until nine or ten o'clock, indeed, all day, in clothes more or less wet, without experiencing any serious inconvenience. The tall grass itself, lining both sides of the path was so saturated with water that no one, even with waterproof boots could ride any great distance without being wetted nearly to the knees. Those who, in civilized countries where comforts are always at hand, know very well the appearance of everything external after a heavy rain, and when the clouds seem big with floods of water, may imagine very correctly the condition of things when there is but one spot uncovered with water in the little path you are travelling, while all the elements above are full of showers, and the mist is gently descending and adding to the already saturated earth. Unexpected to myself, we had a number of long miles to travel before reaching the signs of the living; signs that made our hearts bounce because they foretokened something of that kind hospitality which a native town scarcely refuses.

On reaching Ogboro I found it lodged in a mountain fastness, secure in its retreat and almost unapproachable without a guide. Taking one or two of my carriers, we commenced the ascent and, on reaching the summit, found it situated near the top of one of the tallest mountains in Yorubaland. People being pent up on this mountain side, as the inhabitants necessarily must be, the recent rains had rendered the streets, if so they may be called, most disagreeable and almost loathsome. The cooking pots, whose fumes were to me just at that time as odoriferous as a flower-garden, first attracted my attention, although I had but a few moments to remain and in those was anxious to see the chief. Partly gratifying my appetite, I hastened at the call to speak a word to this people through their representative, and was led into a very dark apartment, the only aperture of which was the floorway, through which the chief could see anyone entering without himself being observed. He received me very kindly and listened attentively to all I had to

say and with those around him seemed perfectly astonished and carried away with the idea of having a whiteman in their midst. I gave him a small present and received in return several strings of cowries¹ as an expression of their good-will. While I think of that dark den, for it was but little less, I rejoice to know that there, on the mountain top, the name of the meek and lowly Jesus has been heard. To this elevated point, inaccessible to an enemy, this people had fled, no doubt, in the troublous times of war and rapine to secure themselves and their little ones from the clutch of the kidnapper and the chains of the slavedeck. Finishing my repast, I bid adieu to this kind-hearted people, unterrified by my mysterious approach, and began my descent, followed by the joyous acclamations and the blessings of the children who persisted in following me and answered the jocose warnings of the elders by saying they would go with "Oyinbo" if he did catch them.

Fortunately, we were now joined by a small caravan acquainted with the route, some of whom were on their return from Şaki to Ilḡrin and were no doubt glad to avail themselves of my presence in as much as a part of the road was already infested by freebooters and kidnappers, and it was now a current report that it was but a short time since a caravan had been invaded and some of the number taken into slavery. Just opposite Mount Oḡbḡrḡ was another lofty rock, partly covered with vegetation, whose perpendicular side looked frowningly down as if it would engulf us. The country now presented rather a flat mountainous appearance, and was covered by a small stunted growth that might properly be called brushwood, which in every way resembled the wilderness of Sudan. It is through this region of the country east and west, that is to be found the sheabutter² or vegetable butter tree, the annual yield of which is more prolific than the palm. About one o'clock we re-crossed the Ogun, now a little swollen but at ordinary times so narrow as to be stepped across.³ The stream had a milky appearance and was flowing in a southerly direction. It had been reported by natives that this stream took its rise in Igboho, at a large spring,

¹ The currency in use at that time.

² Shea-butter was much used for cooking and lighting purposes in Şaki area where palm oil was rare.

³ River Ogun is near its upper course, in fact, its source, in this area.

but of this the inhabitants knew nothing and represented the source of the river as being some distance from town. From the river we arose to a beautiful table-land well cultivated and favoured with the additional park-like scenery to be found in every part of the country. We saw some people at work but their curiosity seemed little excited as though the appearance of a whiteman was a daily occurrence.

We now came in full view of Igboho, the very sight of which was beautiful and whose shade trees, in some places, and open green swards in others, chequered the scene as shade and light lend interest and beauty to a landscape. We entered the gate without any ceremony as there was no custom house officer present and seated ourselves under some shade trees near a little house of worship. No doubt the caravan had already reported my near approach to the city, as someone, who conveyed my message to the chief, soon approached us and brought the recent intelligence of the capture of the whole caravan between this place and Igbeṣi, save one man, the chief of the party, who, in refusing to be taken, was badly wounded and brought back to the city. This was to my people, now doubly frightened, rather serious news to come directly from the route over which we had to pass, and only increased their apprehensions that they should never get back to Ijaye. The reports that had been received of the capture of Ibariba or Borgu people, whose kingdom we were now bordering, were sufficiently ominous, having frightened one of my carriers away, without the additional reports of caravans captured by rapacious free-booters of Yoruba origin. The messenger soon returned with an invitation from the chief to come in and see him. We were conducted through a part of one of the towns and stationed near some shade trees to await the *Bale*, who had not yet made his appearance. The crowd continually increased as the news was scattered so that when his majesty made his appearance, there was gathered around him a goodly number, among whom were a few musicians to pipe his praise. He was a short, plump, chuffy, merry, jovial and good-humoured little man, honest himself and thought everybody else so, and being such a character, of course, was ready to give a favourable ear to what I had to say. As this was merely an introductory to a more important occasion when all the elders and governors were to be

collected together, so I observed it, and being already fatigued by the two days' travel, I deferred any lengthy remarks to another time. I was soon lodged in the house of a fine old man of those good old days when Igboho flourished¹ and thousands and ten thousands rejoiced in its streets. The very house from its size and present conditions, like the town, showed what it once was and gave an insight more clearly into the heart of the old man against whom fortune had turned, and whose face told of the workings of the heart within. But to my present condition I thought the old man set forth from the dish on which he had dined some of the best palaver sauce it had been my pleasure to taste; and though not served in a lordly dish I had but one objection, and that was, my host had partaken rather too freely of it himself, leaving me the portion of the fox.

With the sweet refreshing slumbers of night, I arose somewhat better prepared for the day's labour. At a suitable hour when the chief and his associate elders were in readiness, I was called on to make my appearance before the large crowd that by this time had collected together from almost every quarter. I had nothing before me but a repetition of what occurred in almost every town a white-man may happen to visit—a large crowd with its varieties, even amid uniformity—gazing women and children, anxious men, dignified rulers and musicians puffing, beating and blowing. I had a pleasant interview without constraint and such as was adapted to the attendant crowd, as my object was to let them know the character of my mission and the prompting motive of my mission. The chief, a short stout little man, was on good terms with himself, and though labouring under depressed weight of his present humiliating condition, was the very embodiment of good humour. This interview being closed, I retired to give the people some time for reflection on what I had said.

A day or two afterwards, while sitting in my compound, a messenger announced that the chief and elders were waiting for me outside the compound. Though I kept the Sabbath as a day of

¹ In those good old days Igboho derived its prominence largely from being at one time a temporary capital of the Old Oyo Empire and where four Alafins were buried. It also lay on the main trade route which traversed Yorubaland. See more information about it below on pp. 68-69 & 71.

rest and sacred in its objects, I could not well refuse a call of those who had come to hold an interview, perhaps profitable to both parties. I found the chief and half a dozen others seated on the roots of a tree in front of the compound lazily inclined, and in a good humour, with a disposition to tell their whole hearts and especially to reveal that pressing most heavily upon them. Nothing seemed to give them so much satisfaction as to talk about their former condition and contrast it with their present state, whether it gave occasion for the exercise of a gloomy, desponding disposition or of a boasting spirit, expected from a city and people, once third in the kingdom.¹ It is not at all uncommon in civilized countries to see infrequent changes of fortune of a city and people, once sporting in affluence and revelling in luxury, become reduced to poverty and despondence under such humiliating circumstances as to bring down the proud looks, melt the hard heart and induce a disposition willing to receive help from almost any source. Such seemed to be the felt condition of those who listened with earnest attention to all I had to say. Forty years ago Igboho was one of the first cities in the flourishing kingdom of Yorubaland, could boast of its thousand inhabitants, its vast extent, its flourishing agriculture and commerce, and its three walls successively built to accommodate the enlarging population. Saunders,² who passed through it during that time, in the days of its glory, has spoken of it as being an immense city, and surrounded by three walls. I saw it under circumstances altogether different, a ruined city, full of desolation, covered with green grass, and beautifully decked with shade trees, but with a remnant of population, occupying a few small towns scattered over an extensive area. Such was the state of things when I met under one of their shade trees the chief and his associates to talk about their present and former condition. Adversity seemed to have had its legitimate effect, and those, once proud and

¹ It was ranked next to Ikoyi whose ruler, the Onikoyi, was the leader of the provincial rulers of the Old Oyo Empire.

² There is no record that anyone called Saunders visited Igboho before Clarke. Perhaps Clarke had in mind the Lander Brothers who visited Igboho in 1830. Their description of Igboho is in Landers, Richard & John, *Journal of an Expedition to Explore the Course and Termination of the Niger*, John Murray, London 1832 Vol. I, pp. 144-146.

ambitious, now reduced to straits and dependence, were ready and willing to hear what a stranger had to say in contemplating the scenes around him.

That which was uppermost in their hearts was talked of; they lamented their condition, acknowledged their dependence, and manifested a disposition to receive help. One of their number said they have been praying to God that he would in some way influence the whiteman to pray for them, evidently implying their own impotence, and the necessity of a power more efficacious than they had found either in their priests or idols. This was the most remarkable language I had ever heard fall from the lips of heathen people, and indicated a state of things that is the most favourable for the propagation of the gospel, besides, being no doubt, a disposition to give me a very kind reception enjoyed at their hands. One could hardly help thinking of Job and his comforters in hearing such humble confessions, and witnessing in every countenance the traces of sorrow and anguish that followed the destruction of the city. I separated from these humble and distressed rulers with some views of heathen character not before possessed, and retired to the privacy of my compound.

With the dawn of the new week there stood before me a new field of labour in this wonderful heathen town. As yet I had stirred but little and had seen but the market of the village which I had made my headquarters. Other villages were to be visited and the acquaintance of the people was to be made before I could leave this part of the city. The first was distant about half a mile and had as its chief a very friendly open-hearted old man who, with the entire population, gathered around me to hear my strange talk. I could but feel that I was among those who loved me because their eyes, countenance, action, and words, all expressed a decided welcome. After I had talked a little while to them about the only way in which men could be saved, the old chief insisted I should remain a number of days with them, intimating I would then see the result of my preaching and be a witness of what the people would do. Such language, inexplicable to me, indicated a state of things which I was not prepared to believe, and savoured of the ignorance of those who seemed, like some of the disciples of our Saviour, to be pronouncing too positively on a matter on which they were but slightly acquainted.

Our conversation soon changed to the condition of the people as compared with their former state. Near me sat an intelligent looking coloured man, about thirty-five years old, who, with a sad, lonely and pitiable look, remarked, with the simplicity of a child, that he wished to go home. His colour and language were leading me to ask if he was not a foreigner, and to what tribe he belonged. I derived the information that he was a Yoruba and his wish had reference to Old Oyo, the old capital of Yorubaland, where he was born, and from which he had been torn in the troublesome times of the country. See the strong, ardent attachment to the place of nativity, a hold on birthplace and early association that even thirty years could not sever. Returning from this interesting interview, accompanied by numbers of sporting, lively children, my attention was attracted to a beautiful, green sward of several acres, level as a floor, without a single rolic to give the slightest token of its former use. This, the natives say, was the sight of the royal palace¹ where were now to be seen feeding on the green grass, tall, majestic crane, of variegated plumage and the snow-white bird, the friend and companion of the crowd. Skirting one of this fine lawn was a small collection of Fulani houses occupied by these native shepherds who are a people within a people, distinct and alone, clinging to their natural peculiarities, with uncompromising tenacity.² In visiting another small village, as the chief was absent, the people were unwilling that I should talk lest they should bear a responsibility belonging to stronger hands. I did not insist and was directed to another town of considerable size, three quarters of a mile distant, where I met with a kind and willing reception and a large crowd to hear me. In concluding the interview nothing must do but a present of a pig; and a pig I accepted.

There were three villages in this part of the city to be visited, but my time being so short, I was hastened to the other side of the town preparatory to my departure. Having notified the chief of my intention, the old gentleman, with his good, kind looks and jolly face, came out to bid me good-bye. I left him, hoping this would not be the last time I should enjoy the hospitality of the kind-hearted chief

¹ At the time Igboho was the temporary capital of the Old Oyo Empire.

² Fulani settlers in Yoruba towns often lived separately in places called *Iga* on the outskirts of towns.

of Igboho. I passed two small villages, at both of which I was compelled to stop according to the etiquette of the country, and submit to such imposition as the people saw fit to put upon me, which in each case was a pig again, subjecting my people or others to the only agreeable inconvenience of taking them to the next place. This last village occupied quite an eminence near the inner wall, and overlooked a very large part of what was once the city. The kind governor, a tall fine-looking blackman, being notified of my arrival, made his appearance and we enjoyed pleasantly a few moments; I telling the object of my visit and he as anxious to furnish me with good quarters as his large compound could afford, besides forcing upon me another pig, notwithstanding the supply of the article already on hand.

As the sun was setting, I walked out to the inner wall of the city, the largest and finest built, for the purpose of taking a view of the vast extent once inhabited by a happy and thriving population. The wall, I suppose, from the bottom of the dyke to the top was between fifteen and twenty feet high and offered by far the most commanding view of the city I had yet seen. Behind me were two other walls enclosing a new area large enough for several towns while before me numbers of small villages, looking in the distance like small sports, and innumerable shade trees scattered over the grassy plain, all presenting a most interesting scene, and if it was calculated to arouse reflection sad and gloomy, it was because of the contrast of the present with the past state of things. I saw in the distance four or five miles away one or two mountains and, wishing to ascertain the dimensions of the city, I said to a young man with me how far does your city extend in that direction, pointing to the west? And he replied beyond those mountains. And how far towards the north? He replied beyond the mountains you see in that direction. With this information I should form some idea of the dimensions of the city whose circumference could not be less than fifteen or twenty miles.

During my conversation with my first host, he gave me the following account of the destruction of the city. They had heard of the threats made by the Fellatahs [Fulani] after the destruction of Old Oyo or Katunga, the former capital, and were in continual expectation of an invasion. This old man was present at the siege, and may therefore be considered a good authority. He stated that a very large body of men came from the Niger and besieged the city

for seven days, during which time he said, about ten thousand of the enemy perished. The city, as the natives say, was then broken, three kings killed, and the entire place fell a prey to the flames and cupidity of the ravaging, plundering party. The inhabitants now panic-stricken, were forced to flee, or defending their firesides to the last, perish in the flames or by the sword, or by being reduced in capture to a state of slavery. Who could paint such a scene of barbarous warfare, where plunder, pillage and the capture of slaves were the desire on the one hand, and the loss of life, property and freedom the result on the other. Amid the crackle of flames, the flow of blood, and the roar of battle, were the confusion and cry of thousands of children and the screams of defenceless women. Within a few short days, that which was once powerful and flourishing, and happy with a joyous population, was now flowing with blood, covered with sackcloth, bathed in tears; and the farms in a state of cultivation were left to the wild beasts and the over-powering growth of weeds and grass, so that it could not now be discerned that the surrounding country flourished with all the productions of the country. Such scenes as these were too much for a man to see and bear without being moved to pity if not to tears. If I could not see before me in the wrecks of Igboho the ruins of Nineveh or Babylon or Pompeii, the remains of ancient splendour, antique refinement and unsurpassed architecture, I saw the area over which was scattered the innumerable shade trees that marked the spot where once stood houses of the happy and joyous scores, if not hundreds of thousands, of industrious, laborious people.

The compound in which I was to spend my last night was an elevated plain, high and dry, and gave every indication of health. In taking my leave of Igboho, where every kindness of a native people was shown me, it was with a conviction that it presents one of the finest fields for missionary work in this part of Sudan.¹ Such was the condition of the people and their earnest desire for a change for the better that I could scarcely refrain from instituting a comparison between them and the Koreans; and I am now of the opinion that were a station established in this city there is no place in the

¹ Cf. Bowen's desire in *Central Africa*, pp. 99-100 to make Igboho the headquarters of Baptist work in "Central Africa".

country that would give promise of greater success. During my short sojourn I saw, I believe, not one idol; saw no religious celebrations or festive rejoicings; and heard no songs nor shouts of praise to Oṣiṣa and Ifa.

It seems to be a happy people who, from the loss of earthly things and the afflictions of great temporal calamity, had ceased to rely on the gods of the land and were looking for deliverance from some other source. If my inference be true, what an opening for some young herald of the cross, who aspires with the apostle to build, not on other men's foundations made to hand, but in a new field where scarcely yet the standard of Jesus has been raised.

But morning dawned and with the rising of the sun we passed out through the openings of the several walls and began our day's journey in the prairie grass and brushwood, that in a few years had grown up thickly around the town. We were all fully aware of the serious mishaps that had befallen a caravan but a few days before and were anxious as to what route would be safe as our company was small and, aside from my own weapon of defence, we were almost without protection in case of attack. On reaching the forks of the road and while taking a little refreshment, one of the superstitious of our number walked a little in advance for the purpose of protecting with his superstitious manipulations the freedom of our route from freebooters and kidnappers; but unless someone had told me, I should have never imagined his manipulations to be a work of magic. The accompanying party was a small number that had been waiting several days for me in order to enjoy what other security my presence guaranteed, and who, eventually, were of no little service to myself and carriers. The whole of the country lying between Igboho and Igbeti is in a wild, uncivilized state; for the most part flat and mountainous, and covered with a brushwood growth, the peculiar wooded feature of this part of Sudan, and with prairie grass. Iron stone is abundant, being the substratum of a sterile soil. As there had been considerable rain, some of the low places presented some little obstacles to travel especially the creeks, the banks of which were steep and troublesome to a horse. We passed at an early hour one or two towns so desolate that scarcely a relic of their former existence was to be seen.

The sun was near setting when, emerging from the forest in which we had been travelling all day, I caught a glimpse of one of the groups of mountains among which Igbeti stands conspicuous. Deceived as to the distance and vainly hoping to reach the town by dark, I pushed on a pace far in advance of my carriers, who with but little excuse, were ready to encamp at any place for the night. On reaching the foot of the mountain, I found myself almost alone with but one carrier and without anyone as a guide. Just when it seemed a night again in the open air was the only alternative, a native of the town returning from his farm, offered his services and proposed to be my guide. Although it was late and I knew nothing of the mountain that I now had to climb, I determined with the aid of moonlight and the superior knowledge of my guide to make an effort. Being relieved of my horse, which was committed to other hands, I had nothing to do but to take care of myself in ascending this steepest and roughest of mountains, up which I went after a very hard day's ride with an ease and quickness astonishing to myself. On reaching the top, wet with perspiration, and not a little apprehensive of the strong, cutting breeze that swept over me, I made rapid strides towards the house of the chief in order that I might find shelter as soon as possible. My guide conducted me into a small back apartment where there was no light and notified the chief of my arrival. Not being aware of the fact that I was present, he exclaimed in perfect wonder, "Oyinbo", that is to say, has "Oyinbo come?" I immediately relieved him by a salutation and thus introduced myself as well as I could, my interpreter having not yet made his appearance. Fortunately for ourselves, we were scarcely more than housed when thunder and lightning told of the approaching rain that soon poured down in torrents; so much was the rain that I was hardly secure in my well-covered native hut. In due time, and before the rain, all of my carriers, some way or other, had found their way up the mountain by a steep, yet circuitous route that certainly could not have been followed without native assistance. After a rainy night the morning was very gloomy. The clouds, thick and lowering, and Igbeti, though a mountain, seemed anything but inviting. This being the only day I could spend in the town, the chief collected together the people and gave me an attentive audience. I already had occasion to notice once, if not twice, the physical

and mental inferiority of people inhabiting the mountain; a fact which, being found to prevail here, forced me to the conclusion that the elevated points are not so favourable to health as the plains. There seemed to be a vacant gaze and listlessness that indicated a mental imbecility too palpable in many countenances.

One of the most remarkable specimens of the albinos I had ever seen was a little girl about three years old with very fair, white skin and blue eyes, without squint common to such persons in daylight. She looked so perfectly natural in the colour of her skin and the expression of the eyes that I could not for a long time believe it to be one of nature's freaks,¹ and yet it could not be otherwise as no whiteman had ever before visited the place.

This [Igbeti mountain] is one of the highest and most interesting mountains in Yorubaland, furnishing the most extended field for observations in the country, and is marked by four distinct points, three of which I visited nearly corresponding with the points of the compass. In every direction could be seen distinctly some of the most prominent points several days distant in the kingdom; in the south-west rose the mountains of Okeiho; in the west was perfectly the peaked Mount Ogboro; on the east was seen a single rock standing in the Ilorin farms; while almost due north were to be distinctly seen the snowy-looking mountains that surround old Katunga. The whole surrounding country presented a plain of the most beautiful green, extending for one or two days' journey in every direction without apparent break. The mountain, a solid granite rock, of primitive foundation, is from one to two miles in diameter, and contains some two or three thousand inhabitants who support themselves by the cultivation of the surrounding valleys. Water is found in sufficient quantities upon the top of the mountain. This is the remarkable spot whence it is said by the Yorubas that Oye, or harmattan from the desert, who is said to be a huge man, takes its origin,² but as the season had not quite rolled round, I failed to

¹ It was precisely because of the uniqueness of this freak that the Yoruba call albinos "Eni oriṣa" i.e., a special creature of the gods.

² For this reason, the Yoruba nickname for the harmattan is *Okunrin kọngbẹ Oke Igbeti*.

make his acquaintance. I think Mount Igbeti, as to height and dimensions, would compare favourably with the rock mountain of DeKalb;¹ certainly as to rich and variegated scenery and the scope of vision.

Our arrangements all being made for an early start this morning, we arose very early for the purpose of reaching Ilorin, if possible, having no idea of the difficulties which we would meet. The morning was excessively damp, gloomy and unpleasant, and suitably portentous of the day. We made our descent with the intention of pursuing our journey alone should our company prove anyway tardy, and after waiting at the foot of the mountain until patience became exhausted, we began our route with such little scraps of information as could be gathered from the natives. Our winding path passes around a considerable portion of the mountain amid the tallest grass, perfectly saturated with the water of last night's rain and the morning mists that now fell heavily upon the plain. We followed this little road until, becoming bewildered amid grass and in branches,² we were compelled to wait the reinforcements that extricated us from the unpleasant dilemma. While following the path in the current of a branch swollen by the recent rains, my horse sank to his side, just giving me time to escape, and was extricated with considerable difficulty. Passing along the sides of the mountains, I saw on a steep part innumerable small rocks scattered in profusion and confusion, which I learned, on inquiry, was the stratagem or mode of warfare resorted to when the Igbetians were attacked some time since by the people of Ilorin for the purpose of reducing them to slavery.³ High above their enemies, and with a very steep declivity they kept their foes at abeyance and finally came off victorious. On the opposite of the mountain from which I descended is a very steep precipice by which the people manage in some way to descend and avoid the circuitous route. Not until I had reached the plain on the east of the mountain could I form an idea of its size and height; the latter of which does not appear to be so great from the fact that it takes its rise directly from the level of the valley.

¹ In the state of Illinois, U.S.A.

² As these were path junctions without signs, difficulties often arose as to which was the correct route to follow.

³ The real reason was political: to establish Ilorin hegemony over Igbeti.

It was already late in the morning when we bade adieu to the rocky crest of Igbeti and placed our feet on the more agreeable soil of the plain. As we had now to pass through the region infested with robbers and kidnappers, and was subject to an attack at any moment, silence or conversation scarcely above a whisper was the order of the day. In consequence of the country being thus infested, we were compelled to deflect from the regular route and pursue a course in which we thought there was less danger; but in doing so we met with obstacles in the form of swollen streams every few hours. It was early in the morning when I was compelled to strip off for the purpose of taking a wash, rather than risk a wetting by clinging to my horse. As the road was very little frequented and the recent rains had swollen all the streams, I soon found that had it not been for the assistance rendered by the caravan I should have been compelled to desist from travelling until a more auspicious time. It is generally believed that a little dry season occurs in the month of August, and under this impression I left home; but as there are exceptions to all rules, so in this case; we had rain from the day I departed to the present, flooding the country, particularly this extensive plain through which we were now passing. About twelve o'clock we halted by a large creek impassable with loads except by swimming, and in that precarious situation in which the people were almost afraid to breathe. There was a very small, slender palm across the narrow, swift part of the stream that could be crossed only at considerable risk by persons without loads. One poor fellow made venture with his load but scarcely had he started when he lost his balance, and he found himself in the stream, struggling with all his might to save his little stock on hand, which no doubt he had obtained at considerable labour. The loads could only be crossed over by being delivered to one of the tallest men who waded as far as possible, then swam as the circumstances would allow.

We had hardly begun our march again when a cry was heard in our rear. Immediately, every ear was pricked and each man began to think of taking care of himself when it was ascertained that one of our number was considerably behind. Whether he was captured or was in apprehension of danger from an attacking party no one knew, but everybody made ready for protection. I called for my gun and

commanded the people, some of whom were about starting to run, to stand while a friend of the distressed went back and soon ascertained that he had only lost the road and had cried to give an alarm. We had now proceeded but little more than a mile when my horse completely bogged in trying to ascend a steep bank, and only extricated himself by the most powerful surges. As I stood looking at him with his thigh apparently unjointed, and was beginning to think very seriously of having to walk to Ilorin, now distant a full day's journey, it was to me the greatest relief when I saw him come forth uninjured. Not fifty yards ahead, there rolled at our feet a creek still larger than the one just crossed and presenting an obstacle only to be overcome by time and patience. We sat down on the banks to await the result of a search instituted by some of our number for a crossing place; and as it was announced we might succeed some distance below, it was now unnecessary to make any effort until morning. We then moved out into the plain where the ground was firm and dry and fires could be kept up with but little difficulty. I never apprehended any difficulty from a party of robbers, cowardly as they necessarily must be, and as I believed the discharge of five or six barrels was enough to put fifty to flight; but not so with my companions, who were apprehensive of danger at any moment, particularly here, where we were shut in by creeks and surrounded by a wild and uninhabited country. We built our fires and having prepared and taken our scanty repast with appetites that compensated for deficiency of quantity, we were willing and ready to give ourselves to sleep. My only protection was an old umbrella that had withstood rain and storm and my bedding; but even with these, considering the condition of those around me, I had no right to complain. Before retiring I made the company keep silence while I invoked the blessing of the most High upon us; for in Him was my confidence and strength; and under the protection of His wings, with the canopy of heaven as our covering, we could sleep in peace and rest as in the palace of a king.

We were on the wind in the morning betimes with the determination and ardent wish, if possible, to reach Ilorin by sunset. We found a tree so lying across the stream that by stationing carriers at several points on the limbs of the tree and by wading, we could ferry all over in the course of an hour or more. Having succeeded without a

loss, we now pursued our journey with thankful hearts, at one time losing the way, then in low whispers, advising and counselling and watching until we crossed the last stream, the dividing line between danger and safety. Scarcely had our feet touched the opposite side when the people opened their mouths, cracked their jokes, laughed at dangers past and seemed just as different as the changed circumstances could make them. In several places I noticed the spoor of the elephant by the huge feet of which the path was so torn as to be no longer fit for use. Crossing this last creek, the country began to rise and became firmer and more interesting as we approached the farms of Ilorin. About one o'clock we saw the signs of civilized life in cultivated farms and an occasional shanty. Tired, fatigued and hungry, we made a halt for the purpose of gratifying our appetite at the expense of the farmer,¹ as yams were abundant and the good cooks who keep the small stores for caravans, were absent in town during the Ramadan. A little distance from us stood conspicuous the conical rock that I had seen from Mount Igbeti as marking the boundary of the Ilorin farms. We had not more than finished our homely fare when the approaching clouds indicating rains were at hand. Being an entire stranger and not knowing what would be my reception in entering the town at this strange unexpected quarter, I notified my carriers to take care of themselves as I intended to keep apace with that part of the caravan acquainted with the city. By this time the rain poured in torrents, making branches of little rivulets and flooding the flat places with water. A large creek intervened, but fortunately for me, it was bridged for foot passengers, and furnished the only instance of the kind I had ever seen in the country. Being detained by the passage of my horse I was now far behind and with night so advancing I could see but a short distance before me. My companions, fixed and intent upon reaching home, made no delay for obstacles. They waded through creeks or floods of water and bade me to do the same. So with them I plunged along not knowing one moment where I should be the next until I reached a large body of water, fifty or hundred yards wide, a short distance

¹ Helping oneself in this way in those days was not regarded as stealing as long as one only ate enough to quench hunger and did not carry away. Any attempt to carry away would amount to theft.

from town. Terrible though it seemed, I brought my reason to bear upon it and, venturing, succeeded in reaching the other side. When my friends knocked at the gate entrance I was there to receive at their hands an introduction, for to me it would have been awful to have received a repulse and spent such a night outside the wall, not knowing what awaited me on the morrow. The old man whose duty it is after a certain hour to keep the gate locked, having asked who we were and received the answer of an acquaintance, admitted all, and hearing from the lips of one of our number the description of me as being "Okunrin rere" (a good man) took me into his own house and administered to my wants as best he could. It was now eight o'clock, proving we had travelled since three o'clock the distance of more than twenty-seven miles. Within a short time my carriers bringing up the rear, and like myself, drenched with rain, arrived. It need not be said that we now found that repose so strongly required by our tired and jaded frames.

On awaking next morning I ascertained by every outward demonstration that the report of my arrival had spread abroad and was bringing numbers to the place of my temporary abode. It was not only Sabbath, but I demanded rest from a twofold consideration, and was but poorly prepared to appreciate curiosity wholly at my own expense. But of what avail to people whom neither entreaty, threats nor promises could influence? Fast as one crowd passed away another took its place; and to hide or keep secluded was only to increase the noise and confusion consequent on a very natural desire of the people. At times a part of the house was so besieged it seemed as if it would give way by the weight and violence of those whom nothing could restrain but the lash. Although I occasionally showed myself to see if that would not have a calming effect, I had only to learn by experience that the curiosity of native Africans is gratified but with the lapse of time.

At an early hour, I had sent word to the king of my arrival and thought I had received one or two messages in reply. I was compelled to wait through the whole day with considerable impatience, and not a little annoyance from the noisy crowd. As the king's good sense, based on an acquaintance with the character of his own people, had constrained him to adopt the wise plan of conducting me through town by moonlight to avoid the confusion and excitement that

would necessarily and unavoidably attend the appearance of a whiteman, it was already night when three messengers with special orders arrived at the Onibode's to act as my bodyguard through the town. The moon was shining beautifully when I mounted my horse and took up the rear of my attendance. Fortunately, it so happened that as there were very few present when I started to augment our little band, I was not discovered by the numbers passing to and fro, and even those who ventured to exercise too much scrutiny or curiosity were put to flight by the lashes of the vigilant guards. The moonlight not only gave additional charm to every surrounding object, but enabled me to see the fine shade trees and the houses and courtyard with greater distinctness, while the markets, beautifully lighted with small lamps, and alive with busy and chattering people intensified the pleasure of my ride. It appeared to me at the time as one of the most interesting scenes I had ever witnessed. I suppose that the distance over which I passed that night was near three miles, and I saw five or six markets on one thoroughfare. I was in the first instance conducted to the house of Dongari, the king's prime slave, who, not wishing to see me at that unseasonable hour, ordered the messengers to take me to the house of Nasama, to whom has been given the honour, according to appointment, of taking care of the king's white guests. It was at this house and under the auspices of this same host and hostess, that my friend Bowen, a few months previous, was so hospitably and kindly entertained, and who was so highly appreciated as not to be allowed to go beyond the boundaries of the courtyard. Nasama appeared highly delighted at my arrival and gave indications of my being well received in high places.

According to usual custom, I was compelled to wait until the third day before I could enjoy an audience in free conversations with Nasama. But in the meantime, I thought of what would be the most agreeable to Dongari and the whole court. I therefore had to examine my few remaining presents and gave them away quickly in order to secure favour before my own presentation. The fact was that my little stock with which I had left Ijaye had been so nearly exhausted, and unless I made a draught on some of my private valuables, any present I could place before the king and his court would make but a ridiculous appearance. I had a beautiful dressbox

with a looking glass, and writing portfolio easily wrapped so as to be portable in a pocket, that I gave to the royal personage, and a small trunk, and a pair of large india rubber boots, with which I complimented Dongari. I sent these articles in advance with an ample apology, stating my unavoidable condition and the circumstances under which I had been compelled to enter their town. It was on the third day that the readiness of the king was announced, and I was ordered in all haste to get ready, for there must be no delay now, said all the natives, as the King's word had come. I had first to be conducted to Dongari, whom I had previously visited, and then under his wing he marched to the royal palace, a house by no means splendid and an expression used only in accordance with the language and custom of the country. I was led through a large gateway to an arbour twenty feet square, where were sitting a number of the functionaries and elders of the city ready to be cognizant of the ceremonies and sayings of the occasion. One man of whom I then had no knowledge, but whose influence was felt through the whole court, happened to be absent. I suppose the freedom of the king and his courtiers was greater than otherwise might have been. After some salutations strict inquiries were made about my travel route, etc., how I succeeded and where my destination was, and why it was that I did not give notice of my purpose in visiting the town. In the next place the king examined the presents I gave, requiring to hear a full explanation of them. He seemed as pleased with them as a child would be with its first doll. The court language, through which all official business is carried on, is Fulani,¹ but not infrequently the king, who can speak four or five languages, uses the Kaninke or Hausa, which are immediately translated into Yoruba by Dongari, the interpreter. Near me on my right sat a large, splendid-looking man, perfectly black, with large whiskers and white turban on his head, and robed in a fine cloak. This was the Moham-medan chief priest, and one of the first counsellors of the king. Around me were every variety of colour, and the representatives of several kingdoms who no doubt were anxious to hear what was to be said by a whiteman. After all the preliminaries were attended

¹ Although predominantly a Yoruba town, Ilorin came under the control of Fulani rulers in the early part of the nineteenth century.

to, I was notified that the court was ready to hear what I had to say. I arose and for some fifteen or twenty minutes addressed the audience very much in the same strain as if I had been surrounded by a heathen crowd, making but little allusion to their own religion lest I should arouse unnecessary prejudice, but holding up the religion of Jesus Christ as being the only system by which men could be saved. There was not a murmur; nothing but stillness prevailed, and when I concluded there was an amen burst forth not only from the lips of the chief priest but from all around me. It seemed very plain that a bold yet prudent plan was the course to pursue in intercourse with this proud, overbearing people. Although I was surrounded by those who despised the name of Christians and cannot bear toleration, yet, had I not been aware of the fact by previous information and some outward signs, I could not have easily perceived the difference between this and many other similar occasions. Soon after reaching my compound I received a present from the king, a large ram and several heads of cowries, brought in by a slave of two hundred pounds weight, said to be a eunuch, and who seemed to disdain the very ground on which he trod.

I was now visited by numbers of people, mostly of a select kind, whom the kindness and partiality of Nasama allowed to enter the gate, and to some of whom Nasama himself and his wife, though far their superiors in more respects than one, were compelled to show obeisance, the more unwilling because they well knew the purposes for which some of these visits were made. There is a whole host of little princes, said to be the sons of the king, but which the incredulous might very properly doubt,¹ who are ready to receive anything that might perchance fall in their way from the hands of a stranger. It was some of these who had now visited me that were so very obnoxious to my host and hostess; for, said they, that is just what they have come after, and if the king knew it they dare not come here. There was one fact, however, with which I could console myself, and that was a poor man had but few presents to offer.

¹ The doubt arose because the princes did not appear royal in their dress and general appearance. Nevertheless, they might have been real princes; it was only that kings in Yorubaland at that time often had so many children that it was impossible to have enough means to make all of them look royal.

In one of my strolls, attended by this Nasama, who is the terror of the populace because of the tremendous weapon attached to his side, I passed through the Gambari market¹ where all the fine goods such as saddles, silk-sash, raw silk, trona and many other articles, brought by interior traders, are deposited, and caught a glimpse of the industry of the people and something of the trade that knows scarcely any bounds on this side of the Atlantic on the one hand and the Mediterranean on the other. As it did not happen to be the right hour, I could form but a very inadequate conception of the energy, enterprise and bustle that at times is found in the market. I casually met an old acquaintance who six months before had used all his innuendos and stratagem to deter me from proceeding to Ilorin, but now with smiles on his face, seemed glad to meet an old friend, and apparently to rejoice in a success that he had at one time laboured so hard to thwart. As I was passing a compound where an old Mohammedan priest was diligently engaged in the study of the Koran, or some scraps of Arabic, I called in at his solicitation to have a moment's chat, expecting on all such occasions to have controversy, more or less. The old man received me very kindly and with just as little bigotry and haughty conceit as is to be found in any class of the heathen population. This was appreciable but was also astonishing; for I expected to find, especially among the devoted to this religion, unbounded bigotry, and such extreme intolerance as would scarcely allow a favourable allusion to the Christian religion. But the longer my acquaintance, the more firmly I was convinced, as informed by Nasama, that those who made the most noise and wore the longest and whitest turbans were the vilest of men. He himself had for many years followed the trading business, and of course could speak authoritatively with regard to those who were his daily companions.

While sitting in my room one morning, I was called upon to make haste, make haste, as the king had come and was just outside the compound. Of course I hurried to behold the form of him whose form I had never seen, and of whose existence I only knew by a whining voice behind a screen, as according to eastern custom, and in order to throw a mystery around his person, he rarely makes an

¹ That is the market of the Hausa people in Ilorin.

exhibition of himself even on set occasions. He was attended by a splendid retinue of horsemen whose horses were beautifully caparisoned, and several servants who followed his person with their hands upon his horse in eastern style. He was richly dressed, habited in a fine, black cloth cloak; with his head covered by a turban, mounted on a beautiful bay charger, and withdrawn a little aside from the retinue that he might be the better distinguished. No sooner had I approached within speaking distance than Dongari, who was on foot, said, "*Baba ki o, Baba ki o*",¹ meaning "The king salutes you, the king salutes you". Then his fine voice rang out and uttered a few salutations, and he was gone. It was amusing to see the little boys, said to be little princes, bringing up the rear with such speed as they could extort from their shabby little ponies.

I now began to think of departing homeward and so notified the king, who seemed so fond of the presence of whitemen that he could not possibly let me go for several days. It was no use to argue the point so I kindly assented to remain two or three days longer under the promise that I was to leave at a certain time, and early in the morning, as Ogbomoso was distant a long day's ride and could not be reached without a very early start. In the meantime, I was given as present a young horse, scarcely broken to the saddle which, though undoubtedly a poor apology, was pronounced by the knowing ones as being evidently a good steed. Such a gift so vexed me, that although my present had no claim to merit, I should have refused the acceptance but for the insult that would have been offered. This was the third gift that has been given to white visitors, not one of which was worth the trouble of taking home, and clearly proved the determination of this ruler not to part with anything valuable. It was now a clear understanding between Dongari and Nasama and myself that I was to leave at the time agreed to whether or not I saw the king. I had now remained ten days and some time longer than I intended, and though I had enjoyed just few opportunities of seeing the town in consequence of silly and trying regulations that hamper one on a first visit, I determined to leave for home at the time appointed.

¹ Either *Baba ki o* or *Oba ki o*. In Yorubaland, of which Ilorin was a part, *obas* (kings) did not, by custom, speak loud and their speeches, messages, and greetings to visitors were usually re-echoed by an official.

At an early hour my people were in readiness and I hastened with Nasama to see Dongari, but the hour being very soon, his honour had not yet risen. I said to Nasama, "Do you see this? You remember the agreement? I intend now to leave". He entreated me to remain but I insisted on leaving and returned to his house. On second thought I concluded to make another effort, and thus exonerate myself from the imputation of being impatient and hasty, but Dongari was still asleep. Now doubly vexed at his laziness, and the delay he had caused me, I took my departure, leaving instructions for my new horse to be brought on by a young man who was to return within a short time to Ogbomoṣo. A few hundred yards from the Onibode I heard someone hailing me to stop, and looking back whom should I see but one of Nasama's men, who had been sent ahead to overtake and detain me until my new horse could be brought up. Nasama came puffing, blowing and leading the horse which I thought was now to prove an obstacle to me, and with a message from the king that I must not get mad, and ought to have saluted him before leaving.

The sun was nearly an hour high, and the city from this splendid point of observation, was stretching out over the country for several miles in full view. The whole plain was open before me, adorned with wide-spreading locust trees, with here and there a herd of cattle and occasionally a planter driving on his steed, riding hastily over his farm. A few miles from town I numbered from one point of view seven or eight villages engaged in agriculture, the property no doubt of wealthy men residing in the cities. The whole country immediately within the vicinity of town has been in a state of cultivation, but is now a pasture ground for cattle, or cultivated only in fertile spots. The region is elevated, beautifully rolling in long extensive plains that may be seen for fifteen or twenty miles, and presents every indication of being as healthy a country as is to be found anywhere on the globe; for what is supposed to be the cause of sickness on the coast—richness of soil and excessive dampness from vegetation—here no longer exist. At the distance of fifteen or twenty miles from town, I found the undoubted signs of labour and industry, not only in lands then in a state of cultivation but in the aggressive war on the wild, untamed forests.

The country lying between Ilorin and Ogbomoṣo is in a wild, unbroken, savage state, and with a variety of soil rich and poor, troublesome crust, sand and black mould, open woods, prairie forests; and presents the finest level I have ever seen. This is nearly the only road within my knowledge that caravans can travel during the heaviest rains without being greatly inconvenienced by swollen streams. Throughout the whole distance of forty miles, there is hardly what could be called a hill, and yet the undulations, the rises and falls are so varying with the dead levels as to render it the most pleasant and agreeable for horseback travelling. I had ridden about fifteen miles when it became evident that my horse that had borne the fatigue of five weeks of arduous labour, could not alone bear me to Ogbomoṣo, except very slowly and with great difficulty. The horse, given me by the king, though very young, I now felt compelled to bring into requisition at a very early day if I expected to reach my destination within a very short period. Under an exertion that more than anything else wears away a traveller, I succeeded at a late hour, though far ahead of my carriers, in reaching Ogbomoṣo.

The more I travel in Sudan the more I am convinced of the very great uniformity of the country in the same latitude and of the existence of a belt or dividing line which nature has placed between the Niger and the sea. All around and within the vicinity of Ogbomoṣo the country, though rolling, presents a more broken appearance and bolder outline than any regions for sixty miles towards the Niger. On entering the city in which I had once spent three weeks so pleasantly, I felt at home and repaired at once to the home of Adigbo, my former host, and took lodgings at my old quarters. Nothing now was so much desired by me as some of that good tasty pudding of indian corn that the good cooks of Yorubaland know so well how to make, and for some of which I immediately dispatched a servant. They who travel on railroads where eating houses are loaded with the plenty of the land, and dine on steamboats of sumptuous fare, know nothing of the pleasure enjoyed by a man amid the untamed Sudanese, after a hard day's travel, when he sits down to a calabash of Yoruba *ekọ*—hot from the pot—or a lordly dish of the palaver sauce, one chief excellence of which is a full supply of capsicum. Adigbo said he had in reserve the two bags of cowries left in his possession for safe keeping except a few

he had allowed my friend Bowen to have after a sufficient and satisfactory proof that he was identified with me. This is a most worthy trait in the Yoruba, and it may be in Africans generally, that when anything is committed to their hand it is just as safe as if it is their own. It was most fortunate that I had taken the precaution to leave this amount of cowries in Ogbomoṣo, as I had spent nearly everything in Ilorin; not only my money but I had parted with valuable articles, and was finally compelled to borrow cowries from an Eḡba man who had now returned with me to receive a large per centum on his loan.

This morning I called on my old friend, Oḡunaro,¹ to pay him a mark of respect before leaving for Ijaye. Several months before, I had told him my intention of locating in his town, for which purpose he had given me a lot of land, and as he was now holding it in reservation, seemed a little aggrieved that I had been so tardy in fulfilling my promise. It is a little remarkable that the first whiteman who visits a native town is the choice of the people, and that the settlement of no other one gives such general satisfaction. It was due to this fact that the Balḡ seemed so desirous that I should settle among them at my earliest convenience, and accepted the promise, which I then intended to fulfill, of my speedy return.

The rains for some time back had been so heavy that I now began to apprehend that I should meet with some trouble before reaching Ijaye. My faithful horse and companion that had borne me safely over mountains, through water and out of bogs, began to evince such signs of failure that I could no longer think of relying on him as my dependence homewards. Leaving him in the hands of Adigbo and relying on my new and young steed, I left town with an early start, intending, if possible, to reach the Oḡbà mountains within one day. The morning was cloudy but as it gave no indications of immediate rains, I hoped the watercourse would give me no serious trouble. But about five miles from the city the stream which, in February preceding, was so small, now presented an obstacle almost insuperable to carriers except in numbers large enough to aid each other. A crossing of very rude description over a narrow and very strong current had been made by the natives, and with no little

¹ The reigning Balḡ of Ogbomoṣo.

difficulty was made to answer the purpose of keeping persons from being submerged entirely in the water. Some active young men and good swimmers, who were on their way to the farm, made no hesitancy in taking their baskets, or whatever they had upon their heads, and swimming across with great ease. It is a native custom that travellers in extremity or difficulty aid each other and extend even to the small act of helping to place a load on the head. There happened to be in our company four or five messengers from Ijaye, whom I knew to be public servants by their livery and carriage, and with the little meanness generally belonging to such characters, after they had been aided, were about to decamp and leave us to ferry our loads across as best we could. Seeing the trick, I felt constrained to force them to observe travellers' etiquette¹ by that determined decision to which a native will almost invariably submit. To have left us thus would have been an outrage and one to which I did not feel like calmly submitting.

All being safely across, I mounted my horse, hoping I should not need any carriers any more during the day, unless some water-course should again check my progress. But I had entirely miscounted, as the ground was so saturated with water that not only the creeks, but the little branches were full enough to present obstacles every few miles. Three or four miles, I was compelled to dismount and wade and once was forced from my horse in the midst of a stream by attempting to cross on horseback. With all these mishaps it seemed highly improbable that I should reach the river by dark. The sun was rapidly declining when, wet and tired, I began to wind around the Qbà mountains, through the thick growth that covered the ruins of former cities, and as my carriers were far behind, and it was extremely doubtful whether or not they would overtake me, I made every extra effort to reach the river in order to have some shelter from the night air. The mountains, throwing their shadows over me, hastened the night much more rapidly while the tall grass that hedged in the pathway kept me from seeing scarcely anything but the surrounding objects. I rode on until it became impossible for my horse to follow the winding path and having dismounted to lead the way myself, I was just

¹ Obligation to be of help to co-travellers.

about giving up further effort as fruitless and throwing myself, worn out, upon the grass, when most fortunately I saw near by, in a little open space, a few small shanties, hastily thrown up by a caravan traveller to protect him from the night dew. Not knowing what would become of my horse in this unpropitious region where there are wild beasts if any are to be found in the country, I loosed him to graze and take care of himself whilst I crept into a little straw shanty, scarcely long enough for my full length, and wrapped myself up in a wet cloak to try to pass through the night. But for my lack of insensibility occasioned by fatigue, I should have felt keenly my awkward situation where I was subject at any time to the very serious interruption of a hyena or a leopard. After remaining there for about an hour I was awakened from my reverie by some faint sounds that fell on my ears causing half fear, half rejoicing; I listened with the suspense better imagined than described as the sounds grew louder and more hopeful, and with the readiest use of my little stock of Yoruba, ascertained that they were a part of my company, and that my people were coming on behind. The happy thrill had not more than passed through my veins and electrified my whole system when my interpreter and carriers, whose voices were never so sweet, arrived. We soon made the surrounding grass shine with the blaze of our fires, and with our potatoes in the coals for a frugal meal, presented the scene of the jolly, happy crowd. My wet clothes I exchanged for dry ones and made another and successful effort at refreshing slumber.

Having no provisions to stay our morning stomachs, there was no need of effort to put everyone in readiness for an early start to finish the few miles remaining before we reached the river. There is an occasion on which natives will make haste and that is when fire is sweeping away their dwellings; but it is one of the most difficult things to impress them with the idea that you are in a hurry. Of this I had sufficient proof this morning on reaching the river now greatly swollen, with my boots and legs wet to my knees, and nothing to warm my chilled body but some red pepper that I applied to my feet to keep off everything like the approach of a chill. We talked and howled and stormed and threatened; then waited a while until patience would become exhausted and repeated our unsuccessful efforts until ten or eleven o'clock before we

succeeded in crossing. The ferryman happened to be absent from the village, and it seemed that nothing, not even the severest alternative, could forward our course ten minutes. In February, this stream was but a few yards wide. Being anxious to reach home after an absence of six weeks, during which time I had not heard one word from those left behind, I stopped just long enough to gratify my appetite with some good native food, and hurried on my poor horse, whose condition I now began to deplore. His slow pace from the drive of yesterday began to show too clearly that he was not able for the task, and most likely would succumb from the effect of such travel. On reaching Ijaye gate I met my friend and co-labourer, Bowen, who, hearing of my approach, came out to meet and welcome me home. Though my absence had been short, the labour performed and the difficulties through which I had been providentially kept were sufficient reasons for thankfulness; to Him be all the praise.

CHAPTER 4

TRAVELS IN CENTRAL YORUBALAND

I HAD hardly rested from the fatigue of travel before my colleague [Bowen] expressed his conviction of the absolute necessity for a change for himself and wife. He proposed to go to Bioku's place,¹ a high mountain point west from Ijaye, a little more than a day's journey, and on the western side of the Ogun; but at my suggestion he changed his place for a temporary residence in Ogbomoso with an eye on Ilorin, and left me in charge of Ijaye. For several weeks I was somewhat enfeebled and kept myself much closer than is desirable for health.

In November [1855], I made a trip to the coast for the purpose of meeting some missionaries who were expected weekly, but after waiting some days in Lagos, I was compelled to return alone. It was not until January 1856, that we received a reinforcement of A. D. Phillips² and lady and J. F. Beaumont.³ During the early part of this year our little band suffered severely in the death of our much loved and devoted Sister Phillips, who had scarcely entered on her career when she was called to her reward; and the return [to America] of brother Bowen and lady. Such are the trials and difficulties which all new missionary efforts must sustain, and serve to show the necessity of a diligence and earnestness commensurate

¹ The real name of the town is Bolorunpelu, but sometimes called by the name of the ruler, Bioku, as Ile Bioku (Bioku's place). See Bowen's description of the place in *Central Africa*, Chapter XIV. The place was destroyed towards the end of the nineteenth century, see Johnson, *History of the Yorubas*, pp. 301-2; 455-57.

² Born near Carthage, Moore County, North Carolina on 6 August 1827. Educated at Mercer University, Georgia and appointed missionary to Africa in July 1854, and served in the Yoruba mission from 1855 till c. 1860 when the Ijaye war forced him to leave Yorubaland for America.

³ Came to Africa with A.D. Phillips in early 1856 not as a minister but "to assist in preparation of books". He returned to America after twelve months for health reasons.

with the work. It was in the month of July, when enjoying a little leisure, that I determined to visit a large town called Iwo, two days' journey east of Ijaye. My companions were my interpreter and an excellent coloured friend, a native American from Liberia, who was in our employ as mechanic, and the necessary carriers. I had solicited in vain of our chief for a messenger, but when the morning for my departure arrived, he gave me an escort on horseback as a mark of respect, and to show that though he could not assume the responsibility of introducing a whiteman to a town over which another large city had jurisdiction,¹ he personally favoured my visit. Some distance from the city I struck the ruins² of a town which in extent seemed as large as Ijaye, and of the existence of which, though within six or seven miles of me, I had no knowledge. This town originally contained a very large part of the population of Ijaye and was destroyed by Kurunmi the present chief, who rose to power by the force of his own strong, characteristic mind. It seemed a pity that such ruins should meet the eye everywhere over such an interesting country, that those places once the seat of power and activity should now be torn up by the hoe of the farmer and become the repositories of agricultural productions.

About twelve o'clock we reached a nice little town called Fiditi, between Ijaye and Oyo, and which in some way or another had several times defeated the attacks of plunderers and robbers. I called on the chief and after expressing my good-will and desire to live on a friendly footing, gave him a razor and asked the privilege of speaking to his people. This being no sooner asked than granted, I talked to a goodly number that had gathered around about a new Oriṣa or Mediator and the way of salvation; that the great God has prepared for all men.

In inquiring of the people, I ascertained there was no direct route from this place to Iwo, and that I should therefore be compelled to proceed to Oyo, and enter the regular caravan road and take an old route sometime since abandoned but formerly the direct line of travel.

¹ Jurisdiction over the place belonged to Ibadan which was, at that time, in a cold war with Ijaye.

² This was the town of Abemo which was destroyed by Kurunmi of Ijaye. For information on events leading to the destruction, see S. Johnson, *op. cit.*, p. 238 and pp. 269-73.

Having the services of a trusty guide, we began our day's journey in a wild, uncultivated region, fertile in the extreme, and with a vegetation so excessive that in many places there was but little more than vestige left of the old track. Just at this season of the year the tall grass and growth of nearly every description had reached its maturity, and so hedged up our way that but for our guide who cut his way with a bill-hook, we should have been compelled to give up the chase in despair. In several places on the route I observed cleared patches and the capsicum growing as if indigenous, but in nearly every instance it is seen by a close inspection that this growth is the certain indication of the former habitation of travellers. It not infrequently happens that there are traces of villages in the thick forests that could not be discerned in the peculiarity of the growth, or some opening once cultivated, but now overgrown with weeds and grass. This old blind path eventually led us into the road leading from Ijaye to Qbà and with which I was well acquainted. Here we parted from our guide who kindly received a razor as compensation for his services. On reaching Qbà about one o'clock, it became a question with our little company whether we should continue the journey or spend the night at the present quarters. Some gave us encouragement, others discouraging information, but as I supposed the object was to keep us in the village to gather a little of our small change, I gave the order to march as I had been previously informed that Iwo was but a short distance and had little doubt but we should reach the city by sunset. After a ride of several hours in the prairie, we again entered, about four o'clock, the terrible primeval forest, almost impenetrable, and in which we found ourselves travelling until we again reached the river at nearly dark. Late in the afternoon the rain began to descend and make our condition anything but a pleasant one, but ceased a little before night when, with daylight sufficient to see our way across the river, we found the stream now distant from town six or seven miles. Fortunately, the moon favoured us with her light which, together with the good roads that passed through the farms, enabled us to make good speed. Several miles before reaching the Onibode [gate-keeper], we heard the humming sound of the busy multitude and the noise of the drums, which encouraged us to hope we should soon find a little rest. When we entered the gate and saluted the gate-keeper, he appeared so perfectly

astonished that it was some time before he could decide the question of admitting us on his own authority, although he was reassured by us and received ample explanations as to the cause of our delay. He finally allowed us to take such positions in his little house as each one could, though without being able at that late hour, and at some distance from town, to give us a supper.

On the approach of morning we notified the chief of my intention, and received a messenger to conduct us forthwith to his house. He held an interview in his large countyard, under several porticos, where could be seated a goodly number with some comfort to themselves. He was by far the oldest governor I had ever seen, and bearing the character not only of the ruler but also of the father and patriarch, must have been between seventy and eighty-years old. He had black skin, a most humane and benevolent countenance, withall, he was such a specimen of a good old patriarch that he forthwith inspired me with a respect and attachment for his person that I seldom feel on first acquaintance. He allowed me to talk as long as I wished; to read a portion of the scripture in their tongue, and manifested the freeness to allow others as well as himself to ask questions about the new religion. It would seem to be folly to talk about pious heathens and to speak favourable of the religion of these who worship creatures as their god, but there was something so humble, meek, sincere—so heavenly minded and inspiring—in the countenance of this man that I could almost feel I was in the presence of a follower of Jesus, and should bear the impression of his image to the tomb.

He delivered into the hands of one of his subjects who, though expected to furnish me with quarters befitting a guest, carried me into a compound which, for mud and filth, surpassed anything of the kind that had ever met my eyes, and the apartments of which were not only damp and disagreeable, but in front of a hog-sty. I gave some attendants to understand that I had no objection to remaining in a compound provided it was pleasant, but to occupy the room assigned to me I could not—so they must procure me another place. My objection was not only entertained but efforts were forthwith made and a place dry, secluded and comfortable provided, where I had the pleasure of spending four or five days very agreeably. I here met a Mohammedan from Sierra Leone, who brought with him his family, among whom were two, nice daughters that had not

forgotten all the form of civilized life, but manifested their appreciation of our visit by some hastily served but palatable and well-cooked dishes.

During the several days I remained in this town I paid two or three visits to the chief, one of which was public, to afford the populace an opportunity of being present. In consequence of infirmity, the power and direction of government rested for the most part in the hands of the war chief, who is as fine a specimen of a native as I have ever seen. He is six feet tall, well proportioned, light coloured, pleasing countenance, keen black eyes, winning address, and commanding appearance, and though he had but little to say, his power was evidently felt throughout the whole city. At my compound small crowds were continually coming and going; some on account of curiosity, others to see and hear, and thus was offered an opportunity of addressing day after day numbers from all parts of the town on the important topic of salvation. Besides those efforts, I visited nearly every part of the city and on one occasion ascended a small mountain from the top of which can be seen, not only part of the town, but much of the surrounding country. From this spot, as well as from other points of observation, it was clearly to be ascertained that the locality of Iwo was the most unfavourable to health that could have been selected. It is nearly surrounded by creeks and branches; in some places low and inclined to be marshy, and overrun throughout the whole town by woods and grass which, on the close of the rain, can but be prejudicial to health. In making inquiries as to the health and sickness of the place, I was told that a few years ago the fever raged so terribly as to sweep off hundreds and thousands of the population within the course of a few months. My informant, in conveying the information, asked me if I saw the number of the people in the market; I told him yes. Then he said that as many people died during that year as there were people in the market. This town is another standing proof of the necessity of that class of labourers¹ who are naturally enabled to withstand the attacks of African fever than the whiteman.

¹ The reference is to black Americans who are members of the Southern Baptist Convention churches.

From those whom I supposed ought to know, I tried to gather some information of Ede and Osoḡbo and the country beyond, but with such little success in adding anything to my previous knowledge that I had to give up in despair. Unless you chance to meet with a man who has travelled, whatever may be the pretensions of your informants, you will ascertain sooner or later that their geographical knowledge is exceedingly limited; and even that little, derived from other sources, is involved in more or less mystery. Similar to their limited geographical knowledge of their own country is the meagre information of the traditional legends of their fathers. I called on the Balḡ of the town one day for the purpose of gathering such facts as he and others might possess in regard to the ancient history of the land. One after another they state with a show of wisdom but a meagreness of information that marks the ignorance of children. They could tell a few general facts about their town and country, but even these facts only dated back to their fathers or grandfathers and referred to some little insignificant event they happened to remember. The compound in which I made my sojourn was one of the largest I had ever seen, being a collection of courtyards and extended from one street to another, and under the governorship of one man. Wandering one rainy day from court to court, I stumbled on an old priest of Ifa, who, with his bowl and palm nut, was making his manipulations with all the earnestness and gravity of a minister, and apparently in a good humour, scarcely noticed me, though I made some effort with my broken Yoruba to introduce a conversation.

It happened during my stay to be the time of a great Mohammedan feast, just succeeding the Ramadan when all this class of the population became devotees to rejoicing, eating and drinking. I had no idea of the very extensive preparations that were being made to celebrate the day other than the dressing and mounting of a young Mohammedan a few doors from me in the same compound. About ten o'clock I rode out to the eastern gate to see what was transpiring, when, on approaching the gate, I saw crowd after crowd entering the city. I stopped a few moments to await an opportunity for passing; but finding that there was little or no cessation I rushed through the gateway and took a position without the wall. The scene then presented to my gaze was the most thrilling I had ever seen in the

country. There was an immense concourse of people densely packed, and stretching over the plain for half a mile seven and eight deep, with a commanding figure rising far above the footmen, seated on a fine horse, beautifully caparisoned. From the ranks would occasionally dart forth one or two horsemen in full speed over the plain as if to gratify the pencil of the painter. Very slowly and measuredly, the crowd approached and passed on into the city until the war chief, riding up, made a halt in quite a pompous manner in front of me and remained just long enough for me to survey him and the fine suit in which he was arrayed. He was surrounded by a large bodyguard, mostly footmen, who in their attentions to himself and steed could hardly have been excelled by the attendance of Mordecia while passing through the streets of a Persian capital. Each man that could parade a horse had mounted him and was trying to vie with every other one in the display of fine colours, beautiful saddles, or dexterous horsemanship; while thousands of humble footmen were honourably content to follow in a slow and measured step behind their lord. What became of this immense crowd I know not. The next I saw of the remnant was in the evening in front of the governor's house, when it was in the enjoyment of a general dance, in which the Balogun was the lion of the hour. He had evidently been partaking freely of Holland gin, or some equally pernicious poison, and was drunk.

After a sojourn of nearly a week I made my last visit to the chief to give him my parting salutation and to encourage him in the hope that some day we should reach his town with the word of God, though I could not now give him any assurance of immediate occupancy. At one of my previous interviews I had given him a Yoruba translation of one of the gospels, not that it should be esteemed as a charm, but as a memento of a visit of peace and glad tidings to be shown to those who might come afterwards.

As much rain had fallen during our sojourn, it was deemed a good policy to provide for a ferryman to ferry us over the river, which in all probability by this time was unfordable. We started early with the promise that the ferryman would reach the river very soon, as we intended to make the distance to Ijaye in a day. In travelling to the river I learned the cause of the terrible fevers that sometimes rage in the city. The many creeks and branches, the

fertile soil, the excessive vegetation, the flatness of the country, and its contiguity to the *Ọbà*, are the causes that would be expected anywhere to produce sickness. In addition to the above, the palm tree grows as finely and as extensively as on the coast; thus indicating the soils and climate to be very much the same, besides the nearness of a large body of heavily timbered primeval forest, equal in size and density to any I had seen in Yoruba country. After the delay that may be always looked for whenever there is an appointment with a native, we were safely ferried across in the peculiar Yoruba manner—of course on a huge calabash. After a day's ride of nearly forty or fifty miles, I reached Ijaye about sunset.

It now became necessary in view of extending and enlarging our mission, that another town should be occupied. For some time past, I had been negotiating with the king in *Ọyọ* for a site on which to build the station, as this was the next town in order and in point of importance. In the month of January [1856], I had visited the capital in company with the missionary destined for *Ogbomọṣọ*, but as my attention and presence were demanded at home by some newly arrived missionaries, I could make but a hasty visit to him, who, though the real, is but the nominal king¹ of the Yorubas. The *afin* or palace is situated on a beautiful level eminence occupying the highest ground in the city, and surrounded by a large wall that encloses all the royal buildings, and extensive courtyard where all interviews are held.² I delivered my present into the hands of *Kudęfu* otherwise called *Arę*, the prime messenger or privy counsellor of the king, and expressed my wish to have an interview. After all the preliminaries had been made and *Kudęfu* had tried to impress me with the great importance of the occasion, and given me directions as to my course, the king's readiness was announced and everybody moved instantly. Horns continually pealed forth the appearance of his royal highness and put everything in commotion, even the fowls and goats of the yard. *Kudęfu* led the way with long and measured steps to the gateway of the palace, which he entered cautiously; then quickening his pace, ran and prostrated before

¹ Real power lay with Ibadan and Ijaye at this time.

² For the structure of royal palaces in Yorubaland, see G. J. Afọlabi Ojo, *Yoruba Palaces: A Study of the Afins of Yorubaland*, University of London Press, 1966.

the royal face. In the meantime, I had stopped a short distance off to await my introduction before being seated. All my people, I believe, followed me except a youth who was forbidden entrance because of an idolatrous charm or sign around his neck that was not allowed to come within the royal courtyard. In my ignorance of the kingly custom, I had brought hoisted into the courtyard an umbrella, which is only allowed to the king. Such a strange appearance before royal eyes created some little excitement which Kudęfu could have stopped by taking down my umbrella, but as the sun was shining with considerable power, I preferred to ignore custom and kept it over me. The king, attributing the indiscretion or violation of custom to ignorance, smiled and let the matter pass. As may be seen in the next engraving,¹ he sat under one of the porticos in front of the palace about thirty or forty feet from me, shaded by a huge silk or velvet umbrella and habited in a rich robe or gown, with a silk cap on his head. On his right and left were prostrate a number of men, with shoulders and bodies uncovered, being the household servants of the palace, and said by the natives to be eunuchs. Atiba,² the ruling monarch, is advanced in life, and though with the appearance of an old woman, is a shrewd and ingenious fellow. He seemed in a good humour, talked freely and listened with respect to what I said. On state occasion when the king is surrounded by his servants and subjects, all that can be done is merely to speak in general terms of your plans and objects; as it is more his desire to make an exhibition of himself than anything else. I did nothing more than convey through Kudęfu my desire to build a station in the city, provided the king would entertain my proposition. Before taking leave of Oyo the impression was made on my mind that there would be but little or no difficulty in perfecting the contemplated arrangements.

It was in the month of June [1856] while on a visit to Ogbomoşo that I determined to make another effort towards preparing the way for our occupancy of the capital. It happened that a German

¹ The engraving of Alafin Atiba is not available. The substitute opposite page 202 is that of Alafin Şıyanbola Ladugbolu, Atiba's grandson, who reigned from 1911-44

² The first Alafin of New Oyo and successor of Oluewu, the last Alafin of Old Oyo.

and his lady,¹ connected with the Church Missionary Society, were visiting the city at the same time and for the same purpose; and as both parties wished to see the king, I had requested a private interview; but contrary to my wishes, we were conducted in company to the palace and presented on the same occasion. On my first visit I was placed on a comfortable glazed seat of beaten earth, and allowed the use of my umbrella to ward off the rays of morning sun. At this presentation we were conducted to another part of the courtyard where there were no seats, nor the least preparation for the comfort of those who were to wait on the king. The ground was rough and covered with small rocks that rendered sitting not very pleasant, to say nothing of the humiliating position that was entirely unnecessary and beneath the dignity of the court. The king himself, with his large velvet umbrella to secure him from the sun, was well seated in his portico, and had the audacity not only to request but require us to sit flat on the ground. I had a position in Indian style as being the most comfortable; the other parties also seating themselves in the most comfortable postures, when the king, not satisfied with our own taste, required to see us more comfortably seated. I refused to alter my posture, and unexpectedly drew down on my head not only the royal displeasure, but the contempt of everybody else. To be coaxed or entreated to change my position I would have submitted, but to be forced to occupy a place humiliating and disgraceful, even in the eyes of the natives, I was most decidedly unwilling. My refusal stopped all intercourse; the king seemed perfectly astonished; and his surrounding attendants kept up a muttering that seemed to indicate a strong feeling of discontent on every side. Whether to submit this time or leave the yard was a question that arose in my mind, then the gentleman and lady [The Rev. and Mrs Hinderer] who had already complied with the requirement, insisted on my sitting on the ground. I finally took a seat with the determination to make a protest against such an arbitrary requirement. It need not be said that, after such an unpleasant occurrence, I had but very little to say with regard to my contemplated object. After closing my interview and returning to my compound, I objected openly to such an unheard of and arbitrary policy,

¹ They were David and Anna Hinderer.

one to be condemned by all natives, as being unworthy of a king.¹ Expecting myself to occupy the town, I was unwilling to begin a course which, if persisted in, would sooner or later bring me into an open rupture with the royal authority, or force me into submission that would eventually be converted into contempt. This was the state of things when I left for Ogbomoṣo to spend a week.

On my return I ascertained that undue influences and Jesuitical intrigues² had been made use of to prevent my occupying the city. The very state of things in which I had unfortunately been placed has been made use of to make an unfavourable impression against me, so that I could not even get an audience before the king. Kudęfu, who made various excuses and pretexts, not only could not keep back the truth, but at this time, and on subsequent occasions, when I came into favour, intimated the real cause of my misfortunes. I was compelled to leave the city entirely thwarted but perfectly satisfied as to the reason, and relying on the justice of my cause, I believed the day would come when we, the poor despised set, would be righted before the people. It was in consequence of this failure that I was now making preparations to pass on through the capital, a point acknowledged to be important and one we had reason to believe the king was anxious to occupy, to Ogbomoṣo, about forty miles in the interior. I had never fully relinquished my design of locating in this city from the spring of 1855 to the present date, when unexpectedly but providentially I was turned in that direction. We were expecting reinforcements and as Oyọ would not receive us, it was necessary to make preparation at the next favourable point which was readily conceded to be Ogbomoṣo.

It was in the midst of the rain and towards the close of September when I again dissolved a most pleasant connection with my brother, A. D. Phillips, with whom I had spent several months most agreeably, to enter a new field and begin my work from the foundation. After an experience of twelve months in house building and overseeing,

¹ Clarke here failed to understand the amount of respect the Yoruba people had for their kings, and rather than condemn the Alafin for what Clarke considered to be high-handedness, the Yoruba would consider Clarke's rather defiant attitude as culpable disrespect to royal authority.

² It was true that Catholic missionaries would do anything to get rid of a Protestant missionary, but the treatment of Clarke on this occasion might have been a result of his earlier defiant attitude to court etiquette in Oyọ.

I became thoroughly satisfied that the missionary who attempts without aid to direct, superintend and aid in the construction of a large station in this part of Africa must do it not only at the risk of health and life but of any immediate prospect of usefulness. From the nervousness and feeble state of health induced by excessive oversight and care, I never entirely recovered during my sojourn in the country. I went to Ogbomoṣo in the enjoyment of good, vigorous health and fully prepared for almost any emergency, made my abode in a small native room and continued my arduous and incessant labours until forced to relinquish the hold with which I intended to finish my work. Nervousness, loss of appetite, indigestion and failing strength so prostrated me that I was incapacitated for every business, and made the subject of the awful scourge of hypochondria. When I left Ogbomoṣo in January 1857, to meet the reinforcement of new missionaries at Ijaye, it was from my bed with strength just sufficient to sit on my horse. At a great loss to myself, I had purchased a dear experience which I intended to make use of for the benefit of those who might hereafter engage with me in missionary labour. We had now a fourth station nearly two hundred miles from the coast as a basis of operation, and from which we intended to continue an aggressive warfare until the stronghold of Mohammedanism should have yielded to our entreaties.

In April 1857, in company with some missionary bretheren who were anxious to visit Ilorin, I determined to make an effort at a point called N'Lade for the purpose of settling the question as to the practicability of stretching a line of stations from Lagos to the Niger and to prepare, by a gradual acquaintance, the minds of the natives for this ulterior object. On reaching Ilorin I made free to go to the compound set apart for the king's guests, and took quarters. After remaining beyond the ordinary time allotted by the custom of the country before strangers are entitled to an interview, we began to make serious enquiries as to the reason why we could not see the king. We not only desired the privilege as such to which we were entitled but from the fact, according to another very foolish custom,¹ we were prevented by the strictest watch from going fifty yards

¹ This was not a "very foolish custom"; rather, it was a regulation necessitated by security and protocol.

beyond the gates of our prison house. What made the matter worse was that we were continually tantalized, hearing first one excuse then another, with false hopes of seeing the king, until patience became exhausted. If we are to be detained by this insufferable plan, crowded and besieged continually, then said we to our keeper, "You must allow us to go at our leisure over the town". "No," said our keeper, "I can't do this because you have not seen the king, and to allow you to go at large before seeing him would never do". We had remained in this condition for several days and had paid our visit to our keepers—Dongari, quite as sagacious and accomplished in lying¹ as Nasama—before it began to be hinted that the king was sick. Learning that this was his unhappy state and being better acquainted than the rest of the company, I told Nasama that we must be allowed to go at large; that I had seen the king several times and was not a stranger, and should therefore be released from such unnecessary confinement.

Seeing I was determined to have my way, he finally consented that we should ride out to the *Asa*, a small river about two miles distant, and running at the foot of the town wall. With this privilege we demanded still a larger one, and continued in our efforts until we had succeeded in visiting nearly every part of the city. In order to see some of the populous places, Phillips, Trimble² and myself, arrayed ourselves in large robes and native hats and successfully eluded the active observation of the crowd who were ever ready to give the cry at the approach of *Oyinbo*. But there were two places no consideration could induce Nasama to allow us to visit; one the small mountain that overlooked the city, the other the king's market. Whenever we happened to escape the eye of our old friend who no doubt felt great responsibility in his important charge, he could not rest until he had found us. One evening, we slipped to the outskirts of the king's market and placed ourselves on a little elevation where we could get a glimpse of the immense throng that covered

¹ Similar behaviour in "civilized" countries would probably be termed diplomacy!

² The Rev. Selden Y. Trimble was born in Logan County, Kentucky on 17 September 1827. Appointed missionary in 1856, he came to Yorubaland towards the end of the same year. After serving for two years, he returned to America (owing to ill-health) and there served as pastor in several churches until he died on 25 September 1873.

an acre or more, when Nasama, apprised of our absence, came in considerable haste down the street and met us quietly on our return in a good humour, rejoicing in our success, and not a little amused at his temporary passion.

The fact of a lady being one of our number kept us surrounded by crowds that nothing but continual and active watchfulness could keep from the yard. It now became evident after a prolonged stay that we could not enjoy an interview with the king, and therefore an important question arose as to what course I should adopt with regard to my visit to the Niger.

I did not wish to take a hasty step, neither did I wish to be thwarted in my purpose. I conversed freely with Nasama to ascertain as far as possible what would be the result if I forced my way and, if that was impracticable, what would be the better plan to adopt. I finally resolved, in as much as I could make a visit at some other time, to be patient and wait the brighter development of providence. The sequel proved that this was far the better course. After being detained with false promises and delusive hopes far beyond our anticipated time, we beat a retreat with not a little satisfaction at what we had seen and enjoyed, though much of the time so closely confined as to strongly tempt our rebellious spirit. This visit was in part intended to keep up the friendly and social intercourse that had always been manifested by the people of Ilorin and with reference to occupancy whenever an opportunity should present itself.

I had been at home but a short time when the necessity of a meeting of the missionaries called me to Oyo where we intended to make a combined effort for securing a location in that city. We had already been aware of the kind of influences, unworthy even of a Jesuit, that had been brought to bear on the minds of those who had the king's ear, and were determined to prove that we had both men and means in Yorubaland. Phillips, Cason and myself were of the number to represent our mission in the meeting before the king. Already in conversation with Kudufu we had reason to believe the tone of opinion had changed, and we should meet with no difficulty in the attainment of our object. To gratify the royal taste we agreed to dispense with our umbrellas but kept our hats over our heads. We had hardly finished our salutations when the king, two or three times, distinctly singled me out as the one who had refused to sit

on the ground on a former occasion, and called me his friend with an emphasis quite striking: '*Ore mi, ore mi*'. Evidently, the spirit of independence and regard for one's self had produced such a conviction upon his mind that we were on the road to favour, and had only to wait the lapse of time to secure even more than we had anticipated. Whatever produced the rapid and radical change in the king's mind may not be apposite just here to inquire, but a change there was, which secured for us a site on which I had the pleasure before leaving the country of beginning a station with the erection of a house suitable for temporary purposes.¹

There appeared something so little and disgusting in the obstacles thrown in our way for twelve months as to give the world a just contempt for that system of so-called Christianity that condescends to Jesuitical intrigue for the attainment of its ends. It has been said and believed by many that the controversies of Christendom will not be carried into heathen countries where the points of difference cannot be appreciated; but it is an assertion and belief that ignore two great fundamental facts—the universality of our human natures and the radical differences between Papists and Protestants. My own experience in the heathen field clearly proves to my mind that so long as Baptists are true to the cause of God, the battle they have fought in Europe and America will be fought again in China and in Africa. And so long as they oppose all the vestiges of human traditions in their ardent devotion to the unadulterated word of truth, even to that period of time they will be in all lands, kingdoms and tribes arrayed in deadly conflict against all the forms and phases of popery, whether stamped with a papal seal or robed in the chamelion dress of the nineteenth century.² Christ against anti-Christ—truth against error—light against darkness—Baptists against the world, until He shall come, whose right it is to rule.

¹ This was at Işokun which became the base of Baptist establishment in Oyo.

² Baptists are puritans of a sort, and Clarke's reflections here re-echo that fight-to-finish attitude to popery or Roman Catholicism which characterized sects of similar brand—Calvinists, Huguenots, Puritans, Presbyters—in the period of the Reformation.

CHAPTER 5

TRAVELS IN EASTERN AND NORTHERN YORUBALAND ACROSS NUPE TO RIVER NIGER

TODAY [12 November 1857] at noon I left home intending to visit the eastern parts of the Yoruba kingdom, and then to pass through Ilorin with the view of touching the Niger at some suitable point and thus testing the practicability of extending our missionary operations in that direction. For some years it had been our earnest desire to have that Mohammedan city of Ilorin open to the gospel. As it was thought a safe passage through and would be favourable to this object, I determined to make a second effort. Mr Daniel May, of the present Niger expedition, under command of Dr Baïke,¹ had this morning en route for Lagos to make efforts to relieve his associates who had the misfortune to lose their vessel, the *Dayspring*, at some point above Rabba, in the Nupe kingdom. Having learned from this gentleman that N'Lade, the point at which I wished to touch the Niger was little more than a desolate place, I considered it good policy to avail myself of the opportunity occasioned by the expedition, and there touched the river. I could but be satisfied with the importance of this step, inasmuch as the barrier now presented by Ilorin would remain the greater until we should have passed its bounds in peace. The importance of this step was still more clearly seen from the consideration that every advance is so much additional territory open to our operations, with a strong guarantee of security and protection for the future.

The western and north-western parts of the Yoruba country I had already visited in the fall of 1855,² I could not remain satisfied

¹ See the account of this expedition in W. B. Baïkie, *Narrative of an Exploring Voyage Up the Rivers Kwara and Benue in 1854*, J. Murray, London, 1856, Reprinted by Frank Cass, London, 1966.

² See preceding chapters for description of these areas.

until the remaining portions of the country had been travelled and brought to view. If I shall be aided in this little tour by Him who is the guide and protector of the Christian pioneer, we shall have an acquaintance with nearly every town and city in this interesting kingdom.

Leaving the southern gate of the city, my direction by compass was almost uniformly south, though Ijeṣa is pointed to us as lying in an easterly direction from Ogbomoṣo. Lying to the west of my day's travel is a beautiful range of mountains distinctly visible from home, but the striking outline of which can only be seen by riding the base. For two long hours, I had the pleasure of distinctly viewing the beautiful green that enveloped them and the elevations and depressions of the ridge, so succeeding each other as to make a strong impression on my mind. I was surprised to see so few farms on the road, though occasionally on my right and left the usual life and beauty of cultivated land was visible.

To the east enchanting views of natural scenery occasionally enlivened by a smiling farm rose before me for an hour's ride or more, when the general appearance became flat and uniform, and almost as different from the high elevation about town as a pine level from broken oak land. At half past four o'clock, having left the prairie, we were passing through a beautiful skirt of woods whose spreading bough and rich spreading foliage seemed to vie with nature's sun in giving beauty to the scene. How delightful, how cheering and surpassingly interesting in such an African wood, where the brightness itself is beautiful. I passed a small village called Iware, lying a short distance from the road, and under the protection of Ibadan; rather I should say under its oppressive taxation. Here we partook of a little refreshment. I perceived that in the course of a few hours the appearance of the country had very much changed, and that the rolling prairie lands had given place to forests and low-flat plains and high grass, occasionally intersected by running streams. Night was setting when we reached the woody environments of Ajebo. As is usual in African towns at this hour, the market was all astir but by skirting it we passed through unnoticed and took our seats under a shady tree before the house of the chief, and remained unobserved for three quarters of an hour, until his excellency gave us an audience preparatory to assigning a resting place

for the night. At an early hour this morning I called on the chief, whom I found awaiting me, dressed in a cool white wrapper, and attended by several men in the decline of life, who, I supposed, were the elders of the town. Having but a few minutes to spend, I watched the passing moment to speak to him and the attending crowd of the plan of salvation. As is usual on all set occasions, there was as much order and attention as one could expect, with an occasional hearer whose interest would solicit particular notice. Having given a small present in accordance with the custom of the country, I received in return a head of cowries, the real value of which, in the interior, is about seventy-five cents. The natives call this act of hospitality "making a stranger of the man",¹ and almost invariably expect an equivalent, not as pay, but as a recognition of their kindness.

Before seven o'clock, I had passed the town gate under a considerable escort of men, women and children, all anxious for one glimpse of the white stranger, with a direction due south, and a continuation of the woods entered the evening previous. In a short time the road forked, the right bearing south, leading to Iwo and Ibadan; the left bearing towards ESE. to Ilobu. About seven o'clock I saw a range of mountains due east, and a short time afterwards crossed Aró creek running south. At nine o'clock we reached Arà, a small village, the plantation of the Balogun,² or commander-in-chief of the Ibadan forces. Here we stopped to take a little refreshment, while I paid my respects to the chief, and preached to him and the people about the Saviour, who came into the world to save poor sinners. Dark and gloomy as seemed the prospects, there was here also some who seemed to take an interest in this heaven-born story, one in particular, whose undivided attention could but attract my own. The appearance of the people was healthy, though the village is surrounded by woods. The road forked again at this place, the ESE. bearing to Ilobu, the SSE. to Èdẹ. The general appearance of the country through which I had passed this morning is not so interesting, being a continual interchange of high grass,

¹ Here Clarke has translated literally Yoruba expression "șe c ni alejo". The appropriate English translation of the expression is "entertain him".

² Towns and villages ruled by Ibadan in the nineteenth century were usually shared among the Ibadan chiefs. See the arrangement in Elgee, *The Evolution of Ibadan* (Lagos, 1914).

brushwood and forest timber. The cultivation I had been so accustomed to see had ceased and the road indicated a soil, barren and sometimes rocky. At eleven o'clock the country changed slightly, becoming a little more elevated and the growth resembling that of the table-land about Ogbomoso. We crossed a road running due north and south and Awon creek, bearing same direction. At twelve o'clock we came in sight of the town, Ilobu having the mountains of Ogbomoso lying north west. Before reaching the precincts of the town, I perceived my winding course of yesterday and today was owing to the fact that none of my carriers were acquainted with the direct route from Ogbomoso to this place. It was one o'clock when I reached the market place and gave notice to the chief of my arrival. No time was lost in his eagerness to see the stranger kind of face that produces so much excitement throughout the country, and I was soon favoured with the privilege of complimenting this sable ruler of Ilobu, and from whom I soon retired to obtain a little rest and satisfy the demands of the appetite.

In the evening on my return I hoped to enjoy the privilege of preaching according to my custom, but the intense excitement and the eager curiosity of the gazing multitude for once at least prevented my succeeding in the desirable object. The young incumbent not a little abashed, and unaccustomed to wield a strong arm, made but a slight ineffectual effort to secure order among the uncontrollable subjects. As the crowds could not hear, I made an attempt to impress his mind with some saving truths, but finding my efforts unavailable, I concluded to relieve myself of a situation not very comfortable, and get a little fresh air, even mixed with dust, in a stroll over the town. To have relieved myself from the rabble would have been impossible. So I walked along as if the honour paid me was altogether agreeable, because no other plan was practicable. As all were in the highest spirits with the show, suddenly there turned the corner a very singular and fantastic looking man, dressed from head to foot, and known in Yoruba as the "Devil-man", but in the Foulah country of West Africa as Mumbo Jumbo. He had advanced in haste but a few yards when, behold, something stranger¹ to him than a devil man met his eyes; he made no stop for inquiries, and

¹ Reference here is to Clarke himself.

if a hundred armed pursuers had been in hot haste after him he would not have made better speed. I need scarcely say the crowd fairly roared as they saw their peculiar favourite flying away as on the wings of the wind. Returning home I found a crowd ready to hear the saving truths of the gospel; and if a little before I was a little discomfited, annoyed and confused, now with such attentive listeners I could but be cheered with the hope of that blessed day when Ethiopia shall stretch out her hands unto God.¹

The haste with which I am compelled to perform this tour prevents me from delaying more than a day in a town of five or six thousand inhabitants. So early this morning I called on the chief to notify him of my departure, intending to visit Ede, lying SSW from this place. The country through which I passed yesterday [14 November] was rather calculated to throw a shade of gloom over one's feelings, in as much as the life and beauty of cultivated farm and improved natural scenery so cheering and enlivening was sought for in vain.

I had scarcely left the gate of Ilobu when the country assumed a more cheerful appearance, indicative alike of health and prosperity. As I advanced I could have imagined myself travelling through the rich and luxuriant farms of Ijaye, as soil, scenery, elevation and productiveness all appeared the same. About eight o'clock the mountain rose up in the distance south and west, while much of the surrounding country presented an elevated and picturesque appearance. We recrossed Awon creek, having good banks and rocky bottom, and bearing due south. At a quarter to nine o'clock Ede came into view, appearing to be located on a broken hilly site, from a distance somewhat commanding. Farmers continually passed us and with a shy look and an inquisitive glance; seemed to inquire within themselves what does this mean? Our road became quite rocky and descending, and with roaring in the distance indicated a stream near at hand. It was nine o'clock, when I reached a fine small river, perhaps seventy-five yards wide, formed by the junction of the Oşun from the south east, and the Erinle from the east, and taking the former name, with a west course. At almost any time a river is a pleasing and interesting object, but when two

¹ The reference is to Psalm 68:31.

streams are seen flowing together as if uniting in wedlock, it is truly an imposing scene, and somewhat compensates the traveller or tourist for his toils and fatigue as a lover of nature's works. I speak of the two streams as uniting in wedlock because of the figure suggested by the natives in calling one the man and the other the woman. Such seems to be their notion of the connubial relation.

This fine stream was enlivened by the number of people crossing and recrossing the strong current, that the dry season was just reducing to practical ford. Able-bodied men would plunge in and at places were scarcely able to resist the rapid current, while women and children would unite hands and bodies to present a force sufficient to counteract the velocity of the stream. The passage was so very rocky and rough, and the current so strong that I considered it good policy to mount the shoulders of a hardy Yoruba, and trust to his knowledge and practical experience of the ford. His rises and falls over the rocky bed were so frequent and sudden that I would but be in apprehension of a ducking nearly every moment. He, however, who is acquainted with the African character, well knows that once committed to their care and fidelity, he need not fear within the limits of their power. This, at least, is my observation and experience. This stream, when full, is in places, near a quarter of a mile wide; had receded within the banks and gave me no trouble in reaching the town around which it partly flows. Emptying its waters into the lagoon, some distance below Lagos, it will some day afford a ready transmission of goods into the interior by canoes and small boats for several months in the year.¹ I suppose at this place the Qşun is but little smaller than the Ogun at Abeokuta, which point canoes may reach at all periods of the year.

At half past nine o'clock I reached the town situated half a mile from the ford of the river. In entering a Yoruba town for the first time it is customary to dispatch the gate-keeper or custom-house officer to notify the chief of your arrival; this in order that you may not occasion surprise, and that preparation may be made for your reception. A Yoruba so much dislikes trouble and annoying palavers that very frequently in one's visits, the first question asked is: "Is

¹ The construction of railway and roads from Lagos to the interior in the early part of the twentieth century made this proposition no longer feasible.

anything the matter?" As the same in principle holds true in visiting towns and villages, I dispatched a messenger as usual to give notice of my arrival. While awaiting his return a company of idol worshippers and festive rejoicers were just starting out, dressed in their gayest apparel and attended by drummers for a day's celebration. The company was composed chiefly of females, who accompany the music with songs of mirth and kept good time by the grotesque gesticulations, and contortions of their limbs and body. Ridiculous as these varied motions appeared to a stranger, I have thought about what radical difference there was between the slow, regular motions of an African woman, and the light-rapid skipping of a French beau. The former appears silly enough, and the latter, if familiarity had not deprived it of its novelty, would look equally so, anything to the contrary notwithstanding. Having given some proof of their skill in the evolutions of African dancing, the poor blind¹ creature passed on, while I was led off in haste to the house of Daodu or prince,² who was to receive me previous to visiting the chief. I was about entering his compound when I heard a peal of four guns and a rush towards me with a shout as I advanced into the yard. Such a strange and unusual welcome I did not immediately understand. This was my salute of welcome. Thus some idea of the civilized reception of honoured guests had made its way this far into Africa.³ This kind prince, into whose hands I had fallen soon pointed me out an airy and comfortable apartment, from which I could, for the most part, exclude the noisy crowd and vacant gazers, when rest and retirement were demanded and yet enjoy a sufficiency of air. What a privilege in an African town.

About three o'clock, after enjoying a little rest, I was conducted by the Daodu to the residence of his elder brother, the chief. On approaching the reception room I found his wives beautifully dressed, sitting around his seat then vacant, and a nice little boy,

¹ This refers not to physical but to spiritual blindness, and Clarke's reason for regarding the woman blind was that she was an idol worshipper and not a Christian.

² In Ede the Daodu was and still is usually the king's brother and not his son as in some other parts of Yorubaland. The title of the present incumbent of the office is *Baba kekere* (literally, "small father").

³ Clarke is speaking on the basis of an erroneous idea that this mode of receiving guests is peculiar to Europe and America, and that in any case, any sign of it in Africa must have been due to external influence.

clad in green velvet, standing in their midst. The neat and pleasant appearance of the whole scene impressed me so favourably that I was prepared to see appear in a little while a sprightly and inquisitive countenance and fine figure, rather imposing than otherwise, richly dressed in silk and satin. I noted four different colours of velvet in a fine coat, a rich silk robe, a pair of green Turkish trousers and a cocade hat of various colours, as being the dress in which he had proudly arrayed himself to impress me with an idea of his importance,¹ and that he was the chief of the town. As the very looks of the man, so soon as I cast my eyes upon him, indicated a person somewhat superior to ordinary rulers of Yoruba towns, I was not astonished to find him quite at ease, that he had been a considerable traveller in his time, acquainted with the coast, the Benin and Efon countries, as well as the interior kingdom of Hausa, and was tolerably well informed on general topics for an African. In my short and pleasant interview which I did not intend should assume a religious phase, he inquired of some of my friends, if I did not intend settling in his town. To this inquiry I could not give any very possible information, when for the want of men—perhaps now unemployed, or cultivating barren and unproductive soil and who could here find a field in every respect commensurate with the power and ability of a humble missionary—we can scarcely equip and hold the points now occupied. However, I was pleased with his free and open toleration, so inconsistent with the Muslim faith that he professed to hold. This young follower of the prophet, a short time since, became the ruler of the town in the place of his father, the deceased, and brings with him into office the influence of his new religion, and the protection and aid of those hungry dogs that lie at his feet. His first proposal as to the length of my stay was nine days, which honour I could but decline in staying four or five days as a maximum. We will await the result and separate until a more important occasion draws us together.

The sabbath rolls around again and brings with it a day of rest. And on such a day in an African town, where crowds are always on the alert for just one look at a white face, a stranger is not to be

¹ It was not just to impress Clarke, protocol demanded that chiefs of this grade should be formally and richly dressed when receiving visitors publicly.

lightly esteemed. So my surprise at the notification that this was the sabbath day, the crowd died away, and curiosity as if satiated, seemed to have given up its search. All is quietude and at eleven o'clock, I gathered my own little band around me to preach to them some precious truths of the gospel. We numbered ten in all and I tried to give them some instructions drawn from the ten commandments, as the surer plan of awakening a deeper and more lively interest in that blessed Saviour, whose mission to this sinful world is to destroy the works of the devil, and grant everlasting salvation to the righteous and faithful. It was gratifying to witness their interest and attention, and the source of no little pleasure to believe their understandings were becoming more and more enlightened.

But pleasing as were these exercises, that which most excited my zeal was an interview immediately after with a company of civil Mohammedans. I introduced my remarks as if with no intention of preaching, and thus, by a little guile to secure their attention, without awakening their prejudice; but the opportunity was so favourable and the attendants so willing to hear, that I soon enlarged by bounds, and gave some plain simple statements of the plan of salvation as seen in the Old Testament; the fall, prophecies and more especially as exhibited in Jesus Christ, the Mediator of the new covenant; and then contrasted the life of Mohammed in his wicked propagation of error, with the pure and holy example of Jesus. The difference in the character of the two prophets was so apparent and seemed to make such an impression on their minds that I was obliged, once at least to note the frankness and honesty of Mohammedans in acknowledging the truth of all my remarks. There was an exception in the company, a bigoted youngster, heavy and overwise, that made several efforts to raise a dispute by calling in question some point, but in every instance was overruled by his more civil and discreet companions, one of whom is a man from Hausaland engaged in the silk trade, and possessed of some information. During our conversation they expressed their anxiety to hear the truth, and manifested some earnestness in asking for a teacher—not for a trader—to instruct them in God's word. Deceitful and unworthy of credit as were these Mohammedans, the interview made a strong impression on my mind, and I could but rejoice, even in the wilderness, that it was my blessed privilege to testify of

the grace of God coming through the only true prophet to those who may yet exchange the crescent for the cross. Be they in earnest or be they not, be they false or true, it is ours to give them the privilege which we enjoy, of hearing of salvation through Christ. Privilege! Yes, indeed, a privilege to live and not to die. Heaven-born, blood-bought, inestimable! And where is the young man, self-dedicated to give this precious boon, but now nestled in indifference or with a tortured mind of Jonah fleeing from the clearest dictates of conscience in a divine course that will not cause him to ask, "Am I not an apostle—an apostle literally sent from God to this very work and this very spot"? A sound coming up from the depths of heathenism and superstition entreats for assistance. Blessed be God; it is joyous to be among the heathen to testify of the grace and love of our Saviour. If any will enjoy this sacred pleasure while treading where the messenger of peace never trod, and while reclaiming the unsearchable riches of Christ in regions beyond to a willing people, willing to hear if not to believe; if they would feel some of the noblest pride that man can feel in his fallen state, and its calamities, its trials and burdens, let him who is now rich become poor; and let him who is full of earth's good things forego them all for this one untold privilege—of preaching a saviour to those who sit in the regions of death and shadow of night.

At an early hour this morning readiness of the chief being announced, I repaired to his residence where I found him in state, seated on a large variegated cushion, and dressed in a flowing gown over which was thrown a rich mole-coloured mantilla, and wearing a pair of trousers made of African silk. On his right a few steps off, under an extending roof, were seated the elders and principal men of the town, while the crowds were gathered in front around me, sitting just before the chief. At his request, I shook hands with the elders before beginning my remarks. I was at perfect liberty, the chief well understanding my object, and arose before the people and spoke to them of salvation through Christ for fifteen or twenty minutes. The attention was sustained to the last. One of the elders, a Mohammedan, replied, that he hoped my heart would not spoil!

¹ Literal translation of the Yoruba expression *ki okan baje* (to break one's heart or to be disappointed).

before I left this town; that my words were very good; that they were pleased with it and believed the time would come when the people would refer to the reign of this chief as the time when a whiteman first came to their town; that they had long heard of the whiteman and of his country, but now they saw him for themselves. Such was about the substance of his remarks, and after an interview of about an hour I retired. This evening I called again and at the request of the chief, we had a private interview, one object of which was to array his finery and get my opinion of the brass and brittania with which some of it was bedecked, and which he vainly hoped was gold and silver. Tired of much work, I gladly changed the subject before the conclusion to something profitable, and just as several important characters were approaching us. They expressed their unqualified approbation and desire of having a minister of the word among them and that they should not be deceived in our object. I was distinct and emphatic in having them to understand the nature of the work we designed doing.

On learning the proximity of Ijeṣa capital, Ileṣa, to Ede, I determined if possible to obtain a messenger from the chief to bear a message to the king expressive of my desire to visit him. The request was readily granted with the understanding that I was to proceed to Oṣogbo and then return should a favourable answer be received.

Whilst sitting airing this evening, I was honoured by a visit by the devil-man [i.e. masquerade], called in Yoruba *Egúngún*, dressed very fantastically and ready for any antics for the diversion of the crowd. Whenever anyone becomes tired of these grotesque monsters, he has but to intimate in the presence of females that he is a man and the work is done; for it is grave offence for anyone to call in question the spirit origin of these strange creatures, and for a woman to speak of such a thing would subject her to the severest penalty. Night was setting in and as I wished to retire, I told *Egúngún* to call me tomorrow, not as *Egúngún* but as a man properly. The effect and diversion consequent on my blunder acted like a charm; I smiled, *Egúngún* laughed and the crowd went almost into ecstasies. The prime object of these remarkable characters is to keep the female population in proper subordination; and as such a chief could not endure without the best management; they connect it with the spirit world in the persons of deceased friends and thus

incorporating it into their superstitious creed to give it the force and honour of a religious observance.¹ I received a visit this morning from an elder, who was absent yesterday at the public meeting. I preached to those present and Yoruba-like, he said, that was just what he came to hear. Strange and unaccountable are these Yoruba; a people whose religious feelings are very strong and whose organ of veneration is highly developed, and yet it is apparent that they have no regard whatever for the truth. One, on a certain occasion, told me that if a Yoruba man told the truth it would kill him.²

I called on the chief this evening to give him a parting salutation, as I proposed leaving on the morrow. He expressed his determination to send to the city of Ijèṣa but his wavering course made me somewhat question his sincerity. I had had much doubt as to my success in reaching Ijèṣa in consequence of the opposition in these border towns now, as formerly, under the control and fear of Ibadan. The predatory warfare that had been carried on for years against those represented by some as the inoffensive Ijèṣa had contributed very much to keep up a hostile and unfriendly feeling in all this part of Yorubaland. To reach that people and gain their confidence will tend, no doubt, very materially to inaugurate a new state of things, bring the kings into closer alliance on the footing of friendship and open up a new territory for the conquest and spread of the gospel. With such an object in view I intended to make every effort to succeed, and if baffled here by the diplomacy of these shrewd Yoruba, to work the harder at Oṣogbo. I saw opposition on every hand. The Balogun, or war officer, who is with us this evening, and who, no doubt, has had his turn in kidnapping, dissuaded me strongly from my intention. But all of no avail. No enemy is a fair and unprejudiced party.

I walked over a part of the town and mounted a considerable eminence where nearly the whole city was in full view. It is a very uneven place situated on a number of hills and surrounded by a considerable undergrowth, while the appearance of the surrounding country is broken and elevated, though not very interesting. The

¹ Primarily, it was a symbol of belief in life after death or reincarnation. Its use as a political weapon was subsidiary.

² This meant no more than a warning to avoid trusting people *indiscriminately*

population of this place I would estimate at twenty-five thousand souls, and I think is scarcely so heavy as that of Iwo, one day's journey west, which I had the pleasure of visiting in July 1856. South about one day's journey is the famous city of Ife and, in the opinion of the Yoruba, is the spot whence all countries took their origin;¹ but now discord and civil war rage,² and a part flogged or disgusted, have taken up their abode outside the walls of the adamite city. It is said that Ede was once an Ijesa³ town but the Yoruba city of the same name, having been destroyed during the Felattah invasion, this, like the Egba towns and villages, fell a prey to the flying but more powerful Yorubas.

I left Ede this morning at half past six o'clock escorted by one of my host's brothers, with a direction northeast and east to the road leading from Ilobu where my direction became due south to Oşogbo. A mile and a half from town, I recrossed the Oşun bearing east. Its width here is about fifty yards and has rocky bottom and good banks. The cultivation of the land makes a marked difference in the appearance of the country, with which fact I was today particularly impressed. This being the main route travelled by the Ibadan slave catchers en route to Ijesa, the people of Ede had entirely abandoned it, as the ravages of freebooters and rogues had rendered it altogether impracticable for agricultural purposes. The land being low and covered with high grass, I was not able to enjoy a fine scene during the day's ride. It appeared to me from the many low, marshy places through which my road passed that I had not seen a more unhealthy looking section of the country though I could not doubt that good cultivation would produce so great a change that the same road at another time would scarcely be recognizable. In all such looking country, the palm tree is generally abundant.

After two hours' ride I reached the village of Ido Oşun, nearly east from Ede, with a population of several hundred inhabitants. The first sight that attracted my attention was a number of men

¹ See an account in S. Johnson, *op. cit.*, p. 15.

² This was the civil war between the Ife people and the Oyo refugees which settled among them consequent upon the fall of the Old Oyo Empire. See details in Johnson, *op. cit.*, pp. 230-32.

³ The account in Johnson, *op. cit.*, pp. 156-58 described Ede not as originally an Ijesa town, but an Oyo outpost established to prevent Ijesa incursions into Oyo territory.

busily engaged in dissecting a horse, the flesh of which is esteemed quite a luxury¹ by the natives. I made a short stay and preached to the chief and his attendants. At this place I met the first Ibadan consul,² a class of officers placed in the eastern towns for the purpose of collecting tribute and keeping the oppressed population in subordination to their tyrannical ruler. The strong prey upon the weak and the whole land groans under the oppressive yoke and blighting influence of the accursed slave traffic. Oh, Lord, how long!

Before reaching Oşogbo the forest became quite heavy, surrounding nearly the whole town; the timber tall and majestic and the whole would afford a rich feast to a lover of natural scenery, but for the strong conviction that while he would rejoice, sickness and death here reign. The people at these towns have been so often torn away from their homes, and the latter so frequently pillaged and laid waste by the terrible scourge of kidnapping, that the least thing unusual excites their suspicion and throws them into a state of perturbation. Such was somewhat the case when I entered the town today and made inquiries for the chief. A messenger had already called but, as he was absent from town, I was left to make my own way amid half affrighted natives to the Ibadan consul, whom I found ready to afford me every assistance. What striking uniformity in the varieties of our human natures. Here is a man who calls himself a consul of a superior power, surrounded by his train and daily attended by a crowd of hungry flatterers—just a life picture of what occurs in the indices and courts where glitter and show render such scenes more palatable to lover of royalty. Every little boy, even if his business is to cut grass for the horses, feels his importance because he, too, belongs to Ajele or consul. It is such a character as this with whom I now had to deal in another effort to reach Ijeṣa. Oşogbo lies directly on the route and is distant from the dividing line of the two kingdoms scarcely two hours' ride.

My first work this morning was to secure a messenger from the consul, to whom such matters properly pertain, to bear my message to the chief at Okeibode, the first border town, whence it would be

¹ It was a luxury because horses were scarce and expensive.

² For the place of Ibadan consuls in administration, see B. Awe, "The Ajele System: A Study of Ibadan Imperialism in the Nineteenth Century", *Journal of the Historical Society of Nigeria*, Vol. III, No. 1 (Dec., 1964).

dispatched to the king. The former part of my object, the securing of a messenger, was soon obtained, but dispatching him from a real enemy and by faithless and treacherous dependents, whose living is at the mercy of tyrants, was quite another matter. I ascertained in the evening, after a little dodging on the part of our accommodating consul, that unless I proceeded on my own responsibility—from which the timid and fearful tried to persuade me—I should fail in accomplishing my object. Strongly bent on gaining my point and giving proper weight to groundless apprehensions¹ as to my success, I determined on leaving, and set apart tomorrow evening for my departure for Okeibode, a kind of half-way town, where the traders of the two countries meet to exchange their various articles of merchandise.² It was about nine o'clock when, conducted by the consul, I proceeded to express my obligation to the chief and his town. The usual ceremonies of an African court must, of course, be performed before I could consider myself as regularly introduced. First my arrival must be announced before I enter the courtyard. Secondly, the consul, acting as messenger, must announce me as a visitor to the town, and in so doing must prostrate himself before the chief, however self-important a few minutes before when surrounded by his own suite, and with his hands on his face, press each cheek to the ground, again cover his face, rise, leave the compound, rub his head in eastern style with sand, then return and perform the same humiliating prostrations. Then I was at liberty to walk up and shake hands with the chief, and at his solicitation take a seat near him on his little striped quilt, quite the mark of his prominence. Behind were a number of black eyes peering at me from the royal palace, and on the left were seated the elders of the town, while the crowd was everywhere round about. To have succeeded with any remarks before the preliminaries of the present had been settled would have been bad taste, and not altogether palatable to a finical African court. This act of hospitality consisted of three heads of cowries and a fine pig. This done, I was permitted to speak of the claims of God on all men. I stated that I had no word of my own to

¹ The apprehensions appeared groundless to Clarke who did not know the nature of the long-standing tension between the Oyo and the Ijesa in this area.

² In spite of constant hostilities, facility for trade was assured.

offer, that I myself was a messenger and had come to speak the word of my king, the great God. As usual, I spoke of the origin of sin, the fall of our first parents, our lost state, and redemption and salvation through Christ; his sufferings, death and resurrection; the necessity of repentance and faith, and of the final judgment when God will make a difference among men in the salvation of the righteous and the damnation of the wicked. The attention was very respectful. This was a word entirely new, the introduction, though unknown to him, of a truth that will overturn and destroy until the last vestiges of Oriṣas and Ifa shall be utterly consumed. It is a very common reply to our preaching efforts that they will hear little by little, and this was used by the chief on the present occasion. Adam-like, he seemed to think that there were other towns worse than his; and did not at all try to conceal his opinion that if the Ibadan people believed others would believe, and that if they could be saved, others would be saved. To this I replied pointedly that every man must believe and be saved for himself, and that he could not believe for his children, wife or his parents. He is young in office, though an elderly man, whose father died about a year ago, and now reposes a few feet from where I sat, buried under the projecting roof of the house in the passage of the portico where a groove is cut in the ground the length of the deceased, and partially paved with pieces of glass. The head of it is marked by a large demijohn, partly buried in the ground, and a large elephant tusk rising five feet high. This is a monument of the late governor of Oṣogbo. With these observations and remarks we parted in peace, hoping to meet again. The river Oṣun, which we crossed and re-crossed at ease, runs around the south side of the town, taking still an easterly course.

Here I met a Sierra Leone man,¹ George, living in the midst of heathenism, speaking some English and making pretensions to religion. George seemed to me in his deportment and conversation to be a Christian, but the greater part of these characters who have learned some of the good but much of the meanness of civilized society, may indeed be watched, whatever be their pretensions.

¹ A considerable number of freed slaves settled in Sierra Leone were returning to their homes in Yorubaland at this period and George must have been one of these.

From him, a native Yoruba, I learned that Ojoku, Ipetumodu and Ogbomọṣṣo survived the Fellattah invasion, and that Èdẹ and Oṣogbo originally belonged to the Ijeṣa kingdom.

This evening, we were favoured with a serenade from several of the governor's musicians, three in number, whose instruments were identical with a mouth, two holes in the jaw of the instrument and one at the foot. The music was soft and plaintive, though of little variety. As an experiment, I called for "God save the chief" and no sooner than understood than they puffed away giving sounds significant of a petition that the chief's life might be spared. I then asked for their war song but they could not play as they were not warriors. I was a little amused at the tact of the musicians to obtain some little favours for their services. After I had made a little compensation for their trouble, each carrier, tardy in the contribution of a mite, was singled out by the musicians and "Piped unto" with significant sounds, well understood by the natives, until shame or good humour extorted a few cowries from each one. At the very antipodes of our world, human nature in its endless variety, is ever the same.

The consul sent word this morning that he must leave town on a visit to his farm but would place a messenger at my service to conduct me to Okcibode. As yet I had found no deception in this clever, open-hearted man who, in his business, seems to act more from the restraint of superior orders than from the outgushings of his own soul. With the chief I had a pleasant and free interview and spoke more freely of the way of salvation; and to convey a clear idea of this subject to their minds I made use of a house and door frequently as an illustration. I told them Christ was the door to the house or kingdom of God and that faith was the key to unlock the door. This they could readily understand. The ruling power of the town expressed their entire willingness and desire that the missionary of the cross should dwell with them, and referred to Abeokuta, Ijaye, Ibadan and Ogbomọṣṣo as having preceded them in this course, though they made no allusion to trade as influencing them in their desire. So they understand our main object, however ignorant they may be of any specific plan for its promotion or the practical results that are likely to ensue. I make this remark because it has been intimated that the natives have but little regard for us as ministers of

God, and would equally esteem us had we not belonged to this calling—an intimation wholly at variance with my experience with Yoruba sentiment and character, and the open, free and unreserved expressions of the chief and elders in the towns I have had the pleasure of visiting. The size and situation of this town strongly demand a class of labourers of whom we are destitute and without whom we can make but slow progress in our work. The location I think unhealthy and yet its size but a little smaller than Ogbomoṣo and its position plead earnestly for its speedy occupancy. Intelligent, well-educated, coloured ministers, or such men prepared for the ministry, are just the class to occupy these points where the locations are decidedly more prejudicial to the health of the white incumbent.

At eleven o'clock I left Oṣogbo for Okeibode under a warm sun that in case of my non-reception I might return the same evening. Passing over a considerable rocky hill that encloses a part of the town, I entered a broken prairie-like country, resembling somewhat the sections about Abokuta, with some beautiful mountain scenery lying in the distance, skirting the horizon, and running apparently north and south. Two prominent hills were pointed out as marking the sites of Ijeṣa and Ife. The former lying southeast and the latter due south. Entering such a fine-looking country, I was revived with the hope of again enjoying table-lands, extensive prairies and fine views but scarcely was my wish done when I touched the strip of woodland which, though interesting itself, was but the beginning of a forest that reaches to the environs of Ijeṣa. In a short time, I again stood on the banks of the Oṣun, now a beautiful stream forty yards wide, whose banks are lined with fine shade trees, which, with the gently rolling clear water, gave a refreshing appearance to everything around. The soil in this vicinity is a rich black mould and capable of producing ten barrels of corn to the acre. Occasionally near the outskirts of the wood I could see thriving farms which I doubt not are quite extensive on this river. Above the ford several hundred yards may be heard the roaring of waterfalls that, with the electric speed, hurried me back in memory to the days of boyhood when such scenes were familiar to my eyes. On close inspection I found that the natives had rather taken advantage of the rocky descent to the river to run a dam quite across for the purpose of catching fish. This would certainly furnish many advantages for a mill-seat.

To this point, during several months in the year, communication could be had with Lagos and the interior of Yorubaland by means of canoes and small skiff boats, and very greatly improve the present mode of conveyance. The river still bears on its eastern course. This same quality of timber and land, very much resembling the hammock, is found at several points between this latitude and Lagos, lying in considerable bodies of heavy forest between Ogbomoso and Ijaye, Ibadan and Abeokuta, and Abeokuta and Lagos. It is brought into a state of cultivation with little other labour than the removing of the undergrowth, and no land so well rewards the labourer. I noticed several trees that reminded me of the beach, the white and water oaks of America, but I have never found any tree identically the same that I could believe indigenous to the soil. Iron stone is abundant throughout the whole country.

At two o'clock I reached Okeibode and immediately dispatched the gate-keeper to announce my arrival to the chief. I was now among a strange people, of bad repute among the Yoruba, with a language somewhat difficult and liable to suspicion.¹ The intention of a whiteman in their country, their costume, air, appearance, physiognomy and speech all indicate a change. In a short time a motley crowd was seen coming to gaze as if at some condemned criminal and I tried to single out the chief as they drew near, expecting as usual that he would be the most gentle-looking of the company; but the reverse was true. His very appearance was filthy; his head bound up with a dirty rag, his body naked, while his only covering was a cloth drawn around his loins and dangling down his legs. This was the chief. I saluted him, but his look, strange and savage, his singular movements, his shake of the head, and his grumbling tone all indicated to me that my prospects were very gloomy. But not so, scarcely was my object announced when a messenger was started post haste for Ijesa. My subsequent acquaintance with this man gave me another additional lesson on the old adage, "Trust not to appearance". The consul at Osoybo had cunningly told me how affrighted the population would be when they should see a whiteman! He says the Ijesa would declare, "Ah! Oh! Our master's come now—Yoruba caught us and sold us to whiteman

¹ Clarke seemed to have shared Oyo prejudices against the Ijesa.

but now we see our master for ourselves". But the [Oyo] Yoruba is a timid unwarlike man. The Ijeṣa, the more daring, savage, bold-looking fellow, who approaches with some ease to the pale-faced stranger.

A little indisposition awakened my apprehensions and mind more than body annoyed the patient. In this low-woody place with night cold, and considerable nervousness, I had more fears of sickness than the reality. To fail in my object, to turn back! My cry was may God forbid it.

This happens to be the market day for all the surrounding country, and from seven to eight o'clock this morning the caravans have been pouring in by hundreds, and such was the curiosity and anxiety to see the whiteman that I was compelled to bar my door to keep from being overrun by ceaseless crowds of untiring gazers; and even then my every point available was seized to get one glimpse of that strange looking being. This evening at three o'clock I called on the chief, whom I found in the second court of the house, no better clad than on his first appearance, and apparently not aware but that he was arrayed in all the splendour of a courtly prince. Though rather unwell, I preached for some time to quite an attentive and interesting little audience. I saw among a new people, to whom my word was something wonderful and in speaking to such hearers I almost forgot my little ailment amid the pleasure that their attention afforded me; and could but feel something of that joyous thrill that runs through the messenger of peace when he sees other hearts beating in unison with his own. The chief, in a characteristic way, remarked that the word pleased him. While writing these lines, we had such a tremendous tornado with torrents of rain that it seemed as if the roof would be taken off. The rains are even lesser here than in Oghomoso, although the difference in distance is not more than sixty or seventy miles. The excessive vegetation¹ will no doubt in part account for this fact.

Another Sabbath dawns and finds me thus far advanced in the attainment of one object. Last night, half sick and most anxious for a little sleep, I was quite annoyed by a party of Ethiopian minstrels—yes, literally—who kept up their playing and singing until past midnight; and vexatious as it was, I could scarcely help admiring the

¹ Hesa is in the forest region.

sweet music they would draw forth from their crude instruments. Had I not known I was in Africa I might have believed myself in America, listening to some Ethiopian serenade, with drum, triangle and horns, imitating some Indian¹ songs. No music I have heard in this country before would scarcely bear a comparison, so regular and striking the instrumental, and soft and plaintive the strains of the vocal parts. At twelve o'clock I held some religious exercises with my people, and about one strolled through the markets for the purpose of a little recreation. At this place every fifth day are collected together several thousand people from all the surrounding country, with their various articles of exchange, and trading is carried on to such an extent in goods—manufactures and provisions—that quite astonish one not acquainted with the commercial spirit of this inferior country. Here may be seen the representatives of nearly all the Yoruba—Egba, Ilorin, Ijesa, Ogbomoṣo and Ife—all mingling together in harmony and peace, with their various wares of merchandise, soon to separate and there to exchange commodities throughout the whole of the towns and cities for a diameter of more than one hundred miles. This is a continual recurrence every fifth day.

If such be the trading spirit of the people under existing circumstances, what shall be the extent when confidence is fully restored and when French intrigue shall be caught in the very incipency of kindling the slave wars afresh. From the Senegal to the Congo, and either diplomatically or at the mouth of the cannon, the slave trade will be stopped and this network of towns and villages shall begin to flourish afresh under the quickening influence of a pure commerce. If thousands are now diligently engaged in bearing upon the head from town to town their articles of merchandise, with an untiring energy, what may we expect when their eyes shall be opened to the advantages arising from the adoption of some civilized modes of transportation. He who cannot see a day arising for such people and such a country must be blind, either through ignorance or obstinacy. The day will come. The redemption of Africa draweth nigh.

¹ That is American Indian.

I again visited the chief in company with the Ibadan consul and preached the word more fully to him. As before, his attention was quite earnest. May He who holds all hearts in his hand, direct His word as a shaft to the hearts of this people. Had I accepted it, I could have regaled myself finely with palm wine, an article very abundant in this region, but it was best to decline, though the offer was quite a work of hospitality. The chief, however, with several others, took occasion to absent themselves until several quarts, I imagine, had been disposed of. The kola nut, of which I received quite a number on nearly every occasion, begins to be very plentiful. If a man should neglect to give a stranger or a visitor a kola nut as a token of respect, the latter need have but little stronger evidence that he is not on very high esteem.

While I was refreshing myself with a cup of tea, in came the chief with the messenger from the king of Ijeṣa, bearing the intelligence of his master's willingness to receive me. So I had the prospect of reaching his capital early tomorrow morning, all opposition to the contrary notwithstanding.

It was seven o'clock this morning when, with buoyant hope, we were all ready for our journey. Missionary, interpreter, carriers, all felt gratified that we had outwitted the smarties, and were now led by a royal messenger to the town of which, in Yoruba, so much has been said both for and against. The chief bade us good morning and delivered us into the hands of the messenger who led the way. Our road lay through the woods and began with a ridge high and elevated that lasted until we reached Ijeṣa. I had travelled through heavy African forests before but never on a ridge of rock and iron stone, whose ledges sometimes crossing the path, would render passage almost impracticable for a time, not that the road was very rocky, but when these ledges did occur, dangerous riding or dismounting was the only alternative. I had proceeded but a short distance when the sun shone forth in his beauty from rainy, gloomy clouds. The water on the leaves sparkling in the light so as to force from me the literal exclamation; well, if it is a terrible African wilderness, it is one of enlivening and sometimes romantic beauty. The recent heavy rains had no doubt aided to give a gloomy cast to what is otherwise life-giving and cheering, and had rendered the roads anything but pleasant. The soil is exceedingly rich, with a

fine clay substratum, and the road, in many places presented very much the appearance of market roads in Georgia, during the months of December and January. Sometimes I would come to places where the ruts two feet deep or more had been cut out by the feet of caravan when my horse would be taxed to his utmost to elude a fall. In the descents of the ridge we would generally find at the bottom, low-marshy swamps, indicative of anything but health; but from them we would soon rise to our regular elevation. At one time the road passed near a precipice of fifty or sixty feet deep, from the top of which I could catch a glimpse of a very rich-looking country, more open than that through which my road passed, and sometimes in a state of cultivation. After a ride of an hour and a half I passed a small town, Ará,¹ where the chief sent a runner after me, but my haste on the king's business could not allow me to stop. Here in a considerable descent of fifty feet, I passed down a macadamized road, the rocks of which were as large as a man's head, and well arranged for foot travel. I passed several little market places for the sale of provisions, one of which is called the Oyo market, a place where Yoruba traders exchange their goods and merchandise for those of Ijesa. The roads were horrible; it was rut after rut, and my messenger who had a poor way of consoling me by promises of a better road, knew it was a bad one to the very suburbs of the town.

Everybody must clear the way for the royal servant who almost vexed me by the way he hurled some aside that did not move to suit him. So it is, tyranny begets tyranny. Four or five miles from town my attention was drawn to three separate ditches ten feet wide, cut through the woods and running, how far I could not tell. These were expedients, and very good ones in the thick woods, devised to check the marauding parties of Ibadan robbers and slave catchers, from whom the town had suffered so much. I crossed a creek at ten o'clock, running north-west. At ten o'clock we left the woods and entering an opening, being cultivated land, came in sight of Ijesa. At the custom-house we made a halt until my arrival could be announced to the king's prime minister, during which short interval I was fairly besieged by the uncontrollable crowd. My escort through

¹ This Ará is not to be confused with Ará near Ede; both of which are different in pronunciation as indicated by the tonal marks in this note.

town was any number of men and children whose admiration seemed unbounded, and gave evidence of the reception about to be received in high quarters. One halt I made under a burning sun, but no matter, this was the king's son who wished to show the respect and manifest his friendship and hospitality by a few kola nuts, and wait I must, with more than a thousand eyes peering upon me, worse of all under a scorching sun. The first object that attracted my attention as I rode along was the high wall enclosing the king's premises. In height it was eighteen or twenty feet, with a five or six feet base. On reaching the compound of the king's first counsellor the crowd became so restive and impulsive that I had to look out for myself, as the door was unbarred, lest the impetuosity of the strong current should bear me off. I was carried from one court into another, and seated on a polished seat three feet high and two feet wide, running the square of the house, there to await further orders. Some water and kola nuts were sent me and in a few minutes appeared from a nook of the room leading into another apartment a fine noble-looking old man, of fifty-five years, bright skin, fine forehead and keen black eyes, who kindly saluted me and took his seat with a kind of interpreter between us. He is about the first native I have seen that could look a whiteman in the eyes for any length of time. His countenance and head indicated a superior mind, and though his look was open and free, he seemed to have a reserved thought, rather suspicious, and I have but little doubt his mind reverted back to the days of active slavery when no man could have left home any distance but he might be taken captive and borne off forthwith to some miserable slave deck. Not at all strange that he should eye a man of that race whose hands are too guilty in the accursed traffic.

Our interview, being nothing more than an etiquette of African taste, was soon over, and I was taken by the messenger to my apartment. Passing again the king's wall, I could but be struck with the height as far surpassing anything I had ever seen. Added to its height there was a covering three feet high, making the whole little short of twenty feet, while the enclosure itself is large enough for a small village. I was first led to apartments which, though they had been prepared, were so damp and uncomfortable that on a first inspection I positively refused to occupy them. My health was obliged to be guarded, but to have taken quarters there would have subjected

myself and company to sickness. My objection was immediately entertained, but a few minutes had elapsed before a place entirely satisfactory in every respect was furnished; and had the excellent quality of being made either public or private at option.

It was now twelve o'clock and without any prospect of an audience today. I must make good use of my opportunity for rest and regaining a little strength. Never was I better situated in a native town for the enjoyment of rest and quiet. Two or three men were on guard all the time, and no one could enter the room but by permission. This may seem hard but when it is remembered that without some precaution in a new and strange town a man's peace is at an end, the course cannot fail to be appreciated. Kings pride themselves in their peculiarities, and however objectionable to the common people, they must learn to bear it and be patient; so I must endure one peculiarity and await the king's pleasure, which is generally the third or fourth day before a white stranger can enjoy his presence. "*O mores!*"

This morning a stranger came and announced himself as a messenger from Èdẹ—this was the messenger promised ten days ago, who had been in town some three days, and had given no notification whatever of his object. No doubt, had he not seen me, he would have returned with a lie in his mouth to his master, his accomplice in lying, to say the king was unwilling to receive me. Confounded, no doubt, at his ill success, he made but a moment's stay and took his exit to return no more. Such is the reliance to be placed in men who have an utter disregard for the truth. In all inquiries concerning the towns and countries, one cannot well be too particular, as he is liable to deception from the conflicting statements of the natives, and the different names by which places are called, and such like difficulties. Thus, in Ijẹṣa, there is a town called Èṣọ̀n, meaning literally, cut-off, from the Yoruba word "Fọ̀n" to cut off. The Ijẹṣa say that it is composed of those people who, condemned for offences under the reign of a certain king, fled from justice or tyranny, and located in this town. And those with whom I conversed asserted positively that there was no other town or country of that name; nor could I by all my inquiries derive any information of the Èṣọ̀n country lying several days' journey to the east.

The boundaries of the Ijeṣa country, as well as could be ascertained, are Ado, on the south; Ijebu, south-west; Akoko, south-east; Yagba, Eṣon and Igbomina, east-north-east; and [Oyo] Yoruba, north and west.

This is the day appointed for an audience before the king. Nine, ten and eleven o'clock passed away during which time I had waited with some patience, and I saw no movements for preparation for a meeting. As I naturally became restless, my time, precious as gold, was rapidly passing away, and the loss of one day would have been as the loss of a week under ordinary circumstances. I dispatched my host to hasten matters as much as possible, for there is no reliance to be placed in these African rulers when you are a guest—they will keep you as long as possible. He soon returned and as if to say, "Be quiet and patient for a little while", brought with him pounded yam and palaver sauce enough for all my people. Evidently he obtained the advantage, and it could serve but little else than show weakness to manifest vexation. Twelve o'clock passed and still in suspense. At a quarter after twelve there entered a little boy, bearing a scimitar-like sword unsheathed, thus announcing the readiness of the king; and a moment after came the prime messenger, my escort from Okeibode, in a state of entire nudity. Shocking as was the sight, it was demanded of the king that he should thus appear, and who could help it. Proud nations that have boasted of their civilization and refinement have in times past acted scarcely a whit better; and even so the present day on points, though different, show almost as much weakness. At twenty minutes after twelve o'clock I left my room preceded by my host as body-guard and royal conductor. As I approached the residence of the king, its size, fine appearance and beautiful location satisfied me that this was the royal palace. The building was situated on a beautiful elevation commanding a view of the town, with a few shade trees on a mound adorning the front yard. The three projecting turretted porticos and two wings on each side, whose roofs extend nearly to the ground, and the whole resting on short pillars presented a scene of cottage style truly impressive and interesting. I passed through the first entrance, the wall of which is twenty-five feet high, and took my seat in an outer court to contemplate these new scenes, while awaiting the call of the royal occupant. Some of the pillars and timbers of this building are quite

massive for the management of the people who know nothing of the mechanical art and labour-saving machines. A few of the former on which rested the plates, were fifteen inches in diameter, though only five feet in length. I was soon ushered into a fine court, the area of which, exclusive of the colonnade formed by the projecting roof, would measure 80 feet by 160 feet. From the middle entrance, I moved slowly diagonally across the courtyard, kept firm and hard by continual beating, to the corner in which I found the king reclining with a most unconcerned air, on an elevated seat three or four feet wide that runs the circuit of the building. He was wrapped in a pretty checked cloth, and with a smile and gentle expression, and outlines of countenance, resembling the Poulks,¹ might have been taken for one of that tribe. He seemed very much like a man on whom the cares and weight of years had pressed and which had reduced him. In his hand he held a fancy fan of raw-hide, with which he generally covered his mouth, and thus so hid the parts of his face² that I could not well scan his physiognomy excepting a black piercing eye that indicated a latent energy. Occasionally, I could draw forth a smile that showed that he had a heart, and his taciturnity was only the result of court etiquette. On each side of him were arranged his musicians, with several kinds of instruments, drums, flutes and crude iron triangles, on the same raised seat with himself; below were the elders and principal men of the state, who held in their hands as a sign of office iron pestles eighteen inches long and tufted at each end; and directly in front were seated a group of slaves or servants, in a state of entire nudity, while around the whole court were gathered together several thousand spectators besides the crowds in the first court and outside the building. After a few salutations and compliments I was conducted some distance back on the king's left and seated among a number of officials who bore the ensign of office mentioned above. While seated and waiting further arrangements, I was all observation, taking notice of everything that met my eye. My seat was raised three feet above the ground, three feet wide, well glazed and painted red while a few yards above was a false opening in the

¹ Another name for Fulani.

² Usually, up to that period, Yoruba obas (kings) hardly showed their faces in public: they normally wore beaded crowns with veils.

The boundaries of the Ijeṣa country, as well as could be ascertained, are Ado. on the south; Ijebu, south-west; Akoko, south-east; Yagba, Eḡon and Igbomina, east-north-east; and [Oyo] Yoruba, north and west.

This is the day appointed for an audience before the king. Nine, ten and eleven o'clock passed away during which time I had waited with some patience, and I saw no movements for preparation for a meeting. As I naturally became restless, my time, precious as gold, was rapidly passing away, and the loss of one day would have been as the loss of a week under ordinary circumstances. I dispatched my host to hasten matters as much as possible, for there is no reliance to be placed in these African rulers when you are a guest—they will keep you as long as possible. He soon returned and as if to say, "Be quiet and patient for a little while", brought with him pounded yam and palaver sauce enough for all my people. Evidently he obtained the advantage, and it could serve but little else than show weakness to manifest vexation. Twelve o'clock passed and still in suspense. At a quarter after twelve there entered a little boy, bearing a scimitar-like sword unsheathed, thus announcing the readiness of the king; and a moment after came the prime messenger, my escort from Okeibode, in a state of entire nudity. Shocking as was the sight, it was demanded of the king that he should thus appear, and who could help it. Proud nations that have boasted of their civilization and refinement have in times past acted scarcely a whit better; and even so the present day on points, though different, show almost as much weakness. At twenty minutes after twelve o'clock I left my room preceded by my host as body-guard and royal conductor. As I approached the residence of the king, its size, fine appearance and beautiful location satisfied me that this was the royal palace. The building was situated on a beautiful elevation commanding a view of the town, with a few shade trees on a mound adorning the front yard. The three projecting turretted porticos and two wings on each side, whose roofs extend nearly to the ground, and the whole resting on short pillars presented a scene of cottage style truly impressive and interesting. I passed through the first entrance, the wall of which is twenty-five feet high, and took my seat in an outer court to contemplate these new scenes, while awaiting the call of the royal occupant. Some of the pillars and timbers of this building are quite

massive for the management of the people who know nothing of the mechanical art and labour-saving machines. A few of the former on which rested the plates, were fifteen inches in diameter, though only five feet in length. I was soon ushered into a fine court, the area of which, exclusive of the colonnade formed by the projecting roof, would measure 80 feet by 160 feet. From the middle entrance, I moved slowly diagonally across the courtyard, kept firm and hard by continual beating, to the corner in which I found the king reclining with a most unconcerned air, on an elevated seat three or four feet wide that runs the circuit of the building. He was wrapped in a pretty checked cloth, and with a smile and gentle expression, and outlines of countenance, resembling the Poulks,¹ might have been taken for one of that tribe. He seemed very much like a man on whom the cares and weight of years had pressed and which had reduced him. In his hand he held a fancy fan of raw-hide, with which he generally covered his mouth, and thus so hid the parts of his face² that I could not well scan his physiognomy excepting a black piercing eye that indicated a latent energy. Occasionally, I could draw forth a smile that showed that he had a heart, and his taciturnity was only the result of court etiquette. On each side of him were arranged his musicians, with several kinds of instruments, drums, flutes and crude iron triangles, on the same raised seat with himself; below were the elders and principal men of the state, who held in their hands as a sign of office iron pestles eighteen inches long and tufted at each end; and directly in front were seated a group of slaves or servants, in a state of entire nudity, while around the whole court were gathered together several thousand spectators besides the crowds in the first court and outside the building. After a few salutations and compliments I was conducted some distance back on the king's left and seated among a number of officials who bore the ensign of office mentioned above. While seated and waiting further arrangements, I was all observation, taking notice of everything that met my eye. My seat was raised three feet above the ground, three feet wide, well glazed and painted red while a few yards above was a false opening in the

¹ Another name for Fulani.

² Usually, up to that period, Yoruba obas (kings) hardly showed their faces in public: they normally wore beaded crowns with veils.

wall, very much resembling that of folding doors. In the wall, for fifty feet below to the king and several feet above me, were small holes executed in different patterns, extending the whole distance in four or five rows. The elders or prominent citizens, who were late in making their appearance, saluted the king most graciously by repeated prostrations on all-fours, and touching the forehead on the ground. After a little delay my interpreter was requested to go forward and make such remarks as I saw fit to make to his majesty; but objecting to this, I was soon called for to speak in person. I preached the simple plain gospel as well as the occasion and circumstances would admit, the Prime Minister¹ of the king being the chief officiating personage. I was more and more impressed with the noble and disinterested bearing of this superior man, who had received me so kindly on my first entrance into the town, and expressed himself pleased in his whole heart. In conclusion I could but express my regret in not being able to remain with them longer than the morrow, although they were very solicitous that I should stay several days. The best promise I could make then was that D.V., I would return and spend some time with them and visit other towns in the kingdom.

As I was about closing this interview, cowries to the amount of about thirteen heads, a load for one man, were heaped upon me, one being set apart for the special purpose of preparing a kid [a young goat] that had also been given. As this was a testimony of their kindness and good-will, to have refused it would have been to insult the whole court. I then bade His Majesty goodbye with the promise of a return tomorrow morning. Evening soon came and having now been housed for nearly three days, I felt inclined to take a little fresh air. For this purpose, vainly hoped as it proved, I was placed in the hands of several guides and conducted in the first to the house of the Prime Minister to receive his sanction for a guide around town. Closing my short interview with him, I took my leave to ride, as I thought at leisure, where I pleased. I had not gone fifty yards before I was stopped to salute another elder, and to make short of a long story, my evening's ride proved to be nothing more than an evening of fashionable calls on the elders of the town

¹ This was the *Ọdọle*.

from whom cowries and kola nuts were so plentifully received that the visits were an ovation to my people. In the turmoil of the hour I could but be amused at the momentary importance a few cowries and kola nuts had given me, as some held my stirrups, others my bridle, and attendants laid their hands in eastern style on the quarters of my horse. Night was setting in before I reached my lodging place from this evening's pleasant stroll, one I hope which will not prove wholly unprofitable. In no African town, not even in Ilorin, have I seen such an approach to princely living and custom. The construction of the buildings, their superiority and the bearing of the occupants very much pleased me, and showed most clearly that the people of Ijeṣa, in some respects at least are in advance of their more highly-favoured neighbours.

At eight o'clock this morning, I resumed my visit to the officers of the town with the same orders of ceremonies as on yesterday evening. I made it a point to speak to each one the simple story of the cross and leave the result with Him in whose hands are the hearts of all men. After visiting residences of four more of these princely men, making ten in all that I had the pleasure of seeing, I was compelled to return as my guide had no other alternative than to follow the instructions of his superior. I gazed out on the long streets that stretched before me with an ardent desire to see their ends, but my anxiety could avail nothing. In that walk, I perceived that the streets in one half of the town at least seemed to be laid off at right angles while in the low, wet places some kind of crossways or raised streets for foot passengers proved the forethought and consideration of a people who could thus provide for their comfort. On returning home, I had the pleasure of preaching again to a number of attentive hearers, who said they had heard some yesterday and had come again today.

This evening I made another call on the Arẹ Ago to prepare the way for an early departure tomorrow morning. I have a special liking for this man whose soul beamed in a countenance and whose countenance is one of noble expression and parental kindness. While awaiting his appearance, I was quite amused at the vain attempts of the servants to exclude the people from the court.

Although express orders were given by the Balé¹ to exclude all strangers, no effort could succeed in clearing the yard of those who were determined to see *Oyinbo*, until the appearance of the master himself, when renewed efforts, threats and bluster were a little more successful, but in a moment bang went the doors and in again rushed the crowd. I enjoyed a free and pleasant intercourse with this good old friend, trying to establish and strengthen his confidence as preaching is of little avail without it. At the close of our interview he seemed very anxious for my return and his last words were, "May God prepare the way to bring you back". My heart and feelings grew warm as I grasped the hand of this noble son of nature who returned my pressures with all the warmth of a sincere friend. Orders were given the messenger to conduct me to the king whom I wished to salute once more before taking my leave of the town. I was now compelled to return half round the royal enclosure with its lofty walls, and got the master of my house to act as royal conductor to the king's residence. After waiting the customary length of time, the walking rang with the cry of the crowd, just as the king made his entry. As this audience was comparatively a private one I had nothing to do but to express my gratitude for his kindness and that of his town, and impress his mind with the remembrance of the truth I had preached. Receiving his expression of willingness that I should visit his city again, I bade him farewell. In leaving Ijeṣa, I was not satisfied with what I had seen of the town that in some respects surpassed Ilṣrin. From personal observation, I cannot judge of its size and population, though I have seen much of it. Too great anxiety on the part of the visitor, however sincere and explicit in the explanation of his object, will only tend to thwart his purpose; for African courts have their customs, and to those they will pertinaciously adhere: while argument and entreaty are of no avail to servants who receive from their superiors explicit instructions from which they dare not deviate. So I had to content myself with what had been done within the short space of three days, being satisfied that the great barrier to our advance had been removed and that the kingdom is now open to us—one in extent and population little inferior to the kingdom of Yoruba proper.

¹ The proper designation is "oba": for Ijeṣa had and still has an Oba whose title is Owa of Ijeṣa.

Before taking this leave of the people I will add a word respecting their peculiarities, that we may institute something like a fair comparison between them and their more highly favoured neighbours. Originally, no doubt, they were the same people, as is indicated somewhat in their features, language, custom and building. The general contour of the face is much the same, but the expression of the Ijeṣa being much more savage and warlike, with receding foreheads and unshaven heads, rather gives the advantage to the [Qyṓ] Yoruba, who seem in personal appearance to have enjoyed superior privileges. The principal dress of the former consists of a cloth worn around the loins and falling to the ankle; a wrapper for the upper part of the body, which most frequently is left bare, and a cap, in some instances a calabash suited to the head. The *ṣòkòtò* or pants [trousers] are not generally worn and, the robe and Sudan skirts are of very rare occurrence. These, however, are the most unfavourable features that were noticeable, and I do not hesitate to say that the Yoruba in these respects are considerably in advance. In the construction of houses, there is decidedly better taste and judgement exhibited than in Yoruba, though the similarity in many particulars is striking. Instead of large open courts, there are comfortable rooms or suitable open spaces with skylights, arranged with seats and sometimes sleeping apartments in such a way as to add very materially to health and comfort. The walls are very thick and high and the rooms are very airy, as they have no ceiling overhead. The houses are decidedly superior. My extra guide or attendant was a keen shrewd Yoruba. I said to him "Don't you see how far the Ijeṣa surpass you in building houses? You ought to go home and teach your people better". "Ah", he replied "Yoruba no do so, we build walls thin so if fire come when we sleep we can kick the wall down and get out". A pretty good hit thought I for an excuse. Ijeṣa for its cleanliness, regularity, the width and straightness of its streets and the elevation for comfort of foot passengers far surpasses any native town I have seen in Africa. Blocks of buildings could be distinctly marked out by the regularity with which the streets cut each other, thus preventing the town from presenting that confused mass of roofs so generally visible. It was tolerably evident that the town was of a superior order and their acts indicative of forethought and consideration not at all to be despised. In my visits

to the elders, I could scarcely repress the pleasing conviction that I was at least among a people who provided themselves in their taste and household arrangements as if they thought dress and show were only to gratify little minds.

— Confined as I was according to an almost universal African custom, I had not the pleasure of visiting any of the African markets and satisfying myself as to the ingenuity of the people. Iron is, however, abundant and instruments and cutlery cheap. At the palace I saw a saddle and donkey carved out of one piece of wood, and serving as a pillar to the building. Very nice wooden vessels are cut out entire, some of which would compare favourably anywhere. The manufacture of cloth, I do not think, is so extensive as at some other places. They are principally an agricultural people and if left alone by the [Oyo] Yoruba would very likely soon leave an abundance of provisions to supply other towns, surrounded as they are a most fertile country. The articles of produce are very much the same as they are in Yorubaland; goats, sheep, cows—fowls excepted—are abundant. The king had a fine herd of cattle, the only one in town,¹ but they knew nothing of the use of milk. An important and profitable trade is carried on in the sale of kola nuts, an article in the ordinary intercourse of African society as indispensable as necessary tokens of hospitality and kindness in civilized communities. We readily perceive that there are differences between the two countries but such as we might reasonably expect to find among people between whom opposing barriers had been raised for ages. The position of the Yoruba who enjoy immediate access to the sea, and from which they have kept their brother, will in part account for the difference in dress, while the ideas that would have made their way to the minds of the Ijeṣa by an enlarged intercourse might very materially have modified their character. During my stay, I saw one proof of their idolatrous nature. That was a woman who made her way through a crowd while I was waiting in the court of an elder to testify to the superiority of her Oriṣa by singing a verse in its praise.

¹ Grazing field was (and still is) rare in Ijeṣa, the place being forest area and not grassland.

Of the position of this town and its favourableness to health I would speak cautiously, as my stay was not sufficiently prolonged to enable me to judge with any certainty. On the southern side lies a considerable body of woods, while the other side is generally open with mountain scenery and elevated land in the distance. Whether the proximity of the woods to the town would affect the health I am unable to say. There is this fact that deserves to be well considered—their willingness to receive the missionary in their midst. Hitherto there had been on the part of the Ibadan people a disposition, not even now extinct, to keep the Ijeṣa under their subjugation by a way of taxing tribute and in case of failure to infest their borders by kidnapping and such like sport, which no doubt has checked the intercourse that would have been alike beneficial to both countries. Now, if the capital of Ijeṣa should soon be occupied by a missionary force, there must, in the course of a few years, be felt a strong reactionary influence by the Yoruba and thus the two kingdoms, by increased intercourse and friendship from which might arise their mutual prosperity, would act and react on each other in such a way as to promote not a little the progress of the gospel. I know of no better place than to record here my opinion of the duty we now owe to this people, and of the call of divine providence to give them the blessed gospel. Speaking a dialect of the Yoruba language, accessible, willing and ready to receive us, distant but a few days' journey, and occupying a capital that commands the influence of the kingdom, this people demand our immediate attention, both as respects strategic operations and future prospective usefulness. So soon as it shall be occupied the Sierra Leone emigrants¹ will flock thither, the trade of the country will immediately increase, and the intercourse between Ijeṣa and Oyo Yoruba will become of such a character that the peace party of Ibadan² will gain the ascendancy and give a security to property in the destruction of the miserable slave traffic—the present curse of the land. For these manifestations of divine favour we can but wait, but while we wait we would pray, come quickly, Lord Jesus.

¹ Many of these were of Ijeṣa descent.

² See J. F. Ajayi & R. S. Smith, *Yoruba Warfare*, pp. 79-80 for information on the peace and war parties in Ibadan at this time.

to the elders, I could scarcely repress the pleasing conviction that I was at least among a people who provided themselves in their taste and household arrangements as if they thought dress and show were only to gratify little minds.

Confined as I was according to an almost universal African custom, I had not the pleasure of visiting any of the African markets and satisfying myself as to the ingenuity of the people. Iron is, however, abundant and instruments and cutlery cheap. At the palace I saw a saddle and donkey carved out of one piece of wood, and serving as a pillar to the building. Very nice wooden vessels are cut out entire, some of which would compare favourably anywhere. The manufacture of cloth, I do not think, is so extensive as at some other places. They are principally an agricultural people and if let alone by the [Oyo] Yoruba would very likely soon leave an abundance of provisions to supply other towns, surrounded as they are a most fertile country. The articles of produce are very much the same as they are in Yorubaland; goats, sheep, cows—fowls excepted—are abundant. The king had a fine herd of cattle, the only one in town,¹ but they knew nothing of the use of milk. An important and profitable trade is carried on in the sale of kola nuts, an article in the ordinary intercourse of African society as indispensable as necessary tokens of hospitality and kindness in civilized communities. We readily perceive that there are differences between the two countries but such as we might reasonably expect to find among people between whom opposing barriers had been raised for ages. The position of the Yoruba who enjoy immediate access to the sea, and from which they have kept their brother, will in part account for the difference in dress, while the ideas that would have made their way to the minds of the Ijeṣa by an enlarged intercourse might very materially have modified their character. During my stay, I saw one proof of their idolatrous nature. That was a woman who made her way through a crowd while I was waiting in the court of an elder to testify to the superiority of her Oriṣa by singing a verse in its praise.

¹ Grazing field was (and still is) rare in Ijeṣa, the place being forest area and not grassland.

Of the position of this town and its favourableness to health I would speak cautiously, as my stay was not sufficiently prolonged to enable me to judge with any certainty. On the southern side lies a considerable body of woods, while the other side is generally open with mountain scenery and elevated land in the distance. Whether the proximity of the woods to the town would affect the health I am unable to say. There is this fact that deserves to be well considered—their willingness to receive the missionary in their midst. Hitherto there had been on the part of the Ibadan people a disposition, not even now extinct, to keep the Ijeṣa under their subjugation by a way of taxing tribute and in case of failure to infest their borders by kidnapping and such like sport, which no doubt has checked the intercourse that would have been alike beneficial to both countries. Now, if the capital of Ijeṣa should soon be occupied by a missionary force, there must, in the course of a few years, be felt a strong reactionary influence by the Yoruba and thus the two kingdoms, by increased intercourse and friendship from which might arise their mutual prosperity, would act and react on each other in such a way as to promote not a little the progress of the gospel. I know of no better place than to record here my opinion of the duty we now owe to this people, and of the call of divine providence to give them the blessed gospel. Speaking a dialect of the Yoruba language, accessible, willing and ready to receive us, distant but a few days' journey, and occupying a capital that commands the influence of the kingdom, this people demand our immediate attention, both as respects strategic operations and future prospective usefulness. So soon as it shall be occupied the Sierra Leone emigrants¹ will flock thither, the trade of the country will immediately increase, and the intercourse between Ijeṣa and Oyo Yoruba will become of such a character that the peace party of Ibadan² will gain the ascendancy and give a security to property in the destruction of the miserable slave traffic—the present curse of the land. For these manifestations of divine favour we can but wait, but while we wait we would pray, come quickly, Lord Jesus.

¹ Many of these were of Ijeṣa descent.

² See J. F. Ajayi & R. S. Smith, *Yoruba Warfare*, pp. 79–80 for information on the peace and war parties in Ibadan at this time.

Before six o'clock this morning, and in advance of my escort, I was en route to Oşogbo. After a ride of sixteen minutes, I reached the western gates, observing as we passed the regularity with which the town was laid off, as the streets cut each other at right angles and the houses occupy the lines of the streets. The road had improved considerably since I had passed and as the morning was pleasant I could but enjoy the fine scenery afforded by the lofty wooded ridge over which the road passes, and an occasional verdure-clad mountain that intercepted my view. At places the road was perfumed with the odour of blossoms of rather disagreeable nature. It was alive with people rushing on as if in hot pursuit of something valuable, and at several places presented all the activity of a busy hive, buying and selling, living and letting live. Before the lapse of an hour the king's messengers, my escort to Okeibode, overtook me and we breakfasted at Ila,¹ a small Ijeşa village, where I made the acquaintance of the chief who had the kindness to present us with some food. This man had called after me a few days ago while on my way to Ijeşa and I now had the opportunity of showing him that he was not forgotten. The road was still so bad that I was compelled to dismount at several places, and once just in time to save myself from a broken or bruised limb, as my horse with all his activity could not keep on his feet. A few minutes past nine o'clock, I reached Okeibode and immediately called on the chief, who appeared quite gratified that I had returned in peace from the capital of his country. My object in these parts was accomplished and having heard of another kingdom lying a little to the east of my route to Ilorin, I determined to visit the capital and know something of the country and people. At the *onibode*, or custom-house, I took my leave of the kind conductors, who had led me thus far to the borders of their kingdom, and pushed on apace through the heavy shady forest, until I reached the Oşun. The caravan was all astir on reaching the river that had risen a little from the recent rain. Men, women and children all plunged into the stream, some sang to keep their spirits and all reached the opposite bank in safety, where myself

¹ This Ila near Ilesa should not be confused with the bigger Ila which was the capital of the Igbomina kingdom. See information on the latter Ila on p. 149 below.

and people enjoyed a general bath. While sporting in the beautiful stream I clearly forgot myself, went much beyond my strength in the exercise of swimming and came out with a most painful headache that lasted half an hour. A beautiful skirt of woods now lie in my path for some distance, adding much to the scenery and pleasure of travelling, while the fertility of the soil in regions so beautiful and interesting could but give an additional charm to the interest and pleasure. The prairie feature of the country in this vicinity very much resembles like regions lying between Ijaye and Abeokuta. It was a quarter to one when I reached my former house in Oşogbo.

Having taken a little rest I called on the Ibadan consul, whom I found, as usual, surrounded by a court of flatterers, drinking freely of his palm wine and catering to his pride. He is a jolly fine fellow, with a smile for everybody, and too much experienced in the diplomatic art to betray the least displeasure at my arrival. He was all hilarity and appeared very glad to see me after an absence of nine days and of course to learn that I had concluded my trip to Ijeşa successfully. He gave me a messenger to visit the chief whom I wished to see preparatory to an early start in the morning. Our short interview was pleasant and agreeable and I had the pleasure of leaving this town, as is the case with all others visited so far as my knowledge extends, with a good impression behind me.

I had returned home but a few minutes when in came George, my Sierra Leone friend, whose apparent interest in my welfare was quite marked. He seemed a little hurried and excited and could scarcely salute me before he said quite emphatically "What's the matter?" as if he had received some news of a hair-breadth escape. I replied in an indifferent way when George related his story. He said that on the day I left for Ijeşa, a large, fine-looking man, well dressed and rather commanding in appearance, entered the compound, but was so abashed that he didn't approach me until some time afterwards. As I was on the verge of leaving, he asked me if I could not give him something. As I had already heard his character and mode of life, that his father before him was a notoriously bad man and had suffered the penalty due to his crime, and that his son was walking in his footsteps, I rebuked him for his course and immediately began my journey. George accompanied me some distance beyond the town and gave me his blessing and good wishes

as we parted, fearing I should fall into the hands of the savage Ijeṣa. Now, as he was returning, whom should we meet but this same man I rebuked a short time before. George, naturally suspicious and very apprehensive as to my safety, concerning which I had given myself no trouble, said to him as he was muffed up in his cloak: "What have you got under dar. Let me see". And behold there was a formidable African knife that could fell a man at one blow. "What you gwine do wid dis knife"? The man replied he was going to follow Oyinbo to kill him. George immediately reported the matter to the chief, so he says, and the man was forthwith driven off. But from no one else could I hear the story and the improbability was so great that I would not betray the least solicitude in the matter, not even as to a single inquiry. George had not yet touched my sympathy in the great interest he manifested in my welfare, so he again informed me that the Ilorin people were willing so far for whitemen to visit them but would not let them build in their town:—a fact which I had known for two years. Poor George had not yet succeeded and he could not afford to leave until he had told the real truth, the cause perhaps of both tales—the lazy fellow was hungry. There is a good moral in this story that may be well considered by those who are laying the foundation of a Christian work in a heathen land. This man, like many others in the country, had received religious instruction at Sierra Leone and I suppose was a member of the Church of England, but look at him? Too lazy to make his own bread, with a heathen wife and, I fear, with scarcely the moral honesty of a native man. Why is this? There is a deficiency in the right kind of moral and religious instruction. The probability is that the foundation work of a genuine Christian without which no true structure of divine grace can be reared has ever been wanting in his heart. Hence it is that the ingredients of Campbellism, mixed up with genuine apostolic cautiousness in organizing churches in a heathen land, form a bitter and destructive pill that sooner or later will affect most injuriously every member of the body.

On retiring last night, I offered a reward to that one of my number who should wake me in the morning betimes. At half past three, one called out but rather at the expense of a jest from his less wakeful fellows. Twenty minutes after four o'clock I awoke and immediately

prepared for my departure, hurrying everyone to be in readiness at the call. It was past five o'clock when I left the town wall, thus showing that I had passed through a city of considerable size. One I suppose but a little smaller than Ogbomoṣo, and containing perhaps a population of thirty or thirty-five thousand souls. Let no one smile at this estimate for the people in these Yoruba towns live like bees.

The rains of last night had wetted the tall grass and bowed it in such a way across our path as to give us a thorough drenching, but for my umbrella that parted the grass my situation would have been most uncomfortable. Here is another effect of kidnapping—a fine country lies uncultivated because the good sense of the people prevents them from planting and labouring for a band of unprofitable wretches worse than vagrants. Beautiful as are the farms of Ijaye, Iwo and Ogbomoṣo, Oṣogbo would stand their rival if the security of the property would allow the prosecution of those industrial pursuits that would make the wilderness blossom as the rose. With a direction north-east to Ikirun, the country began to present a more interesting appearance, with a continual interchange of forest and prairie, but with a flat surface that did not begin to rise until within a short distance from the town. The iron stone was again visible and the sandy wet soil had given way to the firm clay indicating that a change of country was at hand. As I had been travelling in the lowlands and hammock-forests for some time and was now taking a north-east course, I was on the watch for the ridge that divides southern Sudan from the western coast and that runs from Okeiho on through Ogbomoṣo, dividing Igbomina from Ijeṣa, then on to the Niger and then following the Benue on to the east as far as the exploration had been carried. My notion was confirmed as I rode the hilly country over which the town is settled and saw some distance before me, the first elevation of the region that in mountain roughness would rival any part of Georgia, North Carolina or Virginia. From my point of observation, where I stopped for some refreshments, much of the town could be seen and the many roofs that rose strictly together and spread over a large space indicated a considerable population. While doubting in my mind what course to pursue, whether to spend the night here and remain over for Sunday, or proceed on

my journey, I was somewhat relieved by the appearance of another Sierra Leone man whom I forthwith dispatched to announce my arrival and express my desire for an immediate interview. At this town the road diverges, the northern via Ofa leading on to Ilorin, the eastern along the border of the Yoruba and Ijesa kingdoms to the capital of Igbomina. The latter course I intended taking, and, as my time was short, it was necessary that I should use the best economy and skill in its distribution. The messenger soon returned to conduct me to the chief and was most earnest in his solicitations that I should remain over the morrow, but as several other towns would call for part of my time, I argued the point with him and at last presented my situation before the chief and left the decision in his hands. As he deferred to my desire, I had nothing left to do but to perform that duty incumbent upon me wheresoever I may go—preach Christ and Him crucified. Quite a number of people had gathered around, among whom were some of the elders of the town, all very anxious to see and hear something of the strange visitor. In performing these labours, I am perfectly conscious of and impressed with the feebleness and inability of the means, but in God as our strength, and blessed will be the work if, when a few years shall have rolled away, the people shall remember today as the glorious era of the introduction into their homes of the everlasting gospel of the son of God. With considerable opposition and some reluctance, I was permitted to leave, and at twenty minutes past one o'clock I left the town with a due east course directly over the mountains for Ire, the last village in the Yoruba kingdom.¹ Wild and romantic was the scenery as I passed over these mountain tops from which I could gaze far away into the distance, or glancing behind see the distant outlines of mountain ranges in the far west, then look through some elevated bottoms of magnificent timber, then along a deep shady ravine and at last behold some smiling farm that would dispel the idea of a wilderness scene and revive the thought of civilization and home.

¹ The Editor's research on the extent of the Old Oyo Empire (called by Clarke as Yoruba Kingdom) confirmed this statement. See J. A. Atanda, "The New Oyo Empire: A Study of British Indirect Rule in Oyo province, 1894-1934", Ibadan Ph.D. Thesis, 1967 p. 13.

About three o'clock, we reached Ire where I again had the opportunity of preaching. This town contains one or two thousand inhabitants and is not so large as Ikirun by one half or a third; and here, as at the latter place, I found an Ibadan consul whose duty, I imagine, is to fleece the people and rule the town. My stay was but a few minutes, merely to make the acquaintance of the ruler and the people and notify them of my object in visiting their town. I was still on rising ground as I had been since ten o'clock in the morning. In the course of an hour's ride, after passing over a rich and varied country of elevated plains, hills and woodlands charming to behold, I unexpectedly found myself on the pinnacle of a mountain, one of a vast number that bounded the horizon in the distance. I had seen rough mountainous country in the vicinity of Okeiho bordering the western limits of Yorubaland, but here on the extreme eastern limit the bold outlines, points and peaks of granite rocks partly covered with vegetation, presented a view of the picturesque and the romantic seldom seen in any country. From a beautiful level over which passed a road, and surrounded by mountains, I numbered eleven conical peaks, each distinct and within the diameter of ten miles. For several hours we were passing over these rough hills and steep declivities, down which my faithful horse bore me, without a stumble. Long before I reached Otan, a border of Ijesa town, the country lying between these mountains was in a fine state of cultivation and, as such, added much interest to the fine prospects of nature everywhere visible. As I rode along some valley fifty feet above a ravine through which flowed some refreshing streams, I could but mark the lofty stately trees as they rose up eighty and a hundred feet from cabins below, now towering above me and striving with all surrounding nature to interest and animate. I was now hedged in by mountains on every side and my path, following the small stream, was the only practicable entrance into the town around which nature had thrown its rocks of defence, and which we happily entered about sunset after a long and fatiguing day's travel. The moon was shining beautifully when an announcement was made that our quarters were ready, news that horsemen and footmen all gladly received. Every voice was hushed in the

silence of sleep and I laid down my pen to join in sweet repose. My direction from Ikirun to this place via Ire was due east; Ibokun is east-south-east from Ikirun and Ofa due north.

I had another Sabbath of quiet repose in my journeying. I held religious exercises with my people and gave them some instructions from the first verses of the first chapter of Mark. At four o'clock I was conducted by the Ibadan consul to the chief who was now a little relieved from the engagement of preparing his occasional tribute for its destiny through Ibadan. I found him in state surrounded by his officers and seated under a fine shade tree around which had been raised a mound and arranged blocks of granite rocks for seats—those, I imagine, bearing a likeness to the "Bentang" or town hall of western Africa. The evening was delightful, the sun was fast declining and had lost its power; the shade fell gently over us; all was quiet and peaceful and the crowd was anxiously waiting to hear my words. How favourable indeed the opportunity to preach peace and salvation to man; to tell the glorious truth of reconciliation to God through the merits of Jesus whom I had come as their servant to bring. The hearers were quite pleased as could be seen in their nods of assent that I had visited them and I was equally as much so to be among them to testify of the grace of God. Oh, that I had the living faith to see a shaking up of these dry bones in this valley of darkness and superstition. Shall this word spoken produce this effect? Oh Lord thou knowest; thy word will not return unto thee void. Help thou my unbelief. Come, come quickly with thy quickening power and let these people live before thee. How in importance and interest does this field increase?¹ I was surrounded by towns with their thousands of inhabitants; and from this spot near the same latitude near Ogbomoso one day's journey and less lying at different points of the compass are Ire, Ikirun, Igbajo, Osogbo, Okeibode, Ijesa, Ibokun, Ila, Ofa and how many more I am not able to say. What is more, I have thus far been received with open arms. May it be a certain presage of the acceptance with the heart of the son of righteousness.

¹ True to Clarke's dream Ire became an important Baptist centre, particularly famous for its medical unit known as Ire Welfare Centre.

I had the curiosity to ask the chief if his town was healthy, to which he replied in the negative. A year or two very many had died. No wonder. An amphitheatre of mountains surrounded it and in the dry season it would serve as a receptacle for water to imbed itself under their houses and thus produce virulent fevers. Strange it would appear that such a site should have been selected when I found on a mountain just overlooking the basin below a beautiful level table-land whose healthy breezes would always fan the cheek. The rocks are simple granite, some bearing marks of a tremendous convulsion of rate; the substratum of earth is mostly clay though sometimes apparently calcareous or impregnated with lime, while lofty forest trees adorn the mountain tops.

At five o'clock this morning I resumed my journey with light not sufficient to show the points of my compass. My guide being rather tardy, we moved on a pace in the direction our route was supposed to be, bearing east-south-east until we became completely bewildered in farm roads and blind paths, and were forced to beat a retreat. It is not at all pleasant under any circumstances to lose one's way, more especially when my time was most precious and I was desirous of spending a short season at every place through which I might pass. I had just reached the forks of the road on my return and was in doubt which way to go when to my great satisfaction Fari-Ogun, our guide, came up in considerable haste. Such a man acquainted with the country and people is very desirable where one is an entire stranger and the way so mountainous and rough as to be almost impassable. He immediately directed the way and we moved on our way over hill and plain, through grass and brushwood, until the naked granite hills over which we were compelled to pass rose into view. Vainly had I hoped our mountain travelling was nearly done. Though on a small scale, "Alps on Alps" arose and again, as on the previous day, I was surrounded by an amphitheatre of mountains. I shall attempt no description of such grand and romantic scenery. It is enough for me that while travelling to preach peace and salvation to the ruined thousands of Adam's race and prepare the way for more extensive efforts, nature steps forward and presents panoramic views of its own beauties and grandeur enough to compensate for all toil and fatigue and a mere glance at which a lover of nature's works might well covet. Ascending

one of these bare granite rocks we crossed a farm road of Igbajo running south-south-west. On a Saturday evening a few days ago, while descending a rugged steep, I was cheered by the winter whistle of our American partridge or quail; now I was permitted to see one, which in size is a little smaller and darker in colour. Simple though be these mementoes they serve to revive a chain of thought that runs far back into the past and makes sweet the memories of bygone days. Finally the descent became so rugged and steep that for the first time I was compelled to dismount. A few minutes before eight I crossed a small creek bearing north-north-west. In the ascent of a steep mountain I saw an abundance of cactus and some pineapples growing on a very thin, poor soil, with a substratum of rock.

A few minutes after, I reached Ijeṣa¹ situated on the south side of a mountain, the top of which rises far and proudly above. There we took a little refreshment and exchanged wet shoes and damp clothes as he who travels in Africa must content himself with these little inconveniences, though they should recur every morning. Here I found another Ibadan consul who notified the chief of my arrival, by whom, in turn, were quickly gathered the elders of the little town to make as much show as the hasty arrangements would allow. In the course of half an hour a good number was summoned together before the residence of the chief, who seated himself on a mat in simple style, supported on his right by some aged and respectable-looking men. They gave very good attention to my short discourse; and that I might the more strongly impress on their minds the truth on the occasion, I took a pretty coloured tumbler and delivering it to the chief, told him to accept this little memento and preserve it as connected with this day and the truth he had heard that it might ever remind him, his people and their children after them, of the first time they had heard God's truth preached in their town. I was now on the last mountain on my journey east and after descending a rugged steep, almost perpendicular and altogether impracticable for a horse, I entered a beautifully wooded level, presenting very much the appearance of hammock land and exceedingly rich.

¹ Clarke is probably referring to the Ijeṣa town of Ireṣi near Igbajo.

From Ijeṣa to Ila,¹ a travel of four hours, the road passed through a wooded country, well watered and sufficiently broken to render it healthy when brought into a state of cultivation. The soil of the more elevated regions is a mixture of clay and sands quite common in forests of this country and well adapted to agriculture. At an early hour we saw traders and even signs of cultivated lands, though we were distant from Ila ten or twelve miles, when our road led us through a low, marshy, black-looking country from which we were not relieved until a short distance from town. At one point of observation I could exchange the dull monotonous scenes for some smiling interesting farms in the distance not at all to be despised after being shut in for hours from the open field by uninviting and almost impenetrable forests. The red iron stone was very abundant today.

About eleven o'clock, as we emerged from the wood we entered the gate at Ila. We were now on rising ground and caught for the first time the cooling breeze of the harmattan. We were no longer in Yorubaland,² though the Yoruba language is spoken. The last Ijeṣa town had been passed and we had entered the country of the Igbomina which, as to number of towns, is scarcely second to either Yoruba proper or Ijeṣa. Observing the usual ceremonies, I soon received from the king permission to enter the town. He said he had heard of the whiteman in Yorubaland, that Abeokuta, Ibadan, Ijaye and Ogbomoṣṣo had received him and he would now do the same. My messenger conducted me to the consul who showed the usual African kindness and hospitality in quickly providing myself and people with suitable accommodations. Scarcely seated, I could almost have wished myself in some secluded Ijeṣa room as here it is one continual crowd and, while writing, the yard is full before me of anxious gazers that no threats could move and who seemed determined to verify their word. They would stay to see *oyinbo* until night.

The Yoruba have a tradition that all countries and people take their origin at Ife and hence the following story, related to me by the consul of this place. It is said that there were once six brothers

¹ Ila was the capital of the Igbomina kingdom.

² The Igbomina are, in fact, a sub-group of the Yoruba and their head, the Orangun of Ila, is listed in tradition as one of Oduduwa's children or grandchildren, Oduduwa being the progenitor of the Yoruba.

who left their parentland to try their fortune in the world. All started from Ife, the mother of all living. They finally occupied the countries of Igbomina, Oyo Yoruba, Owu, Ketu, Ife and Ake, each retaining the names similar to the place inhabited. Yoruba and Igbomina are the countries of any size remaining while Ife. Ketu and Ake or Abeokuta¹ are reduced to single independent towns. This tradition, it is said, might be extended in its limits *ad infinitum* and it is sometimes made to include Ado, Ijebu, Ibo, Benin and all the countries in the delta of the Niger. Hence it is evident that all the kingdoms within the delta and bordering the Niger as far west as the countries of Borgu and Dahomey originally belonged to the same family. Some recent research into the language of these countries seemed to strengthen no little this hypothesis. It is probable Dahomey may be classed with that family of languages still farther west embracing the Fulani and Asante. South-south-east from Ila lies Ijesa and Ado, an independent city like Ilorin. Yagba on the east and Efon east and north-east from which the Niger is said to be eleven days journey distance in an easterly direction. This however cannot be as the longitude clearly establishes the contrary.

Every country and court has its own customs and there are few nations that stand more on their court etiquette than the petty kingdoms of Africa. Here it is an essential part of good breeding to be taught the importance of reverence, humility and obedience to sovereign and rulers; and he who might at one time smile at the prostrations of his fellows, an act scarcely superior to adoration, must in turn kiss the dust before him who can wield still greater authority. In Ijesa I was detained three days before seeing the king and only three, because absolute necessity would not allow of further nonsense and folly. But here there was a smaller capital, where royalty had lost much of its glory and power by the tyranny of more powerful neighbours, my detention was so slight and I was permitted to see the king on the second day and as early as eleven o'clock. The detention of strange and honoured guests is carried so far at some African courts that Baikie speaks of one delay of thirty days occasioned by the court etiquette of a petty sovereign on the

¹ Abeokuta was of much later foundation and should not here be regarded as the same thing with Ake of the former Egbaland forest area.

upper Benue before admission to his presence was allowed. On the present occasion no arrangements were made, the elders not even being called together and the king appeared in solitary glory habited in his royal robe of velvet green and red. The palace buildings were beautifully situated at the upper end of a fine grove used as a market ground and very much of the same character as those described in Ijẹṣa though on a much smaller scale. In the centre of the front side is a portico intended as the royal "beutang" where I imagine special cases are heard and royal splendour exhibited on important occasions. The inner courtyard and internal arrangements were much the same as heretofore described while the order of the day and the crowds present would bear no comparison to what I saw in Ijẹṣa. The king was seated on a square in front of the portico, the roof of which extended so low that the occupant could not be seen even a few feet distant. At such a distance I was requested to stop but, as the sun was pouring down in all his strength his meridian rays upon me and I could scarcely see the royal feet, I insisted on a nearer approach which, readily granted, gave me a favourable position just under the eaves of the roof where I was protected from the scorching rays and enabled to view fully the royal face. I found him a man of at least fifty-five years with a light colour, intelligent and benevolent countenance, fine forehead—indeed with European features—the only failing being weak eyes that watered very freely. Such a countenance rather improved by a silk robe and variegated velvet cap made him a pleasant figure to look upon. Behind him stood two servants with their fans continually in motion; and apparently very much in favour with their royal master. As there was no bustle, no large crowd, I could take some little time in making my remarks. I introduced my subject cautiously as if with no intention to preach and then spoke of my message with some freedom. He was attentive and at times appeared interested. His reply was that he had heard of the whiteman in Yorubaland, what he had done there, that his work was to make peace in the world; and because he wanted this peace he had invited me into his town. Lest he should misunderstand me and the nature of my work, I told him I could do nothing of myself yet we hoped peace had come through us by the influence of God's word. As usual, on such set occasions I made short my interview and returned home.

Today, I made some effort at a map of the Igbomina country, one numerous in towns though they are not so large and populous as in Yorubaland. Efon borders Igbomina on the east. Yagba in part on the north-east and lies farther in the interior; while Nupe extends for some distance on both sides of the Niger. The country on the south and south-east is rough and mountainous, a fact provable by observation, and the north-east and north level are of prairie description. Iron is said to be found in these regions in abundance and the cotton growth certainly surpasses anything to be seen in all Yorubaland. The cultivation of this staple production is so extensive or so exclusive and the manufacturing department on such a large scale—comparatively speaking—the traders from Ijeṣa, Ilorin, Yoruba and Abeokuta flock to Ila for the purchasing of cheap cloths. While passing through the market this morning, my attention was attracted to fifteen or twenty loads of cotton, the aggregate of which could have been scarcely less than one thousand pounds. The market for this article is said to be here every third day when, according to native testimony, two thousand loads from the farms of surrounding country are brought into town. A native told me that the result of a single man's farm was eighty of these loads; so that, allowing much for exaggeration, there can be no doubt that cotton is grown here very extensively and so much more so than I expected to find and that cloths purchased from Ila may be sold in surrounding towns at an advance of seventy-five and a hundred per cent. This is an interesting fact and one that I doubt not sooner or later "John Bull"¹ will make powerful efforts to convert into benefit of Manchester and Liverpool for, if such is the disposition on the part of the people when there is but a limited demand for the produce, what might we not expect when direct communication is opened with the confluence of the Niger and Benue, and the heart of Igbomina, a distance that cannot exceed eight day's journey. Thousands of rich areas not only surround this town but are to be found throughout all the eastern country even on to the Niger which, if brought into a state of cultivation, might make "Brother Johnathan"² think there was a possibility of competition in the world moving staple. It would

¹ Reference to British traders.

² Reference to American cotton growers.

have been a pleasure to visit a full market and ascertain from actual inspection its state and extent but unfortunately the appearance of a whiteman as I fully tested acts like a magnet on the mass and draws them all off from the excitement of selling and buying. Thus defeated and rather than give unnecessary trouble to buyers and sellers, I was compelled to retire to my more comfortable quarters.

From morning to night I was besieged by crowds, smaller or larger, whose curiosity seems never to fag. I enjoyed an interesting season this evening in preaching to the consul and some others; and the more so because it was unexpected and the truth had in part taken effect before the opposition could be called into requisition. The judgment and resurrection topics, understood, by the natives, scarcely ever fail to interest. The consul said the king was much pleased; that he was pleased himself and the word was so plain that even children could understand it. Very good testimony from a heathen whose apparent interest would shame many a drowsy occupant of cushioned pews. In Yorubaland, it is a custom that the whiteman is to be guest solely of the king or chief and almost an unpardonable offence in anyone else to manifest any officiousness concerning him. The like order prevails here and hence the scarcity of elders and prominent men who must receive instruction from higher authority before they dare exercise familiarity with the king's guest. Jealousy,¹ no doubt is the cause of such strict exclusiveness, a policy by no means so noble as that practised in Ijèṣa where it seemed a pleasure on the part of the high authority to have his officers share in what was considered to be a privilege and an honour. At this place I suppose I was a little above the latitude of Ogbomòṣò, though the country in the vicinity presents a very different appearance, being much more wooded and flat and, I think, more unhealthy. I received a message from the king this morning returning thanks for my remarks yesterday but the prime object was to secure a charm proof against all danger. If there is a being that deserves our pity and sympathy it is the unfortunate one whom the ravages of time have reduced from opulence and power to a state of poverty and penury. Such seemed to be the condition of the monarch of

¹ It was due to protocol rather than to jealousy.

Igbomina. Whatever the country and capital may have been in its palmy days, there are marks sufficiently evident to prove that those days are no more, that the power of royalty is lost and the kingdom exists only in name.¹ The very countenance of the man proved to me his energy was gone and, if his physiognomy taught anything, it appears that the wounded spirit within his heart will hurry him to his grave. Ten or fifteen years ago much of this eastern country in the Igbomina and Ijeṣa kingdoms was overrun by the warlike Ibadan people and, if the towns and cities were not consumed to ashes as was the case with Yorubaland under the destructive ravages of the ruthless Fulani, they were reduced to a state of servitude of unwilling tribute and placed under the jurisdiction of consuls to eat out, at the bidding of their tyrannical masters, the very vitals of the people. Such is the present state of things from which I see but little prospects of relief.

I spent this morning in trying to obtain information—now about my third attempt—of the surrounding country that I might have some accurate data from which to sketch a map: but my efforts served to prove the difficulty where native statements are so indistinct and conflicting. For instance, every day's travel is counted one day though the actual distance may not be ten miles and should you pass over distance double that in order to reach any place yet not the hypotenuse of a right angle triangle, nor the linear distance, but the other two sides, or the elbow you may perchance make it counted. Hence it is difficult to obtain anything like correct information from native authority as to construct a sketch map presenting an area commensurate with our prospective force for years to come and embracing towns ever ready to receive us and so contiguous to each other, to say nothing of the heavy population as to render it a most interesting field for missionary labour.

The evening was passing away when I seated myself to address one of the many crowds that continually pressed into the yard; finding the wind rather strong for my cap, I arose hastily to get my hat when, as if lightening had struck the house, a large part of my audience decamped instanter. I began to talk to the remainder when

¹ The Igbomina kingdom with its one-time large capital of Ila declined as a result of Ilorin-based Fulani attacks in early nineteenth century. In mid-nineteenth century, the area suffered further invasion from Ibadan.

the number of hearers soon reached its original size, some of whom, on dispersing, returned thanks for what they had heard. Near nightfall the elders of the town made their appearance in a body, seven in number, and rendered conspicuous from the crowd by the official mark of distinction, consisting of the hair plaited in a raised tuft across the head and wrapped with straps of leather. They entered the yard preceded by several little boys, the bearers of scabbards and scimitars and placed their seat, being a neat raw hide, before me. As they were all absent yesterday morning they had now, by permission of the king, come for a special interview. Such an opportunity could not be allowed to pass without trying to impress on the minds of these men the precious truths of the gospel. The first talk was granted me and all manifested considerable attention and interest until the close when the foreman of the company could contain himself no longer. We must speak. He said the wise would hear the word; that it came from God and was good but if not good it could do nothing. He added, the elders had no strength, they could do nothing as they were servants of the king and the consul who was sitting by; and if either of the two became angry there was no alternative but submission and entreaty. His last words were that he heard. They had scarcely left the door when the consul began to speak. He said, "These men, the elders, rule the town; they are very much pleased; I and this man", pointing to the Balę of the house in which I was staying, "when any disturbance arises we quell it and bring back peace to the town". Of the two speeches I thought that of the elders savoured more of truth and that the consul under Ibadan influence and direction is not only the lion but the tyrant of the place. My object in visiting this place was partly attained and though disappointed at the capital itself I left rather favourably impressed as to the extent and population of the country which in many respects is altogether Yoruba.

My arrangements all being made the previous evening, I left at half past five o'clock in an easterly direction passing over a rough hilly way through the forest that partly surrounds the town. The consul, who was not awake when I left, overtook me at the gate, out of breath, to bid me goodbye. I had not gone a hundred yards before dismounting became absolutely necessary as the ruts first cut out by the feet of travellers had been worn to a considerable depth by

the rains of several seasons. In sandy soil the size of the ruts soon reached a level and the road became as good as new, but not the case where there is much ironstone mixed with tenacious clay.

Leaving this forest that must extend over a considerable area, I found immediately a change of country, growth, soils and scenery; the low flat woodland soil yielding to the open sparsely wooded prairie that showed its sterility in the long prevailing grass and the upper stratum of earth that presented the appearance of land once under a state of cultivation. About eight o'clock we passed through a strip of woods and crossed Onikuki creek bearing north-east. At nine o'clock we crossed another creek containing the waters of the Onikuki and forming one of the branches of the Erinle that unites with the Oşun at Ede. Soon the chain of mountains passed over only a few days before rose distinctly to view running SSE and WNW from which I singled out the Adun with two others more conspicuous than the rest and far more interesting to the natives from being the deified objects from which every few years the inhabitants of the surrounding towns are accustomed to offer human sacrifices. It must not be understood from the mention of this fact that such sacrifices are at all common. A resident of Ogbomoşo who at a time raised this question paid his life at Oyo as the forfeit. We now entered some beautiful farms around one of which I observed a ditch dug to keep out such unwelcome intruders as wild animals especially that class too fond of some of the staple productions. By this time our appetites were becoming a little keen when we found ourselves at the farmyard of a citizen of Oyo, lying a short distance from us south-west and the site of which I could discern by the green shady trees, the very pleasant accompaniments of all African towns.

Finishing my little repast, I gave my carriers the order to advance while I called around me the servants of the plantation, twenty or thirty in number, and preached of Christ the Saviour. I had now fairly entered the open country and could mark all the features of African prairie, the open view, the sparse timber and the waving grass while immediately on my path the country was smiling with gladdening cultivation and now compensating for the gloom experienced in passing through so much uninviting forests. I crossed another creek which, with nearly all the water courses seen today bears south-west to the chain of mountains mentioned above and around the base of

which they run until they empty into the Erinle at Ijaba whence they take a south-western direction. Twenty minutes before eleven o'clock we were in the farms of Ofa, having travelled north-west from Oyo until reaching the forks of the road at twelve o'clock, the north-west bearing to Igosun, the west to Ofa. Close to my route on the south and south-west were once seventeen towns now lying waste, being the effect of Fulani invasion but living again in Erin, a short distance from Ofa. About one o'clock we reached the Onibode from the north just as the caravan was arriving from the south. The route today was nearly due west from Ila. With but a short delay I was introduced into the town and given a room in the compound of the princess, sister of the chief, who, though coloured, was nevertheless a fine specimen of a noble-hearted woman. Within a short time I was conducted to the chief authority who, a little different from some more ligant rulers, seemed willing to see me at almost any hour. At this interview I had mentioned the number of years since our Saviour was born; a part which so attracted the attention of a Mohammedan present that on my return home, he asked how long before the Saviour would return to the world and seemed to be labouring under the impression that the period was not very far distant. Such ideas and knowledge with regard to Christ this class of men, in advance of the heathen, have gathered from fragments of the Koran and Sudanese travellers who have penetrated as far as Egypt and Arabia and in some instances to Constantinople. Just as I was about retiring to rest, the chief, conducted by his sister, mine hostess, asked permission to have a social interview. When my astonishment had a little subsided at the strange innovation of custom that a chief should visit a stranger in private, we entered familiarly into conversation during which I insisted on communication being opened up between this place and Ogbomoşo and tried to point out some of the advantages arising from such direct communication. Ofa is a town of a fine healthful location, convenient to reach from Ila and equidistant from Ilorin and Ogbomoşo. To render practicable this route, long since abandoned between this place and the last mentioned, it is believed by the native that all that is necessary is the passage a few times of a whiteman. To affect this, as all other desirable communications, those anxious to promote progress should use all their influence and means on every befitting occasion.

Having stated yesterday my ultimatum for remaining in the town, I received a promise from the chief to have an interview with the elders today and hoped the audience would take place at an early hour this morning. Time rolled away, hour after hour; crowd succeeded crowd—to one of which I had the occasion to preach—messengers passed and repassed and no audience. Word at last came that the elders could not be gathered until tomorrow. I understood the trick and was so decided that I could not remain; preparation was immediately begun for marshalling the officers of the town that could be paraded. It was half past three o'clock before I was sent for, and even then only very few men of any prominence I found seated around the chief. I took my seat and we sat in silence as if something of importance was yet to take place. I began to doubt whether the town was duly officered and began to make some inquiries when twelve men, announced by a messenger, entered the yard and advanced towards us. The messenger returned and met them twenty steps distant and exchanged salutations with them by shaking the arms of each other; then by raising hands and slapping the palms together and lastly by repeated prostrations until they neared the chief and took appropriate seats. Not until then was the announcement of readiness made. The chief reclined in the door of his compound attended by the fair ones of his harem; the elders were arranged on his right, myself on the left, while the crowd were round about occupying every available point. What an important and blessed opportunity! Was that a glorious announcement made by heavenly angels to the shepherds at Bethlehem? Glory to God in the highest; on earth peace, good will toward men! It is glorious still, to reiterate, that announcement raised with joy my voice and at this impressive time and at considerable length declared unto all the free grace of God; Christ Jesus, our Lord, the one Mediator between God and man through whom cometh precious redemption, forgiveness of sin and life everlasting. In front where sat the elders was almost undivided attention and one man in particular I could but note who seemed to take pleasure in every word uttered; and what was more gratifying still his attention seemed to be an intelligent hearing. Twice I was constrained to stop and await the entrance of more prominent men and rather regretted I had begun before all had arrived. This was a precious occasion, perhaps the most interesting

I had ever enjoyed among the little efforts to do good to this benighted land. When years shall roll away and Christianity shall have become fully established throughout this country, may many rise up and call this day blessed as the usher-in of the everlasting gospel. As I looked around me and saw on every side aged men fifty, sixty and seventy years old I was constrained to mark this spot where fortune smiled and nature lavished its most precious boon. May it prove equally so to those heralds of the cross who may perchance find here their African homes.

After this interview I rode out to take a view of the town and nearly every vacant spot I found in a state of cultivation, growing luxuriant corn instead of the forbidding weeds and grass so universal in every unoccupied spot in Yoruba cities. Parts of the town are very thickly populated as the crowds, never diminishing and constantly changing, clearly indicated. On my return to headquarters we were met by a company bearing a corpse and making all the noise and racket within their power but their cries were lost amid the bustle and confusion of the larger crowd, the tramp of whose feet sounded like distant thunder. Entering the compound of my temporary home, I rode up on a small mound to give the four or five hundred present a fair look, hoping then to be relieved of further pressure, dust and noise but with such success as would result in an attempt to satisfy the covetous with gold.

I arose this morning twenty minutes before three o'clock and within an hour was en route for Ilorin whither I had already dispatched a messenger on the day previous to give notice of my approach. This I did to gratify the pride of the king that he might enjoy the pleasure of escorting his guests in the town by a horse company. Early as it was I could not elude the watchful vigilance of my kind hostess who came out to bid me a farewell salutation.

Though the sky was partially overcast with clouds, the moon gave us sufficient light to see plainly and make good use of the cool refreshing morning. So soon as daylight permitted I found I was still in the high open country of Sudan with trees just sparse enough to give the whole the appearance of a beautiful park and the cultivation so extensive and interesting as to dispel every thought of gloomy solitude, the naked savages and unbroken wilderness; and as for wild animals especially lions, elephants and boa constrictors, I had

much rather institute a search in Barnum's Museum or some other spot prolific of such creatures than in regions where they are as scarce as in the streets of New York. The water courses for more than the distance to Ilorin flow eastward, entering the Ogun and the Qsin; the remainder fall into the Asa which takes its rise in the vicinity of Ogbomoso near the headwaters of the Qba that empties into the ocean in its course to the sea. At twenty minutes before seven after a fast ride of three hours, we reached the town of Ojoku which, judging from the crowd, must contain several thousand inhabitants. This is now one of the oldest towns in Yorubaland, being one of the very few that escaped the destructive hand of the Fulani. I applied to the chief but received answer that he was asleep as the hour was too early for his honour to rise. Then I shall not be able to see him I replied. This had the desired effect and the old gentleman, who rather than let this opportunity pass of seeing Oyinbo, was forthcoming and fully bent with all the chicanery and art to keep me until the morrow. The anxiety of the people was so great that a Sierra Leone woman was introduced to plead the case and, but for the want of time and the probability of still greater detention in Ilorin, I should have yielded to their wishes. I talked a short time to the chief and the few persons immediately around him as the babble-like confusion of the crowd was so great that any attempt of this kind was utterly impracticable. I have seen no one since leaving home so anxious for a missionary to be resident in his town as this kind-hearted old ruler; but all I could promise for the future was D.V. to visit him at some future time.

Although during the day not a cloud was to be seen, the gentle harmattan and the murky dust of the desert were such a protection that the rays of the sun were not so unpleasant as to require the use of an umbrella. It would seem that nature had designed such a country as this especially for railroads where now, if there were wagon roads from forty-five to fifty miles, could be travelled with ease any day. The ground is hard and firm and though generally beautifully level it is sufficiently undulating to bring all the muscles and sinews of a horse into frequent exercise. The soil is variable; sand, ironstone, black earth and white clay, with a mixture of sand continually interchanging. For three days' journey from the vicinity of Ila to Ilorin, the whole country is in a state of cultivation with the

production of yams, rice, beans, and Indian and Dana corn. The latter corn is most excellent for horses and well adapted for a poor sandy soil, though on a light alluvial or rich mould it flourishes best. Within the vicinity of Ilorin I counted five villages containing for the most part, I suppose, the slaves of the rogues and freebooters of the city. At Gumma we dined and my carriers who had travelled up to this time but a little short of thirty-five miles relieved themselves of their load and walked into town as gentlemen. Within two or three miles of the city, I could make out through the hazy atmosphere its dim outline as it bounds before me two-thirds of the horizon, and seemed to cover a vast plain. I stretched my eyes a little to see, if possible, some signs of an escort but the timid character of my messenger did not indulge in the strong hope that he had made the necessary arrangement. I reached the town wall at three o'clock and ascertained that little or nothing had been done to inform the Balogun of my arrival. The Ogbomoṣo consul being about, Sunṣonu the commander-in-chief, condescended to see me by waiving the ordinary formalities of introducing a stranger. As this was my third visit I began to flatter myself that I should no longer be deemed a stranger, and thought that, as I had complied with the request to give notice before our arrival of my intended visit, the king might show royal etiquette by giving me an escort, but Sunṣonu was a little nettled that I had ignored the African custom and entered a town as a native or as a poor man. If he was nettled I was not much better pleased at his rather offensive and dictatorial manner and had not much inclination to give an explanation of my conduct that at last satisfied him. I suppose I felt a little more independent from the fact that I did not find in his person the ordinary black Sudanese who is ever ready to show a spirit of kindness, but the quick-passioned, bright-coloured Fulani, tempered with the Moorish blood of suspicion and revenge. But as my prejudgement was liable to be wrong, and his haughty demeanour seemed to change with acquaintance, I reserved my decision.

Sabbath—happy rest day. Here I found myself in the mammoth city of a hundred thousand busy beings where there is more bigotry and vice and at the same time more gentility than in all Yorubaland.

The population is of a mixed character, containing Yoruba—predominating—the Poulh or Felattahs,¹ and a representation of nearly every country in the interior. No one gave me any annoyance today by intrusion because the Mohammedans have their own Sabbath, so-called, and can therefore appreciate the position of one who has a similar day for the worship of his god. At the close of the day I gathered my little band around me for some religious instruction and, as they had been in close intimacy with me now for several weeks, I concluded to catechize them, and thus ascertain the tenor of their thoughts. One after another expressed himself in the garb of native simplicity with scarcely an effort to repress the convictions that to an extent, greater or less, seemed to take hold of their consciences. Well may we sow beside all waters not knowing which shall prosper, this or that.

At half-past eight o'clock this morning, I started to give Sunmõnu another call, preparatory to visiting the king, but arriving a little too late as he had just ridden out, there was no other alternative left but to await his return. The intelligence was soon brought me that Dongari, the king's head slave and executioner was dead and therefore the Balogun was necessarily delayed. As my position was a good one for gazing as well as to be gazed at, I, while changing crowds were gratifying their curiosity, continued to note every object passing in the broad sweep at the end of which I happened to be sitting. From different parts of town, carriers and slaves were pouring in and, gathering together at a large open space partly adorned with shade trees, were depositing their loads. In the course of two hours, or by half-past ten o'clock several thousand people were collected together and judging from the clattering noise they must have been engaged in buying, selling and speculation. The Asanra market as the Yoruba say was full. It occurs at this period daily with the regularity of clock time and continues through the day. Becoming by this time quite a gazer, I noticed two young men—one, the son of the Balogun, sparely-made and graceful, the other low and compact—walk off together, with such airs of consequence and importance, with all the feelings of city loafers—certainly with

¹ "Poulh" and "Fellatah" are other names for the Fulani.

not less grace—that I could but say within myself, “Well, young men, I have seen your facsimile before today”. About this time I lifted up my eyes and saw several horsemen coming in full speed, followed by a number of armed attendants, preceding the Balogun, who brought up the rear, mounted on a fine splendid, iron, gray charger, with a haughty and defiant look. I kept my position unobserved by him and sat quietly under the projecting roof of the compound until he called for me; and I intended to act on my dignity and independence for the time being, at least, as I thought I understood my man, one who is extremely fond of power and sufficiently acute to make a yielding disposition subservient to his own purposes. This, be it borne in mind, is the man who has heretofore seemed an evil genius in the opposition he has made to our occupancy of Ilorin, and it will require much caution and discussion to win his favour, without which no success is certain. He now presented a much finer appearance than he did yesterday when he was in an undress, but though with the eye of an eagle, yet like an African, he could not keep the old prejudice against us in mind but a moment. There is no African blood in the composition of Sunmōnu who, I doubt not, is the strongest man south of the Niger. He rode into his compound and soon sent for me to say that Dongari was dead, and therefore I could not see the king before tomorrow. I found him not so gruff but far more tractable than I expected and, still more astonishing, quite willing that I should proceed to the Niger. Like all African rulers, the fine present I offer does more to conciliate his favour than anything else; and it is in part to this I attribute his readiness that I should continue my journey. It does not look right that missionaries of the cross should stoop to such influences with people but this is one of the cases where, as far as consistency allows, we have to become all things to all men and defer to the customs of the country. The people with whom we have to deal have most exaggerated notions of our wealth and our power and expect some proof of the supposed fact whenever we find ourselves placed under obligations to serve them.

As stated in my journal of November 12th, I had sent to the present Niger exploring expedition a box of necessaries through the Balogun who, it was supposed, would dispatch it forthwith to the Niger. In following this plan, one I did not endorse, I deferred

to the wish of the recipient and found today that my fears were too truly realized. It was strongly insisted that I should open the box, but as this would have proved suspicion on my part, and called in question the honesty of the keeper, I also strongly resisted the request.

Today at noon the Ogbomoşo consul, a man who has been acting in this capacity for a number of years, and for whom a messenger had been sent early yesterday morning, came charging into the yard with all the importance of a king. This gives some idea of the extent of the city farms, especially when it is remembered nearly all the intervening land is in a state of cultivation.

This is the day appointed to see the king. While preparations were being made by the consul into whose hands I now fell, I had an opportunity of preaching to several semi-Mohammedans whose intelligent attention was particularly gratifying. There is something so different! in the contrast between the false and the true prophet, between Mohammed and Christ, that the intelligent Muslim cannot fail to perceive.¹ A little after eight o'clock I reached the house of Sunmoṅu, who was ready to pay his respects to the royal chief but whether from custom or pride he did not allow me to accompany him. He went, as he came on a previous day, attended by a number of armed men who are ever ready to do his bidding, and feel never so highly honoured as when marching, gun in hand, before him. I was ordered to await the return of the servant who should conduct me to the king and though the delay might be for six hours I must wait. He who has to do with African potentates must have patience. I sat on a mat until wearied, then mounted my horse and sat until wearied again and was in the act of dismounting for another humble position when my straining, gazing eyes espied the messenger. This is a part of Ilorin which I had never seen but must be seen to form a proper idea of the size of the place. My road to the royal palace passed through a thickly settled part of the town and directly through the Asanra market that I had seen filling up the morning before. What life, energy and activity among these assembled crowds! Can there not be hope for such a people? I halted at a

¹ Muslims will not share this view.

large open space known as the royal market place, until the king's pleasure was sounded. Two men kept me under surveillance lest I should become impatient with delay and be missing when called for.

In this situation I rode off a short distance to see my old friend Nasama, of other days' remembrance, and made an engagement for some butter of which there is an abundance in the city. A hundred yards off I was overtaken by a young man from whose grasp there was no release; he would have gone with me to the very verge of the sea; for, says he, in the greatest excitement, "The king wishes to see you just now this very moment". I felt confident he was lying but under his most solemn affirmance of truth I returned but to ascertain the fact of which I had just accused him. A little explanation to the king's door people and I was permitted to attend to my business. After the delay of an hour I entered the place of reception, a covered arbor where the king received his visitors and subjects and which, when crowded, will hold seventy-five or a hundred people. His majesty was veiled from public view by mats with an only aperture just large enough to allow a sight of the feet of his courtiers. Sunmōnu was sitting on the left with his hands on his feet—a most graceful situation I thought for one of his dignity—while other officials and men of prominence were occupying every convenient spot. There was a superabundance of interpreters and my desire and requests were very soon made known and readily granted. As I entered on my return to make a short stay I wished as short an interview as possible that I might leave at the earliest moment. The king explained his situation ten months ago when I attempted to perform this journey, but I was unable to see him, as my object in visiting the Niger was of a two-fold nature and, as I was dealing with a suspicious people, I made use of a little ceremony in placing pretext first and the real cause or reason last; but I let them know plainly that my main object in my work was to preach the word of God. I made offer of an Arabian Bible to anyone who could read the language but no one accepted it. However, my request to visit the Niger was granted. Thus an object so much desired but the accomplishment of which I had not little doubted, was attained, one that in the event of the exploration of the Niger must exert such a favourable influence on our prospective operations.

About two o'clock I called on Sunmõnu to give him my parting salutation, knowing I should not be able to see him on my return as his whole time and attention were now engaged in speedy preparation for a slave hunt in the Efon country, and perhaps in part for the benefit of his disinterested and magnanimous majesty, usurper of the French.¹ Beautiful specimen of philanthropy; to set all Africa on fire with the flames of slavery under the pretext of benefiting a few ruined wretches under the clutches of slave-drivers in a French colony! Oh, temporal. Sunmõnu, no doubt, feeling his importance as commander-in-chief of this fine expedition, was very anxious to obtain a piece of ship's canvass for a tent and commissioned me to interest myself on his behalf with Dr Baikie and secure if possible this valuable article. This I could promise to do without at all identifying myself with Ilõrin and French philanthropists; more especially as he had given a very significant hint that they must be good to him as he was the way and clearly intimated that it was within his power to keep all communication at pleasure. Knowing this was the fact, I intended to gratify him to the very extent of my power so far as consistency would allow.

It was now two o'clock when we parted. I passed out at the eastern gate and crossed the ford of the Asa, bearing a north-west direction. This side of Ilõrin I had never seen and as a good view of it would give me a correct notion of the size of the town, I scanned it closely. The harmattan had been blowing for several days and the whole heavens were thick with the dust of the Sahara's desert which obscured the view within a few miles. The fine barren rock I was once so anxious to mount and represented to be at the foot of the wall I found to be considerably to the north and distant from the city half or three quarters of a mile. My interest in that mount was lost, more especially as I could now view the whole length of the eastern side of the city, which could not be less than five miles from the extreme northern to the extreme southern point. Crowds pouring into the city through the well-beaten paths, the rolling plain, the little farmyards, the cattle, the sky, the wood, all like the mementos of that bright land lying under the wings of the

¹ Clarke wrongly saw Ilõrin's expeditions in northern Yoruba area as an attempt to supply slaves to the French. But the real motive of Ilõrin was political: to subjugate the area and widen the Emir's territory.

Almighty far away to the north, inspired me with new hopes and bade me take courage in other efforts for the good of the people. After an hour's ride I crossed the Ogun bearing north-west which united with the Asa and the Osin to form an important stream that either empties into the Niger at some point above the Ketra rock, or taking a circuitous route, discharges its waters into the Bight of Guinea. At five o'clock on account of the murky appearance of the heavens caused by the heavy harmattan, night seemed setting in and, stopping at Oke Oṣe, I began preparation for a night's rest. Though the master of the house was absent at the time of my arrival, I was invited into a compound where I found accommodations good as under the circumstances to be desired. In the course of an hour or two my host came in to salute me but with a mournful tale that someone had stolen quite a number of his dried yams which is a very necessary article at this season of the year and is readily converted into Yoruba flour. This is the only way the yam can be preserved: and when early corn and yams have ceased to be available in the markets in the dead of winter, this flour, which is in great demand, furnishes one of the best African dishes.¹ Thieves do not at all times steal worthless articles. In America, however, where people are honest, a farmer would have no one to blame but himself if his want of experience allowed him to place too implicit reliance on all his good neighbours. Considering the carelessness² of the people in this country the wonder is that theft is not much more frequent. Oke Oṣe is situated east of Ilorin about eight miles, or a two hours' ride, and is mostly the property of some princely Yoruba or Fulani.

The orders on retiring at night were a start by moonlight—this morning. At four o'clock we were on the wing, the moon favouring us with gentle beam, the wide-extended wooded plain inviting a

¹ The product from this flour is called *òkà ìṣu* or *àmàlà* and is ranked second to *iyán* (pounded yam) in Yoruba dishes.

² It was not a question of carelessness as such, but an indication of implicit confidence in people's honesty leading to the belief that farm products were safe with neighbours and even travellers. It should also be pointed out that Yoruba hospitality at that time permitted travellers, when hungry, to feed on the fruits, yams and other products from near-by farms. But it was forbidden to take more than was necessary to quench immediate hunger. Any action to the contrary would amount to stealing; and such stealing was rare, at least, up to the end of the nineteenth century.

pleasant contemplation and the biting cold bracing our system. At six o'clock we passed a walled village beautifully situated in an extensive plain decorated with shady trees and apparently laying claims to some little age. If there is a healthy spot north of Ilorin this must be the place. When I first saw the coasts of Africa in July, 1854, my preconceived notion was somewhat realized but in this old cultivated country of vast rolling plains and beautiful table-lands everywhere smiling in cultivation, and adorned with parklike forests, such as no American farm can present. I had not the remotest idea of seeing Africa so richly and so honourably dressed. At eight o'clock I reached the village of Oke Qsin at the foot of which runs north-west the River Qsin, taking its rise several days east of Ila in the kingdom of Igbomina. As Mr May¹ has spent a night at this place I found the people a little familiar with a white face; some thinking perhaps he was on his return. Here we refreshed ourselves and on leaving I called the people around me and told them about the Saviour and the way to God and peace. I left them in a happy mood soon to enter a more broken and productive country than I had seen since leaving Ilorin. The Qsin has some bottom lands in a state of cultivation that seem to produce finely, marked by a range of hills running north-west and south-east. The country now became rocky and presented much the appearance of an open forest covered with grass and such as is very frequently seen in the pine lands of south-western Georgia. About nine o'clock our route lay directly over a small rocky mountain, well timbered and not dissimilar to oak and hickory wood. At ten o'clock we reached another farm village of considerable size situated in a fresh country still in a good state of cultivation, being the farms and plantations of Ilorin planters. Here we met the Sareh caravan which had left that place this morning.

The country had very much changed in appearance since leaving the Oke Qsin from the elevated, worn-out open fields to fresh lands more thickly wooded, plains less extensive and to a region not altogether so interesting. At twelve o'clock I reached Apado, situated on a spur of a mountain, where caravans step aside from the road of travel to take refreshments. Bearing due south is a

¹ One of the crew of the *Day Spring*.

road leading to Ibadan. The prairie grass was here fine and at one time drove me from the road. We noted a fine mountain on whose top is a splendid plateau from which, but for the trees, I should have enjoyed a delightful view. From this eminence we descended into a flat of black earth covered with stunted growth and though now as firm as a rock, in the wet season, is ankle deep in mud. It was three o'clock when we entered the farms of Sareh and were favoured with finer prospects, a more elevated and imposing country, resembling that of Ilorin and Ogbomoso. Ere long, the city appeared in the distance, the northern part being surrounded by a striking semi-circular mountain, the top of which furnishes a beautiful parapet for evening walks. The soil of today's travel was quite variable; mainly light and sandy, sometimes productive for the first three years of cultivation, but mostly poor and sterile. Water courses were amply sufficient for the purposes of grazing and agriculture. Cottons seem to thrive well, comparatively speaking, as well as *dana* or guinea corn, to which the soil is admirably adapted, but Indian corn is generally inferior except on the best soil. After nearly thirteen hours of hard travelling I reached the town tired and hungry while most of my carriers were yet some distance behind. As night was setting in, being unable to see the chief, I had begun to try to secure lodgings for myself and people, when a young man standing by volunteered his hospitality and conducted us to an open compound and furnished me, I suppose, his own room besides interesting himself in providing us with supper. It was very refreshing indeed to meet with such hospitality and when weary and fatigued and disinclined to make provision for one's self.

At an early hour I made my way to the Balogun, hoping to be able to pursue my journey with but little delay as it was my intention to make a short stay at this place on my return. Though the hour was quite early, I was kindly received and permitted by his excellency to proceed without hindrance. We cut short our interview that myself and people might make some speedy preparation for the day's travel. In good earnest I began preparing a fowl when, as I almost finished, I heard the cry of fire. I worked on, little heeding, when some inmates of the house began to seek protection elsewhere. The fire seemed rapidly approaching and lest the appearance of the whiteman in a happy moment should augur unfavourably

I considered it prudent to leave the town as soon as convenient. I changed my position until I occupied a point where I could have full view of the raging element as it rapidly licked up the roofs of the mud walls and needed only a fair wind at this dry season to sweep over the town. At one time the fire was nearly extinguished when a quarter of a mile from the original seat I saw a flame as large as a man's hand on the roof of a house lying against the mountain. In less than five minutes the compound that sheltered, I suppose, sixty persons was wrapped in flames. Amid the confusion and the unfortunate occurrence, where it was impossible to purchase any food for pity or money, my poor carriers and myself, entirely disconcerted and out of humour, were forced to leave the town almost as hungry as we entered it. I made a little effort to secure the services of a guide as we were now about entering a new kingdom, and had no acquaintance beyond this place, but the demand was so exorbitant that I concluded to proceed and rely only on our own resources.

About eight o'clock with a fair sky and tokens of a hot day, we left the gates with a direction bearing north-east, the road bearing east leading to Rabba, distant about one day's journey. The soil became more sandy and sterile, resembling in appearance the country between Lanier and Tazewell, Marion country in Georgia, and the timber was such as very much resembles the black jack and the stunted oak growth common to such sections. Scattered about in promiscuous confusion were many large, turreted ant hills, the first of any height I had ever seen in Africa. Any one desirous of a minute description of these wonderful little monuments would do well to refer to Wilson's *Western Africa*, where he will find some sections and drawings with suitable explanations. The many roads and paths continually bifurcating gave us some trouble and at one time compelled us to stop and institute a search for our own way. To keep up the spirits of the hungry company, I doled out a little bread and sugar with the hope of soon reaching a resting place where we could gratify our gnawing appetites. If the country was poor and sterile there was something in its scenery and clear azure sky and the occasional farms that beguiled our hours and

cheered us on; while the circular huts that mark the spots of some Nupe towns, destroyed by the ambitious Masaba,¹ gave undoubted proof that I was no longer under the jurisdiction of Yoruba rulers. It was eleven o'clock when I reached Boudara and, stretching my bedstead under a fine tree and beneath as pure sky as Italy can boast, gave myself to repose. Everything around betokened quite a change but my hungry carriers were a little disconcerted in not finding the good old cooks of Yorubaland, with their fine dishes ready to hand and the young lassies bearing about for everyone's convenience the little knick-knacks, the quality of which they know full well how to appreciate. The difference in the culinary art of the two countries is more however in the kind than in the preparation of food. The food prepared from Indian corn and yams though very scarce is compensated for by the *dana* corn and rice.

The principal difference I find is in the construction of the houses. The Yoruba fancies the square or oblong compound with all his rooms and porticos facing a fine open court; the Nupe prefers a collection of circular huts arranged with some taste while each room seems to be independent of each other and may sometimes contain a small family. Each has its advantages and disadvantages, and I shall await a better acquaintance with the latter before giving a decision as to their superior merit. On the very confines of the Yoruba kingdom, where the intercourse of the two people is so continual, there is not enough difference in their general customs to attract attention. While lying on their bed, I saw rising from the north the thin "cirrus" cloud far away in the distance through the pure transparent atmosphere, being the first of this kind I had ever seen during my sojourn in the country. Rising gradually, a more elevated country with new scenes, a new people and bracing cold to inspirit me, I could but rejoice in the glorious prospect of a better and brighter day for this benighted land, and though I write thus and appear as an enthusiast, I shall not be the man, let it be remembered, to colour my picture too highly, but

¹ The younger son of Malam Dendo who rebelled against his brother.

intend, if anything be said, it shall be, "He hath not told thee half". I fear to speak the whole truth lest it be said, "The man is mad with enthusiasm".

Leaving Boudara in a north-easterly direction, I rode over the most beautiful and extensive plain I ever beheld. The country in its native state might not strike every observer as being charming but brought into a state of cultivation, where farm is like a park, he who could not enjoy such delightful scenes must be deprived of the faculty that gives much of the pleasure that this life affords. At one view I could see to the very extent of the horizon, over apparently an unbroken plain, and I thought, even beyond the Niger, the country presenting the appearance of a thick, almost impenetrable forest, and yet so open in most places as to allow for considerable speed with safety. The people were busily engaged in harvesting their grain, and seemed only to enjoy a pleasant excitement at the novelty of a whiteman passing through their farms. If the soil is not rich it is loose, productive, easily cultivated and capable of sustaining a heavy population. The *dana* corn with its golden heads was bowing to the earth, except where, in many instances, the planter had already laid it in rows along the furrows, ready to be stacked or removed to the farmyard. Calling at one of these farmyards to inquire after the route, I was most politely waited on by some coloured females, one of whom gave me a drink of cool clear water even on this elevated plateau, and, with the genuine graces of a lady and the hospitality of one who has a soul, offered to add to its good quality by putting in a ball of *fufu* which, immediately dissolving gives the water a pleasant acid taste. Who could not respect and admire such a people, black as though they should be as the ink from my pen.¹ For two hours I glided over the plain and stunted growth and sedge with scarcely a decline from the level until I descended to a fine, limpid, rapid stream, skirted by lofty trees, and running due north. About four o'clock I entered the farm of another village called *Bubufu*, whose fine shaded trees and beautiful situation certainly augured favourably for the health of the people. Under this pure sky and with a

¹ Clarke was still expressing his bewilderment at seeing evidence of civilization among black people in Africa.

refreshing bracing breeze from the north I felt so exhilarated and strengthened as to turn both cook and caterer, and prepare myself a supper that certainly was not slighted for want of appetite.

While awaiting the arrival of my carriers, I was engaged in conversation with some Yorubas, one particularly, a gentle mulatto-coloured man who, hearing me mention the death of Dongari, a noted character in Ilorin, immediately turned aside, seated himself and with the most complete tokens of grief, buried his face in his hands, and so remained for sometime. If he feigned, it was hypocrisy to perfection. If his grief was genuine, it proved a tenderness of heart very rarely seen among natives.¹

We were one day's journey from the Niger and intended proceeding to Fauga, being the most practicable point as Masaba and his brother had not yet commenced the re-building of Rabba [which had earlier been destroyed]. Our start was to be by moonlight and rather to be dreaded in the present state of our blood as we were very sensitive to cold. It was hard work to arouse my carriers who had never before felt such biting weather, and it was half-past four o'clock when we left. The moon was shining brightly and the sky clear as a November night and the cold² almost as severe to our thin blood as if the thermometer had been at the freezing point. As our bodies warmed, our spirits revived and many a laugh behind me broke the stillness of night as we moved on at the rate of five miles an hour. The country was very much the same in appearance as I had seen yesterday with light cultivation and beauty. At six o'clock we reached a small village—Kogun—just on the verge of a swamp, and I thought it was but a short distance from the rivers. We took breakfast such as we could find and not being able to proceed farther in our direction due north, the bearing of this morning, we turned due west and soon changed north-west and found ourselves skirting the valley of the river. I was continually on the look out for the Asa, a river said to fall into the Kuora [River Niger] somewhere in this vicinity and which, according to our understanding of the report, I expected to cross before reaching the Niger itself. For about fifteen miles I passed over a

¹ This expression arises from a mistaken notion that Africans are not sympathetic.

² This was the harmattan period.

flat, level as a floor, of finely pulverized dust, sparsely wooded and presenting very much the appearance common to the shea-butter regions. I examined the soil closely, doubting in my mind from its appearance the richness of its quality until the cultivated land groaning with such *dana* corn as my eyes had never before beheld, and checked with yam hills that looked like pygmy mountains entirely settled the question. The soil was of the finest quality, being a light alluvial, loose and pulverized, and different from that found in the valleys of American rivers. At one time I was riding along the edge of a grassy plain in which there was not a tree to be seen, containing five hundred or a thousand acres without a perceptible break, and if brought into cultivation by rice planters, capable in itself of supporting a heavy population. During this ride I crossed the two worse wet places a few yards wide that could be easily remedied by being planted in rice, with dykes on each side of the road. I observed this peculiar feature in the valley: though a flat it presents nearly every feature of a dry upland country and on this side of the river is in appearance so elevated and healthy that it would not be imagined that the river was but a few hundred yards distant. Hence it is that I this morning approached within ten feet of its branch when to my utter surprise there rolled at my feet a majestic stream one hundred and fifty or two hundred yards wide, gentle and placid as a lake, with a clearness and beauty of colour that astonished me. I now felt almost bewildered. From native testimony I had no doubt that I should cross the *Asa* before seeing the *Niger* and just at the town I had now reached. Having no *Nupe* interpreter, I could not satisfy myself of what I felt confident to be a fact, for it could not be that any other streams of such size emptied its water at this point into the *Niger*. Still lingering in some doubt from the statements of the natives that this was not the big river, I ascertained that the only practicable plan would be to charter a canoe and proceed by the river to *Ketra* rock, the site of the English encampment and determine this question for myself. The governor and the consul, a son of *Masaba*, giving me their assistance, by eleven or twelve o'clock, under the scorching sun, I was enabled to proceed. I was not at all satisfied to be floating on the water of this once mysterious river with the least doubt in my mind as to its identity, and but for the deceptive hints of some

Nupe people travelling with us and whose language I could not understand, I should not have had the shadow of a doubt. The banks on either side were very low and flat, covered with a thick impenetrable bush among which stood conspicuously the noble palm.

We had ridden about two hours when an opening in the distance indicated an approach to the parent stream of which ours was a small branch. At the point of diversion the width of the main, not including the eastern branch, separated from it by an island, is about three quarters of a mile. At this point the river, which in its upward course is very straight for several miles without varying a single point of the compass, allowed a view of the most remarkable and attractive objects.

A range of hills marked the western bank in the distance, eight or ten miles, and would have attracted some attention but for a magnificent dome that rose singly and apart for several hundred feet from the water's edge, and appeared to be so regularly polished that not a jagged point could be seen upon its side. As we moved slowly along, I watched and observed every object, the many islands, the rocks, sandbars and small towns that were occasionally visible, yet with an eye ever ready for the fine object in the distance ahead. As we neared it, its outlines became visible, its smoothness and polish wore away, and now its striking gothic appearance, rugged as nature only could make it, became more attractive. Off a small town on the western bank, the current over a shoaly place was so strong that our canoe men made several ineffectual efforts before succeeding in passing. I saw a canoe descending in mid-current with several passengers, one of whom I would have fain have made out a foreigner. I now saw plainly that wonderful effect, an island rock, a magnificent gothic cathedral, whose sides are carved by nature's hand into pillars and pilasters, whose top is a splendid dome and whose interior is sufficiently capacious to accommodate as many monks of the nineteenth century as would be pleased to practise a life of asceticism. This is Ketra Rock.

The next object that all eyes beheld as we shoved from this massive pile of sandstone into midstream was the ship. It was to my little company a striking object, situated in midstream, with its red sides and white deck mingling well together, and lying upon the rock it

had struck on its larboard side with a bow one-third in the water. On the northern bank situated on a rocky eminence, I saw the encampment marked by some colours, floating in the breeze from the tops of the trees near the bank of the stream and to this point our canoe men steered and landed us at the little English settlement, one evincing good judgement, skill and resolution on the part of those determined to brave the difficulties and dangers to which they are subjected. With Mr Crowther¹ I had a slight acquaintance, otherwise I was an entire stranger. I here met with men engaged partly in the same work that had drawn me from home and who, in trying to open up this vast continent to the great work of civilization and Christianity, were braving every danger and despising luxury and effeminate pleasures if they could but do something toward the attainment of this noble object. Here were to be seen the representative of the government, commerce and Christianity, not from my own America but from a country bound to us by the inseparable ties of consanguinity, and whose praiseworthy efforts could but arouse the feelings of an honourable jealousy and stimulate me the more to press on with vigour as far as was within my power to draw to these mysterious and cheering regions the representative of the land that fears no clime; the commerce of the country whose ships float on every sea and water, and above all, the messengers of that King whose dominion hath no end. While I bid the noble untiring Britain God's speed in this blessed work, I would fain hail the day when Columbia's sons shall bend their footsteps thither to prepare a home for the unhappy race that must find their destiny ignoble or glorious in the land of their fathers.

As I recovered a little from my fatigue, I looked around a little to admire the fortune with which the company had been favoured in landing on this spot, situated on a rocky elevation, distant a hundred yards from the stream, with a broken mountainous back-country, good mountain and river scenery and the cold, bracing

¹ i.e. the famous, Samuel Ajayi Crowther, the first African Bishop who was consecrated in 1864 about eight years after Clarke's travels. For more information see Jesse Page, *The Black Bishop: Samuel Ajayi Crowther*, London, 1910; J. F. Ade Ajayi, *Christian Missions in Nigeria: the Making of a New Elite*, London, 1965, particularly Chapters 7 & 8 and 'Samuel Ajayi Crowther of Oyo', in Philip D. Curtin (Ed.), *Africa Remembered: Narratives by West Africans*, Wisconsin & Ibadan, 1967, Chapter 9.

wind night and morning from the north sweeping down the rough hillside. They seemed as prosperous and happy as men could be under such unavoidable circumstance. The ship's canvass and masts had been used for the construction of a large airy hut which, with an additional covering of mats to protect much better from rain and sun, gave some promise of health and comfort. Early this morning at half-past five o'clock we were called to prayer; an omen certainly not unfavourable and that again afforded proof of that scripture which says, "Happy is the people whose God is the Lord". This early hour was selected so as not to interfere with the regular duties of the day and almost invariably to their honour, let it be said, I found the commander and principal members of the expedition in their places. Mr Crowther of the Yoruba Mission, was acting chaplain and pioneer missionary, having been sent out by the sagacious Church Missionary Society to take steps preparatory to extensive evangelizing efforts in the country. This policy of sending a missionary chaplain is one that meets our most hearty approbation and leads us to doubt whether an exploring expedition without just such an arrangement can be complete. Already the incipient steps towards the organization of missionary stations have been taken at Benin and the confluence and will be commenced at Rabba as soon as practicable. Thus with zeal worthy of imitation the CMS have advanced into the heart of the country by a route impracticable for us, and although we acted with energy and determination half commensurate with their explorations and means, we should within two or three years unite hands again on the banks of the Niger. With characteristic foresight, their object is to unite their lines beginning at the mouths of the Niger and at Lagos about the old town of Rabba, from which, as a central point, they doubtless intend spreading into the interior and occupying every acceptable point. Theoretically we have in part accomplished this same work. The darkness and doubt that had appeared so gloomily in our way have been dispelled in the gradual step we have made from Lagos through Yorubaland, and we are now ready to shake hands in peace and friendship with the country that lies directly the way to the large and important

kingdom of Gambari, Hausa¹ and Bornu. Whether much or little has been accomplished is not now the question with us; it is cheering to know that in advance of, and preparatory to, the great work of beginning the gospel among these benighted millions, the first steps have been taken towards the ultimate object; opposition and prejudice to our advance have given way and now we have only to pray that He, who is the deliverer of the nations from the fetters of sin, may carry on his own cause to a successful end.

This morning in company with Mr McIntosh, the ship's captain, I paid a visit to the ill-fated vessel. It lay near a small island on a bed of rock over which it was attempted to steer it. As the current was very strong and the cocks at the time were covered with water the vessel struck just as it was borne around in an unsuccessful effort to ascend the stream and sunk, bow farthest, on the larboard side, and was only prevented from going to the bottom by the rocks on which it rested. Captain Beecroft, in a former and more successful expedition, avoided this middle channel in taking the eastern branch of the river but which, I believe, was not observed by any of the present expedition. Though the navigation at this point becomes critical it was proven by Beecroft,² who went one or two days' journey higher up, not to be impracticable; to which fact Lieutenant Glover, one of the company dispatched by Baikie, to Wawa and Busa added that he did not consider that there was any insuperable obstacles to the navigation, not even at the Busa rocks.³ He said that at the most difficult points the rocks and high water could be passed over and that low water could go between them. At Ketra rock the river is divided into three channels, the aggregate of which can be but little less than a mile in width and presents a fine view, relieved as it is by the adjoining mountain scenery, as is to be seen at any point in its course. It is not excessively winding, rather straight

¹ The Yoruba used to call the Hausa "Gambari", and Clarke was here influenced by this. But it is superfluous to talk of "Gambari and Hausa kingdoms" as both are, in fact, one and the same thing.

² The first British consul on the coast of modern Nigeria. For information about him, see K. O. Dike, "John Beecroft, 1790-1854: Her Britannic Majesty's Consul to the Bights of Benin and Biafra, 1849-1854", *Journal of the Historical Society of Nigeria*, Vol. 1, No. 1 (December 1956).

³ Where Mungo Park's canoe capsized in 1805. The section of the Niger which Clarke described on this page is now the site of the Kainji Dam, Nigeria's biggest hydro-electric power centre.

than otherwise, with beautiful water, but though a noble and important stream, will not compare in the volume of water with the great western river of America. Up to this point, about five hundred miles from the sea (and how far beyond is yet problematical), it could be made available for the purposes of commerce at almost any season of the year by the use of vessels adapted to its navigation.

Lying on the west behind the range of hills that line the river is Old Oyo, the Katunga of Landers, distant one or two days' journey and visible from Mount Igbeti, the huge granite rock of which mention has been made earlier.¹ All this region bordering the Niger, once the Yoruba stronghold, is now a deserted wilderness waiting the call of providence to step forth into active usefulness and reward the effort of civilization and Christianity.

Today being Sabbath day, there were prayers as usual. At ten o'clock we were assembled in the large tent for divine service performed by Mr Crowther. The Reverend gentleman had insisted that I should preach for him but being a stranger and dissenter of the worst cast, I considered it better that he should conduct the exercises according to his own custom. The church service was handed to me, but not being familiar with the litany and sometimes losing myself, skilful though I be in turning over leaves, I would not positively assert that the entire forms were read, but if there is any greater repetition in the regular services of churches and cathedrals than we had today it was not at all to be wondered that our congregation was fatigued and cheerless before the service was even begun. We had some very good remarks from second Peter, twentieth verse, of the stereotyped order, but it is not the preaching that would influence Africa with a love of the gospel and build on the ruins of heathenish superstition and Muslim fanaticism and bigotry and apostolic living Christianity.

Although it was Sabbath and contrary to my convictions and plan to travel on this day, I felt constrained because of pressure of time to take leave of the company in order to spend the night at Fauga, preparatory to an early start the following morning. The evening was delightful—save an oppressive heat—and lent a charm to every object that caught my eye, as the shadow lengthened out and the

¹ See Chapter 3 below.

cool breezes began to revive our spirits. The awning being now removed I had a survey of the whole stream with its clear beautiful-looking water, the placid gentle motion of which produced scarcely a ripple. The average width I would take to be from twelve to fourteen hundred yards from the islands that frequently divide the channel. The banks in this vicinity are generally low and flat and on the right mostly covered with an impenetrable bush. There was but little to admire or attract attention save the wide-spread gentle waters and the attendant scenery. No fish were heard floundering in the stream; no awkward unwieldy hippopotami were seen basking on the land or feeding on green islets: none rushing, plunging in the deep: not an animal nor a reptile nor a bird to suggest to the mind that I was riding on the bosom of the once mysterious Niger. At four o'clock I entered the right branch about the size of the Alabama at Montgomery though much more placid, and was soon landed at Fauga. I had supposed the Asa river emptied into the Niger a few yards above the town, but on closer inspection I was convinced that the united streams of the smaller rivers Asa, Ogun and Qsin must lose their waters in the parent stream some distance above Ketra Rock. In making some inquiries I ascertained that this branch of the river returns to the main current a few miles below and not above Rabba as was suggested by someone of the expedition. The bluff at this point is a very fine one and running into an elevated, level region affords one of the finest localities for a colony within the whole of the Sudan country.

I now paid my respects to the Balę and gave him a small present in which, according to the custom of the country, he forthwith dressed himself, and appeared as friendly as could have been wished. The consul, to whom in taking charge of my horse I had given a small present, finding the Balę had received a cloth, objected to his present as not being suitable to a man of his dignity.

I saw here a large canoe party, partly loaded, with a width and depth each of four feet and a length of thirty feet and capable of holding several tons. The boats are not made from single trees but of different pieces of wood fastened together by strips of iron so united as to admit but little water. Rice is quite abundant and forms a staple production. The island just opposite the town, which is of considerable size, would certainly produce thousands of bushels of

this valuable article. The Nupe people so far as I have found them are kind and hospitable and like the Yoruba manifest a willingness to receive into their midst those who have a desire to live in peace. I explained to them my object and expressed the hope that I should be able at some future time to visit Masaba and Rabba with a view of introducing into their country the religion of the true God. It is said that the Nupe have no word in their language expressive of the term saviour but the mere statement of a few natives was not sufficient to satisfy my mind.

As the moonlight had now failed us and we were no longer able to make our early start, the daylight gave me the better opportunity of examining this magnificent valley, the more interesting not only because of its fertility but also cultivatable nature.

At the English encampment there was a yam sold that weighed thirty pounds. The immense size of these bulbs enabled me to understand the object of the large hills [heaps] which, like piggy mountains, were scattered over the farms of the valleys. Such roots must have room for development or lose the size to which they are entitled. Bees wax I thought to be plentiful. I noticed several baskets made of straw resembling fish baskets and seeing bees occupying one I inferred the use to which they were applied.

A little distance beyond Kogun I met a caravan and for the first time saw beasts of burden brought into requisition. Oxen and donkeys are both used and in this instance bore two loads, balancing each other on the sides of the animal.¹ The owner walked behind with measured pace and at a rate that could not exceed fifteen or twenty miles per day.

At Bubufu I found my little hut had been invaded and swept away by fire. No one, I suppose, blames me, however, for the unfortunate occurrence. For several nights past I had been so annoyed by mosquitoes and had lost sleep to such an extent that at times today it was almost impossible for me to keep my eyes open. At one time they actually closed and when returned to consciousness I found myself in the suburbs of a farmyard a short distance from the road.

¹ This is still a common feature in Nupe today.

I reached Sareh about three o'clock and immediately requested an interview with the Balogun; but as on the morning of my departure, the chief's house had been consumed in a conflagration my prospect for effecting anything at this place was materially altered. Houseless and almost homeless, the governor could by no means entertain a stranger. Though I perceived my opportunity in this state of things was very unfavourable I concluded to wait until the morning to hear the result of the official's decision.

The incendiary who had been the cause of this fire was a woman, now held in custody awaiting the decision of the chief authorities. Incendiary acts are very common in African towns and the more so from the difficulty of detecting them. A spark of fire wrapped in a little combustible matter, placed in a grass roof and perfectly concealed from view is most certain, when fanned by the wind, to result in a serious conflagration. But fires here, unlike those in civilized countries, are of but little moment, as the walls generally survive the heat, and the roofing of a house only furnished the occasion for a general frolic in the free use of beer or Holland gin, largely diluted with water. The women cry a little and keep up a terrible din and confusion in the securing of goats, calabashes and other perishable articles, but when that subsides and the excitement passes off they return to their accustomed work with as much glee as ever.

Early this morning I started my carriers off. I then called on the Balogun whom I found to be a son of the chief and found him surrounded by a number of his brethren fully as determined as himself in the service of the false prophet.¹ He was a little miffed that I had not called on him a second time on the morning of my departure and appeared to have about him an air of dissatisfaction that I did not exactly comprehend. He informed me of the misfortune of the chief and that he could not now see me as he had no place to receive strangers. I then tried to preach or rather to introduce a religious conversation—but no—they fully understood the importance of my message and would excuse me that I might make no delay in my day's travel. Such was the bluff I received from these bigoted Mohammedans but, as an offset to their uncivil proceeding, the Balogun remarked that as Abeokuta, Ibadan, Ijaye and

¹ The reference is to Prophet Mohammed, the founder of Islam.

Ogbomoṣo had done, so his people would do whenever the advance step should be made by the people of Ilṣrin. This was the first attempt I had ever made to preach without success on account of the decided unwillingness of the hearers to receive instructions. I suppose the entire crowd was Mohammedan and prompted by the presence of their leader to refuse to hear of Him who in their hearts they hate and think to be inferior to their own deified prophet. In the present condition of the chief I could do no more than submit to the failure of an interview and proceed forthwith to Ilṣrin, as affairs at home would not allow of any protracted delay. The sun was now shining so warmly that but for the harmattan that favoured me the day would have been oppressively hot.

A short distance from Apado I was astonished to meet an old acquaintance formerly connected with our missionary work, now on his way to the English encampment at Ketra Rock. I soon ascertained that my mail was in the company and was so elated with the idea of hearing from Yorubaland and America that I should have induced fever but for a timely and free use of quinine. No water could have been more refreshing to a parching thirst than the consoling epistle of our highly-esteemed secretary, J.B. Taylor, whose heart of overflowing sympathy, well knows how to touch the feeling of those who have to war against principalities, the flesh and the devil. I do not wonder why Paul at "Apu Forum" thanked God and took courage.

About midday, passed several Arabs called Baturi¹ [Bature] by the natives with twenty or twenty-five donkeys laden with their merchandise and bound for Ilṣrin. These men are the yankees of central Africa, but not so enterprising as to exercise a little of that African wisdom, I failed to practise, of spending the heat of the day in the shade.

Reaching Igborin about three o'clock I concluded to spend the night and be in readiness for a hard day's ride on the morrow. The chief of this place who seemed to be the subject of gloomy despondency and at the same time object of jealousy on the part of the Fulani was very anxious that I should give him a charm proof against the wiles and machinations of his adversary. In answer to

¹ Hausa word for whiteman.

his request I preached to him Christ crucified, our deliverer and only peace "when the Assyrian cometh into the land". This town is situated in a fresh country and is supplied with an abundance of provisions at very cheap rates.

Before daylight this morning, we were on the wing traversing the road rough and rocky with a few small conic mountains here and there that somewhat relieved the monotony of the way. After passing Oke Osin, the country improved considerably as it became beautifully elevated and spread out into extensive rolling plains, everywhere smiling with farms and checked with fruitful shea-butter trees. This tree, like every other of value, is left standing in the farm by the natives, thus evincing good sense as well as fine taste.

Many were the carriers and traders now wending their way into town, while the road every little distance was occupied by the stalls of female vendors with the good things of the country to attract and whet the appetite of the way-worn traveller. As I approached the city, its long outline of thickly-crested houses rose distinctly to view, presenting a linear distance that cannot be less than four miles from north to south. Twenty minutes before twelve o'clock I reached the consul's, having travelled six and a half hours and from twenty-five to thirty miles. I found that Sunmõnu had already started for the Eḡon country to aid his French brethren in the magnanimous work of colonizing the unhappy African by tearing them away from all they hold dear and sacred; from the land of their nativity where they can make "cent per cent" and by transporting them to an uncongenial hated soil to spend the remnant of their days in ignominy and beastly labour. And for what? To better his condition? Who could think of such a thing but the most selfish and tyrannical.

This morning I dispatched a messenger with Sunmõnus' canvass that had been given by Dr Baikie and which I had brought with me to the small village where he was now making his headquarters, but a short distance from Ilõrin. The king yesterday had promised an early interview in appreciation for the iron bedstead I had just given him. After the usual preliminaries I was admitted to an audience that proved quite private and unrestrained. He was in a fine humour and very much gratified with the present that had been to me of such great value in travelling over the country. I had intended spending several days in the city but as Sunmõnu was absent and I was unfitted

in many respects for prolonging my stay and moreover was very anxious to reach home, the king readily yielded to my solicitation after complimenting me with a fine sheep and several heads of cowries. By this time my fine retinue, similar to the small one of 1855, was reduced to six in number and scarcely a load to bear home, as I had of necessity disposed of my boxes, trunks and bedstead. In the evening about three o'clock I left the town to spend the night in a farm village with the kind wishes of some for my safety home and of others that I would again return.

In taking leave of Ilorin, a city which, from the representations of its size and position, has attracted some little attention, I wish to append here a few remarks that may be taken as embodying what would interest the reader. This city lies north east of Lagos a hundred and sixty miles by latitude and two hundred and thirty miles by way of travel and about fifty miles from the Niger at Rabba. It is now one of the greatest entrepôts of central Africa and the commercial emporium of all southern Sudan and of this part of the western coast. It was originally and is really now a Yoruba town under the control of the Fulani, who by the prestige of their military power succeeded by taking advantage of the disordered state of the Yoruba kingdom some fifty years ago in over-running the entire country and well-nigh brought it to the very verge of ruin. It was under these circumstances that the ambitious Poulhs gained a strong foothold among the panic-stricken Yoruba and retained it to the present time. In many respects the Fulani race are decidedly a superior people and are so acknowledged by all their neighbours and I doubt not they rule Ilorin altogether by prestige. They form but a very small portion of the population of the town, perhaps not more than a tenth, and yet the Fulani are the undoubted aristocracy of all this country. In saying that Ilorin is a city of immense size, with its hundreds of thousands of inhabitants, I imagine very little credit will be given me for sound judgement by the pedantic and otherwise who have at all times ready-to-hand foregone conclusions suitable to their wishes. But let that be as it may, the above assertion as regards the size of Ilorin, though it be merely an opinion, was based on an acquaintance with the city, such as no other whiteman has had and on observations of its length and breadth from every important point. To give an idea of its size, Ogbomoso is a town that is supposed

to contain forty or fifty thousand people and yet when standing viewing the length of Ilorin on either side it would seem you could place four or five of the former town in the latter. Besides its length from four to six miles and its width three miles, the most of it is thickly settled and nearly every part of it is built up. The gates of entrance are a dozen or more and the markets of merchandise are counted by scores. In 1855 I entered Ilorin at night at the north-west gate and on the night following rode three miles into the city to the stranger's home and every four hundred yards passed a market beautifully lighted with lamps. This is the case over the whole city; the din and confusion of which are like the roaring of many waters and may be heard for several miles. From six until eight o'clock at night during which time most of the marketing is done the city is so alive with human beings that I venture to say, were the important thoroughfares leading to the markets thronged together into a single street three miles long—omnibus and vehicles excepted—it would prove no mean imitation of Broadway or Cheapside; and that a foot passenger would meet nearly as much difficulty in making his way here as on either of the above mentioned streets. This is due merely to the crowded states of the city, and by no means gives a correct idea of its dimensions. Besides, there are small villages containing from one hundred to five hundred souls. I know twenty of these villages, though the natives say that there are about as fifty or a hundred. These villages are all directly connected with the city and are pouring in every day hundreds and thousands of loads of provisions to supply the markets of towns. I have seen enough of these small villages to convince me that the number can be scarcely less than fifty. I have counted at one time seven or eight from a single point of observation. It may be asked now by those who are ready to be convinced in spite of themselves how can such a population live in such a state of barbarism? Dear Sirs, your conclusion is wholly illogical based on a false hypothetical premise. They are not barbarous. They cultivate thousands of acres. They eat corn, rice, yams, potatoes, peas, mutton, kid, beef and butter; drink, and ride fine horses, and sleep, drink and rejoice as the rest of mankind. I hope this will suffice to give an idea of the mere size of this mammoth city a larger than which I know not one on this side of the Kong Mountains. Of its trade and importance I will hereafter speak.



Plate I. Tabitha Jennie Clarke in later life



Plate II. Amule Hill near Şaki

By Courtesy of Mr S O Oğundiran, Principal, Baptist High School, Şaki

Daylight had not dawned this morning before I was wending my way homeward. I had already heard of the arrival of some friends and as my road was as level as a floor, I had stimulus sufficient to urge me on at a rapid rate. A few hundred yards from my sleeping place I was hailed by a man—to me a very suspicious character—and certainly at not a very reasonable hour who asked my name. To this I replied; but to another request that I should give him something I made no answer; and as it was yet dark and I was alone in a defenceless condition I rode on little heeding, leaving it to those who were some distance behind to find out his business at such an early hour. I afterwards learned he was on the lookout to receive custom from travellers who sometimes walked before daybreak and without due precaution, and who would escape the payment of duty on goods. Be that as it may, it is certainly not very pleasant to have to do with suspicious characters who are out on watch especially before the dawn of day. The morning was most delightful, the air cool and bracing, with a road as level as a plain I made rapid strides homeward. So great were the changes on the path that, though I had travelled them several times before, there were but few places I could identify; and in some instances what eight or ten months ago was a mere unbroken forest was now in a state of good cultivation. A few minutes before one o'clock I reached home, having been absent thirty-six days, eighteen of which was spent in travelling and eighteen in rest and labour.

PART II

CHAPTER 6

HISTORY OF THE YORUBA PEOPLE FROM THE EARLY TIMES TO THE 1850s

It had been my desire in the preceding pages to introduce the reader by the several tours to this interesting portion of Africa without encumbering him with those wayside remarks, reflections and details almost invariably to be met with in works of this description. Those tours and the acquaintance derived therefrom will be very entertaining to aid us in forming the proper estimate of the country and the several peoples inhabiting them, as well as of the immeasurable facts, incidents, and circumstances upon which their estimate is based. While the reader will enjoy the advantage of judging from the preceding pages the justice and truth of my inferences and facts here embodied, it is my desire to give prominence to whatever pertains to this inviting portion of Africa because of the interest it is eliciting in more ways than one both in the United States and in England.

Sudan from the earliest modern efforts to penetrate Africa has been the aim of nearly all of those who have entered the list on behalf of philanthropy and civilization. It embraces that portion of Africa bordering on the desert for the distance of two thousand miles with a width, beginning about sixty miles from the sea, of nearly five hundred miles, some portions of which have been termed by geographers as Nigritia¹ and embracing that race of people emphatically African. This vast territory, at least in part, was the field of

¹ Probably to indicate the area around the River Niger.

the labours and explorations of Park, Oudney, Denham, Clapperton, Saunders, Kaille, and those associated with them; but their efforts were confined principally to central, north and western Sudan. Southern Sudan is that region of the country lying above the Guinea coast with the Niger as its northern and eastern boundary and embracing some of the fairest and most interesting portions yet discovered of the continent of darkness. Yoruba [Oyo] one of the first kingdoms in southern Sudan, lies in 5° east, longitude 6½° north latitude north of the Bight of Benin, with its southern boundary about six miles from the coast. It is bounded on the north by the Nupe kingdoms and Borgu or Ibariba; on the east and south-east by the Igbomina and Ijeṣa kingdoms; on the south by Ijeṣa and Eḡba and on the west by the old kingdom of Dahomey¹. In the delta of the Niger, as on its western banks, are a number of petty provinces bounded by distant ties and those already mentioned which may be considered as closely united in destiny to the countries to southern Sudan. The kingdoms of which we have to treat more or less are the Popo, disorganized Eḡba, Yoruba, Ijeṣa, Igbomina and Nupe, among all of whom, as might be expected, are to be found considerable diversity among not a little uniformity in the physical country, the people and their language. For the sake of perspicuity I shall oftentimes speak of the Yoruba as the genus of which the surrounding tribes are the mere species

It is an interesting question whence such a people as the Yoruba, who, in mental, moral and physical conditions are so superior to the coast tribes, originated. Involved in the greatest obscurity as the origin, rise and progress of most African tribes are, it would be little less than vanity and presumption to attempt to give anything more than vague conjecture as to the country whence emigrated the Yoruba or the epoch when that emigration took place. If, as said in a recent travel account of Dr Barth in north-central Africa,² so little worthy of credit is to be gleaned of the ancient history of those much nearer the abodes of civilization and the stone house of authenticated facts,

¹ Eḡba and Dahomey were technically component parts of the Old Oyo Empire termed by Clarke as Yoruba Kingdom.

² See an account of this travel in Henrich Barth, *Travels and Discoveries in North and Central Africa, 1849-1855* (Longmans, 1857) 5 vols. reprinted in 3 vols by Frank Cass, London, 1965.

what are we to expect of those who long since, without a language to record their past,¹ have been entirely deprived of that connection with others better informed by a system of robbery and rapine. We may, with others, indulge in vague speculation that in the course of time they were driven from the higher latitudes by powerful invaders but with the very best historic evidence of antiquity as furnished by Herodotus, we can do very little more. As an evidence of the great difficulty attached to this question, the Yoruba cannot be traced back by national similarities either in custom, languages or physiognomy through the intervening tribes to the great kingdoms bordering the desert. While the peculiarities of customs and languages might probably be accounted for on the grounds of long social intercourse we find every tribe with its peculiar stamp of physiognomy and oftentimes so greater differences to be seen than between those separated by merely an imaginary line; for instance, the Yoruba and Nupe are different in whatever pertains to physiognomy, though they are border kingdoms, as the American from the aborigines of their own country, while among the Ibariba, Nupe, Hausa and Kaninke people are to be seen like differences of colour, character and disposition. Perhaps in the course of future developments, under a light not yet realized and with a telescopic key undiscovered, there may be interesting facts brought to view; but of this pursuit we have to content ourselves with the operation of this people for the last seventy-five or a hundred years as they may be heard from the vague and unsatisfactory traditions of the nations.

The kingdom of Yoruba having at one time extended itself from Katunga or Old Oyo near the Niger to Ijebu within the vicinity of the coast and from Ijesa to Dahomey, and having been accustomed from the strength and prestige to receive tribute from the surrounding tribes, it is not at all to be wondered at that a superstitious people should have enlarged views of their country and treasure up in the minds of every successive generation whatever may appear to account for their origin and subsequent growth. There is a striking and

¹ In the absence of written records, Clarke could not understand that the Yoruba had an organized method of recording their past orally through court historians, in traditions, etc. Clarke himself, in fact, tapped this source for the historical account he recorded on pp. 193-197 below!

interesting tradition narrated by some of their legend which, while it illustrates their vague notion of the creation and the flood, tends to throw some light on their origin. The Yoruba say¹ that fifteen persons were once sent out from a certain region with a volunteer and only child whose name was Ọkanbi, and who afterwards became king of Yoruba. Ọkanbi was presented by the persons sending them out with a small piece of black cloth, contents unknown, and a fowl, a servant and a trumpeter whose name was Ọkinkin. On entering this unknown region they saw a large expanse of water which they were obliged to wade. As they journeyed, Ọkanbi was reminded by the trumpeter, according to instructions previously given, of the small piece of cloth by a sound of the trumpet. As the cloth was opened, a palm nut with some earth fell upon the ground and grew immediately into a tree with sixteen branches. The travellers, being weary from their march through the water, gladly hailed this unexpected relief and rested themselves upon its branches. Having recovered their strength, they prepared again for the journey, yet not without perplexity, as they were entirely unacquainted with the way. In this dilemma they were seen by a certain Okikisi from the region whence they set out, who reminded the trumpeter of his duty. He sounded it again and signified to Ọkanbi of the small piece of black cloth. It was again opened and some earth dropped into the water and became a small mound; then the fowl flew up upon it and scattered it here and there, converting the water into earth wherever it touched. Ọkanbi with his servant and trumpeter then descended from the tree but could not allow the others to come down, notwithstanding their entreaties, until they had promised to pay him at a certain time a tax of two hundred cowries each. Thus began the Yoruba kingdom whose supposed origin, as well as that of the world, is the old idolatrous city of Ife.

There is another tradition, lightly varied by those who relate it, of the occupancy and settlement of the Yoruba country and the adjoining territories by six brothers who set out from this famous point for future discoveries. The slave named Adimu, signifying

¹ Compare the account which follows with those in Johnson, *op. cit.*, pp. 3-14. An evaluation of the various theories of origin of the Yoruba is in S. O. Biobaku, *Origin of the the Yorubas*, Lagos, 1955.

"holdfast", was left to govern Ife during their absence. As the result of their researches and discoveries, the kingdoms or provinces of Yoruba [Oyo], Ketu, Egbá, Owu and Igbomina to be ruled in future by five of the brothers, were claimed and subordinated and are to this day recognized in this condition, by the names of the principal rulers derived from the principal cities or localities of the province over which they ruled. The chief of Abeokuta is today known as Alake, he who has or is possessor of Ake, king's quarters; and Alaketu, he who is in possession of Ketu. Of these several provinces among which Yoruba was the youngest, we have only the Yoruba and Igbomina remaining while Ife, Egbá and Ketu have been reduced to the mere condition of independent cities and Owu¹ is known only in song as a mere matter of tradition. During the changes that have marked the course of this interesting people, the capital of the Yoruba kingdom has been twice or thrice changed from old Ife, or some unknown point, to Katunga of Landers or Old Oyo; then from this rocky site near the Niger to its present locality within the central parts of the kingdom.

If we attempt to trace the history of the people through the lineage of the royal family we find ourselves involved in as much perplexity and as great obscurity as when imagining their origin, rise and progress. A line of kings cannot be traced back with certainty farther than the latter part of the last century during which period it is conjectured with considerable certainty that Ajagbo, who died at a very advanced age, reigned in Katunga. A considerable number of the names of these ruling powers has been given me by the natives but as they are mere names without connection with any important fact in history they would be of no service in this place.² Ajagbo was succeeded by Abiodun, who also enjoyed a long and peaceful reign and was then gathered to the sepulchre of his father.

¹ Owu was destroyed in the Owu war of c. 1819-25. See account in Johnson, *op. cit.*, pp. 206-10. See also A. Mabogunje and J. D. Omer-Cooper, *Owu in Yoruba History*, Ibadan University Press, 1971.

² It is a pity that Clarke did not include a record of this king list in his work. It would have provided a useful comparison with the list given in Johnson, *op. cit.*, pp. 669-70.

About this period, supposed to be near the year eighteen hundred,¹ was inaugurated a state of things the influence and effect of which are felt to this day and which presents materials, could they be collected, of one of the most thrilling and eventful periods within the history of any people. As it is not within my present scope to enter into details, I can only present the outline of this period in its connection with the brief history of Yoruba and some of the contiguous countries. About the close of this reign² [Abiḡdun's] the Fulani, called also as Fellatahs, Fuloni, Foulh or Poulh, who had been creating a great excitement in northern Sudan for years previous under the direction of one of their fanatical leaders, impelled by fanatical religion and subjugating many of the heathen tribes, were only known in the country as shepherds and herdsmen. Being a pastoral people, as they may now be seen in some parts of Yorubaland, they were allowed to feed their sheep and cattle wherever they liked and generally lodged outside towns and in tents or hastily erected huts. Situated among a powerful people whose old king Abiḡdun had been accustomed to receive tribute from the bloodthirsty rulers of Dahomey and whose influence and terror had no doubt been felt far beyond the Niger, these humble followers of the tropics had not yet been so imbued with the importance of ambition as to rouse their single hand against their powerful Kaffir foe. But the time had come. On the death of Abiḡdun, Arogangan his brother succeeded to the throne and, jealous of power and authority, soon projected a plan by which he could remove from the gates of the royal palace the object of his jealousy, Afḡnja, his own nephew and a native of Ilḡrin. He first conferred on him the honour of Aḡ Ḡba,³ king's chief warrior, and placed him in Ilḡrin with a hope that his insubordinate spirit might be calmed. But instead of accomplishing his desired object, Afḡnja made use of every artifice to dethrone the king that he himself might occupy the throne. Arogangan, being aware of his

¹ Cf. Akinjogbin's, "A Chronology of Yoruba History, 1789-1840", *Odu: University of Ife Journal of African Studies*, Vol. 2, No. 2 (1966).

² That is the reign of Aolḡ otherwise known as Arogangan who was Abiḡdun's, successor.

³ The full title is Aḡ Ḡna Kakanfo. Compare this account with the one in Johnson, *op. cit.*, pp. 189-96.

design, sent him under a false pretext against Iwere, a town situated in the southern part of the Yoruba kingdom that he might thereby remove him, as David did Uriah, out of the way. When Afonja told the people of Iwere of the design of his visit he was immediately sent back with an army to take Arogangan and in case of his refusal to deliver himself up, to attack the capital. The king, fearing the result of capitulation, poisoned himself, and thus by his death introduced a state of things which resulted in little short of entire destruction of the country.

After the lapse of five or ten years during which there were four or five rulers and an interregnum of a few years, the kingdom was thrown into the utmost confusion, which crisis Afonja made use of to stir up a spirit of jealousy between Ilorin and the capital and then to invite to his aid the Fulani, who, by their prestige and warlike achievements in northern Sudan, were but too willing to avail themselves of an opportunity to realize their desire of a universal empire in subjecting the Kaffirs to their rule, even to the very borders of the sea.

Just at this time the great thirst for pillage and kidnapping had reached such a degree in all the country as to prove such a powerful auxiliary to the Fulani in carrying on their conquests by breaking that bond of union which hitherto had presented the Yoruba to their neighbours as a powerful and prosperous people. If, on the one hand, the Fulani, who had been the scourge of interior Africa, were coming down like an avalanche on the kingdom, sweeping everything before it, the people of Yorubaland, on the other hand, were the prey of their own cupidity and became so far abandoned to every vile principle as to subject their neighbours of contiguous cities to slavery, verifying in their case the saying of the scripture that "the wicked tremble at the shaking of a leaf". Scarcely anyone was going to the farms lest before night they should be in the fetters of robbers and en route for the barracoon, or slave deck on the coast. Before these disturbances, though there were a number of very large and populous cities in the kingdom, such as Old Oyo, Ilorin, Igboho, Ikoyi and others, the people generally lived in small towns and villages each, according to reports, of about one thousand inhabitants and devoted to the cultivation of the country. But when compelled to flee they threw themselves together into some well-fortified towns for mutual

defence against the common enemy, and with a resolution and firmness worthy of a people fighting for life and liberty, determined to conquer or die. Town and city were continually swept away, the terror-stricken people were fleeing in every direction, seeking peace and safety, but finding their homes in the island of Cuba or on the plantations of Brazil—except those who were so fortunate as to find a foothold on the capricious spoil of Sierra Leone. The town of Ogbomoṣo, which protected the aggregating population of many surrounding towns, sustained its defence long and well and with three or four others now stands the remnant of what once was the original kingdom of Yorubaland. The Fulani, flushed with continual victory, bore down on every successive town in their march to the coast, pressing on the devoted Yoruba who, in turn, rushed like mad men on the defenceless Eḡba until the conquering army met a force worthy of its steel in the determined and brave soldiers of the large city of Ibadan. These mad followers of the prophet who had made their boasts that were it not for the sea they would conquer even the pale-faced Kaffirs of the west, here with a signal defeat were forced to terminate their prestige on the southern side of the Niger.

It will never be possible, I imagine, to record the details of this great tragedy on the page of history and assign the full weight to the regular causes of its desolation, so entire and extensive as to have few parallels in human experience. The work is done. Hundreds of towns and cities within the territory of fifty thousands miles live only in name or in the songs of humiliated people or the green grass, the heavy undergrowth or the broken walls that perchance mark the sites of desolation and ruin. Of the evidences of this desolation any traveller may become satisfied in his direction east, west or north until the heart suffers at the sight of so much destruction and ruin. Of the blood that was there, of the tears that flowed, of human misery that covered the land like a cloud of darkness in the destruction of property, the blasting of hopes and the separation of each and every human tie that unites heart to heart, let the reader step back twenty years ago and walk the streets of Sierra Leone and mark those multi-form countenances and languages; then let him stop that man who says "Aku" and hear his sad recital of the scenes and events that have been transpiring for years back in his native land. Hear him, as with tearful eyes he relates the capture and destruction

of his own town, the death before his eyes of his own father or mother, the captivity of his own brothers and sisters, and an eternal separation from all that is dear to him of kindred and friends and home and a consignment¹, as he thought, in a foreign land to a life of long servitude. Listen to the recitals of hundreds such, more thrilling and startling than the miniature pictures of what transpired on the scale of a whole nation, and we may have some faint idea of what is in the great tragedy acted out in the most interesting portions of Africa. Or if we would have one single city presented to view, take that mentioned earlier, namely, the city of Ighoho which when seen by Saunders² thirty years ago contained an immense population, with its three walls of mud, but when seen by the writer in 1855 was almost destroyed, yet with relics sufficient to testify to its former greatness.

If it be now asked what was the principal cause of so great desolation and misery, I answer that it was the removal from the African coast of the safeguards of natives' liberty, the American and British cruisers, substituted with those crafts that bear in their wake a pestilence worse than death itself.³ For, introduce again a trade whose influence on the native mind is like the destructive upas tree and sooner or later there will be rekindled through all Sudan the fires of civil war which will reproduce all those changes of such fearful import, desolation, ruin and destruction as are enough to arouse the indignation of any free man against the presentation of wrongs that have scarcely a parallel within the pages of history. That the slave trade had all to do with the utter overthrow and ruin of many fair portions of Africa I would not say; but that it had most illegitimately and wickedly a very great share in the influences that produced such results no candid, well-informed mind can for a moment doubt. Its influence was long seen and felt like an under-current wearing away, and the more dangerous because it was

¹ For an example see the account given by Ajayi Crowther in J. F. Ade Aiayi, "Samuel Ajayi Crowther of Oyo" in Philip D. Curtin (ed.) *op. cit.*,

² Obviously the reference is to the Lander brothers, for as pointed out earlier in the note on p. 68 below, no explorer by the name Saunders ever visited Yorubaland in the nineteenth century.

³ Clarke probably forgot that up to the end of the eighteenth century, these same British and American cruisers were used for loading slaves!

unobserved and was preparing the minds and hearts of the people by its debasing effects until when it burst forth such a flood that there was no power, moral or physical, that could arrest its course.

This Fulani invasion, on the one hand, had a most humiliating effect on the minds of the people in the ruin of their country, the desolation of their homes and the murder of their kindred and friends and, on the other hand, produced the happy result of turning their minds from the love of barbarism and war to the peaceful pursuits of agriculture and commerce. Worn out, completely exhausted by preying on and sucking the life-blood of each other, their determination now is, if they could but repel further invasion, amend for the past by the improvement of the present and an ardent longing for a still better future. A quarter of a century has elapsed and though their heavens have occasionally been darkened by pillage, robbery and internecine feuds, their course seems to have been onward, more especially since the introduction among them within the last ten years of the Christian religion. Since my acquaintance with this kingdom and people, beginning in the fall of 1854, there has been continually an improvement among them in almost every respect, especially in agriculture and commerce, and a desire for peace. A year ago it was a boast in the country that an old woman could go from town to town in peace with a staff in her hand. In 1855 by the regulations of the city of Ijaye not one gallon of palm oil was allowed to be shipped from the city nor is it a regular article of trade between that city and Abeokuta. Such is a brief and concise history of the rise, progress and present condition of this interesting kingdom, with which those interested in Africa, we believe, would desire to become better acquainted.

CHAPTER 7

PHYSICAL FEATURES AND VEGETATION OF YORUBALAND

FROM the partial descriptions of various localities to be met with in the former part of this work there is obviated the necessity of any minuteness of detail other than a short review of the topography of the country, with the surrounding kingdoms taken as a whole or in the aggregate. We have here a country, which, in its physical features and aspects, presents a status either from the peculiarity of its position or from a variety of causes not fully understood, that modifies very materially the [pre-conceived] notions of a traveller respecting a tropical equatorial region. Passing through that forty or fifty miles of flat palm region that may be properly called the coast belt, we enter a section of country extending to the Niger, which in its prominent features differs very materially from the country below and from one's preconceived notions of what a tropical region would be. The elevation of the country in a gradual rise from the coast is at this point very striking and presents beautiful specimens of the primitive formations that mark the age of the country. This elevation continues to a point nearly two hundred miles from the coast, which is the remarkable dividing line that separates the streams flowing respectively to the sea and Niger, and at which the country begins to spread out into vast plains stretching to the latter watercourse. This elevation becomes striking and doubly interesting in that beautiful chain of mountains denominated by travellers as the Kong, which perhaps has peculiarities rarely to be seen. The traveller, except in one or two instances, has no impression of a chain, such as is to be seen in Europe, Asia and America, from those isolated single peaks

scattered over the face of the country and which do not impress with ideas of grandeur and sublimity, but offer a pleasing resting place to the otherwise wearied traveller, and give a change that adds not a little to the interest of the side-spreading landscape. These peaks, rising directly from the plain and presenting sometimes sides and tops covered with a luxuriant vegetation, or a dry impoverished grass of a light red colour, or sides perfectly bare, may be seen in numbers more or less from every part of the kingdom. Around Okeiho and the eastern parts of Yorubaland, and especially in the Igbomina country, they present if not the tallest elevation yet a brokenness and roughness and sometimes a grandeur that invest them with not a little interest. From the highest point of Okeiho and the several pinnacles of Mount Igbeti, east, south and west, are to be seen almost every peak of interest throughout the kingdom. The extent of this peculiar range of mountains, with its belt of a hundred and fifty miles, though it may not be fully confirmed, there is the best reason for believing they extend from the source of the Niger and Senegal on the west to an eastern point perhaps far up the Benue where it is possible at least that it may form a connection with the mountains of the moon and the extending spurs of the Cameroons as they shoot out eastward towards the equator. These mountains do not give to Yorubaland the aspect of a rough mountainous or hilly appearance, but still there is a remarkable absence of hills and dead plains as found in many portions of the United States; they have a peculiarity in those remarkable, gentle undulations that give to the country one of its first features of beauty.

It might be very easily imagined and understood how, in such a territory, there could be rivers and watercourses abundant for every purpose. To say nothing of the Niger that encircles all this portion of Sudan, there arising in the eastern and western portions are the Oşun and Ogun rivers, which in their source to the Osa [lagoon] traverse the country and drain the whole by the innumerable tributaries that continually pour in their waters into the parent stream. By reference to a map¹ it may be seen there is quite

¹ See maps on pp. xxxviii and xxxix for the location of the major rivers.

a ramification of these streams, not put down haphazardly, but from actual observation, in every part of the kingdom, presenting it as a region suited well to agricultural and other purposes. A goodly number of these streams retain water during the entire year, or are of the perennial nature, where many others remain entirely dry but for a short time during the wet season. On the other hand, though these streams are almost innumerable during the wet season, they are not of sufficient size to impede progress or present difficulty for any length of time to the travelling public. Most of the smaller streams are clear, have a sweet taste and are entirely free from mineral properties. Some few of the smaller streams seem to be impregnated with iron while the large rivers take their colour more or less from the countries through which they pass. Very few, however, have imparted to them that deep red colour common to many American rivers. The Ogun is, at some places, a little ringed with red clay and at others has a whitish colour. All streams are skirted by a grove and may be determined in the open countries at considerable distances by this peculiarity which imparts life and beauty to the scenery.

The varieties of soil are as great as can be found in any country of equal extent undergoing frequent and marked changes from the coast to the Niger, and at some places within half a mile's walk. Most of the soil within the vicinity of the coast, and especially that of the swamps and rivers and the primeval forests, is a rich black mould, and in some instances, loose after cultivation, very productive and finely adapted to the growth of Indian corn, yams, and vegetables. Cotton does not seem to thrive so well. In the palm belt, so called because of the prominence of this tree, there is a slight change or modification of this soil with a greater mixture of sand that reduces slightly its fertility. This quality, with a good substratum of clay, produces the finest crops and is sought by the natives because of the ease with which it is cultivated and generally the little labour required to bring it into a cultivable state. It occupies in every sense of the word an intermediate position between the rich black mould of the primeval forest and the qualities to be observed in the higher and open regions. The striking features of the soil in the open or prairie country are loose, pulverized and

sandy, frequently of an ash colour, free and productive and with a deep subsoil of clay which it would seem as in a basin with a great deal of water, and accounting in part for the moisture of the climate and that peculiarity of a four and five month's dry season in which there is little suffering for want of water. The soil, whether the black mould or the sandy, washes but little, either from the nature of the varieties, the mode of cultivation, the very gentle undulations, or all these circumstances. In but very few instances has there ever been seen anything like calcarious substances or lime; never any coal except on the bank of the Niger. Much of the soil in this poor and open region is poor and sterile and though in many places it appears to have been impoverished by excessive cultivation, it produces freely and repays the labourer with a yield not at all in proportion to the appearance of its capacity. There has been observed a very marked tendency and increase of sand in all the soil until you strike the valley of the African Mississippi [River Niger] and in no place is it more conspicuous and evident than just before you enter the valley. In one word, the similarity to the soil in Yorubaland to what we find in many portions of America would not seem to authorize the fact of the entire difference in the vegetable kingdom.

But such is a fact that we have scarcely a tree or shrub of a similar species, to say nothing of an entire want of identity. The growth of the primeval forest is large and tall and would compare favourably with the gigantic trees of the Red river and Mississippi valleys. Many are from sixty to eighty and ninety feet high, well proportioned and heavily timbered. The silk-cotton tree stands conspicuous among the rest, both in the size of its body and its great height. Its excessive size, however, is seen only in the wild buttresses with which nature has furnished it for a protection against storms and tornadoes. The undergrowth and vines furnish the key to solve the impenetrability of these forests which otherwise would be as open as those among us [in America].

The varieties of palm are well known to be several hundreds, a number of which we have in Yorubaland. The ordinary palm of commerce, from which is obtained the oil of trade, is that found in most abundance, extending over a belt of a hundred miles and

furnishing also wine beverage¹ for the natives. This species flourishes in the rich flat bottoms or in the open sandy prairie, but seems best suited to a fertile soil. Its height is from thirty to sixty feet and its age vary greatly. The bamboo palm, so-called because of the great length of its branches or cones, and in their likeness to the bamboo, is found only in fertile or low places such as the border of streams or swamps and is esteemed for its long limbs or branches in building and for the quality of the wine² it furnishes. This wine it is said, however, not to be so good and wholesome as the above mentioned, having a tendency to cause weakness. Yet it is consumed in very large quantities in the regions where it is grown and may be obtained by tapping the body at the top just under the heft or cap of the tree, and catching it as it exudes. I recollect once to have seen between eighty and a hundred females, loaded with calabashes [gourds] of this wine, containing each several gallons, going into Abeokuta. The natives are very fond of it as a beverage and can take large quantities without suffering or making others to suffer from the evil effects of intoxication.

The growth usually found in the prairie and in the upper country, while in the native state, is of a character adapted to the soil and seems in size to be measured by its fertility. In those sections where the soil seems to be rendered doubly sterile by the annual burning of the prairie, we have a small stunted scrubby growth sparsely scattered over the surface and called, very properly, brushwood. Wherever we see the soil improve we find an improvement in the size of the growth, yet never becoming great except in isolated spots or cases. The wide-spreading tendency is a prominent feature in their growth, with a consequent and natural diminution of height.

The locust and shea-butter trees are confined, like the palm, to certain regions and seem to have a kind of affinity for each other as they are not infrequently found in the same section. Neither of these grow to a great height but are striking in imparting beauty to the scenery of their locality. The locust is a wide-spreading tree

¹ This is palm wine which the Yoruba call *emu*.

² The Yoruba call this type of wine *og'ur'ò* (*og'òrò* in some areas).



Plate III. Alafin Şiyanhola Onikepe Ladigbolu I in state. Reproduced from the Afm, Qyo.



Plate IVa. *A wooden divining bowl (opon igede) from Ife, showing the central and radial compartments*

Courtesy of Indiana University Press



Plate IVb. *A rectangular divining tray carved at Duga, Meko, on which is a set of the sixteen palm nuts (ikin) used in divination*

Courtesy of Indiana University Press]

from thirty to forty feet high and growing singly; the shea-butter tree in general height and proportion bears a resemblance to the blackjack. The region in which we find these groves lies between a point one hundred miles from the coast and some unknown point beyond the Niger. The mimosa, the indigo—both small trees—the lime, the orange, the well-known baobab, peculiar in the disproportion of its size and height, with many other fruit trees indigenous to the country, particularly one, a most beautiful tree and prolific with red fruit, as large as a small peach and a flavour like the haw, and other species too tedious to mention may here be found.

That which makes a striking and lasting impression on the traveller as to the growth is the smaller vegetation which presents itself as the covering of the earth and revives the idea of tropical richness and luxuriance. When in the spring or summer of the year the stranger looks forth on nature's covering he is not so impressed with any one object as that universal green luxuriant covering everywhere meeting and greeting the eye. The tall, coarse grass of the prairie, to say nothing of the smaller and less conspicuous species, is seen waving far as the eye can reach over hills and plain. At one time presenting an almost unbroken appearance, then checkered by a forest or a sparsely scattered growth. The luxuriance of every kind of vegetation is one of these peculiar features that adds a charm to a tropical country and which has become proverbial throughout the civilized world. We find it here as described in other tropical countries, one of the main features in imparting such freshness, vigour, life and beauty to all nature, as to compensate in no little degree for the lack of some other blessings that are providentially withheld. The stages of vegetation in germination, growth, maturity and decay, we find regulated by those universally natural laws that govern the vegetable kingdom in all countries; hence the early winter in this latitude only anticipates spring as we find the earlier vegetation, particularly the grasses putting forth and taking the lead in this department, which in spring changes the whole of nature from parched appearance so striking but a few months previous. The change is very rapid, and in many places the growth is fast, and there appears but a very few spots uncovered by a carpet of green.

He who once sees the tropical regions clothed in summer's garb is not soon to lose the impression of such a scene. It is the opinion of many persons that the growth of the tropics is continuous and without any of those changes ignorantly supposed to be determined only by cold, and that all plants, particularly trees, are ever in a state of luxuriant greenness. This is so far from the fact that the evergreens, properly so-called, are very rare and belong to a genus, which even in the tropics cannot be numbered by tens. The subject when examined admits of a conclusion that when we count the orange and one or two other species our list of evergreens is closed. The many trees supposed to belong to this species are not evergreens but either shed their leaves periodically, monthly or annually. The great important fact is overlooked by the casual observer that nature's law is true to herself in the vegetable kingdom and that every gradation of germination, growth, maturity and decay is as observable in the tropics as in the higher latitudes. The apparent loss of vitality and vegetation no more requires the freeing power of cold than the scorching rays of the sun, neither of which affects maturity in vegetation. The general appearance of such a country whose surface is covered by so many natural objects of beauty, such as striking if not grand mountain scenery, with its distinct cones, pyramids and short rough ranges, streams large and small meandering through and intersecting the country, heavy primeval forests extending in belts at intervals of thirty and forty miles, prairies of unbounded green, sparsely covered with timber, and the whole with those gentle undulations that give free scope to vision, may be easily imagined to be one of no ordinary interest, and presenting such a basis of material as augur most favourably in the process and progress of those developments which follow the favoured providences of an all-wise and overruling God.

CHAPTER 8

CLIMATE OF YORUBALAND

THERE are many modifying circumstances that give character and definition to the climate of any country. As a general thing the latitude has a great deal to do with determining the fact, and fixes the climate as to heat or cold. There are extremes of heat and cold, wet and dry, in the torrid and frigid zones, and of temperature and moisture in the mean of latitudes. Independent of these general laws there are modifying circumstances that vary very much a climate and seem at times to come into conflict with these fixed principles. I make these observations because we find such peculiarities in the climate of Yorubaland. To say we have a hot and dry climate or a cold and wet climate would be equally untrue. Notwithstanding our preconceived notions, based as is supposed on facts, there is neither of these climates in the proper understanding of these terms, while the various modifying circumstances, such as elevation of the country and extensive plain, prevalent winds, excessive vegetation and considerable moisture tend to reduce it from the extreme heat and dampness to a mean of genial, pleasant climate neither excessively hot nor cold, wet nor dry, but with many of the changes of the revolving seasons as are seen to be perfectly compatible with natural laws in the temperate zone. This may seem to be a singular position but we appeal to the touchstone of facts in favour of its confirmation.

The temperature varies with the seasons of the year but as a rule with the slightest changes or with a range of heat and cold so limited as to strike the observer with astonishment. In that term, during the rainy season the variation for weeks and months together is not exceeding six degrees and may be safely recorded as between seventy-nine and eighty-five degrees Fahrenheit. During this period,

though it embraces all the hot summer months, the heat is seldom sufficient except in confined rooms or considerable exposure to the sun to annoy or oppress, and in many instances where this is the case the inconvenience or oppression arising therefrom is dependent more on the peculiarity of the constitution than the heat as the immediate prime cause. During the dry season when it is natural to conjecture that the sky would be as brass and the earth as a heated oven, the thermometer falls to sixty-five degrees Fahrenheit, and seldom rises above eighty-four degrees Fahrenheit. So there is very little discomfort arising from heat during this season. That during the day and at certain periods during the day at other seasons there is oppressive heat when exposed to the direct rays of the sun I do not deny; my object is to try to remove the popular errors with regard to the belief of a continual heat and consequent oppressiveness, so great that life in tropical countries becomes almost at times a burden. An experience of four years in southern Sudan convinced me that the oppressiveness of the climate from heat was not to be compared to what we have in America during the summer and fall months. I have no hesitancy in saying that, with the same vigorous constitution in Yorubaland as in Georgia, the heat and oppressiveness of the sun in the former would present no greater obstacle and inconvenience than in the latter place.

The question naturally arises: why is this state of things so different from popular notions and prejudices? They may be summed up as follows: altitude of the land, prevalence of winds in a very open country, excessive vegetation during the rainy season, prevalence of dampness and clouds for six months of the year, the cold harmattan wind from the north, and the microscopic dust during the dry season that covers the whole heavens, and the fact that there is a vertical sun during the whole year no more in Yorubaland than in America. As proof of the latter, if any be needed, the sun runs so low south during December and January that it is with difficulty that the opposite walls of a house become dry. Other facts as we proceed will tend to throw light on this subject.

The seasons are marked by many of those attendant circumstances or changes well known in the temperate zone, and are governed by the same laws of nature only slightly modified in the spring, though at a period earlier than in the temperate latitude gives clear and

unmistakable indications of a change of new life from a state of matured and decayed vegetation as seen in autumn and passes through much the same period, particularly in that planting season which the native recognizes as a time when, according to the fixed law of nature, he should sow his crops. The observer beholds at the appointed time, not only nature reviving, but putting forth new life under such circumstances as cannot fail to impress him and with a repetition of those annual changes so very familiar. The change of winds and cloud may be observed as exerting an influence in favour of growth, if not in the germination of plants. The warm wind from the sea now takes the place of the cold, drying harmattan and the earth becomes moistened and invigorated under the showers coming from the clouds in the east. The beginning of the wet season, which embraces April and October inclusive, is ushered in by thunderheads or squalls from the east that are generally of very short duration and attended with but little danger. In the evening, about two or three times, a small cloud may be seen in the east enlarging in size and approaching nearer and nearer until warning is given of its approach by a few moments of dead stillness, followed by a strong wind of successive pulse or gusts. Within twenty or twenty-five minutes from the first blow the tornado has entirely subsided. Generally there are four or five of these squalls through a period of ten or twelve days when the rainy season is supposed to be fully begun. The summer months, June, July and August, which embrace the principal part of the planting season of the year, are marked by progressive growth, luxuriant vegetation and wet and dry period, as in the temperate latitude. It is supposed by those not fully acquainted with the peculiarities of the tropics that in the dry and wet seasons which occupy each six months respectively, there is all rain or all scorching burning heat. He who spends a few years in Yorubaland will oftentimes be forced to see the striking similarity between the wet seasons of summer and as they occur in the United States. The rains for the most part fall by spells, which vary in length and intensity with the several years. If there is a very wet spring the probabilities are highly in favour of a dry summer and vice versa. And if there be a very wet summer there is apt to be a dry fall or one of moderate rains. These spells of rain must not be understood as embracing every day in any given period as it is very

seldom that three successive days of rain ever occur. It is even a rare occurrence throughout the year to see a day so rainy that outdoor exercise at some hour is not practicable. Most of the rain falls in the evening or at night and from summer clouds and is not so excessive as the rains of higher latitude, especially in some of the winters. As a general rule, the streams overflow their banks but once a year and subside within four or five weeks. The natives recognize a little dry season in the month of August, which is generally cloudy during the day with very slight fall of rain; this season however depends altogether on circumstances, and though certain during the rains at some time it only varies the period of its approach. I think from some considerable observation that the quantity of rain per annum in the country of this latitude is a good deal less than in America. During this season, when there is little rain and much cloud, there is no dew but heavy fogs and mists. The whole earth nearly in the morning is frequently covered with mist in the form of descending vapour rendering outdoor exercise and travelling especially most disagreeable if not unhealthy. The second planting of such articles as are of rapid growth and as are adapted to the following season is made at the close of July and first of August. During the fall [i.e. September, October and November] there is generally much rain without a corresponding growth, and vegetation which has now reached its maturity and towards the close of the season begins to manifest signs of decay. These rains are terminated just in the way they began by the same kind of squalls or tornados and with similar indications in every respect.

The close of this season or the introduction of November gives as clear unmistakable evidence of a change and of the introduction of Autumn as are to be found anywhere. Vegetation decays, the whole landscape puts on a ripe yellow appearance, the fields of grain give proof of the same, the sky becomes blue and clear, the mornings cool and midday hot and the wind from the north begins to sweep over the extensive plains bearing with it the refreshing cold of the north, and the minute particles of the Sahara Desert soon covers the whole heavens and mitigates the power of the sun. This is one of the most pleasant and healthy seasons of the year and 250 miles from the coast is sufficiently cold to brace well the system. It is the winter and dry season, the temperature of which depends very much

upon the blowing of the harmattan. It is a great mistake to suppose, as do some persons, that the order of things in the tropics is changed, and that the winter months in those latitudes become the summer; nor is it true that heat in the tropics any more than cold in the higher latitudes takes the place of nature's universal law of decay dependent on maturity. Vegetation completes its course from germination to decay irrespective of the direct and seeming effects of heat or cold. It is very natural to suppose that, during a season embracing six months of dry weather in the months of November to April both inclusive, all vegetation should become parched, the earth thoroughly baked and streams all dry and water an article of great demand. But nature seems to compensate for the apparent lack of moisture to nourish such vegetation as springs forth during the winter months by retaining imbedded in the great clayey substratum as in a basin a sufficiency to meet the want of both the animal and vegetable kingdom, and to set it forth by a gradual rising to the surface under favourable circumstances. During this season there are sometimes heavy showers of rain that are not only refreshing but productive of great good. So securely does this clayey substratum retain the water of the wet season that around all the towns and in wells there is generally a sufficiency to supply the wants of the people. I have travelled hundreds of miles during this season but have never suffered for water for any length of time. Such in Yorubaland are the seasons which seem to be so arranged as to present a country agreeable, pleasant and desirable, neither excessively hot nor too cold, nor excessively dry nor too wet. These remarks applicable to Yorubaland and the countries in southern Sudan must be viewed with some modifications when applied to the coast regions, as there are natural causes that tend to materially produce marked differences.

Strong winds during the whole year prevail in Yorubaland and exert not a little influence in determining the pleasantness or disagreeableness of the climate. They are attendant on and are the counterpart of seasons of which I have just spoken, the sea wind or breeze prevailing during the rainy season and the northern wind or harmattan during the dry season. It is very rare that we have wind from the east or west which, when appearing, are almost invariably attendant upon a tornado from the former or a hail storm from the latter course. The sea wind begins to blow about the last of February

and first of March and at this period I have seen it so warm as to raise the temperature of water in a porous water bottle, placed on the windward side of the house. As the season advances the wind becomes stronger, more fixed and regular and blows not infrequently a gale morning and night, beginning about seven o'clock a.m. and p.m. with a breeze more or less throughout the day. I do not recollect ever to have seen such dead stillness that the leaves of the trees could not be seen in motion. At an early hour in the morning the wind, which is in its passage from the coast, becomes loaded with moisture and is not only disagreeable for an unacclimated person who, if exposed for any length of time especially in damp cloudy weather, very soon feels the injurious effects. This wind, however, to those acclimated or in the enjoyment of health, is pleasant and agreeable at midday and in the afternoon, and serves at all times to mitigate the heat.

During the remaining six months we have the harmattan blowing from the north, not infrequently a strong gale and the very converse in several respects to what are seen to be the peculiar characteristics of the south wind. It blows generally four or five months but not so strongly towards the close as in the beginning of the season, and is so perfectly drying in its nature that thin pieces of wood, back-binders board, veneering and other such articles about a house suffer considerable damage. No wood can be rendered so dry during the wet season but this wind will reduce it still more in size. At this distance from the desert the disagreeable heat and burning sensations spoken of by some travellers, we imagine with exaggeration, is not experienced, while a higher latitude, as we test it by actual observation, tended morning and evening to increase the cold. This wind seems to bear on its wings microscopic particles of dust that become diffused over all nature, oftentimes lessening the heat and clearness of the sun for days together. At the earlier period of the season these particles being brought into contact with the lining membranes of the nostrils produce a little annoyance until they become somewhat insensible to the irritation. That these are minute particles of dust may be proven by spreading a piece of white paper or cloth in a fixed position which in a short time will receive deposits of this dust. Whatever may be the correctness of Lieutenant Maury's

theory¹ with regard to this wind in its great sweep from South America across the Atlantic to the north-western coasts of Africa we shall believe, until we have reason to the contrary, that the harmattan in its course direct from the Sahara brings this cloud of dust from that vast desert. If a small desert in South America has such mobility in its particles that they are thus borne off in clouds by the wind, we cannot see why the same causes cannot and do not produce the same results under similar circumstances in the great African desert. The fact that the sails of ships in their course from South America to the western coasts of Africa become coloured with these microscopic particles is not altogether sufficient to obviate the necessity of the latter theory. The fact of the direct effect of this wind on the thermometer in reducing it from 80 degrees Fahrenheit to 65 and 70 degrees Fahrenheit proves most conclusively its origin and establishes the fact that scarcely any part of the earth is so distant from the poles as not to feel at some period of the year the influence of those ice-bound regions around the poles. At this period of our year as in the winters of cold climates, the soil lies comparatively at rest and perhaps under the influence of this wind producing some chemical changes for the reviving spring is better prepared to reward labour the following season. The natives at this period give evidence of the great change of temperature and may be seen socking fire or drawing their clothes tightly around them as if they were in the midst of midwinter. Such are the winds that prevail in southern Sudan.

The facts mentioned in this chapter furnish considerable data from which we may draw some satisfactory conclusions with regard to the sickness or healthiness of the country. Heat and cold, moisture and dryness, and excessive vegetation all have more or less influence on this question in all countries. From the preceding observations it may be readily seen that the uniformity of temperature is something remarkable, and so far as that one point goes is favourable to the

¹ See the theory in M. F. Maury, *Physical Geography of the Sea*, which, published in 1855, is acclaimed as the first text-book on modern oceanography. The author, Mathew Fontaine Maury, an American naval officer was born on 14 January 1806. For more information about him see *Encyclopedia Americana*, Vol. 18, International Edition, New York, 1967, pp 452-53.

health of the people. There are never very excessive rapid changes in heat or cold, in moisture or dryness, such as in many countries produce not infrequently lamentable results. Those causes which, more than all others, seem to affect the health most injuriously are excessive dampness and vegetation and the direct action of a vertical sun. During the wet season the atmosphere, especially early in the morning, is loaded with a moisture even to the extent of heavy fogs and mists, and induces a clammy sensation on the skin when exposed. This dampness has a tendency to produce chills and fever in un-acclimated persons and dysentery and fever in that part of the native population whose houses are not capable of protecting them from the moisture of the ground. Hence the sickness of the natives at this season arises more from the want of comfortable houses, free from the earth's dampness, than any natural cause. At the beginning and close of the seasons, when the earth is in a state of transition and the vegetation is exposed to the intense heat of the sun, we have the greatest danger from malarial fevers. But whether these causes produce any decided results against the health of the country is to be decided by an appeal to facts, not in a few European or American causes but in the natives themselves. My observation goes to prove that the principal cause of sickness is mainly attributed to imprudence and the want of such comforts and conveniences as are necessary to protect the system amid those changes of season that are generally attendant with more or less danger to the physical constitution, and not to certain conditions of the country as to its locality. If there be one fact more than others that would tend to act as a cause productive of malarial disease it is that of the clayey substratum acting as a great basin to hold the water of the rainy season which under the influence of the hot sun might impregnate the air with a poisonous influence, but for this the dry season is most agreeable if not the most healthy season of the year. The cause of disease from excessive vegetation is not so much to be apprehended in the interior from the fact that the basis for result is nothing so broad as on the coast. On this point I feel satisfied in saying, if the decision of this important question depended entirely on longevity, that this people and country would compare favourably with the most favoured land. In looking over the physical aspect of the country all of which seem to favour health where we have a fine rolling surface, numerous streams and

healthy soil, no ponds or stagnant water, no offensive swamps, a vegetation, though excessive, yet in an open elevated region, I turn to the people for a confirmation of my views. And what do I see? If I go through the streets I see everywhere people of advanced age strong and active, engaged in useful vocations and a class of middle-aged people, bearing a proper and favourable ratio to the aged, and the following class of which we have a large number; while, if children be a proof of health, the astonishing number of all sizes and ages settles the question beyond doubt. But if we enter the compounds, there we find again undoubted proof of their longevity in a great many cases of decrepitude and extreme old age that scarcely get out or if they do but a short distance from their homes. And let it be remembered that this people never increase their outdoor labour until compelled. I recollected seeing in Ogbomoso one evening about a dozen old men sitting under a shade tree thus thrown casually together, waiting for the chief who had made a hunting excursion into the country. My attention was soon drawn to the ages of this company of men, the youngest of whom could not have been less than fifty-five, while the eldest was near eighty. In many of my tours I was presented to the elders of a certain town, the healthy locality of which I immediately determined from the large number of aged men seated around the chief from sixty to eighty years old. I have no hesitancy in saying that the proportion of aged people is very large and that the longevity of many would reach ninety and one hundred years. Many are the instances where death is the result of old age or the loss of power in the vital forces. From all these facts and a four years' observation of the climate and its effects in my own case and in those of others, I feel I should do injustice to the country not to say that it is one highly favoured of providence with many of the elements of health, and if it be not enjoyable to a great extent by the white race the reason is not so much in the peculiarity of the climate as natural principles involved in extreme changes.

The peculiarity of the diseases is still further confirmatory of the position here assumed. My observation on diseases is rather of a general character and may perhaps not be so accurate but the impression made on my mind is that the variety is not only limited but free from the epidemics common to civilized lands. Intermittent

and remittent fevers, diarrhoea and dysentery, ophthalmic diseases in some places, whitlows, carbuncles, and some cutaneous diseases, among which we find smallpox in a very light form, may be mentioned as embracing the catalogue. Diseases of the lungs and scrofulous diathesis are rare, and like all others are sometimes managed with considerable success by the natives in the use of native remedies mostly belonging to the botanical department,¹ founded on observations of the principles of the human system. There can be no doubt however that multitudes of this people meet with premature death whenever disease assumes a malignant form for the want of skill and the right means to arrest it. Diarrhoea and dysentery generally prevail at the beginning of the wet season after the ground has become saturated and the house damp and unhealthy and at the ripening of the new crops. Intermittent and remittent fevers are injurious in their attacks in certain localities and are managed by the natives with some success in the diaphoretic and the depletive treatments.

To a native mind an appetite is the best sign of recovering health and always hailed by them with pleasure. In Ilorin I have seen quite a number of persons suffering from total blindness who had become objects of general charity and as in olden times taken up their positions during some portions of the day in the thoroughfares to solicit the alms of the passers-by. The cause of this blindness may be attributed in part to the irritation in the dry season of the eye by the small microscopic particles of dust that cover the whole heavens; at any rate cases of this kind become more frequent as advance is made to the interior. Many persons suffer from whitlows of a very painful kind and not infrequently lose their joints from failing to make a free incision into the part affected. They rely upon nature and poultices to throw off the pus or matter formed beneath the skin and in the tissues, and in the course of a week lose a joint. Smallpox is of a very light form, never producing death nor those ugly scars that are seen upon the face in higher latitudes. In East Africa, however, and the countries lying west of Abyssinia or Nubia no disease is more dangerous and fatal in its results. Some frightful ulcers may sometimes be seen but are generally the results of badly managed

¹ The use of herbs.

wounds. The medical remedies in use are diaphoretics, laxatives and cathartics, stimulants, tonics, local applications and ointments. An observation of these diseases and their effects together with some already mentioned and others hereafter to be stated lead me to speak favourably of the health and longevity of the people. That there is a great unnecessary suffering and loss of life I do not for a moment doubt, but I can readily assign the proper cause to the mode of life and the want of comforts, remedies and skill that would, in all probability, produce very different results.

CHAPTER 9

GEOLOGY OF YORUBALAND

THERE is nothing I believe yet discovered which is in any way remarkable in the geology of Yorubaland and the surrounding countries. As high as thirty or forty miles from the coast are to be seen the stratic evidence of primitive formation in the granite rocks of the Kong Mountains, much of which is of the gneiss variety with distinctly marked strata. These porphyritic rocks are visible in every part of the kingdom and present as the most interesting feature those tremendous fissures and openings, the results of tremendous efforts of nature. Around the bases of these mountains may sometimes be seen large blocks of stone lying distinct and along which were once a part of the whole, while above are numerous legged points and immense rock-dome of tons of weight situated on many a top. No marble of any description has ever been seen, though I have looked long and often amid the mountains but in vain for any trace of this description. Sandstone mixed with mica may be found on the upper Niger but no traces of this formation have been seen lower down. Another peculiarity of the geological structure is the absence of lime in any form, or if it exists no evidence of it either in the water or otherwise has ever yet been discovered. On the eastern side of the Yoruba kingdom I saw one evening what seemed to be the out-cropping ledges of calcareous stone on the woody part of an elevated mountain; but this being the only instance without having instituted an examination, I could not speak with certainty.

If the attention be turned to a search for fossils in confirmation of some geological theories not too clearly established, investigation will be all in vain. In many portions of the United States the traveller can scarcely go amiss for these fossils and submarine shells, but throughout these regions he may travel for weeks without ever

seeing anything in this line that would for a moment arrest the attention. As confirmatory of this remark I have no recollection of seeing in any of my travels in the interior of Africa anything of interest bearing on this subject. If there be fossils or remains of ages previous to the Adamic history they are far buried not only beneath common observations but the small excavations that may from time to time already have been made. We do not pretend to any accuracy of detail in this department but while we do make these general observations for the general reader we cannot refrain from expressing the conviction of the great want of variety and particularly of these startling and interesting specimens of an antedeluvian and pre-Adamic period found in many portions of the globe.

The only metal found in abundance is from ore of the very best quality which would give, on analysis, a very high per cent of true metal. In all parts of the kingdom in the Kong mountains this metal may be found and it supplies all the necessary wants of the people who dig the mines and work them for themselves. The ore is said by the natives to be found in the mountains in its natural state and, therefore, very easily smelted and made ready for the smith. Some say it is found in small quantities in which it is smelted but the only confirmation of this opinion was a case of a woman with a load of sand on her head containing, as my interpreter said, the base of the iron. The ironstone is very abundant and this gives proof of its igneous origin in its marked similarity to the dress to be found about all blacksmith shops and serve as additional proofs of the abundance of this ore. Other metals such as gold, may exist, but as yet there is no satisfactory proof though it is well known that copper and gold are found in abundance in other sections of Africa. So it has never appeared to me that Yorubaland possesses any remarkable wonders that invest a country with temporary curiosity and importance, and so readily attract the attention of the scientific and curious.

CHAPTER 10

PLANTS AND ANIMALS OF YORUBALAND

If attention be turned from geological structure to the science of botany we are of the opinion that the specimens in this department are limited in comparison with the great profusion to be found in some other countries. Such a statement as this no doubt conflicts with the notions of the great exuberance and richness of a tropical region, particularly in all that pertains to the flora. In some of the higher and colder latitudes in England and America, for instance, fields in May and June are rich and beautiful with the variegated flowers that cover them and little less fragrant with the odours that float on every breeze. These flora add not a little legitimacy to the claim that this is the queen of the year. But not so is my observation in southern Sudan. It is true that my examination was that of a general observer and not of the scientific student who might see red and yellow flowers where I would see weeds and grass, but still had they been numerous, certainly in a travel of two thousand miles, most of which had not been trodden previously by any whiteman, at all times and seasons of the year, I should, with a strict and attentive observation tried to give every attractive object, have at least seen many of the beauties of the land. Twenty-five was the greatest number ever enumerated by me, none of which impress either by their size or beauty. I was told by a gentleman in connection with the present Niger Expedition that a large number of botanical specimens had been gathered during the recent researches on that river, but at the same time I could not refrain from the opinion that the region must have been more favourable than those through which it was my pleasure to pass. Nearly all these specimens seemed to differ from the flora of other countries, the only ones bearing any resemblance being some species of the lily. The jessamine

mentioned by someone I have never been able to see. The palma christa, Africana sarsaparilla, the cactus very large, and a species of aloes, besides a very extensive list of roots and herbs for sale in the markets are to be found. These latter specimens that I have already said contain some good medicinal properties and we may hope that Africa, under proper experiments, will yet furnish its own synchona or *veratrum viridi*. The natives rely very much upon such medicines as are derived from this source and there can be no doubt that some of them have very reliable properties.

The fruits are just as limited as the variety of flora. We often hear the expression "The rich fine fruits of the tropics. How pleasant it must be to live where there is an abundance of these luscious articles during every period of the year". This may be true enough in such localities or settlements in which art, experience and indefatigable exertion have been made to contribute to the aid of nature, but if we take that nature alone we shall find such gifts by no means profuse and even in that condition, of an inferior quality. Moses recorded undoubted truth when he wrote, "Thorns also and thistles shall it [the ground] bring forth to thee,"¹ which meets in this unimproved country striking confirmation in this department. The wild indigenous fruits, such as have not been introduced by the civilized, are so very few as to be rarely seen, and even these in their maturity, allow nature's laws in one instance and are to be enjoyed but once a year. The orange, except in one instance, in the Igbomina country, and then by the wayside, I have never seen growing in a wild uncultivated state in which they are so disagreeably sour as to be unfit for the palate. The pineapple, which is indigenous and grows wild, I saw only once in considerable numbers, and then by the wayside. The banana and plantain, the latter of which is very good either cooked or raw, a species of yellow plum, almost in every respect like the common plum; the *osan*, a yellow fruit with three seeds resembling the persimmon and with the flavour of the haw; the *oro*, a large fruit resembling a green apple with a yellow meat and large seed like the peach but not very palatable, the lotus with a

¹ Quoting part of Genesis 3: 18; entire verse reads: "Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field" (King James Version).

world renowned sweetness with which honey can bear no comparison; the coconut, indigenous but rare; the pawpaw, resembling much a squash grown of a pithy tree and when made into a drink resembling the taste and flavour of apples; and the fruit of the large baobab tree of which this cut, with a pendant cylindrical oblong fruit presents a specimen, embraces nearly the entire catalogue. This last is a tree very peculiar to its age and size and is said, I believe, with much truth, to be so partial to the abode of civilization as to be found nowhere else except near some habitable spot or what was once the abode of man. It is computed that some of these specimens on Turk island above Sierra Leone, have been standing several centuries. There may be some other fruits in addition to the above but they are lightly esteemed by the natives and are very seldom seen either in the markets or in a wild state.

That all tropical fruits, however, will flourish does not admit of a doubt as abundant proof is to be found in the various experiments both in Liberia and Sierra Leone. At both of these points some of the best fruits from the Indies have been introduced with great success and no doubt ere the lapse of many years will have been rendered just as successful and profitable in almost every portion of southern Sudan. It seems from observation made in every part of Africa that, while on the one hand the soil and climate are well adapted to the growth of every tropical fruit, a savage or half-civilized state is not that condition of man, notwithstanding his great need of productions, in which the fruits best flourish. We have no hesitancy, however, in saying that those who seek the best interests of the people will not be slow in presenting by all legitimate means whatever may contribute in this respect and in all others to their temporal good. In contemplating the many resources of this country, it is a source of great pleasure to those who pray and labour for Africa's redemption to see and feel that she possesses in many of her territories not only the internal and natural power of becoming great but those minor considerations that would make these places rich, beautiful and like a paradise itself.

In entering another department of natural history we have a field more interesting because we have more facts and data with which to deal. Yet, there is a peculiarity in this respect that there is scarcity of animals supposed to exist in great numbers in a country

wild and savage as this is imagined to be. Let me say to those who may be conversant with the accounts of travels in South and Central Africa of Livingstone, Anderson, Cummings, and others, and of Barth in some portions of North and Central Africa, that henceforth a very broad distinction both as to animals and people must be drawn between those countries and those here embraced in this part of southern Sudan. Most of these writers have given astounding as well as interesting accounts of the numbers and varieties of wild animals that inhabit those regions, and of the great dangers in consequence of the numbers with which in various ways they are brought in contact. But I have no such thrilling stories to relate from the twofold facts that the animals were not sufficiently numerous as to disturb my peaceful labours and I was not so imbued with the spirit of Nimrod as to infest their retreats.

Like all men unacquainted with Yorubaland, I expected to be frequently favoured with the sight of many rare quadrupeds and sometimes to be placed in jeopardy by the numbers with which I should meet; but so far from such is the result that I never saw or heard either a lion or an elephant. My nearest approach to the former being a passage through a region which, it is said, they frequented, and to the latter the spoor, or the wide track, sometimes to be seen in the primeval forest as well as in the prairie. The elephant makes a passage from eight to ten feet wide, distinctly marked in the grass, and a track from eight to ten inches in diameter. If they travel together in number it must be single file or Indian fashion as it is very seldom that more than one track can be seen. So rare are they in this country that I heard no mention of a native who had seen one except in actual chase. There is a large fruit of a cylindrical shape a foot in length of which it is said they are fond, but I believe no stratagem is used by the natives for their capture other than by the weapons used in the chase. Guns with powder and poisoned arrows are principally used with some success by poisoning the animal and waiting until the poison takes effect. No such stratagem as the baiting of large pits or the like is ever resorted to. Although, there are men who by profession engage in this sport for a livelihood, their success must be very limited as they rarely afford proof of the fact either in the markets or elsewhere. Sometimes, it is said that the thick skin which the

natives esteem very highly and which is found in the markets, is that of the elephant, but as I never saw the true skin I apprehend deceit might readily be practised upon me as the skin of the buffalo is also very thick. The natives have no idea of their domestication and seem to be quite astonished when told they are used as horses in some other parts of the world. The day, therefore, when ivory was to be gathered from this country has long since passed away and yielded to a state far in advance of the mere savage condition. In the central parts of Yorubaland the discovery of a lion would be as great a curiosity or a subject of as much talk as if seen in the heart of the United States. They know the names of such an animal and believe from tradition of its existence. Otherwise, we stand with regard to this king of beasts on the same footing. In the north-western parts of Yorubaland around Igboho, and in that section of the kingdom which is almost depopulated and given to the haunts of beasts, it is said the lion is found, and that he sometimes becomes so emboldened as to approach within the precincts of a village and bear off a kid or a goat. But said an old informant, "When we find it out we follow him with our weapons and dogs and make him give it up". To me it would have been a great pleasure as well as curiosity to see a dead lion or even the mere skin of the terrific monster. There the roar of this beast is never heard.

The leopard is far more numerous, and certainly much more dangerous to the inhabitants. He is shy, bold at night and in the day when the objects of his attack are defenceless lurks around towns and villages in the coverts of woods and sometimes makes a sally within the walls and creates a panic among the inhabitants. Children are at such times in danger until the united shouts and cries of defence drive back the unwelcome intruder to his hiding place. There is far more danger, so say the natives, from this shy and treacherous beast when travelling alone than from the elephant or lion. When pinched with hunger they have no fear in attacking a single man or woman from day to day until their murderous propensity outrages a whole community and arouses it to vengeance. Such was the case a few years ago in the farms of Oyo, the capital, when day by day some individual mysteriously disappeared and no account or reason could be given for the strange result. The repetition of the act and the consequent

investigation however soon solved the difficulty. Such accidents are very rare and I believe unknown in caravans or among that class engaged in trade from town to town.

Antelopes, several species, and wild cows are found by the hunters to be plentiful, but they are seldom seen except in the chase. The only species of the former I have ever seen was small, yellowish and fawn-like, without horns, and not much larger than a half-grown deer. The flesh is very fine, if not superior to our venison. No deer, I think, have ever been seen in the country. The wild cow is frequently taken by the hunters and is found in greater abundance in the markets than the flesh of any other animal. It is about the size of our small American cow, is found in herds and is for the most part of a dun and dark, but sometimes, black colour. They are very wild and move with great rapidity when observed by a stranger. The horns of this animal are smoother than, and not so long and as sharp as, those of the buffalo. This latter is said to be much larger and more dangerous and has long, rough horns, marked with rings and is said by the natives to be the horn of the animal identified by them with the Unicorn. These animals are killed with greater ease and dispatch in the dry season when their coverts and retreats are laid open and exposed by the burnings to the vigilant and searching eye of the Yoruba hunter. The flesh is of a coarse grain much resembling beef and is consumed in large quantities by the natives because of its cheapness. The wild hog is of dark grey, not numerous, seldom seen in the markets or anywhere else, and resembles very much the wild hog of the United States. The hedgehog, hare, squirrels, and rats of gigantic size are occasionally to be seen, though not numerous. These small animals are sometimes taken by a trap consisting of a long string tied to the end of a pole or small tree bent towards the ground and fixed with a small circular string by a trigger which, when touched, allows a rapid contraction of the ring and the consequent jerk of the pole that throws into the air firm and fast the entrapped animal.¹ These traps are placed directly in small paths and have several times caught the foot of my horse with such security and tightness that I was compelled to dismount and unloose him. The squirrels burrow in the ground but is never seen to climb a tree.

¹ The type of trap described is what the Qyo Yoruba call *èyò* or *irín*.

Their flesh is very palatable. Several varieties of monkeys are found, principally on the coast and the primeval forests. The baboon is rare. The chimpanzee and orangoutang I have never seen but large yellowish monkeys near three feet high are sometimes seen in the prairies and farms. Large numbers of the smaller species are occasionally seen in groups of from twenty to thirty on large trees but are very wary and difficult to approach and still more difficult to kill. No animal it seems is more tenacious of life. The flesh of the monkey is considered by the natives as a great delicacy. They are very seldom found in a domestic state. I suppose both from the difficulty of catching them and their fondness for a wild state. They are dreaded by the natives for their destructive propensities on the farm. The camel has never been seen lower down than the city of Ilorin.

Serpents of various species no doubt everyone is ready to say are the great pests of the land. Seen everywhere in the grass and on the plains, flooding the watercourses and filling the woods, and even creeping about through the houses and on the walls—the continual annoyance and especial terror to mothers and children. But how mistaken. The country which I believe in my simplicity would abound in reptiles of every description is still more free from this nuisance than the elephant and lion which are so rarely to be seen. The reader can certainly be no more astonished at this strange fact than I on first entering the country. I do not recollect ever seeing more than four or five of different species, one the small green snake, the other of considerable size, from four to six feet long, in colour like the anaconda, and an object of adoration. Women may sometimes be seen, though rarely, with these hideous monsters coiled around their necks and arms, parading the markets and attracting the attention of the curious and superstitious. I never saw one but I had a strong and instinctive desire to give it a stick, though in some parts of Africa he who offers violence to one of these pets, subjects himself to severe chastisement, if not the loss of his head.

A boa-constrictor, which grows to immense size, even to the length of thirty and forty feet, so say the natives, is rarely or never seen except on large watercourses or in swamps where there are lakes or ponds of water. I am told that one may be found near Ogbomoso, where there is said to be a large body of water, infested

with these huge monsters, which are sometimes killed by the natives. But for a little circumstance that confirmed my belief in the native testimony I should have doubted even to this day their incredulous story. I had been suffering excruciating pains for several weeks arising from something like a whitlow on the thick cartilaginous flesh between the middle fingers when a native friend, then on a visit, suggested the application by rubbing the fat of the boa-constrictor. But how could I get this fat was the question. His answer was forthcoming, as an acquaintance of his had just received the fat of one just recently killed. I gave him an order to secure some of this fat as soon as possible and within a short time had the pleasure of making the application as suggested. I shall not pretend to say what was really the virtue of the application but I know my hand recovered, that is to say the sore was healed, though with a painful result in all the parts affected, particularly the joints, even to this day. Why it is that there are so few reptiles may be accounted for on several principles, among which may be mentioned the destructive enemies which they have to combat.

Entering another department of natural history pertaining to the feathered tribe, this is perhaps a most interesting field because observation has rendered it to us somewhat more familiar. In this range there is a more striking resemblance to what we find in a higher latitude especially in several species of the crane found in the south, and on the western waters: the crow, hawk, partridge, dove, sparrow, vulture, mocking-bird, and a variety resembling in some respects the jay. Of this latter species I have seen several varieties, varying in size from the common jay to a bird as large as the largest turkey. One of this species of a jet black colour, shot by me, measured six or seven feet from the tip of one wing to the tip of the other. I have enumerated as many as nine varieties of hawk of all kinds and sizes, six or seven varieties of doves, including the one of the wild pigeon, two of the partridge, the larger being twice the size of the American quail, and two of the guinea, one of these having most beautifully variegated plumage and said to resemble the prairie hen. The most beautiful species of crane is one of variegated plumage with a crest or comb on the head, and in height three and a half or four feet. It is easily domesticated, and I think within a few years has been introduced into the Surrey Zoological Gardens of London, and is

now on exhibition in the United States in the great moral exhibition of Van Amberg. The flesh of most of these birds is palatable but is very rarely to be found in the markets from the difficulty which the natives find in taking them. The hawk is a very great pest in some of the towns where they live in large numbers, to the annoyance of every owner of fowls. The shooting of one of these carnivorous creatures generally brings a shout or unspoken thanks from every witness of the feat. The crow differs from the American species in having a white rind around the neck. The ostrich is never seen in this portion of Sudan. The greatest curiosity in this department is the perfectly white crane-like bird that is on the constant attendant of cattle for the purpose of picking off ticks and may be properly be called the cow-bird. It is gregarious in its habits and there is a similar species on the western waters. Other rare varieties might be mentioned varying in size, plumage and habits, but this list meets my purpose of giving the general reader such general information as is desirable.

Confining my remarks to the interior, I have no hesitancy in saying that Yorubaland is peculiarly favoured in its freedom from many of the insect annoyances that disturb one's peace in many other regions. Gnats and fleas are almost unknown while mosquitoes are not numerous enough to force down a netting once a year. If bugs and insects of all kinds are rare, there is a full compensation for the want in two remarkable species of ants; one of which subserves a most important purpose, while the other seems to be endowed with scarcely any other organ than that of destructiveness. The former is a black ant varying in size and properly called the driver, because it either drives everything before it, or in case of resistance, covers by immense numbers any creature that dares oppose it: then deprived of life by innumerable bites or stings or both, it finally reduces it to a dry skeleton. It matters not what may be the size of the creature, an elephant even is not sufficient to withstand the attack of an army of these innumerable hosts. They have their sentinels posted in their marches who immediately give the alarm and reconnoitre when a stick or any other object is so placed as to arrest their progress. Experiments have proven their skill, bravery and determination with which they attack anything that dares to disturb them. They sometimes scour a house from one end to the other and relieve it

of any obnoxious insects and nuisances and thus contribute to the happiness and peace of the householder. I have several times at night been disturbed by these intruders entering my room and forcing me by their stings or bites to leave my bed until they had freely accomplished their search. It is said that so invincible is the driver that even streams do not present an insuperable obstacle, but they have been known to form a bridge by cohering together that a whole army might pass over in safety.

The other little insect much smaller in size and very different in its habits is the termite, or white ant, properly so-called from its slightly white appearance, and is found in the East Indies as well as in Africa. It is more numerous than the other species and almost covers the country. It is also commonly known as the bug-bug or bug of bug from the fact of its remarkable peculiarities, especially that which refers to its destructive propensity. There are but two or three species of wood known to the natives but yields to the teeth of this little insect, which sometimes renders it difficult to secure timber suitable for the completion of a house. All buildings therefore except those floored with this invincible wood are subject to being traversed by the termite that reduces to dirt everything it meets whether wood or clothing. They even go so far as to penetrate walls and adopt every plan of attack in stratagem if they can but secure their object. They invariably carry in their track some earth which mixed with the secretion from their own bodies serves as a highway or canal which they seldom leave unless compelled. A considerable line of this mud and secretion may be destroyed at night but more than likely the same work will be more than rebuilt by morning. This is the ant that builds the beautifully turreted pyramids from three and four to ten and twelve feet high, scattered over many portions of Africa. Within the kingdoms of Yoruba I have never seen one exceeding five feet high which is a confirmatory proof of a remark by Dr Barth that they are generally not invariably found near large watercourses. The only ones attaining any height seen by me were within a few miles of the Niger in a sandy and impoverished country. The innumerable little earthy pebbles, cylindrical in shape, that cover the surface of the earth are made by the white ants. In the beginning of the rainy season they rise from their earthy homes where procreation seems to have been carried on,

and almost obstruct vision by their little wings which they now lose in their transformation in again returning to the ground. In this connection mention should be made of a singular species of bat, large sized, that is found in great numbers clustered together on peculiar shade trees in some of the towns, and which remain stationary at least during the day. In their stationary state it is not easy to determine whether they be animate or inanimate. The natives, who, in their superstitious notion, attach great importance to this little creature, positively assert that it is impossible to shoot one with powder and shot.

The locust, the scourge of some parts of Africa, very seldom visits this portion of Africa, but whenever it does some dreadful accounts are given of the havoc they commit. It is said that famine is almost the sure result, as they eat up the farms entirely and after a year or two according to some accounts either die or leave the country. They are said to come in such great numbers as to darken the sun but happily for the people their visits are very rare. The bee is frequently found and makes a rich though not so sweet a honey as is seen in countries where the flora is more extensive. The comb is secured in hollows in the ground and hollow trees, and has, it is said by some, a wild strong flavour. A bucket-full once had such an effect on the surrounding hives as to draw them in so great numbers that my house was, for a time, rendered uncomfortable. The natives use the article generally in the form of candy of which they are very fond. Bees' wax is not at all known as an article of trade. Insects and worms do not constitute any part of native diet unless clams and snails may be so classed, and in that instance they are very rarely used.

The question why such a state of things in Yorubaland is so diverse from other portions of Africa may be more easily asked than answered, yet there are some simple facts that tend to solve this as well as some other problems. The country has, no doubt, been settled for centuries and the progress of which such changes have taken place in the cultivation of the soil and by the general occupancy of the people has been to secure results occurring in most civilized lands. The peculiar topography and configuration is very different from many regions in the tropics as described, and not such as tends to generate and promote the species of various kinds

found in the wild and savage state of a country. Hence, if it be fully understood that a soil and country have been under a state of tutelage for centuries it is not so difficult to see and appreciate the anomalous state of things of which we have written.

The domestic animals are those with which the reader is, for the most part, familiar, as forming necessary appendages to all civilized lands. The horse, cow, sheep, goat, hog, donkey, dog, etc., are found throughout the kingdom. The horse, raised in this region, is of the mustang species, hardy and capable of great endurance. It is always kept in its native state yet well trained but never used as a beast of burden other than under the saddle in which capacity it is viewed by the natives as one of their prime ornaments. The horses of Ilorin, being of Arab extraction, are much superior and compare favourably as to their beauty and fleetness with the finest species. The invertebrate jealousy existing between the Mohammedans and heathens prevents the general introduction of this animal into the lower country as the former well knows that the superiority of their soldiery depends upon their cavalry. The value of the mustang is variously estimated from \$10.00 to \$100.00, while a fine Arab steed sells from \$300.00 to \$500.00. The cow is of a good size and judging from the specimens seen, no doubt, could be improved to compare favourably with the larger sizes. The milk of this animal in the spring and summer is rich and makes a very good article of butter. It is not numerous because of certain traditional regulations that it can be the property only of the chief; hence in vast plains of rich grass where innumerable herds could be feeding, only an occasional one may be seen. This regulation does not prevail in Ilorin where the Fulani, a pastoral people, exercise the controlling power. Hogs are rare because they too are placed under the ban of some superstitious law; yet they flourish and grow to an immense size whenever attention is bestowed upon them. It would require very little trouble to raise a stock that would weigh from four to six hundred pounds if the specimens are taken as the base of calculation. The sheep is just such an animal in every respect, saving the wool, as is found in the southern portion of the United States, and furnishes the market with an excellent article of meat—fat, tender and wholesome. The wool is supplied by hair, so greatly changed in its appearance and nature that the observer is readily impressed with the watchcase and overruling

providence of Him whose adaptation is everywhere seen when the wants and happiness of His creatures require it. The goat is another animal well adapted to the climate, undergoes no change and with the former as a household article, without which a family would scarcely be complete. It is an excellent, wholesome and nutritious article of food and is found in the markets in considerable quantities. The value of these articles per head varies from \$1.50 to \$4.00 according to the size and the markets in which they are sold. The donkey, a very small animal, capable of great endurance, and less in size than its genus, the ass, is used as a beast of burden, but is very seldom seen below Ilorin. The universal taste of the African in his fondness for the dog is strikingly illustrated in the numbers here found and the strong attachment between the parties. Every man and boy must have his dog with which he would share his only morsel of bread however useless and unprofitable. The great variety and species is truly astonishing, particularly when we remember it requires some attention to the subject to see in what the distinctions and differences consist. The hair is generally very short and a fat dog would be almost as great a curiosity as a lion or an elephant. These highly tempered creatures have an uncompromising animosity towards a white face,¹ and exhibit their spleen at all times and on all occasions. The ages of the above mentioned animals appear, from all the observation and attention I could give the subject, about the same with those in temperate latitudes.

Fowls, ducks, turkeys, pigeons are not the monopolized articles of civilized lands as they are all to be purchased in the markets and some in great numbers. The fowl or pigeon is esteemed only next to the child and are equally used for sacrifices and for food. Ducks and turkeys, though they may be raised with comparative ease, are not found in such numbers which may be due to the expensiveness of the article. The value of a fowl in the interior varies from four to ten cents according to the size. Of a duck from twelve to twenty cents. Of a turkey from fifty cents to one and a half dollar. And of a pigeon from three to five cents.

¹ They normally show this type of "animosity" at the appearance of a strange face, white or black.

CHAPTER 11

SOCIAL LIFE OF THE YORUBA PEOPLE

IN passing from the first general division of the subject embracing whatever pertains to the country in its natural state we do so with the more pleasure because we enter a field not only doubly interesting but far more profitable. It is to consider the state of those who, by nature says the inspired Truth, are with us from one common origin and have like sympathies, like claims and like responsibilities. It will be necessary in attempting to give an account of the true status of this people that the reader bear in mind the important and essential fact as to the very great difference as to the mental, moral and improved condition of the Sudanese and the inferior and debased tribes of the western coast, and the many of similar characters among whom Livingstone and other South African travellers passed and of whom they have given us such graphic and interesting descriptions. I have not one word to utter against the truthfulness and correctness of their narratives because from the great distance separating the country, there is no good reason for belief of similarities in country, manners, customs, etc., and upon a knowledge of which only could discredit be thrown on the narratives. I think they have, from the best of their ability, given us the facts as could be ascertained, and this conclusively proves to my mind the superiority of the country and people of which we have to treat. I am of the opinion that an acquaintance with even heathen and savage people will go very far towards the confirmation of a clear though doubted truth that all men are of one blood and common origin and that the essential conditions of life will be found to obtain among all. The civilized and enlightened, on a slight and necessarily imperfect acquaintance, oftentimes judge too hastily of those far below them in the scale of improvement because they

do not enter into the modes of thought, motives and state of life, and therefore have not sufficient data of the right kind to draw proper and legitimate conclusions. They judge hastily and rashly, frequently under the impulse of strong and deep-rooted prejudice, and therefore do injustice to those whom they condemn simply because they are not peculiarly in all things what they would wish them to be. It must not therefore astonish the reader when I assert that the mode of life among this people is what we might expect to find among those who are content to live as did their fathers a thousand years ago, who are satisfied with the earliest and simplest arts, those necessary to a comfortable existence, without any of that spirit of inquiry and improvement that mark the enlightened races of the nineteenth century.

Among most of the African tribes with whom I have a personal or historic acquaintance, there prevails the strongest natural disposition towards a gregarious life which results in the building of towns and cities where they hold permanent abode and around which they cultivate the soil. I know of but one strictly pastoral people north of the equator who, in tending flocks, live a wandering life and pitch their tents from place to place. This is the remarkable Felattah tribe of whom mention has already been made. The result of such a mode of life has had no doubt a very decided effect in retaining the ancient and natural, physical, mental and moral status, if not in moulding to a great extent their social conditions of life. Hence it is that we see a marked difference in these as well as in many other respects between the interior tribes and those who, like pioneers of all countries, have not been privileged in their advanced parts of the coast to enjoy the same advantages of those who have remained in the older and more desirable countries. In this portion of southern Sudan embracing several of the ancient Yoruba, the Ijeṣa and Nupe people, some marked differences in physiognomy are not a little puzzling to those who seek further information with regard to the origin of these people. The Guinea, Ibo and Congo tribes have become proverbial for their negro features such as indolence, filthy black skin, flat noses, thick lips and long heels, and have been made the occasion of having transferred from them several characteristics to the various tribes in the interior. This summary way of dealing with the Africans has produced an

abundant ridicule, burlesque and contempt and stayed to a great degree the praiseworthy spirit of inquiry and knowledge so marked with regard to all things else. For this state of things I attribute the wonder of many and the scorn of the land who perceive in Yorubaland and other inferior kingdoms a state of things so different from the preconceived notions. The Yoruba tribes are of medium size compared with the white race; well formed, erect, muscular, active, graceful in their movements; they vary in colour from jet black to a mulatto colour, the coffee and copper colours dominating; have good countenances, many intelligent and sprightly, foreheads tolerably high, frequently slightly retreating lips thinner than the coast tribe and short feet, while the general expression and caste of countenance, as well as the whole physiognomy, is a decided improvement. The Ijèṣà have the same peculiarities but are a little more savage in their countenances and general dress. The Fulani are *sui generis*, and with such marked peculiarities as are found in their case, point to an origin at least in part, very different from the negro tribe. The most striking feature is their wonderful and most strikingly developed nationality so that the stranger who sees the Foulh in West Africa in Goloh, Liberia, or Sierra Leone, will know the Fulani when he meets him in Yorubaland, and the Felattah when he sees him in Hausaland.¹ They are generally of a copper and mulatto colour, spare, wiry and long, have small limbs very long, thin visages and sharp countenances, remarkably small head, long hair and somewhat Indian-like when combed. The Nupe constitute a tribe essentially different from the others and are almost invariably black, with a vivacity and sprightliness in their countenances and movements that partly account for their fondness for trade, except they have jet black skin and they have some marked points in common with the Yoruba and others. The fact that we find black tribes such as the Nupe and Kaninke in the interior obviates the necessity for a coast locality in a tropical region to account for this peculiar feature in its intensity. Such is the physical aspect of the several tribes with whom we have had to do.

¹ "Foulh", "Filani" and "Felattah" are the names by which the Fulani were called in the different localities as indicated in the sentence.

The towns and cities of this people [the Yoruba] strike us both as to the number and size. A momentary reference to the map,¹ without an enumeration in this place will be sufficient to give an idea of the scale of towns and cities in this part of the world. They are scattered over this small area so thickly that many of them may be reached within a few hours walk and with populations so heavy that we are sometimes afraid to give expression to our own conviction lest we be called enthusiasts. Though some of the largest now lie in ruins without a single guard or sentinel to tell the traveller of the site, there are now in the full tide of native prosperity a large number of towns varying in population from 25,000 to 130,000 people. Ijaye, Abeokuta, Ibadan and Ilorin swarm with such myriads of human beings as to arouse every power within the man who contemplates the scene. All of these towns are surrounded by mud walls tapering to the top, with an outside ditch that gives an entire length of from ten to fifteen feet. It has been said that formerly each town had three walls; but as I have never seen this in but one instance of ruin and desolation, I think it needs confirmation. At suitable intervals there are large gates or openings for exit and entrance of these people, as they are engaged in their various vocations. Their gates are shut at night and thus secure the town from unexpected attack. The walls serve well the purpose for which they were built, as in case of war they are always defended from within and are repaired by the entire population once in two years, the women bringing the earth and the men preparing and using the mud. Each district or ward has its own part to perform and on given days at the order of the leader, marches to the work. In this way, marked by such regularity and system, a wall of six and seven miles in diameter will be repaired within a few days. Nearly all towns are so situated as to be convenient to watercourses and where such is not the case wells are resorted to for a supply. Beautiful shade trees of several varieties generally widespreading and low, while they are the ornaments of the place and the pride of the people, serve many good uses and are invariably to be found except in those

¹ Opposite p. 1 above.

localities where fire has done its work. There are several species of the small tree, very much resembling in several respects the white mulberry.

The style of building is peculiarly African and though not very architectural nor handsome, serves very well the purposes and peculiar conditions and habits of the people. All dwelling houses are four square, built of mud of different layers, twelve by fifteen inches in height and eight to ten thick, each of which is dried by the sun to receive the next in order, and generally the walls are not more than seven feet in height. They resemble in shape a double line parallelogram with a width of six feet between the lines and are divided in various small apartments measuring six by eight and ten feet with a single opening to which is fixed a shutter about four feet long. These various apartments are generally occupied by single individuals and are not infrequently nicely fitted up. By heating firmly the floor until it becomes almost as hard as a plank and plastering and glazing the walls so that, saving the high aperture and the consequent darkness, these rooms would be somewhat comfortable. Some of the more genteel and tasty seem never satisfied until their walls become firm and stick as hard finished plastering, while others give a finishing touch of some favourite colour. The size of a compound varies with the family and sometimes encloses a quarter, sometimes half an acre. Every side of the entire building is roofed as houses ordinarily with rafters, ridgepoles and gable ends and stretched with grass of a peculiar kind, which when put on sufficiently thick presents a roof tolerably rainproof. The thatching of houses varies in different localities. Some form a network of small squares through which the grass, if introduced, lapped over the reeds forming the squares, while others tie the grass together so as to form layers by spreading them obliquely across the roof. It may be easily seen that buildings so constructed form a kind of hollow square which is fronted by verandas or porticos that run the entire length of the compound. These cool shady passages are mostly occupied by the natives whether in repose or in sleep, or in the performance of such duties as pertain to within doors. Within these courtyards are enclosed all domestic animals, especially at night fold, when the great gate is shut and all is safe.

The building operations generally commence in the early part of the dry season so as to secure the rapid drying of the walls without the danger of damaging and destructive rains. And in the month of November and later, most of the material for building such as rafters, forks, posts, reeds and grass are brought into town and secured in some appropriate place ready to be used at an early and practicable day. The building process embraces four or five departments of labour; the digging of earth, the preparing of same, making the mud into balls; conveying the balls to the building site: then the throwing of the balls firmly together in layers and finally the roofing and concluding of the inner work. It is very frequently the case that neighbours and friends are invited to assist in the roofing of the house which, after the walls are completed, requires but a few days, and on such occasions are to be witnessed the same scenes of jollity, festivity and feasting among the labourers, male and female, as are oftentimes seen in the country and frontier settlements of America. Of such feasts it need scarcely be said that the Yoruba beer constitutes a very fair proportion. The blacksmith shop, which is circular, forms the only exception among the Yoruba to the square, rectangular-shaped building. The Nupe and several other tribes farther in the interior, construct all their houses in the circular shape and have much larger and more comfortable single rooms though but with one door of entrance. On the other hand, the large and rectangular houses built by the Yoruba makes it easy for a compound with twenty, thirty and forty rooms to easily accommodate a little village family within its own precincts of fifty or a hundred souls.

Social life among this people bears, in many respects, the impress of that peculiar age known as the patriarchal when men were united together on family ties and social relationships. I have often been impressed with this peculiarity of this tribe as identifying them in their origin with a very early period and with those whose history has come down to us through the long night of ages only by the records of divine truth. They are emphatically social people, strong in their attachments, ardent in their friendships, fond of life, hilarity and amusement, and spend most of their leisure moments in that social intercourse that marks a people in whom feeling

predominates over mind. Their patriarchal life renders them a people fond of society and so increases their attachment which tends continually to develop and strengthen the social feelings of the man.

Families live together for years under the same roof and the same parental authority, however they may grow in size, without ever thinking of the west or east or any other point that might bear for a moment on the idea of their removal from the family circle. If they should become so thick as to be necessitated to leave the old hive, their tents will be pitched at the next best spot within the vicinity of the old home. Hence it is that connections and acquaintances grow into strong and intense relationships and a whole town, under one general head, becomes as a large united social family. The very life of the family necessitates the development of the social quality to a very high degree in as much as they are thrown together daily under all circumstances and bound to each other by a common interest and more particularly from the fact that those differences of opinion that oftentimes create schisms and divisions are overruled and adjusted continually by him who sits not only as the ruler but the arbiter of the family.

That which is a necessary element in the social character of the people, loquacity, they possess in an eminent degree, and extend it oftentimes to the jocose, the humorous and witty as I have seen it in them in their own houses where I have had ample opportunity of judging of this character and forming an opinion from actual observation and intercourse. From morning until night the gags, the jocose laugh, the merry tale, the jokes, the proverb, all intermingled with scolding more or less, form the life of those who, within doors, attend to the domestic duty. But that hour of the day when most of this quality is to be seen is in the evening after the day's labour has been performed and the weary ones have returned home to feast and rejoice in the presence of one another. Then, however, that social life is to be observed not so much within the courtyard as before their compound or under their magnificent shade trees, or around the fine *ẹkọ* pot of some good old cook or in the enjoyment of that inspiring drink brewed by the matrons of the land and just adapted to the native taste. At such an hour the whole town is alive with hilarity, amusement, the interchange of good feeling, visiting, playing, eating, drinking and rejoicing, and

throughout its tortuous streets and lanes may be seen at every corner and under every beautifully spreading tree the undoubted evidences of native enjoyment in that free unfettered intercourse that adds no little to the enjoyment of life. Conspicuous in this element is the almost numberless children, a class that in all lands and on all such occasions adorn as much as any other the quality of which we are now speaking. Their cries and laughs and sports and not infrequently witty sayings, give a zest to all that is seen and heard and make one forget the exclusion to which one may have subjected oneself in surrendering all for a life in a foreign land. This social enjoyment constitutes a very great portion of their life and hence it is that every object is pursued with reference to it; the accumulations of property, the cultivation of the soil for the necessaries of life, toil, suffering and sacrifices are all borne that they may contribute to the feasting and intercourse in one's own native town. Intermarriage, local attachments and patriarchal government have stamped most indelibly this feature upon the people so that however they may be viewed we shall see it standing prominently forth in their character.

Amusements of various kinds consume a great portion of the idle time both of the old and young who may be seen particularly in the evening enjoying themselves in their peculiar favourites. A game known and played by all of the males and which may with propriety be termed chess,¹ or the national game, of the Yoruba, is performed with an oblong piece of wood two feet or more in length and six inches wide, and a row of six holes excavated on each side, the men [chessmen] use seeds of a light substance something like marbles.² About fifteen or twenty³ of these are taken by each party and distributed in the holes when the game begins and the contest, oftentimes exciting and entertaining, goes on until one party, as in backgammon, with greater dexterity and a more rapid mathematical skill, reduces the men of his competitor to a mere cipher by continually taking them from the holes. Like many games it is almost inexplicable on paper yet affords very great

¹ The Yoruba call the game *ayò*

² These are seeds got from *igí ayò* (*ayò* tree)

³ The number is usually twenty-four.

amusement and no doubt some profit to the native mind. Children may be frequently seen imitating this game with holes dug in the ground, thus learning at a very early period to play with great dexterity. A very great proportion of the amusements of the people are so blended with their religion and superstition that we shall defer this point until we come to speak on those subjects. Amusements of an active kind are not much in vogue but those of a mental order involving recreation under the shade of some fine tree and a play of the mental faculties in jokes, proverbs, witty sayings, puns, etc., are very common. Hence it is the language enriched and abundant in everything of this order and gives proof of a skill and mental development by no means to be despised.

There are some very marked peculiarities in their social life and the more so as the social feeling and patriarchal feature would seem to authorize a state of things the very reverse of those known to exist. Tables and a common board are altogether unknown, thus necessitating every family and the individual members of families to supply themselves with food served up by every individual except that the chief or governor of a compound sometimes eats with a favourite wife who has served up his dishes and some of the younger children take meals alone and at such times and places as circumstances and appetite may dictate. Hence there is not a great deal of cooking within the compound for the several families except as done for individuals. The kinds of food and styles of cooking, together with many other circumstances have conspired to establish a state of things in the culinary art which, in the present state of the people, answers very well their purpose. For meat, the desideratum needed in the compound, most of the cooking is done in the streets in the open air and under sheds and bears just such a relation to the inhabitants as the fine restaurant to the city citizen. Hence throughout any town, there are to be found within every hundred yards cooking places where the good cooks prepare two and three times a day such articles as meet ready sale and of which the natives are generally very fond. These places are resorted to by all classes and sizes of people, night and morning, as regularly as the sun rises and sets. In the evening more particularly they serve as points of attraction both for old and young, male and female, and present oftentimes scenes of no ordinary interest to a stranger.

Those who may be indisposed to leave their compounds are waited on by servants or children as several articles of diet are seldom prepared elsewhere than in the streets. It may be easily imagined that social gatherings characterize the mode of life, and must be present throughout a large and crowded city where many thousands have to be supplied with all the necessaries of life. At midday when there is a lull of this excitement, young lassies, with their trays of various articles, traverse the streets, hawking their vendibles. Indian corn, yams and potatoes, peas and palava sauce of several varieties, constitute the principal articles of diet and are, for the most part, prepared in native fashion to meet the peculiar wants of the people. For instance, Indian corn is pounded, saturated with water until it becomes highly acid then rubbed or ground into meal between two rocks, strained and then put into a large pot of several gallons and boiled to the consistency of tasty pudding, when it is served out to purchasers in nice clean calabashes with a little cold or warm water to suit the taste, or stirred and left in the pudding state. When stirred with warm water it is taken as a diluent and is a very good and acid beverage. This article of diet, than which none can be healthier, constitutes one of the chief resources of the people, is very cheap and placed within the reach of everyone twice or thrice a day, at such rates that one tenth of a cent will generally satisfy the appetite of one individual. This article, called *ekò* by the natives, is very much improved by putting into it a little of the juice of the baobab fruit and is called the *denge*.¹ It is thus rendered a little sweet, with a pungent acid taste and if not so good as ice cream is certainly as healthy. A similar preparation of *ekò* is made from the grain of the holchus sorghum or chimmine sugar corn in a similar way in those localities where the Indian corn does not grow so well.²

When I see such a diet as this so well adapted to the young, I wonder not that children are seen by hundreds and thousands in their streets, the very pictures of health.

The yam is of but little less importance as an article of diet and almost invariably found the accompaniment of Indian corn. It is variously prepared and in any of these preparations would be set

¹ This is called *denge*. The baobab ingredient gives the *ekò* additional flavour.

² This type is called *ekò bábà* because it looks like copper-colour instead of being white like *ekò* from Indian corn. The Yoruba word for copper is *bábà*

aside for rice, potatoes or anything else, from whatever country or clime. The yam is a large bulb differing materially from the potato in size, skin, colour and flavour; it is much larger, with a rougher skin, white colour, and is almost indescribable in taste, sometimes a little sweet, then almost insipid, and again with a flavour peculiarly its own. In its raw state it is prepared by taking off the rind or skin, then boiling in a large pot made air-tight by cementing the mouths of two large pots together with a clayey mixture and then pounding the cooked material into the consistency of dough, thus making the dish familiarly known on the west coast of Africa as *dumbo*.¹ This is eaten with such *palava* sauce as may suit the taste, and to a hungry man is not at all unpalatable, as I have often proved. The yam is also frequently cut up into small pieces and fried in palm oil, but in this style the excessive oily matter renders it too strong for a weak stomach. Furthermore it is also dried, then pounded into a fine powder² and sifted and in this state may be kept for several months after the fresh article has ceased to grow. This flour is also made into *dumbo*³ or dough by mixing a little of it in hot water and allowing it to remain for a few minutes when it assumes a good consistency and is then eaten with *palava* sauce. This, according to my judgement, constitutes one of the best dishes that the natives can boast. Corn and peas, together with *okro* and some other vegetables, is beaten together and then fried, making a good bread. The *palava* sauce is made of various salads made with palm oil, shellots, locust seed, which constitutes the principal ingredient of one variety, and is that for which my taste and appetite generally call for most loudly; that is an ingredient not generally used in the sauces in the markets and in the eating places though very frequently in that variety by families within the compound. These articles of diet are very cheap and within the reach of every individual thrice a day however poor, if he has but the inclination to work. The food is generally taken in small vessels, made of earthenware, fingers being used in the place of forks and spoons, as nearly all dishes are prepared either by boiling or frying, the culinary vessels are very simple and of sufficient hardness to resist the heat. They

¹ The Yoruba call it *iyán* (pounded yam).

² This is known as *èlùbò ìṣu* (yam flour).

³ In this case, the product is called *ámàlā* or *pkà ìṣu*.

vary in size from the pint pot to a vessel of several gallons and are possessed more or less by all families. Knives and forks are unknown though wooden spoons are sometimes used to dip the sauce. Women only are engaged in the culinary arts, and have their stalls which are occupied by turns for months until a stock on hand has been exhausted when it is taken temporarily by someone else.

This mode of cooking is very convenient and well adapted to the present customs and conditions of the people who live from day to day on their earnings and whose means would not justify such an outlay as would be necessary for individual families under the existing system. The regularity with which meals are taken depends altogether upon the individual who may eat twice, three or four times a day as fancy, inclination or circumstances may dictate. In the early morning before the performance of any labour, every person indulges in the good coffee of the country and afterwards partakes of food more substantial. During the day they, who live in town, eat more or less as food a diet of some kind, while in the evening again one of the most important meals is taken by all classes.

Drinking is one of the most social occasions and generally has a good many devotees towards sunset after the labours of the day have been performed. It is by no means to be understood from this remark that the Yoruba are excessive in their habits, as on the contrary the major portion of the population are quite temperate. The beer mostly used is fermented from the grain of the holchus sorghum and brewed by boiling in large pots. It is a palatable drink, slightly bitter, said to be wholesome and possesses some intoxicating properties. It must however be taken in large quantities to cause any evil effect. This beverage is partaken freely on all important occasions and is to be found daily in the markets at certain places where the disciples of Bacchus¹ meet together to do full justice to themselves and discuss the topics of the day. It need hardly be said that these localities are generally lively and attended with a good deal of wit and amusement though, be it spoken to their praise, there is very little drunkenness and rowdyism and indecency. Holland gin, American whisky and other poisons are not infrequently introduced

¹ The Roman god of wine.

and but for the admixture of water would sometimes give trouble. Palm wine in some localities where the tree is abundant supplies the drink in place of beer and from its very slight intoxicating quality may be taken with comparative impunity. It is of a milky colour and is a pleasant, sometimes exciting, beverage.

The dress of the natives certainly bespeaks for them a higher position than that generally assigned to people of this benighted continent. All classes, rich and poor, male and female, are generally well clad and have a sufficiency for a warm tropical climate. The costume is of the Oriental style though in some respects it may be *sui generis* African, as the American would say. There is a variety of dress that is found in other countries and about with as much pride in the selection of style, colours, etc., even among the boasted civilized. A full-made dress consists of a large shawl or wrapper or toga flowing robe, pants and cap. The shawl is a large oblong piece of cloth six by four feet and is thrown gracefully over the shoulders so as to fall to the knees and below and leave one arm exposed. The toga or gown is a very large garment covering nearly the entire body with folds to be thrown over the shoulders so as to allow free circulation of air around the body, and the pants are either short, reaching to the knee, or half length, or full and lengthy, resembling precisely the Turkish trousers. The latter garment is guided by a string around the loins. The cap is round or peaked at the top with long ears and is made of native cloth or velvet and silk. The robe, Turkish trousers and cap with long ears and sharp top are emphatically the Mohammedan dress and are seldom worn by the heathen population. Sandals are seldom worn except in travelling. It is sometimes the case that an amount of clothing is worn sufficient to keep a man warm in bad weather. A great many natives in full dress present beautiful figures and fine specimens of man. The most graceful, unrestrained, dignified carriage is in the proud noble-minded Yoruba. In him there is no affectation and no disguise. All is open, free and natural. Some of Cicero's great graceful oratorical positions I have seen splendidly represented by the natives in their dress of knee pants and flowing shawls. The funeral dress does not consist altogether of such a variety and I apprehend is neither so good nor graceful, yet it is not at all times unbecoming. It consists of several wrappers or shawls girded around the loins, falling nearly

to the feet, with one or two of similar size thrown loosely over the shoulders, and a head dress of a narrow strip of cloth. When visiting or celebrating some extraordinary occasion, they present not an unseemly ungraceful figure, and are frequently enveloped in cloth from head to foot. When at work their dress not allowing the free use of their arms is reduced, and very frequently the upper part of the body is exposed. Females are fond of ornament, such as beads particularly coral, and sometimes, though rarely, discommode themselves by a super-abundance of the latter. These little trinkets undergo their changes according to fashion just as the cut of a coat or the trimming of a bonnet on Broadway. When visiting one day I stepped into a compound where an artist was busily at work with several copper and brass rings before him of a certain pattern sent to be changed. Said I, "What are you doing?" as his work seemed to me to be one of a novel kind. He replied that he was changing the cut of that ring. "But what for?" "Obinrin (a woman) says she wants it changed", was the reply. "It won't do now, too old". And there he was labouring perhaps for several days to change an anklet or armband to suit the fancy of some fashionable lady. The dress of children was similar to that of adults and worn as extensively and at a cost proportionably great. Children as a general thing go naked from choice, not from necessity. It is a very rare thing to see a respectable boy or girl walking the streets in a state of nudity. Tattooing is carried on to a very small extent, principally among females, though their bodies are frequently disfigured with a sharp pointed instrument in very early life. Charms sometimes as ornaments are worn by the males but principally for the purpose of defence.

The practice of marking the face is almost universal in Africa and has its origin no doubt in a necessity almost apparent, founded on the unhappy state of the people of the lower countries who became so jealous of each other that marks of discernment were necessary.¹ Those marks differed in different tribes and have led to many a recognition and reunion that would never have taken place but for the figures that forever stamp the fact of the tribe on the individual.

¹ No evidence of such fear or jealousy in Yoruba tradition. Facial marks are for distinguishing various families. For information on Yoruba facial marks, see Johnson, *op. cit.*, pp. 104-9.

Shaving the head is almost as universal amongst the males, and consequently has introduced a great many barbers whose shops are generally crowded by customers. Sometimes the entire head is shaved, then again patches or tufts are left to suit the fancy of the individual according to some superstitious whim.

Some of their customs are peculiar and reversed in their application as compared with other countries. The females never cut or sew garments but sell all articles of merchandise and may sometimes be seen at places other than market houses perambulating the streets and visiting houses in making sales of their goods. Conversely the males use the needle entirely but never, or at least, very seldom engage in the art of selling. Their motto seems to be, "Everyone to his calling". Females, though they are the principal bearers of burdens, frequently bring wood and productions of various kinds into town, yet are never known to cultivate the farms. All household duties and many other departments of labour that require confinement within the walls, such as dyeing, the making or the extracting of oil, or making of pottery belong to their province. That of weaving is divided between males and females, the latter confining themselves in the occupation within their compounds.

Whether it is remote or it is to be attributed to the force of circumstances dependent on city life, the Yoruba are a very polite people, extending their civilities to the most trivial thing. Graceful oftentimes in their manner, their daily intercourse with each other is such that would do honour to a Parisian and rebuke those who profess in all their actions to be governed by a purer and holier code of laws. Acquaintances, and very often strangers, extend on meeting the kindest salutations and seldom neglect to inquire after the health of each other. The young and middle-aged are very respectful to the aged and oftentimes prostrate themselves in the dust before their superiors, especially if they be elders or men of marked influence. Two men of equal standing in importance stoop to the ground as they meet and shake hands all the while saluting each other. Women salute each other and their superiors particularly by dropping on one leg and placing one arm across the breast and on the other. These salutations, prostrations and genuflections are continued all day, however often the parties may meet. There is a word in the Yoruba language which, when compounded with any other, may

be used as a salutation, the frequent use of which has gained for them in Sierra Leone the name of the "Aku people". The word is *Oku* and is the contraction of three words, *Ki-o-ku* the literal meaning of which is negatively, let you or may you not die;¹ affirmatively, God give you life. Hence whether it is in the morning, midday, afternoon or evening in every direction is to be heard falling from the lips of the people this word in connection with some other that expresses the desired salutation. Not to salute an acquaintance is considered such a mark of disrespect as undoubtedly calls forth disapprobation. They are exceedingly kind and hospitable, especially to guests residing under their roof. Strangers receive marked attention, enjoy the best seat, and on retiring from the compound, are followed to the door of entrance where the master of the house gives the parting salutation. The kola nut, so well known as the token of respect throughout the interior of Africa, is almost invariably extended to strangers and guests and not infrequently purchased after their arrival, should the supply be exhausted.

Life is more sacred within the compound than anywhere else, and the governor exercises such a prerogative over his own people and dominions that it is said that the chief of the town cannot expel anyone from the hallowed precincts unless through and by the consent of the master. Of this however I have some doubt. Every individual, old and young, small and great, male and female, must bow or prostrate themselves when appearing before the chief magistrate. Individuals pleading causes generally remain prostrate until they have finished. The management of the domestic circle is generally attended with little disturbance and loud talking and quarrelling. Difficulties are easily settled by elders or friends and fighting is of very rare occurrence. Parental authority is of a lax order, or to say the least, the rod is very seldom administered, and then in an inhumane and rather brutal manner. A child with such discipline seldom disobeys except under the impulse of excited passion.

That the natives are positively clean in all their apartments I will not venture to say, but that in this respect they are very much superior to my preconceived notions of African habits there is with

¹ Fully expressed it is *Ki o kun fun agbara* or *o ku agbara*—May you be full of strength. It is a general greeting for well-being.

me no doubt. If what someone, a Frenchman, I believe, says is true that the advancement of a people may be determined by the quantity of soap used, then we shall assign to the Yoruba a high place in civilization. To decide whether they be clean in their habits many circumstances must be noted, not the least of which is that they are all a labouring people and do not therefore at all times present the best appearance. They are exceedingly fond of dress and fine clothes and I have observed that when they do not always look nice and clean it is because of the want of means, not of inclination. That they take pains in washing their clothing the streams around the town almost any day will testify, and that they respect cleanliness and decent clothing, the contrast in the day from the amount of labour to the genteel dress in the afternoon after the performance of the day's labour is sufficient both of the habit and economy. Ablutions especially among the labouring classes are very common, even to once and twice daily and frequently with the free use of soap. This much, by the way, is to disabuse the mind of the erroneous and prejudicial notions respecting the Africans; not that I intend to say that they are in this respect what they should be or that my remarks apply with equal force to all the tribes promiscuously. A volume might be written on the habits and customs of this interesting people, but I am admonished to bring this chapter to a close by a brief consideration of the ceremony of marriage and burials.

The age at which the sexes marry does not vary very materially from those of civilized countries, and is but another confirmation of the fact that the age of marriage in all countries but slightly varies. As in the patriarchal days, and among the Jews and Israelites, espousals were common even from mere childhood, so it is found among this patriarchal people. A young man taking a fancy to a girl notifies the parents by a present, and if he meets with encouragement, continues his pursuits, sometimes through a period of several years, until his betrothed reaches the years of maturity. This is so common that there are few girls of twelve and fifteen years but are already betrothed and have a prospect in the future matrimonial bliss, a custom no doubt many among the civilized would like revived from ancient and primitive time. Hence it is not an easy matter for a stranger, who is in advance of the generation to secure a wife, as the fact that the young, being engaged or betrothed, would necessitate

him to remain for several years in the anticipation of the growth of the mere child to womanhood. This is no fancy but real fact and has brought instances within my own personal knowledge. When both parties have reached the full term of life, preparations are made on both sides to an extent proportionate to their means and standing for a lengthy and happy celebration of the nuptials. The young man and woman make purchase of their wedding garments out of the means they have been providing for months past. the day is announced to friends and early dawn heralds it forth by the playing of drums. This is the first of the three important days of the ceremony, but the one of least importance and in which the intended bride is conducted to a chamber near the governor of the house and there secluded until the hour of her appointed time. In the meantime the friends and relatives collect and begin the day in preparation for feasting and drinking which generally ends with songs of mirth to a late hour at night. During the day the family are receiving from those interested in the ceremonies tokens of regard in the form of large dishes of food and pots or jars of country beer. The second day is the continuation of the first only with more interest, a larger crowd, and eating and drinking to a greater degree. On the morning of the third day, the young woman is given into the hands of the groom and becomes his bride. This is the great occasion and everyone becomes merry, eating and drinking, while the young folks continue their songs of mirth and adulation, oftentimes near the dawn of the next day. One imposing scene of hilarity and amusement would certainly make one conclude that they were a happy people. It frequently happens that the bride after this makes a visit to her friends and relatives and spends several days during the time in company with the attending virgins. She goes from place to place receiving presents and may frequently be seen traversing the streets with veiled face for a similar purpose. No one is allowed to behold the face of those fair ones who always, in receiving any token of respect, bow or stoop before the giver and remain silent as the grave. I remember having seen, one evening, as many as four or five of these fair brides with their attendants all scouring the streets for a like object. Having finished this duty she returns home to cater upon the household duties of the wife, now however without the retention of a bridal veil for sometime to come whenever a public

exhibition of herself becomes necessary. Such is the general routine of courtship and matrimony, acts and relations, which I judge from observation and expressions oftentimes heard, they regard most highly and absolutely necessary to their happiness. Thus, brides, it seems to me, are honoured as highly by the natives as among any people, and certainly receive more of those little tokens of regards that are so precious to the receiver as well as honourable to the giver. Marriages are very frequent, and in the town in which I live occur daily, more or less. This institution as recognized by the natives, one which they regard so highly and maintain much of its purity as ancient and honoured in its form direct from their fathers, certainly exerts the most salutary influence on the habits and morals of the people, and may be viewed as one of the main pillars in their social fabric that gives beauty, strength and durability to that state of things which strikes us with so much astonishment as existing among a people of whom we could scarcely conceive anything but degradation and corruption.

The ceremony attending death and burial is scarcely less honoured than that of matrimony and very frequently is not easily distinguished by the stranger. As soon as death occurs, the body is tightly bound from head to foot, and after some superstitious ceremonies or manipulations perhaps by some priest, it is deposited in a grave dug in a room of the deceased or in a portico in front of the room. This is a universal custom with the Yoruba, and no doubt enhances to a great degree the residences that inclose the relics of so many dear friends and relatives. I never saw a native burial in actual performance, but I happened to be in a compound when a grave had just been covered when the crowd was dispersing. There seemed to be considerable feeling, one or two were weeping sincerely and I felt the solemnity of the place what only my eyes beheld. As soon as death occurs, the friends of the deceased begin their woes and lamentations which they keep up at night for several days successive. The worthless articles of the dead are taken and thrown out near the compound, or more generally deposited by the side of the roads leading into the town. These roads are frequently lined for a little distance with worthless articles, the friends taking care to retain, I imagine, the valuables for themselves. The important funeral services however are seldom performed until some period after

death when the same show and parade takes place as at marriage festivals and oftentimes on a greater scale. All men of character and importance, either sooner or later, are honoured with three exhibitions, and where the estate of a female individual of small means could not bear the expense their friends contribute to this end and even go so far, for instance, that a daughter or son beg publicly,¹ for an amount sufficient to do honour on this day to departed relatives. Hence long after the death and burial, the town is sometimes made to echo with shouts and rejoicing of those who now with means ample, are rendering their last tribute of respect to a father, elder or friend. Sometimes before interment of a body, it is borne through the streets on the heads of two men but so tightly bound and covered over with cloth as to be entirely obscured from light. An incessant uproar is kept up by the shouting party, especially the chanters of praise, perhaps employed for the purpose, and those who shake continually the cloth overhanging the body. At other times this is a mere hoax and designed to secure contributions from the credulous masses by working on their superstitious notions. But some of the greatest exhibitions ever witnessed in Yorubaland are of this character when a prominent man dies and thousands cluster together to do homage to his name. On such occasion the remnant of an estate, after the outlay of an amount sufficient to purchase the necessaries for the children, is taken to the market whither the tremendous crowd, at some house in the afternoon, resort with drums and guns to make a display that burlesques all funeral solemnity, and which a stranger would imagine to be a proper occasion for the greatest rejoicing. Everything gives way before the impetuosity of the crowd, women fly in every direction with their articles of merchandise, strangers and loafers are drawn towards the scene as if spellbound, the circle attests and the revelry begins. The drums ring an incessant roar, the shouts of the multitude deafening the ears, the flash and peal of the musket are continually heard, the money cowries that have been heaped together now flying into the air in every direction, men, women and children running and scuffling with each other for the cowries; some mounting the shade trees and with the action of

¹ On the contrary, the usual thing was to get a loan the security for which a person might pawn his son, brother or even himself until the loan was repaid.

squirrels venturing to extremes for a string of cowries that may perchance to have caught on a limb; others dancing in a ring, and to utter prostration, with all the contortions, whirls and falls possible, and the ecstatic, wandering, rejoicing crowd, present a scene of native life worthy the pencil of the painter, and yet almost beyond a lifelike description. In this way the ordinary estate of the native is squandered away for the public benefit, scattered in every direction in any and every way for anyone who may be so fortunate as to get a cowry, and just to pander to the taste of the public mind that returns with unflinching tenacity whatever has come down from father to son. Let it not be wondered at that the heartrendings of death and the solemnities common to such providences in Christian and enlightened countries should be so little felt among those whose custom it is to make as occasions of rejoicing the death of their great men and relatives and friends. Such is the kind of respect paid by the natives to their departed ones and it needs scarcely be said that on such an occasion solemnity and mourning have nothing to do with the ceremonies of the day.¹ The grandest occasion, equalled perhaps to foreign nations, is when the king dies. This is the time when everybody becomes infatuated and the influences then working are felt for months to come in the grandest demonstrations the native mind ever planned.

¹ The impression should not be had that the Yoruba do not mourn their dead. They do. But they also distinguish between *òfò* and *òkú*. The former refers to the death of a young one or one who dies at a premature age and whose death occasions much grief. On such occasion merriment, rejoicing etc., hardly followed mourning. The latter, on the other hand, refers to the death of one who had lived to a mature age. Mature age in this case is not measured absolutely, but relative to certain factors. For example anyone whose parents have died, who is survived by children, old and wealthy enough to celebrate his funeral, etc., would have died at a mature age and his death would be celebrated amidst merriment, dancing, rejoicing etc., after a brief period of mourning.

CHAPTER 12

GOVERNMENT OF THE YORUBA PEOPLE

THE government of the Yoruba kingdom is monarcho-patriarchal, but sometimes tyrannical under the rule of a strong, self-willed ruler. Originally it was a strong, powerful government and much consolidated, but since the great Fulani invasion, the result of which was the weakening of the royal power, it has been reduced to a mere name and is now dependent for its existence on that national and patriotic feeling which the people, to a considerable degree, possess. While therefore the patriarchal element still exists, and the kingdom is retained in name, the monarchical has long since ceased to exert a controlling and commanding influence over the several constituents. Though a king, a capital and a kingdom now exist nominally, the government of the country may properly be called one of independent chieftainship in which every town is ruled by its own chief, with and under such modifications and circumstances as policy may dictate. Formerly when the government possessed the controlling power and could summarily execute its own behests on all offenders, every town and city paid tribute to the king, but now the capital itself pays tribute¹ to one of the largest cities while each and every one in turn renders tribute on demand to some superior power. The governments of the representative town present two features, one of which determines the character of each. Some cities are ruled by a chief and officers of war who, for the most part, are mere tools and only subserve the purposes of the ruling power. This system,

¹ The inference that the king, i.e., the Alafin of Oyo, was paying tribute to one of the largest cities (probably either Ijaye or Ibadan) was not actually true. It was true that in the mid-nineteenth century, either Ijaye or Ibadan was militarily superior to Oyo and that the Alafin's claim to overlordship of either of them was nominal. But there was no question of either of them imposing tribute on Oyo.

under the management of the ambitious chiefs, becomes most burdensome, and assumes occasionally the features of tyranny which, though in many respects objectionable, works very well in the present state of the central government. The fundamental principles upon which rests the social fabric has, as the stepping-stone, the establishment and safe exercise of the government, which finds a hearty and natural response in the minds and feelings of every subject. The judicial, like the executive, has powers vested in the same hands, and in its administration partakes greatly of the patriarchal element. On certain occasions, which in some towns are almost daily, the chief, with or without his council as the case may be, holds his hours for hearing all cases brought before him. At the appointed time and according to certain signs which the natives well know, crowds flock to the courtyard and, prostrating themselves before the chief authority, take their seats on either side to await the deliberation of the court. Whoever have a case present themselves prostrate before the chief who hears both sides, witnesses and pleadings and then gives his decision. In some instances the opinions of elders and counsellors are taken as a matter of principle, in others as mere etiquette. Any man can plead his own case and oftentimes this pleading is done with a boldness and earnestness truly astonishing, more particularly when we remember how timid subjects become under such government. As to the extent even-handed justice is meted out I shall not pretend to decide, though I am of the opinion in most instances, particularly where the parties are well balanced, the administration of justice is fully equal to the condition of the people in other respects. It must be admitted however that in cases of importance where much is involved, especially the character, honour or wealth of some principal man, chiefs are not free from the reproach of bribery. But there is not much danger to be apprehended from the violation of justice where the parties fully understand the customs and laws of the country.

In the present state of the central government in which there is no standing army, no very expensive machinery, the officers of government are very much reduced in number and are such as belong to the police regulation of a town. There is a commander-in-chief but the army is only the militia of the country who support themselves like all others and fight in times of necessity. The town

governments, involving all the police regulations, afford a fair specimen of what we find in the administration of justice throughout the country. The chief has around him his own slaves and flatterers who do his bidding and are virtually the civil officers; he has his messengers who serve as public criers to make known laws or publish temporary enactments; he appoints, over every department of labour or business, principal men who are to act in their respective spheres; and then he has regular officers of a police character, perhaps his own slaves, who are so detected in their cunning that it is difficult for anyone to thwart them in their vigilance. Hence the order and regularity characteristic of these town governments. I once had a misunderstanding with half a dozen men whom I had employed at an advance of several dollars to furnish me so many feet of lumber. They laboured for sometime and failed to fulfill the contract, ceased work and could not be induced to renew their efforts, notwithstanding all my threats and expressed determination to take them before the chief. The fact was, as they well knew, the governor had no direct jurisdiction over them [in this case] and my threats could only tend to make them laugh at my ignorance. After a length of time, having ascertained I could do nothing except through the chief of this department I appeared before him with my witnesses and settled the difficulty as I best could.

The question would very naturally arise in the mind of the stranger how possibly can such order be kept in the large markets where there are so many conflicting elements and interests and such a variety of causes operating to create confusion and strife. The answer is found in fact that there presides over this as over all other departments an officer whose scrutinizing eye detects outbreakers and keeps in check every disturbing cause. Thousands of human beings continually associate in all the various relations of life with less injury and violence than is to be found among so many hundreds of our boasted civilized towns. However, such a statement may be spurned by those whose incredulity is equalled only by their prejudice of colour; it is nevertheless true whatever may be the reasons or causes assigned.

The penal code is simple and with the ready administration of justice has had the most happy effect in deterring offenders and preventing a repetition of crime. Murder, adultery and theft in some

instances are rewarded with death. For minor offences as for those of a mitigated character, imprisonment and fines are the usual penalty. Any man taking blood, however small the quantity, is subject to indictment before the chief who inflicts a penalty according to the merits of the case. In some towns the government of which is limited in power, or where the elders constitute a part of the executive, minor cases of dispute are often settled before some one of the council, while all important cases are tried before the proper tribunal, which is both executive and judicial. Most malefactors of a high degree and traitors, after receiving the merit due to their crime, have their heads fastened upon a tree in the markets or in some conspicuous place to warn and terrify. In the large city of Ilorin whose elements are various and more incontrollable, the penitentiary system is adopted for many offences of the second degree. Hence the fetters are oftentimes to be seen on the legs and sometimes on the hand and leg of those who are watched daily and forced to work not only for their own support but for the general government. This is certainly one of the best systems that could be devised for the punishment of offenders and the general interest of the community. Around the compounds of the king's prime slaves may be seen any day numbers of these poor victims clogged with their fetters, a disgrace and burden to themselves, and a living warning to others.

The readiness with which the laws are enforced has produced such an effect that a people more law abiding and orderly are seldom to be found. During a sojourn of nearly four years I never saw a street fight between two men—a disgraceful act discouraged by all honourable natives; heard of but one case of adultery; of but very few cases of theft and not exceeding four or five cases of murder throughout the native kingdom. It is true the female traders occasionally have some little difficulty arising from their peculiar profession, but like the Dutch women, they soon become as strong friends as ever. No gambling is allowed by the laws of the country. A remarkable instance of the integrity of the law occurred a few years ago in Ijaye where the offender happened to be the brother of the chief. He was guilty of theft and had been warned time and again unless he desisted he would lose his head. Nothing daunted, he persisted in the repeated violation of the law and paid as the forfeit his own life at the hand of the chief himself. Capital punishment is performed

by decapitation either by the prime ruler or someone appointed to that office. No red water ordeal is within my knowledge performed by the government on any offender.

The income or revenue of the government is derived from taxation on various articles of agriculture and the various importations of merchandise. In cases of necessity or even at the will of the chief direct taxation very much resembling legal extortion is practised. This revenue is used by the chief authority at his discretion, and is virtually nothing more than the income of his office derived by virtue of his position as all expenditure of a general character is borne by the population, irrespective of other taxes. The principal if not the only expenditure of the government is the levees, held several times a week perhaps daily in some towns. This is a very prosperous feature of the government and no doubt reconciles the people to submit to taxation on their labour. The revenue in some towns is very considerable and, but for the tribute paid by the weaker to the stronger, would enrich any man and make the supreme office a most desirable one even for the emoluments. The revenue system is a perfect euchring of the traders who are compelled to pay at every gate entrance and exit of every town and village through which they pass, and sometimes at other places perhaps in the field or wood, where it is convenient to lay claim to tribute or anything else. A certain town around which at a short distance ran a river was in the wet season crossed by native ferriage and made a toll-collecting centre.

The governments have their occasions and kinds of celebrations, but as they are for the most part of a religious character, notice of them will be deferred to a more suitable place.¹ The public servants are generally known by their livery which differs from the ordinary dress and by their overbearing carriage, not infrequently a dishonour to the government they represent. The servants, slaves of the chiefs, are known to make use of this relation to practise violence on the people and force from them such articles of food as they wish, pleading as an excuse their mental connection with the chief authority. This violence however is seldom perpetrated.

¹ See Chapter 16 below.

The tenure of office rests on lineal descent both in the local and general government; descending in the former case from father to son in case of no other claimant.¹ In the local government the choice of the chief is determined somewhat by public opinion acting through the elders or prominent men, in which cases the heir apparent may never become one in reality. Should the king of the Yoruba now die, not his eldest son but Tella the next brother in order would take the throne² and would be sought for and brought by stratagem to the capital where he would receive the crown with perhaps as much astonishment as if an humble citizen. An intelligent native once told me this was the plan adopted by the elders on the death of a king to introduce a new one into an office, and wherever he might be found, or whatever excuse offered, force if necessary would be used to bring him to the capital.

The only exercise of a cruel disposition in the administration of the general government is on the death of the king, who as befitting the grand occasion, must leave on his exit from the world so many sacrifices of his wives and slaves to accompany him to his future state. At such times and during the short interregnum, when popular fury and excitement rage beyond all bounds, it is not so much to be wondered at that some such demonstration should be made by an impulsive and superstitious people who think that now, if ever life ought to be sacrificed, it is at the demise of the king. These and similar occasions are the only ones at which this extreme and offensive practice is resorted to, one in which to their sober moments and ordinary life is repulsive to their every feeling. I account for such acts on very much the same ground as I would for the enthusiastic and wild demonstration of a whole nation in honour of a coronation day, or some immortalized hero, when the sacrifices of life, though not designedly, are virtually really made to the uncontrollable excitement and madness that everywhere reigns.

¹ Such other claimants usually would be the brother or the brother's son of the deceased incumbent.

² This convention was overtaken by events a year after Clarke left Yorubaland for America. For before Atiba died in 1859, he successfully recommended his son Adelu to succeed him. Arẹ Kurumi of Ijaye resisted this in vain. For more information on the outcome, see S. Johnson, *op. cit.*, pp. 331-50 and J. F. Ade Ajayi & R. S. Smith *op. cit.*, pp. 76-96.

There is a secret society,¹ something like the masonic, which may have more or less to do in the administration of government, but as its acts are altogether of a secret kind, no knowledge of its workings can be ascertained. Every manifestation of the signs which have been frequently given to me in shaking hands is attended with the kindest demonstration of good-will and evinces a brotherly spirit which would induce a novice to believe they had some connection with the ancient order of masonry. It is not every individual that can become a member of this society and, judging from my knowledge of the membership, I should think it rather an aristocratic institution consisting for the most part of men of worth and influence.

The government of the small Fulani kingdom of Ilorin is so permeated by the Yoruba element that there is no essential modification, although the religion is very different. In consequence of a greater corruption, dependent and consequent upon the system of religion, the penal code is not enforced with the same readiness nor justice administered with such impartiality.

In the Ijeṣa kingdom the government being patriarchal-monarchical is administered by the king and ten associated elders, who in style of living imitate as nearly as possible their liege lord. Of this number there is the civil counsellor or prime minister and commander-in-chief, who exercises a commanding influence and with the others must necessarily hold within their hands quite a balance of power. Such are some of the prominent features of the government and laws of these kingdoms.

¹ This was the Ogboni Society. Its function in nineteenth century government of Oyo is discussed in Peter Morton-Williams, "The Ogboni Cult in Oyo", *Africa*, Vol. XXX, No. 4 (1960.) But there is no evidence that this cult, most likely introduced to New Oyo by Atiba, existed in Old Oyo in the pre-nineteenth century period.

CHAPTER 13

AGRICULTURE AND COMMERCE IN YORUBALAND

THE Yoruba are emphatically an agricultural people and rely upon the cultivation of the soil for the necessities of life. This feeling so essential in its practical workings to the welfare and stability of a country is possessed by every citizen and produces, as may be readily seen, the most beneficial result in every department of labour. By far the greater part of the population are engaged in this laudable calling with a zeal and energy worthy of imitation and during a period of time that embraces every month in the year. The system of agriculture is natural and primitive and, though without all the appliances of civilization, produces fine results. Land is held by possession and only so long as cultivated unless it is vacated with a reserved right. As the people live altogether in towns, the surrounding country is first cultivated until badly worn and then is left to reinstate itself when another field is cleared. Hence the fields around a town are oftentimes in a wild uncultivated state. Most individuals have their small farms which they cultivate independently, though the membership of a family may be sufficiently able to cultivate conjointly a number of acres.

The implements used in agriculture are the billhook and axe for clearing, and the hoe for the cultivation of the soil. The billhook, a large knife enlarged and rounded at its point, serves very well the place of a hatchet, and is a most formidable weapon. The axe is an oblong piece of iron six inches in length, flattened at the edge and is fastened three or four inches deep into a large club two and a half feet long. With this simple instrument large trees are felled, the forest cleared, the wood cut and split and thousands of acres prepared for tillage.

The natives are not so much interested in any department of labour as in the cultivation of the soil and consequently they lead no calling more honourable. The males are the only class on whom this duty devolves though the females very frequently aid in harvesting, and may be seen daily bringing in loads of provisions from the farm. So strong is the aversion of the native mind to this kind of female servitude that I have yet to see the first instance of a woman engaged, hoe in hand, in cultivating the earth. Planting season begins in very early spring and continues through the summer and fall. The soil is prepared by digging with the hoe, of which we present a cut, very much as it is turned under by a plow. Corn, yams, potatoes, cotton, holchus sorghum and nearly every article that is cultivated on the same mode of agriculture seen in civilized countries. The extent of soil cultivated is in proportion to the size of any given city, and oftentimes unmeasured by mere vision. As animals of the domestic kind are kept within the walls except on visits to the farm under the watchcare of their owners the necessity for fences, save some hedges, ceases to exist and the farms not infrequently present the unbroken appearances of a single field. Sometimes nothing more than a small path serves to make the distinction between the adjacent farms. The idea of Indian patches seen singly may be correct when applied to Yoruba farms, but if the fields are taken in the aggregate such a conception would fall very far short of rightly impressing with regard to the thousands of acres that may sometimes be seen in a state of life and beauty from a single point of observation. Around some of the larger cities a person may travel for hours together amid waving corn and creeping yam vines, to say nothing of other varied articles of culture, fruit and trees. The farms are very well cultivated, cleanly kept and anxiously watched by their owners, who daily visit them.

A description of a farmer's life would serve to give a clear idea of the extent of cultivation and the mode of culture. It has already been stated that the natives dwell altogether in towns and cities around which they cultivate the soil, thereby necessitating the daily return of every man who visits the farm. A farmer therefore rises early, breakfasts, equips himself for the field with such implements as may be needed and starts for the country. In the course of an hour or more he reaches his farm where he labours until late in the afternoon, when taking a load of provisions or wood, he beats a

retreat and reaches town in time for the evening market. As the country over which he travels is level or beautifully undulating he can readily walk twelve or fifteen miles and work from six to eight hours per day. This mode of life is kept up during the whole year by thousands of persons who seem to be delighted with the idea of going to the farm if for nothing else other than to make the visit. By early dawn the town is astir, the farmers, men, women and children are tramping to and fro, eating, drinking, laughing, talking, hastening on together, when by seven or eight o'clock the common thoroughfares are alive with active energetic human beings, who by hundreds and thousands pass through the gates on their way to the country. What an assemblage of visages, characters, costumes, what types, what varied specimens of mankind! Horsemen, footmen, men and women, children of all sizes and sexes, old and young, masters and slaves, some well clad, others in tattered dirty garments, sheep, goats, cows, dogs, baskets, hoes, axes, all go to form the crowd that may be seen any day passing from a city for hours together, moving on with the rapidity and buoyancy of step that mark the vigour and energy of the people. They keep the main road until it bifurcates again and again and finally ramifies like the limbs of a tree into minute subdivisions to the very end of the very topmost branches. So these immense crowds are lost in the network of paths and roads spread over the country as they lead each man to his respective little farm. As the day wears on and the sun begins to lengthen its shadows, one by one they tend to the parent road, tracing each subdivision into the main thoroughfare which becomes alive with the same specimens now loaded with provisions of every description, passing on to town, some walking, others trotting, panting and blowing, with an elastic step, others almost pressed to the ground by overloading, little children heavily laden, striving to keep up, old men and women struggling as if for the mastery, horsemen and light-footed men anxiously pressing forward and jaded animals now compose the crowd, hastening home, eager to beat those left behind.

Scarcely do they reach the gates of the city ere they are besieged by eager buyers anticipating the market; some anxious for their articles—for that with an enthusiasm and ardour equalled to the zeal of buyers of stock exchange. All those with marketable articles

pass on to the market where they deposit their produce in the respective stalls and await the buyers; while the remainder find their way to their homes and by seven o'clock the last ones perhaps of the immense crowds are secured within the walls of the city. This is the farmer's life. As he gathers his crop he brings it into market and disposes of it for ready cash with which he supplies all his wants of provisions, clothing and luxuries. Nature has so adapted its profuse gifts that every quarter during the year the farmer can make available his own labour by converting it into cash. If his productions are not matured he can make a contribution on nature's prolific hand and bring into market some valuable fruits and supply all his wants; or if pressed still more, he has but to turn to the forests and supply himself with an article always marketable. A thrifty farmer, I suppose, would realize in the currency of the country from the sale of fruits, corn, yams, grain, holchus sorghum, sugar cane, okro and various other articles from thirty to fifty dollars per annum. This appears to be a very small sum but it must be remembered that the price of provisions is very much lower than in the markets of civilized countries. A bushel of corn for instance may be bought for ten cents; of grain, holchus sorghum, ten cents, a bushel of yams for twenty-five cents, and other articles in like proportions.

Some of the principal productions are Indian corn, holchus sorghum, yams, cotton, beans, peas, okro, sugar cane, variety of ground peas, rice, echellots and a variety of salads. There are a half dozen variety of yams mostly white, especially the water yam. Indian corn grows very well below but poorly above the dividing ridge; holchus sorghum is well adapted to the whole country and is very extensively cultivated. The yam is very prolific though only one is a heap, and the Indian corn is the staff of life.

The fondness of the people for the peaceful pursuit of agriculture has had no little to do with forming their character as a friendly and harmless action, and giving them a stability which nothing but an ignorance of their vocation will ever successfully overthrow. This is certainly a redeeming trait and confirms strongly the hope of the man who, in labouring for the regeneration of a lost people, beholds in their beautiful farms rendered doubly beautiful by nature's own scenery extended far and wide, oftentimes as far as

the eye can reach, the elements of success and the foundation of whatever is permanent and durable. How very different from the notions of those who never saw anything in an African but a black skin, a woolly head, an imbecile intellect, roots and herbs for his nutriment and a skin or rag for his covering. But these are the prejudices of false conceptions of a passing age and are as unworthy of ourselves as they are injurious and prejudicial to those who rise and sleep with the same sun and toil and labour with the same ceaseless industry.

Commerce is another important element in the Sudanese countries and bespeaks a favourable consideration of the character of the people. If agriculture engaged the attention of a very large portion of the population, commerce or the petty trade of the natives directly and incidentally employ but few less. The trade in native produce and art keeps up continual intercommunication between the several adjacent towns, the one interchanging its abundance of one article for that of another. Thus on those smaller routes may be seen caravans of fifties passing almost daily from one town to another, acting as the branches of the great reservoirs of trade. As a general rule each town excels in some particular department of industry from which it supplies those demanding such articles. Ibadan is a large salt market and supplies many surrounding towns; Ijaye is a flourishing farming district and furnishes Ibadan and Abeokuta from its super abundance. Abeokuta is largely engaged in the palm oil and cotton trade and consequently needs a supply of provisions from some other city; Iseyin deals largely in indigo and supplies Ijaye which is extensively engaged also in manufacturing. Ogbomoso, being within a locust tree and shea-butter district, furnishes other towns with these important articles while Ila, Ilesha, in the east, send their cloths and kola nuts respectively to the farthest parts of the kingdom. Such a trade of inter-communication must necessarily engage a considerable number of people and tend to favour friendly and peaceful relations. The trade in foreign goods of every description extends the line of travel reaching from the western Atlantic to the Mediterranean with all the adjacent countries and cities through which it passes. There are certain routes along which this trade passes and from which it seldom deviates, engaging hundreds and thousands and acting as an important stimulus to every department of labour.

The articles of export, though not great in variety, are very considerable in quantity for a people who but a few years back had no market for their superabundance of produce. Palm oil for several years past has engaged a number of vessels and increased the importance of Lagos as a trading point one hundred per cent. This trade has been rapidly on the increase until the check put upon it by the "magnanimous" French in their outrageous attempt to revive the slave trade and had raised the exports several thousand tons. The consequent activity produced in the interior gave a certain indication of a glorious future result if the people should be left alone in their peaceful avocation. Almost any day in the year a dozen vessels may be seen lying in the roads waiting for cargoes or unloading their imports. The cotton trade itself has been increased under the fostering care of noble-minded British from a very small native trade to an annual export of several hundred if not thousand bales, one hundred pounds each, ginned and packed with as much neatness as is to be seen at any American cotton press. This trade is but in its infancy and though it may never be productive of any very great results, will serve as an important export from a people who in their abundant resources have no one monopolized article. Cotton cloths of every pattern and variety are shipped by thousands per annum to Brazil and are highly valued for their durability. Ivory is shipped in small quantities but never can become an article of much importance in any country where this noble animal ceases to roam in any numbers. At the present time there is no demand for any articles which might be exported in considerable quantities, such as corn, yams, indigo, hides and shea-butter.

The importing is perhaps greater than the exporting, at least in variety. From Lagos are brought by native traders all kinds of Manchester goods, prints, homespun, sometimes silk and velvet, crockery, tinware, knives, beads of every variety, tobacco, gin, and almost endless numbers of articles to Abeokuta whence they are taken by traders in large caravans to all parts of the surrounding countries even as far as Ilorin and Sokoto. In this way a network of trade is carried to a distance of hundreds of miles, and with an energy and perseverance scarcely compatible with a tropical people. The hours of arrival and departure of these caravans at and from

the towns and cities are nearly as regular as the arrival and departure of mail trains in America. Hundreds and thousands of people are thus engaged in the carrying trade while as many more are busied in buying and selling. Not infrequently the articles from the Mediterranean and the western coast may be seen in close proximity, and the productions of the four quarters of the globe within a circumference whose diameter may be measured by a few yards. In the disturbed state of the country when several caravans are thrown together for the purposes of defence a correct idea of the extent of trade may be found in the imposing numbers that stretch over several miles in length.

In trading the natives are keen and shrewd and well understand how to make large profits even at the expense of truth. Two, three and five hundred per cent are not too heavy profits to make on an individual who is ignorant enough to place himself in their clutches. The prices of articles are regulated by the same law of supply and demand that regulates trade the world over. The instinctive desire to trade manifests itself at a very early period in children who are early taught to take care of themselves by personal efforts. It is nothing strange to see small children perfectly at home in the markets buying and selling with all the spirit and tact of grown persons. Nothing can be more true than that he who does not watch on every hand will be a cheated man.

The markets found in Sudan are perhaps the most interesting objects a stranger can behold. They comprise a little of almost every thing and present the native character in every phase, variety and description. Each town has its principal market and smaller ones near the gates of entrance where there is generally a supply of provisions for convenience. All marketable articles are carried to some one of these markets whether of provisions or merchandise, where their value is tested by a trying competition; the principal market hour is in the afternoon between the hours of five and eight as the farmers are returning from their labour bringing in their varied productions, and the merchants and the saleswomen are leaving their regular work to try their fortune at trade. Many deposit their loads of provisions at the small markets where there are always an abundance of purchasers while the major part pass on to try the merits of the greater competitions. As the hundreds

and thousands pour into the several gates to the principal as well as the small markets the town becomes full of life and activity, even to overflowing, with the restless crowd, each one of which thinks of no one else but himself and his little stall. Along an ordinary thoroughfare may be seen scores and hundreds, hastening on to the great crowds with whatever the hands have that day finished or something lying over unsold, perfectly intent on a single object. By sunset thousands have already collected together with every article that the country can produce, ready for sale and whoever has anything to buy or sell is now to be found in the market watching for a buyer, or hunting and accommodating saleswomen. As the natives say, the market is now full, and the day's jubilee commences. A stroll through one of these large markets ascertains that all is order, everything has a place and that there is a place for everything. There is no confusion, no difficulty in finding what you wish if you only know where to hunt for it. Starting at one point you pass through that portion in which is to be found a variety of provisions—corn, yams, etc., then nearby may be a tailor's shop with ready-made clothing, shirts, pants and caps; then whisky or gin, velvet and silk goods, Manchester prints of various kinds, homespun; then in immediate competition native manufacture of every style and pattern, trona from the desert, iron ore smelted, mats, eggs, pigeons, fowls, wild game quails, guinea fowls; dealers in leather and charms, goats, and sheep, iron implements of various kinds, fruits, medicines, fresh meat wild and domestic, beer, salads ready cooked, rope, beads and trinkets, snails, rats, pottery, cheese, mats of superior quality, plates and dishes, calabashes, salt, etc. Each article has its appropriate stall, to prevent confusion, where it only can be found. Notwithstanding the immense crowd and the varied business and taste, all is order and quiet. From some eminence a little way off may be seen a group working like bees in a hive, persons passing in every possible direction with little or no inconvenience to themselves or to others. Men, women and children of every profession, caste and character mingle freely together, some laughing and talking, some crying, others at leisure lounging under the trees, some intently engaged in great haste, others indifferent, awaiting good fortune, some beating drums, firing guns, others shouting and

keeping up a continual roar, now and then a quarrel, perhaps a fight between two jealous traders all present a scene which would delight a stranger for hours together, all worthy of the study of the man who takes pleasure in looking into human nature as it really is.

The number of people collected together on such occasions is truly astonishing. It cannot be accounted for on the ground that the whole town is to be found collected together at this hour; so far from being the case the streets as well as the smaller markets are full of people as intently engaged, who seem unconscious that there is anybody else in town. I remember once entering the gate of a large city at nightfall two miles distant from my residence to reach which I was compelled to pass through the heart of the place. Having never been out at this hour before, I was not at all prepared to see the multitudes that were everywhere visible on a line of two miles. But for the fact of my being on horseback the journey would have been a very tedious one, as the slow crowds almost obstructed the passage. On reaching the large market, I was compelled to deflect very considerably in order to pass at all. No street or market I have ever seen either in New York, New Orleans or Charleston presented just such a dense mass of human beings. To say that twelve and fifteen thousand people may sometimes be seen collected together in the business of trade would perhaps provoke a smile of ridicule from the overwise and incredulous; but I will say, these immense numbers might not inappropriately be counted by acres.

The scene itself is striking enough but is rendered doubly interesting when lighted by a thousand lamps or more seen glittering in the distance like so many twinkling stars. That such immense crowds should meet day after day in perfect harmony and order, and transact their affairs like one great family without fighting and bloodshed is the more wonderful because it stands out in such bold contrast to what is seen in lands boasted for civilization and good government.

Every fifth day is a great market day on which the people of the surrounding towns and villages bring in their various wares and merchandise. Not infrequently, the large market is denominated as the king's or chief's market; the smaller ones taking their names from the locality of some great personage. The natives are very proud of their markets and may sometimes be heard discussing with considerable earnestness their comparative merits.

The currency in which this trade is carried on is very simple though wonderfully adapted to the present wants and condition of the people. It has been in use on the western coast for several hundred years and has in its adaptation to the wants of the people made its way even to many dependencies of the Hausa kingdom. Unwieldy and inconvenient, it is nevertheless infinitely better than many of the cumbrous currencies in use among other tribes. It runs thus: forty cowries make one string; fifty strings make one head; ten heads make one bag—forty cowries or one string is equal to one cent; two heads to one dollar; and five dollars equal one bag,¹ a load for a man. The services of a day labourer are valued at from four to eight strings, while two strings generally supply the wants of any man.² As the wealth and trade of the people increase, the disposition to use silver currency also increases and very much in the same ratio. Four and five years ago it was with great difficulty that silver could be exchanged at anything like a fair valuation in Ijaye; now both in this place and at Abẹkuta the silver, because of its portability, is in considerable demand.

¹ The table of calculation tallies with the one given in Johnson, *op. cit.*, p. 118.

² Cf. The rate of exchange to sterling as given in Johnson, *op. cit.*, p. 119.

CHAPTER 14

THE LANGUAGE OF THE YORUBA PEOPLE

PERHAPS in no one particular area are we so favourably impressed with the Yoruba people as in the language, the vehicle of their ideas. It may with propriety be viewed as the parent source of all the languages in the Bight of Guinea and of many in southern Sudan. As this is not the place to enter into the full merits of this question,¹ we shall be content with a few general observations compatible with the main design. There is abundant reason to believe that it dates far back into antiquity and claims some affinity at least with the languages long since ceased to be spoken. The patriarchal character which has been mentioned as belonging particularly to this people is certainly strikingly associated with the language which they speak and on which it is engrafted. The syntax or peculiarity of its construction oftentimes bears some similarity to the Greek and Latin, while numberless expressions similar to those found in the Old Testament point to it as having an origin or at least a very ancient connection, with the Hebrew.² While there are the direct evidences of its antiquity in the peculiar phrases indicative of the simplicity that marked all early nations and rude people, as may be seen in the direct connection of the derivatives with their roots, there is proof just as striking of its antiquity and great age in its fullness and variety, especially in those nice distinctions of thought and striking discriminations in the use of the language that characterize the people. The labours of Mr Crowther who reduced the language and collected into a vocabulary several thousand words and of Mr Bowen³ who

¹ A good source on the language connection in this region is J. H. Greenberg, *The Languages of Africa*, Bloomington, 1963.

² No linguistic or historic basis of such connection has been established.

³ Samuel Ajayi Crowther, *Grammar and Vocabulary of the Yoruba Language*, Seeleys, 1852. T. J. Bowen, *Grammar and Dictionary of the Yoruba Language*, Smithsonian Institute, 1858.

increased the number to about eight thousand words show most conclusively its fullness and variety which, in the progress of time, must become more and more manifest as continual study and investigation develop its resources. It is capable of almost indefinite expansion. It has about one hundred and twenty or thirty primitive roots and is so constructed that a scholar familiar with all its principles could increase the number of words *ad infinitum*. The word *oku*, contraction of *ki-oku*, which may be used in combination with any other word, is a good specimen of the language in this respect.

It is a language of vowels having but very few consonants and is thus rendered more difficult to acquire, especially by those whose language is differently constructed. The vowel sounds differ from the English. *A* has the sound of *a* as in *far*; *E* has the sound of *a* as in *may*; *I* has the sound of *e* as in *key*; *O* has two sounds—as in *omikron* and *omega*; *E* requires an additional vowel sound of *eh*. *Kp* and *gb* are double consonants and require much practice to a right pronunciation. The language is most difficult because of the innumerable contractions made by the natives in rapid speaking. Not infrequently contracted into three and seven into four and five, so puzzling the learner that he considers it next to an impossibility to catch the words with any distinctness. If, on the other hand, he tries to speak it he will oftentimes find himself expressing an idea he never thought of by wrong accent. Many words have several meanings which are determined only by the accent given them. For instance, *ojo*, signifies coward, rain, or a man's name, either of which can be known only by the accent:¹ so that if it be in the least changed, nonsense is the result and a stupid glare is the answer of the native. So difficult can the language be rendered by these contractions and accents that the natives may be heard puzzling each other by their exercises while the singing of one town cannot be readily understood by the people of another.² The language is remarkably full in scriptural terms; even so much that I am never at a loss for a Yoruba word to express any biblical idea. They are perfectly familiar with all such expressions as faith, repentance, saviour, atonement, judgment, mediator, creator, almighty, etc., which can be converted

¹ Coward is *Ojo*; rain is *Ọjò*, a man's name is *Ọjò*.

² Certainly this alleged confusion hardly happens among the Yoruba people of the same dialect group.

forthwith into Yoruba. Their basis of computation has impressed me to see the similarity to our English numerals. The grade is from one to ten with continual reduplication. *Eni* or *okan*, 1; *meji*, 2; *meta*, 3; *merin*, 4; *marun*, 5; *meḡa*, 6; *meje*, 7; *mejọ*, 8; *mesan*, 9; *mewa*, 10. The reduplication after ten is nearly the repetition of the numerals with the affix "nla" which means great or large. For instance, *mokanla*, 1 [greater than ten] or 11; *mejila*, two greater than ten or 12; and so on to fifteen when the numeral is taken from an arbitrary number as *ogun*, 20; *meḡogun*, or *marun-dilogun*, 5 from 20, 15. In this way the digits and arbitrary numbers, 100, 1000, or any number may be readily counted.¹ In counting cowries the "m" is always omitted.

The language is abundant in proverbs and such expressions as indicate thought. From the acquaintance I have of the language I am of the opinion that it is in advance of most native languages, even of those countries which are supposed to have sprung from it. It has no classification with any of the African tongues but has been supposed by some to have an affinity with the Malay to whom the Yoruba seem to have some faint resemblance.² It is rather a smooth than a rough, and more a musical than an inharmonious language. The nasal and guttural sounds are very few.

There are other interesting languages, the Ijẹṣa, the Fulani, Hausa and Kaninke, but circumstances have not yet allowed us the opportunity of forming their acquaintance.

The translation of the Holy Scriptures, that have already been made by Mr Crowther, most clearly proves the capability of the Yoruba tongue to receive and impart very correct impressions of the word of God.

The study of this language adds another strong argument in favour of the superior conditions of this people and gives some guarantee that with proper efforts they may be made the foundation stone of the glorious building yet to be reared in the heart of that vast country.

¹ For more information on Yoruba Numerals, see Johnson, op. cit., pp. 1-4.

² This resemblance is more apparent than real. In fact, linguists have established that Yoruba belongs to the family of languages known as the Niger-Congo family to which Ibo, Edo, Hausa, etc. also belong. On this see J. H. Greenberg, op. cit.

CHAPTER 15

ART AND INDUSTRIES OF THE YORUBA PEOPLE

THERE is a general acquaintance with many of the rude arts to an extent that meets the most pressing wants of the people. All of the iron ore taken from the mountains is smelted in large furnaces made for that purpose and sold to the smiths who convert it into every implement desired. Every town has its complement of blacksmith shops that may be known by their circular tops where the sound of the hammer and anvil may from day to day be heard. The implements and fixtures in general use are a rock for anvil, a small oblong piece of iron tapering to a handle for a hammer, one or two pairs of tongs similar to those in common use, a pair of bellows made out of raw hide in a circular shape six inches in diameter with handles of wood inserted so as to be raised perpendicularly. The apertures of the hide are connected with a fore underground. Coal made from wood is generally used though the shells of the palm nut are used in case of necessity. A very respectable hoe and axe oblong in shape, billhooks of superior polish and print, edge tools of various kinds for cutting and carving wood, rings, etc. In fact, nearly every implement the shape of which is given to a smith can be made with little difficulty. With judicious instructions this art might among the raw natives be carried to a high degree.

The manufacturing of cloth I imagine to be as old as the nation itself. The cotton is first rubbed off the seed by a small iron roller on an oblong block; then beaten into a kind of lint and finally spun on a distaff for a spindle about nine inches in length, with a bulb about three or four inches from the larger end. This thread is sold in the markets, then dyed and warped on sticks placed in the ground for bars and finally put into the harness. The looms are of two varieties with all fixtures of an ordinary loom harness, sleight, treadle,

shuttle, etc. The principal difference is in the cloth woven. The narrow one of six inches is used entirely by the men in the open air under sheds throughout the town while the wide ones from a quarter to half a yard in width belongs especially to the females who confine their labours to within doors. It is very common to see in the vicinity of the weaving apartments the warping by small boys who seem as expert in their department as those who throw the shuttle. The weavers work with great rapidity and turn out daily a number of yards of cloth. Some of the work however is very tedious, requiring almost an incessant use of the hand in order to arrange the thread and give pattern to the piece. Scarcely any two pieces of cloth are found of the same size and colour, as each weaver is continually striving to turn out something extra or fanciful. The work performed by the female is much more tedious and requires a greater outlay of time for its performance but when finished is more desirable and brings a better market price. The narrow widths are sewn together by the tailors to make a whole garment, or by someone employed for the purpose. As good an article of cloth can be woven by the Yoruba weavers as by any people, and for durability far excel the prints and homespuns of Manchester. Hence the native cloths are by far the more costly.

Tailoring is an art in which is engaged a certain class, exclusively males, who cut and sew and keep on hand ready-made clothing such as robes, tunic shirts, pants and caps. The common imported needle is used by them and is in great demand while they are supplied with thread by their own spinners.

Dyeing is carried on in establishments of various sizes by the females who procure the indigo leaves from the farmers or others having them for sale and prepare them into balls by heaping into a mortar until they can be pressed together. They are then dried and used with dye, caught by dripping from ashes in large pots which receive the cloth to be coloured. Yrona is said to be used by some dyers to give brilliancy to some of the brighter colours. In every town numbers of these establishments are to be seen which may always be known by the large embankments of ashes that have been thrown up during a series of years. They excel in the various shades of blue peculiar to the indigo; succeed in some other colours as the red, green, yellow and purple. Camwood yields a fine scarlet and very likely is used by the dyers to obtain this colour.

Oils are extracted from the palm nut, that is from the kernel of the nut, the sheabutter nut, from the groundpea, and the seed of the small citron. The extracting of the first oil in the palm districts employs a large number of labourers and presents more the appearance of a manufactory than any other department of labour. I have seen establishments of this kind where perhaps fifty persons or more were engaged in labour. The raw material is put in large holes resembling pots made in the ground and glazed and then trodden down by foot until the meat of the nut can be moved and placed in pots to be boiled. From these the oil is taken and made ready for the market and is then of a deep red colour, and of the consistency of thick cream. It may be used as a condiment for cooking purposes and for the oil of lamps.

The kernel oil is prepared by slightly burning, then by beating in the mortar into the consistency of wet mud, when it is trodden by foot and boiled, and thus converted into a brown colour after some time. It is cut up into small pieces and sold in the markets almost exclusively as lamp oil. It makes a good though not brilliant light and is that which lights up the markets at night. The sheabutter is very prolific in its growth and in the regions where the palm ceases to grow answers very well in place of the palm oil. It is near the size of the palm nut, has no kernel but is enveloped in a thin shell. The butter is obtained by boiling and skimming from the top as it rises. This article answers very well as a substitute for butter and lard. It can be made white as butter though generally it is a dark yellowish, and sometimes lead colour. It is made into cakes of various sizes and then cut up into very small pieces large as the end of the thumb and sold for a cowrie each. Very little of this oil is made south of Ogbomoso.

Oils are extracted from the groundpea and also from the seed of the citron but the trade in these articles is very small. Those who have used the latter speak of it as being equal in quality to any other oil they ever knew.

The dealers in leather understand very well the art of making beautiful morocco from sheep's and goat's hides and giving it every desirable colour. The specimens I have often seen exhibited—red, yellow and black—would compare very favourably with those of commerce both in durability and finish. A skin well dressed is worth

from fifteen to twenty-five cents. The workers in leather make from these hides beautiful leather charms, fine hides, nice bags, splendid sheather for swords, covers for saddles, slippers and various articles. Mats of most beautiful workmanship are made in Ijeṣa and Nupe and exhibit in the style and variety of patterns with no little skill.

In Yorubaland the art of preparing and carving the calabash is carried to as great degree of perfection as any other. To this belong a class of men who devote their lives to the finishing and carving of this most necessary utensil; and some of the figures are so perfect that it is almost impossible for the human eye to detect the least inaccuracy in the various carvings on the sides. Practice renders the eye and hand so perfect that however difficult to figure, success most certainly follows the effort. To an unpractised eye it would seem almost impossible that such beautiful figures could be marked out by a knife without the application of some specific rule. This same observation is true with regard to mat making. Carving in wood and the making of bowls and idols belong to a class of men who devote their lives in working in wood. They have a number of sharp edged tools, which for polish and temper would astonish one who had never seen anything in this line but an ordinary native axe or billhook.

There are also large establishments employing numbers of persons, exclusively females in which are made plates, dishes, pots and earthenware of every description. The clay is dug from some spot convenient to a town and carried to this kind of manufactory and here made of such a consistency that it can be easily worked. It is then fashioned on the desired model and finished with the hands. When completed they are allowed to harden slightly and are then put into heaps and burned with straw. The only colours given to the plates and dishes are black and red; but with some improvements on the part of the natives the art might be very much improved in quality and durability.

Hats, baskets, ropes from several different materials and sandals are all made by native ingenuity; besides many other articles tedious to mention but which serve to give some correct idea of the extent of their knowledge with regard to what constitutes the essentials of mere civilization.

CHAPTER 16

RELIGION OF THE YORUBA PEOPLE

I HAVE spoken at such length of the susceptibilities of the Yoruba for religious impressions and their willingness to hear the truth that there is obviated the necessity of any lengthy account of their moral condition. We have been so accustomed to associate with the African race everything that is corrupt and debased in morals and religion that it seems almost an impossibility that there should be any tribes of this people removed any degree from that condition.

However elevated the state of the heathen, idolatrous people, it must be admitted that their moral state is deplorable enough. Some may be better than others, may have clearer ideas of the Great Ruler and of human responsibilities but after all they are enshrouded in almost impenetrable darkness and in one sense need the light of heaven as much as those who have sunken deeper into the pit of ruin.

My knowledge of the Yoruba character, and an observation for several years, of their condition and of the working of their religious rites and observances have led me to the belief that they are rather a peculiar heathen. The same state observable in their social relations, agricultural and commercial position, and in their knowledge of many of the rude arts, is to be seen in their religious systems—a condition of things considerably in advance of those who are supposed to possess merely the rudest elements of being. In attempting to contrast their religious belief with that of the Asiatic races, many African tribes and the South Sea islanders, I have often wondered what position in the scale of heathen worship I shall assign them. With the knowledge they claim to have of the Being, of their peculiar relation to Him and the obligations and

responsibilities that obtain between one another, if they are to be looked upon as heathen, certainly it must be as refined heathen, such as pertains to the Romish Church. Our views of their religious belief are derived of course from their own statement and conduct and therefore to be received with such degrees of allowance as may suit each individual reader. They believe in one Supreme Ruler, the creator of all things, who is so pure as to be unapproachable by such poor creatures as they are, and speak of Him as an intelligent Being who has hatred of sin and wickedness. The names expressive of his various characters give clear proof of their ideas as to His position. He is called in their language Creator, Almighty, God, Lord, names which they understand belong peculiarly to the Supreme Being. The language and manner in which they speak of Deity imply clearly their obligations and responsibilities; their clear ideas of right and wrong, and their susceptibilities to moral appeals, indicate very clearly a position somewhat removed from that lowest form of heathenism that hangs like a pall of gloom over many nations. As the Supreme Being is considered to be removed so far from the theatre of this life to take personal oversight as to its affairs, they have in their system of worship a number of inferior deities who bear the relation of mediator between the creature and God. This is a cardinal feature in their religion and seems to be almost as clear to their minds as a necessity of a mediator to the minds of Christian people. Hence every individual must have his mediator or Oriṣa, not to worship as God but as a medium of communication between him and the great spirit, to hear his sacrifices and translate his prayers. Their tradition of this system is that God makes everything but through the intervening power of Oriṣa, and that as he has given to the whiteman a way for him, so he has given to their fathers Oriṣa as a plan suitable to their condition. A little conversation with the natives would very soon satisfy an incredulous person that no inherent power whatever was attributed to these mediators. There is no end to these false deities as every individual can have one, or as many as he wishes, from any object whatever. Generally that object is chosen which has some peculiar and direct bearing on the owner. Every idol whatever its character is entitled to the general appellation of Oriṣa, or mediator, which may be considered as the

generic term for every system or kind of worship. There are individual idols, household gods and national objects of adoration. Sometimes a charm may be kept as an Oriṣa and carried from place to place; again a snake, though very seldom, is worshipped by females who bear them about through the streets and markets to impose on the weak-minded and credulous. Such an object is generally so trifling that a child or woman would give a few cowries to be relieved of its presence. Household deities are sometimes kept within doors but generally in front of the compound under very small circular huts covered with grass. These the natives say are resorted to early in the morning where they offer up their prayers. I have seen persons bow before these little huts and, rubbing their hands, pray with some earnestness as if they were speaking directly to someone; so deluded and blinded is the idolator. These little huts may be seen throughout the towns and cities before nearly every house. Many chiefs have an apartment nicely kept near their own rooms where their own guardian deity is preserved with greater security, if possible, than wives and children. There are many objects around every town worshipped by nearly all the inhabitants, such as trees of extreme age: branches and groves near which oftentimes are erected temples to the principal gods. There stands an old tree fast decaying on the road to the market to Ogbomoṣo that is kept with all assiduity by an old woman appointed for the purpose, who hangs up a red cloth on the body and receives the contributions of the worshippers as they pass. Another I have observed a short distance from Ijaye was enclosed with reeds around to which poor deluded females offer up their prayers. The natives are very fond of groves and seem to think hardly of any place so well adapted to religious worship as a beautiful grove or a cluster of trees. Why it is I know not, unless their fathers received it from the prophets of the groves. Some chiefs are especially fond of worship and may frequently be seen with a small bodyguard and a few servants going to some of their favourite resorts for good luck or an ease of conscience. As a general rule they need more religion than others and, in this country, seem to be impressed with the necessity. Many objects are worshipped purely through fear; such as fire, thunder, swollen streams, or anything greatly terrifying. Serpent worship is by no means common

and can hardly be considered as one of the orīṣas. Charms are seldom used other than for some peculiar virtue or protecting power supposed to reside in them. These are generally made of leather enveloping pieces of paper with hieroglyphics written by some Mohammedan priests. The superstition of the chiefs sometimes leads them to send somebody on several days journey for a charm of great efficacy whatever it may cost. The chief of Ogbomōṣṣo now has one, a small piece of iron which was bought in a different part of the kingdom at a great price and in which are supposed to reside all necessary protecting power. To convince him to the contrary would be like telling the sun to stop its course. Some men are almost loaded with charms around their wrists and bodies and wear them until the day of their death. Armies going to war have a very large charm of leather, resembling an umbrella, about three feet in diameter which with them has all the potency of floating standards in a contest of battle. They would also very well subserve the purpose of shields and may be so used.

Sacrifices are an essential part of their religious system and are offered on nearly all important occasions. They are made to the Supreme Being through the mediators who are supposed to take them on high; but following the Jewish observance, they take care to retain a good part for themselves. Goats, fowls, pigeons, dogs and sometimes cows and horses are offered up, while human sacrifices are almost unknown. In some places there are altars of stone, generally iron stone, at which are killed some of their sacrifices, or on which the blood is poured. At times sacrifices of provisions are offered, thrown out into the streets as offal, which the street scavenger, as in the form of vultures, soon appropriate. Besides these general observances common to all individually, there are national occasions for worship and peculiar forms which the people as a whole or in classes honour and worship. These are time-honoured institutions as sacred as government and observed with all the regularity and show common to the annual celebration of national occasions. The worship of Ifa is one of the principal branches and is based on the great inestimable value of the palm nut. It is perfectly natural that the great importance attached to some highly valued natural gift should, in the course of time, by a superstitious and idolatrous people, culminate in reverence and adoration. Such

seems to have been the case with this palm nut than which nothing is more highly prized by the natives. With this system is connected the priests of Ifa and we think may be added the Urim and Thumm,¹ as in it is supposed to reside oracular vision or prophetic power of foretelling future events.² The bowl and tray as seen in Plate IV are used in connection with a polished palm nut by the priests whenever it becomes necessary to manipulate for some over-anxious person. I have seen an old priest manipulating with all the gravity of a man on whose decision depended the fate of an empire; interchangeably muttering and using the palm nut. If an individual wishes to be initiated into future mystery with regard to the termination of disease, the success of matrimony, or some other projected plan, resort must be had to the old priest who, if cowries be forthcoming, will render an answer—false or true to be determined by future development. The great high priest of Ifa is said to reside on top of Mount Ado near Awaye, in the western part of the kingdom. This order lives very much on the credulity of the people and may be recognized by the long iron rod with a triangular opening at the upper end in which is a little iron bell that keeps up ringing on being shaken. They seem to be partial to the contributions of the females, or else believe them to be better subjects for imposition than the males. They have occasions on which they offer sacrifices in secret outside of the town with a small company in which are one or two females who do the singing and make the noise and a conspicuous character, a boy or man, the hero of the day, who is painted white and shaved so as to resemble a clown. These old priests are very accommodating in their way, they listen for some time to all you have to say, and in the best and kindest manner almost leaving you to believe you are about to make a convert, but they always take care to hold the reserved right of doing as they please. They are a peaceable class and seldom found to be the instigators of disturbances or bad feeling against missionaries. If they are successful in securing a contribution of cowries, they seem well satisfied.

¹ Objects mentioned in the Old Testament in connection with the breastplate of the high priest.

² See a comprehensive study of Ifa literary corpus, divination, etc., in Wande Abimbola, "An Exposition of Ifa Literary Corpus", Lagos University Ph.D. thesis, 1970; William Bascom, *Ifa Divination: Communication between God and Men in West Africa*, Indiana University Press, Bloomington, 1969.

Obatala is one of the principal deities and may be considered as the medium or mediator of creation. By him all procreation or creative power is manifested. Šango is a system of worship of comparatively modern date. A number of years ago there reigned a wicked king by this name who was such a great terror to the people that on his death he was deified and became a sword of vengeance and destruction in the form of thunder and lightning in the hands of the Almighty. It has gained such a strong hold on the people that there is a large class of persons who claim to be the followers of Šango and to be entitled to the property of all those on whom he inflicts punishment. The frequency with which lightning strikes the native compound and envelopes them in flames has led to the evil practice of incendiarism whenever, during a storm cloud, there is a good opportunity. As the followers of Šango say that only the wicked have their houses struck by lightning and they are entitled to all such plunder by the law, so the burning of a house in a thunderstorm is signal for every species of open theft and violence upon the property and right of those who may be so unfortunate as to suffer from the curious elements. These infuriated men rush to the doomed compound, claim and appropriate everything that is possible amid the efforts of the owners to escape with whatever they can. It is not to be wondered at that there is no subordinate deity more to be feared than Šango. The licence that the system allows gives very clear proof of what would be the indulgence of the people when given up to unbridled fury. They sweep over everything with such invincible force that woe be to the man who single-handed, dares to resist their march. I have seen them celebrating some occasion when, with a pot of fire and flames on the head of the hero and amid smoke, cries and confusion, they would manifest the same frenzy and unbridled fury. They are the instruments through which are to be hurled the thunderbolts of the almighty by Šango himself. How true to nature that while no one during the Dark Ages was more lauded than the Pope, the Vicegerent himself, by affrighted nations so among the benighted terrified populace no one is more honoured and revered than the enraged Šango. Many are the occasions of public religious rejoicings during the year in honour of some divinity that presides over the temporal interests of the people. Oriša Oko, or the farm mediator, has a number of followers selected from the

best of classes and who are known by the signs of white and red mud, or white clay and camwood mixed which is the size of two almonds and placed on the forehead. During the principal seasons of harvesting the Oriša Oko people do honour to their deity while the people *en masse* join in the festive occasion. The females take great pride in arraying themselves in white shawls girded by red bands and parading the streets singing songs and dancing to music. I have seen as many as one hundred in a circle dancing merrily in perfect order and changing their evolutions at given signals with all the facility of a ball party.

Eṣu is the worship of the devil through consecrated iron stone upon which sacrifices are sometimes offered. So many and various are the services and ceremonies of these people, involved as they are in every relation and condition in life, that it would require almost volumes to enumerate their deities. Two of the most important deities bearing directly on the government of the town are Orò and Egúngún. They are not so much religious rites as established customs involving all their superstitious notions and without which they would hardly consider themselves to be a people. The former embraces a period of seven days at a certain period in the year and is known by the closing of the gates beyond which no one on the first day is allowed to go. For two or three mornings until ten o'clock no female is allowed to leave the compound under the severest penalty. At this time the streets present a most desolate appearance, the markets are closed, the cooks have all vacated their stands, the people have disappeared as if by magic and stillness reigns almost supreme. Now and then may be heard the cry of a crowd in the distance seeming to have all the fun to themselves while from every corner and direction comes shrill whistles of the mysterious Orò. For a long time I was much concerned to know how this noise was made and how it was that they who made it could manage to conceal themselves so seclusively. All night and day an incessant whizzing is kept up for several days together without any apparent design whatever and with such concealment that a stranger can seldom make the discovery. During this festival I happened one day to see the chief and was invited into a private apartment when all at once the mystery was solved in a couple of boys with strings tied to long poles and a thin piece of wood about

fifteen inches in length fastened to the string. With this pole they would make a whizzing noise, shrill and loud enough to be heard a hundred yards, and to frighten all the superstitious women and children within the vicinity. A man casually passing the streets would only wonder what could the demonstration mean. He could see but little, hear but little, and know nothing of a definite object. Ah! All this is secret. But the poor women know; yes, and the men too. The poor females must be tongue-tied; they must be kept in subjection, or there is but unhappy life for the males. Thus, the men feel that they have had shrewdness enough to conjure some system by which from year to year they can keep the depreciated, enslaved, weaker sex in a subordinate position.

Another system which has the same object in view, and which accomplishes it most successfully is that of Egúngún, the devil-man, or the spirits of the departed returned to this world. From this point of view it would seem that they believed in metempsychosis or transfiguration of the soul, but the males who practise this delusion know full well their own cunning whatever may be the opinion of the women and children. A devil-man is a perfect caricature of the fantastic and is dressed from head to foot in a garment of one piece cut so that the arms may be extended at full length. No two dresses are alike, each man suiting his own fancy in making something different from every other. Sometimes they are variegated in large patches of diverse colours; then in old ragged clothes and again in pieces of cloth literally covered with feathers. The head-dress is of various patterns, the most remarkable being that of a horn rising ten or twelve inches above the crown. These are grotesque monsters with club in hand and in a rough unnatural guttural voice parade the streets, deal blows to everyone that dares come in their way and terrify all the children within hearing. The laws for protecting these wretches are so stringent and terrible that no man, not even the highest in authority dares touch one. The males only are initiated into the mysteries of Egúngún. At an early age, the little boys are taken to the woods and dressed in the devil's garb, are made one of the fraternity and afterwards parade through the streets of the town. It is said by those acquainted with the ceremony that the person to be initiated is left in the woods or some secret place where he has intercourse with one of the fraternity supposed

to have come from the spirit world, when by some mystic power of speech he becomes changed and, taking the form of some departed friend, returns to town to the wonder and terror of the superstitious populace. This sect has its days of celebration when numbers of them may be seen in crowds scouring the streets and cutting all kinds of antics for the diversion of the multitudes. I have seen fifteen or twenty of these scarecrows on exhibition, presenting the most varied evolutions and making the most unearthly sounds imaginable. The natives call such exhibitions eating dry bones. Many persons make use of this imposition to secure money from the poor deluded women who, whatever be their opinions to the contrary, dare not hint they are anything else than the returned spirit of departed friends and relations. It is by this means also that the female population is kept in subjection. If a man's wife becomes uncontrollable, or offer any resistance to her husband, he has but to call to his assistance one of these women terrifiers and his success forthwith becomes complete. If she dares resist, Egúngún gives her a drubbing not soon to be forgotten and takes his exit with the thanks of the victorious husband. Hardly any laws more successful than this institution could have been devised, one for which I imagine the natives would contend with the utmost tenacity.

All the religious customs and institutions are so blended with their social life that they are more or less of a festive character, and involves rejoicing and frequent celebration. Every circumstance of life, their social intercourse, their great reverence for everything religious, their sense of moral obligations and responsibilities, their wonderful conversation on these subjects, as well as the attributes, justice and perfection of deity mark them as a people whose moral nature is strongly developed. They hoot at the idea of not understanding the difference between mediators and God, and oftentimes express sentiments and opinions of right and wrong involving such nice distinctions that the missionary is made to wonder at their moral discrimination. Their judgement of wicked and vile people, particularly of the lewd, corrupt and pharisaical Mohammedan, is as just as it is severe. In conversing with an intelligent man on religious subjects and the follower of idolatry, I have been made to feel as if I were dealing with one instructed in the Christian religion, so candid their acknowledgements, and open their determination

of a different light. Old men have frequently urged the missionary not to become discouraged on account of opposition, that they spoke the truth, their word was God's word, and at some time would prevail—that the people would take it—that they were old and hard of heart, given up to the ways of their fathers, but to preach on, for the young people would bye-and-bye take the word. Such encouragement has been occasionally received. The clear ideas of a mediator and the position assigned him has had, no doubt, a happy effect on the usual feeling of the natives, and it is believed this knowledge will some day tend very much towards hastening their conversion. The success which has already attended the efforts of missionaries, the willingness with which thousands in the several towns and countries have received the word, and their favourable expression of sentiment with regard to the new movement offer abundant encouragement for vigorous and enlarged efforts towards purifying their moral state and elevating them to a pure and Christian spirituality. That they very greatly need such influences is abundantly evident in what may be continually seen in their gross superstition and religious observance however they may be mingled with festivity and social rejoicing. To see and hear the crowds madly shout to the praise of Orisa in the midst of the appeals of truth; to see the priests and women, all absorbed, hasten to the secret sacrifice with a little child painted white; to hear the cries of the infuriated mob of Şango worshippers, the jocose laugh and merriment of women and children at the antics of a devil-man, and to see a town in distress, and revelling on the death of some great man, or on the occasion of Orò week, to say nothing of the awful and heart-rending exhibitions of depraved human nature—all are sufficient to make us sigh and labour for the regeneration of a people who, but for these two striking proofs of a misguided and debased nature, might be useful, happy and prosperous.

The Mohammedan religion and its general effects on those who profess it are too well known to require any lengthy notice. We have here abundant proof that it ever remains the same in its spirit and tendencies and in its confirmed state as on the plains of Africa what it is on the Bosphorus, the deserts of Arabia and in the jungles of India. If the Mohammedan, as a general rule, is better informed than the heathen, he is more wicked, lewd, deceitful and treacherous.

He despises the kaffirs, infidels as he contemptuously calls them because of their idolatry, while on his arms and body he bears with him the striking signs of that very idolatry. Fanatical and bigoted in the extreme, but with the power they would by sword and torch make everything bend to their own iron will and force on the necks of their enemies their corrupting religion. In nearly all the larger cities they have their so-called mosques generally of superior structure to other buildings where they wash their feet and offer prayers. They who in any degree are confirmed in their religion appear to be very pious, and like the Catholic in dependence on the treasured image of the Virgin, are continually engaged in counting their beads, a string of which is always carried about the person. But notwithstanding all these pretensions, the heathen are not so blind but they look through such flimsy pretensions and see continually so striking evidences of corruption that it has with them become almost a proverb. Ilorin furnishes abundant evidence of the corrupting nature of their religion, as there is no place perhaps in Sudan where there is more lewdness, thieving, robbery and bloodshed, and life is so little valued. I have several times had strong proofs of their bigotry and fanaticism, but nothing like personal violence because of fear on their part of the ruling power. The Ramadan is observed with great regularity and strictness as this is the principal occasion when they hope to win converts in their grand demonstration. At the close of this fast when the feast is to begin, every town makes the greatest show possible and some of them occasionally succeed in entrapping by flattery and otherwise the heathen chief. Notwithstanding all the ingenuity and shrewdness of the Prophet, I have been forced to the conviction from several years' observation that this religion cannot easily be forced upon the inhabitants of Nigritia.¹ Though it may be congenial to the treacherous and unforgiving spirit of the restless and ambitious Fulani, the open, generous and confiding Yoruba prefers the social, simple, honest worship of his fathers. If he be an idolater he prefers to worship wood and stone in the light of day, not in the coverts of darkness.

¹ Clarke here applied to Yorubaland the name which he said (p. 188 above) was given to a portion of the Sudan by geographers.

CHAPTER 17

THEORY OF ORIGIN OF THE AFRICAN RACE IN GENERAL AND OF YORUBA CIVILIZATION IN PARTICULAR

THE solution of the question as to the origin of the African race very likely belongs to a future age, when by the developments of exploration and increased and extensive acquaintance, a greater and more intense light shall have been thrown on their history. With our present knowledge, however, based on various travels and the recent laborious researches of Dr Barth, as well as on the record of Divine Truth, we would suggest what appears to be the most reasonable theory of their occupancy of the country by the several tribes now scattered over its vast area. This theory requires that the puzzling question of colour be first settled. It is said by some to be the result of climate, but a slight investigation will dispose of this boasted theory. That excessive changes require modifications, one of which affects slightly the skin, there can be no doubt; but that the colour, or colouring matter undergoes an entire change will not bear the test of examination. If on the coast where heat and moisture is favourable to the development of a dark skin we found only the jet black negro and nowhere else, then this theory might claim some plausibility; but what shall its advocates say when it can be truthfully said or he is told that some of the blackest tribes as the Nupe, Borgu and Kaninke are found in the heart of the country where the dryness of the atmosphere and altitude of the region would be unfavourable to its development? He would also find that the countenances of these jet black persons, instead of the dull, sleepy, lifeless expression of a coast tribe, would be full of fire, animation and intelligibility with the lighter tribe. The Mandingoes also may be ranked in the same class. Again, by parity of reasoning, the black slaves of America

ought ere this time to have given some tendency towards whitening; whereas, unless in cases of amalgamation, they remain precisely of the same colour with their fathers, save some very slight changes that can be readily accounted for on natural principles already alluded to. Whence then their colour? Certainly as has been stated, if the truth exists, why should the cause be so studiously avoided? From what branch of the Noahic family did they descend? If we read correctly as to the cause of the colour, certainly not from the Shemitic; and with as much certainty not from the Japhetic. Nor are all the children of Ham included in this curse; they are only the descendants of Canaan whose several tribes were the possessors of the land of Canaan and living in considerable splendour when it was wrested from them by the conquering Israelites.

It is now not difficult to imagine what was the tremendous excitement among the several Canaanitish tribes on the entrance into their land of an army numbering hundreds of thousands, whose prestige was already known in the destruction of the Egyptian army and havoc made among other tribes. When there was every reason to believe that all contest and opposition would be unavoidable before a people for whom God himself was fighting, how perfectly natural that thousands of the timid and weak would make use of every opportunity to flee their houses and find safety in some other land. To remain where Ai and Bethel and Jericho and city after city was falling into the hands of the enemy, and death or slavery the only alternative, was unworthy of a people who had given proof of their valour, and who certainly are people in many respects advanced. What then would they naturally do? The first step would be to seek safety in the nearest country that would allow the free exercise of the life they had hitherto practised. There are various considerations for believing that the adjacent countries, as well as Egypt, were heavily populated and that they would be compelled to seek a frontier life. Egypt being an idolatrous nation, the enemy of their common foe and bound to them by ties of consanguinity, would naturally and readily allow of their settlement in such districts as were sparsely inhabited, or a passage through their own land to regions beyond. In the course of time as the Israelites pressed hard upon the remainder now subjected to them, and as the Egyptian rulers would require increasing tax, there would be a strong disposition on the part of

the overthrown and browbeaten tribes to seek refuge still farther in the wider country now open to them. As the spirit of the extension grew on the part of the Egyptians who flourished for so many years after, and who could easily bring a million of soldiers into the field, we can easily see how these humiliated tribes, or rather the remnants of a conquered and overthrown people would be forced to cross the desert from one fertile spot to another before a conquering oppressive government into the regions of Bornu and the surrounding countries. It is well known that in the early centuries of the Christian era, civilization was considerably advanced within the vicinity of these upper African countries with whom there must have been carried on a very considerable trade. If the present remains prove civilization thus to have advanced, it is strong evidence of the early existence of people within these regions. But as to the history prior to this age we are wrapt in darkness and must rely only upon the testimony by Arab geographers and historians, who give very satisfactory proof of a very early possession of Africa by the descendants of Ham. The only question then to be decided is to what branch do they belong? That they are not Egyptians is clear from the history of that people. That they are not descendants of the Berbers and Moors, or any of the tribes that sprung up in the Barbary states is equally true from the essential differences in their very types of character and physiognomy. The great variety of character, moral and physical, and their being scattered over such a wide extent of territory seems to be solved only in the fact that great nations from whence they sprung were once themselves divided into many small tribes with their several peculiarities from which they received and retained them with more or less distinctness to the present time. The great revolutions and constant bloodshed during the wars of Mohammed would have of course produced such panic on the ignorant and timid as to push them still farther and wider into the interior, while their own broils and feuds would in the course of time rear up those walls of separation and distinction that remain to this day in the form of idioms, variety of customs, governments; etc.

The internal evidence of their origin is still stronger. He who has anything like an extensive and accurate acquaintance with the interior African tribes that are not so vitiated as the frontier ones

is impressed with this fact of a people who have degenerated from an ancient and respectable civilization. The governments, laws, customs, traditions of every kind, marking their patriarchal character, the language bearing the impress even to this day of their origin from those who must have been familiar with the manners and customs of the Israelites and Egyptians; their agriculture, commerce, knowledge, rude arts, walled cities, inveterable idolatry, so traditional from their fathers, besides innumerable little incidents unfitted for this place, lead us to assign to them the only origin that the premises seem to authorize. It is in this way we account for that advanced stage among some of the superior tribes who have held their own amid tremendous revolutions and from whom have gone off from time to time certain emigrants into frontier and unfavourable regions where, being deprived of the fostering care of the mother tribe and its advantages, they have degenerated in colour, physique, morals and language. To this may be attributed the great difference between the interior tribes, who retained uncorrupted and pure the traditions of their fathers, and the coast ones who, through many lineages, were shut out from the great seats and sources of civilization by wars and pillage until degeneration and competition became the unavoidable consequence. Taking this view of the subject we may learn to account for so many strange phenomena meeting the eye of the traveller, such as open plains, and sparsely wooded regions and extensive fields that bear the impress in the very appearance of the soil of an exhausting and extensive cultivation. If the question be asked what of the remarkable Fulani, I answer they are certainly an amalgamation of some African tribe of some strong traits of character, perhaps pastoral in their nature, and given to a wandering life, with some of the border desert tribes. With what particular clan or tribe it would perhaps be now impossible to say. These general remarks as to their origin and settlement will suffice, if they be true, to enable us to form some idea of the nature, character and genius of the people.

In some respects there is sufficient uniformity to enable us to classify them as one people. Not only have they general natural marks, as physiognomy and colour, but traits of character, mental and moral, that distinguish them from the other great races. We believe therefore that it is unfair to class all African tribes with the

coast people and infer from them their nature, character, and genius. From the fact, there is good reason to believe that the latter could be the degenerated race of a superior interior race. They [the Yoruba] have a nature kind, affectionate, confiding, hospitable, most forgiving character moulded after the tradition, laws, customs and usages of their fathers and consequently affected by the religion, debasing in its tendency, which they have inherited; genius, far more than supposed, and latent, because every avenue for its exercise and development has been closed; yet it is continually manifested in the transaction of their own affairs, the government of themselves, and the retaining of so many of the rude arts that tradition has left them. They are a people, without a doubt, of mind and thought, and show it on nearly all occasions whenever they enjoy the opportunity. Their children are apt to learn, quick, intelligent and sprightly, while there are many instances now living of their capability of acquiring knowledge to any extent, even after the years of maturity. Samuel Crowther, of the Church Missionary Society, who by nature I do not consider to be a superior native, is a remarkable yet by no means single instance of the high position they may attain. A few years ago this man was a wild native, roving over the plains of his own loved Yorubaland, but who, thanks to overruling Providence, was snatched from his own home and placed on a slave ship only to be delivered like Joseph and Daniel, into the hands of Sierra Leone friends who were instrumental in obtaining for him the facilities of education, and preparing the way for his occupying the niche in African history that he now so honourably and usefully fills. This man was educated from his native state into English and has since become the translator of several books of the Scriptures into his own language, after having reduced the language into systems and published of it both grammar and vocabulary. All honour to a man, be he white or black, who accomplished, especially among the greatest disadvantages, such a work. It would be pleasant to narrate his history but this place does not admit of it.¹ He is not the only instance of marked ability developed by mere culture, instance after instance now living in Sierra Leone and Yorubaland might with pleasure be brought to testify to the truth

¹ See reference on page 176 above on information about Crowther.

of the position that they have genius to accomplish whatever they may be called on to perform. I take the position therefore, though they may not rank high in the scale of the races, they are susceptible of an improvement, mental and moral, that would make them rank among many who claim to stand foremost in the rank of nations.

INDEX

- Abẹ̀kuta:** as market for palm oil trade, 263; beginning of Christian Mission work in, 8-9; history of its foundation 6-8; *passim*, xviii, xxiii, xxvi, 5, 6, 9, 10, 11, 14, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 37, 47, 59, 60, 112, 123, 124, 125, 141, 149, 152, 182, 192, 197, 202, 234, 264, 268
Abẹ̀mọ, 93
Abiọ̀dun (Alafin of Old Ọ̀yọ), xxv, 192, 193, 193n
Abomaga, 5
Abyssinia, 214
Adigbo, 87, 88
Adimu, 191
Ado-Ekiti, 132, 150
Ado Mount: home of Ifa, 280; near Awaye, 45, 46, 132
Adun River, 156
Afọ̀nja (Arẹ̀ Ọ̀na Kakanfo who rebelled against Alafin Aolẹ), 193, 194
Africa, 10, 11, 13, 14, 36, 103, 127, 135, 168, 179, 183, 185, 188, 194, 196, 197, 220, 221, 224, 227, 228, 241, 244, 246, 285, 289
Ago d'Ọ̀yọ, xxvi
Al, 288
Ajayi, J. F. Ade, xxviii
Ajẹ̀bọ, 108
Ajẹ̀lẹ, xxv, xxvi, 102
Ake, 150, 150n.
Akoko, 132
Alabama River (in the U.S.A.), 180
Alafins, p. 67n.1
Alake (ruler of Ake), 192
Alaketu (ruler of Ketu), 192
Amberg, Van, 226
America, 11, 13, 19, 38, 48, 92, 92n, 106, 125, 127, 167, 176, 179, 183, 198, 201, 208, 218, 236, 265, 287
Anderson, 221
Apado, 168, 183
Apu Forum, 183
Ará, 109
Ará, 129, 129n
Arab geographers, 289
Arabia, 157, 285
Arabs, 183
Arẹ̀ Ago: Ilesá Chief, 135; Şáki Chief 57, 58, 59, 61
Arẹ̀ Ọ̀ba (Arẹ̀ Ọ̀na Kakanfo), 193
Aro Creek, 109
Arogangan (otherwise known as Aolẹ Alafin of Old Ọ̀yọ), 193, 194
Asa River, 104, 160, 166, 167, 173, 174, 180
Asia, 198
Asanra market: in Ilorin, 162, 164
Asante, 150
Atadi, 10
Atiba (Alafin of New Ọ̀yọ), p. 100, 100n
Atlantic, 84, 210, 263
Augusta, xxix
Awaye, 34, 44, 45, 46, 47, 280
Awọ̀n Creek, 110, 111
Ayandele, E. A. xvii, xxix

Babylon, 72
Badagry, xvii, 2, 6
Bacchus, 242
Baden, 43
Baikie, Dr B. W. (of the 1854 Niger Expedition), 107, 150, 166, 178, 184
Bapa, 5
Baptists, 105, 105n
Baptist Mission, xi, xiii, xiv, xv, xxix
Barbary states, 289
Barnum's Museum, 160
Barth, Dr H. (Explorer), 31, 189, 221, 227, 287
Bature, 183
Baturi, 183
Beaumont, J. F., 92, 92n
Beccroft, Captain John, 178, 178n
Benin, xxvi, 114, 150, 177
Benue River, 143, 151, 152, 199
Berbers, 289
Bethel, 288
Bethlehem, 158
Bight of Benin, 189
Bight of Guinea, 167, 269
Bioku, 92, 92n
Board. *See* Foreign Mission Board

- Bolorunpelu, xvii
 Borgu, 46, 66, 150, 189, 287
 Bornu, xxiii, 178, 289
 Bosphorus, 285
 Boudara, 171, 172
 Bower, 91
 Bowen, T. J. (first Baptist Missionary and co-labourer of W. H. Clarke), xi, xiii, xiv, xv, xvi, xvii, xx, xxviii, xxix, xxx, xxxii, 9, 13, 22, 49, 81, 88, 92, 269
 Brazil, 195, 264
 British, 264
 Broadway (Avenue in U.S.A.), 186, 244
 Bubufu, 172, 181
 Busa, 178

 California, xix
 Cameroons, 199
 Canaan, xxii, xiii, 288
 Canaanites, xxii
 Cason, 104
 Catholic, 286
 Central Africa (i.e., Yorubaland), xii
 Charleston (city in U.S.A.), 267
 Cheapside (street in U.S.A.), 186
 China, 106
 Church of England, 142
 Church Missionary Society, xi, 6, 7, 10: station in Ota, 18, 100, 177, 291
 Cicero, 243
 Clapperton, H. (explorer), 50, 189
 Clarke, Coleman D. (grandson of W. H. Clarke) xxxvii
 Clarke, Jeremiah (father of W. H. Clarke), xii
 Clarke, William Harvey (son of W. H. Clarke), xxxvii
 Clarke, William Henry: his relative obscurity as a pioneer missionary in and student of Yorubaland, xi; early life and missionary labours xii-xv; assessment of his contribution to African historiography, xv-xxviii; ideas on evangelization, xxviii-xxx; reasons for his resignation from missionary work in Yorubaland, xxx-xxxvi; his last years, xxxvi-xxxvii; his travels in and description of Yorubaland, 1-187
 Congo, 127, 232
 Constantinople, 157
 Crowther, Bishop Samuel Ajayi, xxviii 176, 176n, 179, 269, 271, 291
 Cuba, 195
 Cummings, 220

 Dahomey, xxvi, 150, 189, 190, 193
 Daniel, 291
 Daodu, 113, 113n
 Dark Ages, 281
 David, 194
Day Spring, 107
 Dekalb, 76
 Denham (explorer), 189
 Dennard, T. S. xiii, 2, 2n
 Dongari, 81, 82, 85, 86, 104, 162, 163, 173

 East Africa, 214
 East Indies, 227
 Eatonton, (birth place of William H. Clarke), xii
 Ede, xxiv, xxvi, 97, 111, 117, 119n, 119n, 123, 131, 156
 Eden, Josephine Clarke (grand-daughter of William H. Clarke), xii, xiii
 Eden (Jr.) Clarence A. (great grandson of William H. Clarke), xxxvi
 Efon, 114, 131, 132, 150, 152, 166, 184
 Egba, xxiv, xxvi, xxvii, 6, 7, 8, 88, 119, 127, 189, 189n, 192, 195
 Egbado, xxvi
 Egúngún, 117, 282, 283, 284
 Egypt, xxii, xxiii, 157, 288
 Egyptians, xxiii, 290
 Ekiti, xxvi
 England, 188, 218
 Erin, 44, 157
 Erinle River, 111, 156, 157
 Eruwa, xvii
 Esu, 282
 Ethiopia, 111
 Europe, 106, 198

 Fari-Ogun, 147
 Fauga, 173, 179, 180
 Fellattah, 71, 119, 123, 162, 162n, 193, 232, 233, 233n
 Fiditi, 93
 Filoni, 193
 Florida, xix
 Foreign Mission Board, xii, xiii, xiv, xv, xvi, xxviii, xxix, xxx, xxxi, xxxii, xxxiv, xxxv, xxxvi, 31,
 Foulah, 110
 Foulh, 193, 233, 233n
 French, xxv, 127, 166, 166n, 184, 264
 Froebenius, Leo, xxii
 Fulani, 46, 70, 70n, 71, 82, 82n, 150 154, 154n, 160, 161, 167, 183, 185, 193, 194, 195, 197, 229, 233, 233n, 252, 258, 271, 286, 290; jihad, xxvii

- Gambari Market, 83, 178
 George (liberated African of Yoruba origin), 122, 141, 142
 Georgia (in U.S.A., home state of William H. Clarke), xii, xxviii, 129, 143, 168, 170, 206, 232
 German, 100
 Glover, Lieutenant, 178
 Gollmer, H., 6, 6n
 Goloh, 233
 Guinea, 189
 Greck, 269
 Gumma, 161
- Ham, 283
 Harden, Rev. I. M., 37
 Hausa, 82, 114, 178, 178n, 190, 268
 271
 Hebrew, 269
 Henderson, Matilda (mother of W. H. Clarke), xii
 Herodotus, 190
 Hinderer, Anna, 100, 100n, 101
 Hinderer, David, 100, 100n, 101
- Ibadan, xxv, xxvii, 23, 59, 109, 109n, 118, 119, 120, 120n, 122, 123, 125, 128, 129, 139 & fn., 141, 145, 146, 148, 149, 154, 155, 169, 182, 195, 234; as salt market, 263
 Ibadé, 108
 Ibariba, 46, 66, 189, 190
 Ibo, 150, 232
 Ibokun, 146
 Ido Osun, 119
 Ifá, 44, 73, 97, 122, 279, 280
 Ifé, xxvi, 119 & fn., 124, 127, 149, 150, 191, 192
 Iganna, 52
 Igbajo, 146, 148
 Igbeṭi, xvii, xxiii, 66, 73
 Igbeṭi Mount, 74, 75, 76, 77, 79, 179, 199
 Igboho, xiv, xvii, xxiii, 38, 47, 65, 66, 67, 67n; its misfortunes, 68-69, 71, 72, 73, 194, 196
 Igbomina, 132, 143, 144, 149, 149n, 150, 152, 154, 154n, 168, 189, 192, 199, 219
 Ighorin, 183
 Igosun, 157
 Ijaba, 157
 Ijaye, xiii, xiv, xv, xxiii, 13, 14, 15, 21, 22, 23, 27, 28, 29, 33, 35, 36, 38, 40, 42, 46, 47, 50, 51, 59, 66, 81, 88, 89, 91, 92, 93, 93n, 94, 98, 99, 103, 111, 123, 125, 141, 143, 149, 182, 197, 234, 235; noted for farming and manufacturing, 263, 264, 298
 Ijebu, xxvi, 132, 150, 190
 Ijesa, xxvi, 108, 117, 118, 119, 119n, 120, 123, 124, 125, 125n, 126, 127, 128, 129, 131, 132, 135, 136, 136n, 137, 138, 139, 139 & fn, 140, 141, 142, 143, 144, 145, 146, 148 & fn, 149, 150, 151, 152, 153, 154, 189, 190, 232, 233, 233n, 258, 271, 275
 Ikirun, 143, 145, 146
 Ikoyi, 194
 Ila, xxiv, 140, 140n, 146, 149, 149n, 150, 152, 157, 160, 168; noted for cloth and kolanut, 263
 Ilesá, xvii, xxiv, 117, 129, 137; noted for cloth and kola nut, 263
 Ilesan, 53
 Ilobu, 109, 110, 111, 119
 Ilorin, xiv, xv, xviii, xxiv, xxv, 22, 23, 25, 30, 33, 34, 35, 37, 42, 44, 62, 65, 75, 76, 79, 83, 87, 88, 92, 103, 105, 107, 127, 135, 136, 140, 142, 144, 150, 152, 157, 159, 160, 161, 163, 164, 166, 166n, 167, 168, 169, 173, 183, 184; description of the city, 185, 186, 193, 194, 214, 224, 229, 230, 234, 235, 258, 264, 286
 Iluku, 54, 54n, 57, 59, 61
 India, 285
 Indies, 220
 Ipetumodu, 123
 Ire, 144, 145, 146, 146n
 Iseyin, xxiii, 42, 43, 44; noted for indigo, 263
 Israel, 50
 Israelites, xxii, xxiii, 247, 288, 290
 Italy, 171
 Iware, 108
 Iwere, 194
 Iwo, xxiv, 93, 94, 96, 109, 119, 143
- Jericho, 288
 Jesuit, 105
 Jews, 247
 Job, 36, 69
 Jonah, 116
 Joseph, 291
- Kaille, 189
 Kaninke, 82, 190, 233, 271, 287
 Katunga or Old Oyo; destruction of by the Fulani, 71-72; mentioned, 75, 179, 190, 192

- Ketra Rock, 167, 174, 175, 178, 180, 183
 Ketu, xvii, 150, 192
 Kong Mountains, 25, 38, 43, 51, 186, 198, 216, 217
 Kogun, 173, 181
 Kudufu, 99, 100, 105
 Kuora (local name for River Niger) 173
 Kurumi (Arę of Ijaye), xvii, 93, 93n
 Lacy, J. H., xiii
 Lages: as former slave mart 7; description of 2; mentioned, xxiii, 1, 3, 14, 16, 17, 21, 37, 41, 92, 103, 107, 112 & fn, 125, 177, 185, 265
 Landers, Richard & John (explorers), 50, 179, 192
 Lanier, 170
 Latin, 269
 Lebanon, 9
 Liberia, 93, 220, 233
 Liverpool (city in U.K.), 152
 Livingstone, David (the missionary-explorer), 221, 231
 Lucas, J. O.: his theory of Egyptian origin of the Yoruba, xxiii
 Ludwig, E., xx
 Malay (country in S.E. Asia), 271
 Manchester (city in U.K.), 152; goods from, 264, 273
 Mandigoes, 287
 Marion County (in the U.S.A.), 170
 Masaba (former ruler of Nupe), 171, 173, 174, 181
 Maury, Lt. M. F. (famous oceanographer): theory of, 210-11
 May, Daniel (one of the crew of the Niger expedition of 1854), 107, 168
 McIntosh (Captain of the *Dayspring*), 178
 Mediterranean, 84, 263, 265
 Mission (in Yorubaland), xxxiii
 Mississippi River (in the U.S.A.): valley of, 200
 Monrovia (capital of Liberia), 1, 9
 Monsterrado, 5
 Montgomery (town in the U.S.A.), 180
 Moors, 289
 Mordecai, 98
 Moses (the famous Israelite), 219
 Nasama (subordinate chief in Ilorin), 81, 83, 84, 85, 86, 104, 105, 165
 New Orleans (city in the U.S.A.), 267
 New Oyo, xxiv, xxvii
 New York City (in U.S.A.), xiv, 160, 267
 Niger Expedition of 1854, 218
 Niger River, xiv, 2, 4, 23, 41, 47, 71, 87, 103, 105, 107, 143, 150, 152, 163, 165, 167, 172, 173, 174, 177, 179, 180, 185, 189, 190, 192, 193, 195, 198, 199, 200, 201, 203, 216, 227
 Nigeria, xi, xxxvii
 Nigritia, 188, 286
 Nimrod, King of Mecca, 221
 Nineveh, 72
 N'Lade, 103, 107
 North Carolina (state in U.S.A.), 143
 Nubia, 214
 Nupe: neighbouring country to Yorubaland, xiv, 107, 152, 171, 174, 175, 181, 181n, 189, 190, 232, 233, 236, 275, 287
 Oba Mountains, 36, 88, 89
 Oba River, 25, 27, 36, 99, 160
 Oba Village, 25, 36, 94
 Obatala, 281
 Odunaro, Balę of Ogbomoşo, 88
 Ofa, 144, 146, 157
 Ofiki River, 51, 52
 Ogbomoşo, xiv, xv, xxiii, xxxvi, 22, 25, 28, 30, description of the site of, 33, 35, 36, 85, 86, 87, 88, 92, 99, 100, 102, 103, 108, 110, 123, 124, 125, 126, 127, 143, 146, 149, 153, 156, 157, 160, 161, 163, 169, 183, 185, 195, 213, 224, market for locust beans and shea butter, 263, 274, 278, 279
 Ogboro, 64
 Ogboro Mountain, 65, 75
 Ogun River, 2, 3, 4, 11, 16, 38, 41, 52, 65, 65n, 92, 112, 160, 167, 180, 199, 200
 Ojoku, 123, 160
 Okanbi, 191
 Oke Amo, 52
 Oke Oşe, 167
 Oke Qsin, 168, 184
 Okeibode, 120, 121, 123, 124, 132, 140, 146
 Okeiho Mountains, 51, 75
 Okeiho town, xxiii, 34, 44, 47, 48, 143, 145, 199
 Okikisi, 191
 Okinkin, 191
 Old Oyo (capital of Old Oyo Empire): destruction of, 71-72; mentioned xxvii, 70, 179, 190, 192, 194

- Old Oyo Empire: rise and fall of, xxv-xxviii
 Old Testament, 269
 Olokemeji, 12
 Ondo, xxvi
 Onikuki Creek, 156
 Oriṣa, 73, 93, 122, 138, 277, 278
 Oriṣa Oko, 281, 282, 285
 Oro, 282, 285
 Osa (Lagoon), 199
 Osin stream, 15, 160, 167, 180
 Oṣogbo, xxiv, 97, 117, 118, 119, 120, 122, 123, 124, 125, 140, 141, 143, 146.
 Oṣun River, 2, 111, 112, 119, 122, 124, 140, 156, 168, 199
 Ota, 18
 Otan, 145
 Oudney (one of the explorers of the Niger), 189
 Owu, xxvi, 150, 192, 192n
 Oyo people (or Oyo Yoruba), 8, 126, 132, 137, 138, 139, 150, 189, 192, 232
 Oyo refugees, xxvii
 Oyo Town (i.e. New Oyo), 42, 93, 99, 100, 102, 102n, 105, 129, 156, 157, 222

 Papists, 106
 Park, Mungo (an explorer of the Niger), 189
 Paul, 183
 Phillips, A. D. 92, 92n, 102, 104, 105
 Phillips, Sister (wife of A. D. Phillips), 92
 Poindexter, A. M., xxx
 Pompeii, 72
 Pope the (head of the Roman Catholic Church), 281
 Popo, 189
 Poulhs, 133, 162, 185, 193; *See also* Fulani
 Protestants, 106

 Rabba, 170, 174, 180, 181, 185
 Rammadan (period of fasting for the Muslims), 286
 Red River, 201
 Roman Catholicism, 106, 106n

 Sahara, Desert, xxii, xxiii, 166, 208, 210
 Ṣaki, xiv, xvi, xxiii, 38, 43, 46, 55, 56, 59; description of, 60, 61
 Ṣango, 281, 285
 Sareh, 168, 169, 182

 Saunders, 68, 189, 196, 196n
 Selden, Y., 104, 104n
 Senegal, 127, 199
 Shangai (China), xxxii
 Sierra Leone, 8, 10, 95, 139, 141, 142, 195, 220, 233, 246, 291
 Sokoto, 264
 South America, 211
 South West Publishing House, xvi
 Southern Baptist Convention, xiv, xv
 Southern Baptist Publications Society xv
 Strong, Tabitha Jennie (wife of W. H. Clarke), xxxv
 Sudan, 9, 12, 25, 34, 47, 65, 72, 73, 87, 143, 144, 159, 185, 188, 189, 193, 194, 196, 199, 206, 209, 210, 218, 220, 221, 226, 232, 265, 269, 286
 Sudanese, 231
 Sudans, 33
 Sunmonu (official of the Emir of Ilorin), 161, 162, 163, 164, 165, 166, 184
 Surrey Zoological Garden (in London U.K.), 225

 Taylor, J. B., xii xiin, xxxi, xxxiv, 183
 Tazewell, 170
 Tella, 275
 Thumm, 280
 Townsend, Henry, 6, 6n
 Trimble, Selden, Y. 104, 104n
 Tupper, H. A., xii xiin, xiii

 United States of America, 188, 199, 216, 223, 226, 229
 Upper Ogun (or Oke Ogun in Yoruba i.e., area in the upper course of the Ogun River), xxvii
 Uriah (the Israelite and victim of King David's covetousness), 194
 Urim, 280

 Virgin Mary (mother of Jesus), 286
 Virginia (a state in the U.S.A.), 143

 Wawa, 178
 Wesleyan Methodist Mission, xi
 Wesleyan Mission, 20
 Wesleyan Society, 10
 West Africa, xiii, 233
 Wisconsin (a state in U.S.A.), xix

 Yagba, 132, 150, 152
 Yoruba (Oyo). *See* Oyo [Yoruba]
 Yoruba (people), 18
 Yoruba [Baptist] Mission, xxix, xxxi, xxxii, xxxiii, xxxv, 37







Clarke's efforts to challenge and correct preconceived but erroneous ideas about Africa commonly held by Americans and Europeans in his days contributed to his work not being published. But now, all those interested in the geography, politics, as well as in the economic, social and religious life of the Yoruba will find this book both informative and challenging.

The editor, Dr J. A. Atanda, who provides a critical and illuminating introduction to the book, is a lecturer in the Department of History, University of Ibadan, and specializes in Yoruba history.

Price: ₦6.30 net in Nigeria





