



NIGERIA—POLITICAL OFFICER FOSBERY HOLDING AN INQUIRY

the white ants, eight or nine feet high in some instances. For miles we would struggle and straggle over a tornado-swept stretch of the country, where hundreds of giant trees lay upturned—cumberers of the earth. Down ravines and up hillsides we toiled day after day.

After the first week on the trail, we found the natives lying in wait, generally attacking the first column under Major Heneker, which was usually an hour ahead of the second column. On the 20th, on approaching Urome, the capital of Ishan, we were attacked by the natives in force. They had dug pits and were along the trail. Our men fired volleys into the bush and charged, matchets in hand, cutting their way through the thick undergrowth. The natives sought shelter in the bush. We advanced on the town, and found it deserted. Setting fire to the houses, we withdrew a half a mile and formed a permanent camp.

The houses were built of a mixture of red clay and sand, roofed with palm-leaves and bamboo. Baked by the sun and sometimes dried by a fire before the roof is put on, these houses

look not unlike red sandstone. On close inspection the better class of houses are seen to be polished. The interiors are often decorated with simple straight line designs after the Egyptian style, and often clay and wood images painted in gaudy colours and fashioned into grotesque and distorted forms were to be found.

In every compound there is a ju-ju house; in every house in the compound is a ju-ju room, where the head of the family performs his devotions. His offerings of eggs, fowl and animals lie in this room, decaying and decayed; while occasionally, a human skull and various bones of the human skeleton are seen hanging on the wall.

There is, besides, a general ju-ju assembly house, as well as the king's great ju-ju house. These have a more pretentious architecture, and have furnished us with the best specimens of their artistic skill in the way of statues and idols. Out of one of these we removed no less than seven of these idols carved in mahogany, white wood and calm-wood, about eight feet high, each representing months of labour to the artist with his crude tools. The