

earthen (clay) sacrificial altar about 50 feet long close against the wall on which were placed the gods to whom sacrifice was made—mostly being carved ivory tusks, standing upright, mounted at base, in hideously-constructed brass heads. In front of each ivory god was a small earthen mound on which the victim's forehead would apparently be placed. The altars were covered with streams of dried human blood, and the stench was too frightful.

It would seem that the populace sat around in these huge compounds while the Ju Ju priests performed the sacrifices for their edification. In the various sacrifice compounds were found open pits filled with human bodies giving forth most trying odours. The first night several cases of fainting and sickness occurred owing to the stench, which was equally bad everywhere.

In one of the pits, partially under other bodies, was found a victim, still living, who, being rescued, turned out to be a servant of Mr. Gordon's, one of the members of Mr. Phillips' ill-fated expedition. At the doors and gates of houses and compounds were stinking goats and fowls, sacrificed apparently to prevent the white man entering therein.

The foregoing is but a feeble attempt to describe the house of this most terrible city, which, after five days' continuous fatigue working with about 1,000 natives, still presents most appalling and frightful sights. In the outlying parts of the city the same sights are met, and the annual expenditure of human life in sacrifice must have been enormous.

Most of the wells were also found filled with human bodies. Goats and fowls were also used for sacrifice, and for the latter elaborate altars with two bronze cocks on each were found erected.

On the 19th three Jekris of the ill-fated expedition came in from bush terribly mutilated, and stated that on the approach of the troops all the remaining members who had been brought to the town were killed. The Ju Ju trees and altars were this day destroyed, and the outlying compounds of the big Chiefs commenced to be burnt, this work being completed the following day. An old Benin woman who was captured was sent out to the people telling them to come in. Six Accra men captured in the Mahin country rubber collecting during the last few months, came in from bush heavily ironed. The effects of the late Mr. Phillips and his party were found in the King's palaver-house almost intact, but unfortunately they were subsequently destroyed by fire.

A fire, unfortunate only in that we were unprepared for it, broke out about 4 p.m. on the 21st instant and destroyed the King's and all surrounding quarters, leaving us only open camp; but the cleansing effects of it compensated fully for the destruction of shelter and loss of baggage and provisions which occurred. Fortunately, just as the force was again settling down, a carrier column under escort arrived with provisions.

The entire naval brigade left under Admiral Rawson on morning of the 22nd instant, and the native troops, under Lieutenant-Colonel Hamilton, moved into the camp selected and partially prepared. There are 270 troops in all, with a complement of 350 carriers; but with escorts and a small flying column out opening roads, there will only be about 200 in camp as a rule.

On the afternoon of this day four messengers arrived from the King, begging and asking if he could come with his Chiefs to palaver. I

sent message back that they could come if they wished, but I guaranteed nothing, but that hostilities should be suspended till Friday, 26th, to enable them to come. In any case, nothing could possibly be done up to that date or later, as the camp cannot be earlier completed and cleansed.

Yesterday, 23rd instant, two natives came in, rather with a view to spying, to see what line the King could take, one suggesting it being a question of paying for the massacre. They were sent away with a reassuring but evasive answer, and I am in hopes that some of the Chiefs at least may come in, in which case it will only be a matter of time to get hold of the King and his Ju Ju men.

This morning a flying column left to open the Gwato route, which messengers who were sent down on the 20th instant and returned yesterday report is now safe.

This brings the history of the operations up to date, and I now propose remaining here with entire force until the natives come in, and an attempt can be made to deal with the affair of the massacre by native palaver, country custom being very strict in demanding an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.

It is imperative that a most severe lesson be given the Kings, Chiefs, and Ju Ju men of all surrounding countries, that white men cannot be killed with impunity, and that human sacrifices, with the oppression of the weak and poor, must cease.

All buildings on this site, saturated as it is with the blood of human victims, will be levelled to the ground, and no building of any description will ever again be allowed to be erected thereon. If a town is again built it must be nearer the water, which is now three miles distant.

The success of the operations speaks more for the conduct of them than anything that I can say; but having been with Rear-Admiral Rawson and the Head-Quarters Staff from the commencement of active work, I should mention the unsparing and untiring energy displayed by both the Admiral and Flag-Captain Egerton. The work has been continuous, day and night, and all that care, forethought, and judgment could do to insure success and spare the men as much as possible has certainly been done. From time to time, as fresh difficulties were encountered, it was found necessary to vary and reorganize the original plans, but this was done with judgment and dispatch, so that no delay has on any occasion been thereby caused. Looking back, it will be found that the first news of the disaster was not communicated in London or at the Cape until the 10th January, and on the 18th February the party, having come, roughly, 5,000 miles, from three different directions, entered Benin city. There was little time for preparations, except such as could be ordered by telegraph; but there is no direction in which the arrangements have failed, though the expenditure has probably been unavoidably somewhat heavy. The immediate object of the expedition—the taking of Benin city—having been successfully attained, I would respectfully submit that Rear-Admiral Rawson and his staff are entitled to full recognition of their services, which will, no doubt, be duly accorded them by Her Majesty's Government. The permanent result of the operations are yet to be attained, and to this task the attention of the officials of the Protectorate is now earnestly turned. The punishment of the individuals responsible for the massacre is of these the first,