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NOTE.—There are many subjects in Africa, such as Racial Characteristics, Political and Industrial Conditions, Labour, Disease, Currency, Banking, Education, and so on, about which information is imperfect and opinion divided. On none of these complicated and difficult questions has Science said the last word. Under these circumstances it has been considered best to allow those competent to form an opinion to express freely in this Journal the conclusions at which they themselves have arrived. *It must be clearly understood that the object of the Journal is to gather information, and that each writer must be held responsible for his own views.*

A NOTE ON THE IGARA TRIBE

HAVING been in charge at Idah for nine months in 1901-2, I am much interested in Captain F. F. W. Byng-Hall's article on "The Okpoto and Igara Tribes," at pages 165-174 of vol. vii., and beg to refer readers interested in that part of Nigeria to my article in *Blackwood's Magazine*, 1904, pages 329-337, entitled "The Burial of the Ata of Igaraland, and the 'Coronation' of his Successor." It confirms Capt. Byng-Hall's extremely interesting account of the division of the stranger's descendants into four branches, who in turn provide an Ata, but his statement that this stranger's eldest son's family split up into two of these branches is additional. The version told me was that the first Ata was a woman, Ebblejono, but she may have been the Okpoto whom the stranger married (see Capt. Byng-Hall's account). The Asadu, or Prime Minister, calls himself "the Ata's Wife," and is the real power behind

the throne. The older race, I was told, had *voluntarily* made over the kingdom to the "strangers." Anyhow, this quaternary system works well for the Asadu (of the older race), for he always enjoys the same level of power, whereas, according to his remote predecessor's clever policy, the power of the "strangers" rests always in their *minority*, and the four branches are ever mutually jealous.

My article contains a list of fifteen Atas, ending with Osejji¹ Onapa, whose "coronation"—a most thrilling pageant, finer even than his predecessor's weird midnight burial—I attended in February, 1902. The frontispiece shows him sitting outside his dilapidated palace, surrounded by his court. In the dexter corner, wearing a white turban, is his sister Akwina, an aged dame who, but for their Salic law, would have been Ata. On Osejji's left sits Ogbi, the huge head-eunuch, who thanked me for saving him from being sacrificed at Ata Am Aga's funeral. Osejji Onapa has since been gathered to his fathers, but without the hereditary pomp of an Ata.

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¹ [Is this the same as the "Ata Amochaji" mentioned by Captain Byng-Hall (see p. 13, *infra*)? "Am(a)" would seem to be a title.—ED.]