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Africa.

By C. A. Mitchell.

Africa has an area of 11,514,307 square miles, which is divided as follows: England, 2,351,936; France, 2,783,948; Germany, 832,750; Italy, 315,070; Portugal, 909,820; Spain, 246,760; Belgium, 827,000; Liberia, 37,000; Boer States, 173,350; Independent, 2,120,323, and the great lakes, 80,350; of the remainder Tripoli under quasi-Turkish rule has 400,000, and Egypt under semi-English rule 436,000.

The population is variously estimated at from 210,000,000 up to 300,000,000, and there are said to be 438 languages and 153 dialects spoken. The inhabitants are recognized as belonging to six great families or divisions—the Semites, Hamites and Fulah, having curly hair, Negroes and Bantu have woolly hair, and the Hottentots have woolly hair growing in tufts.

The color of the skin varies from yellow to a dark brown usually, but some tribes on the West Coast are really black.

It might be said, speaking generally, that the Hottentots inhabit Cape Colony and the extreme South of Africa, the Bantu and Negro the central portion near the Equator, and the Semites, Hamites and Fulah the territory north of the Equator.

While the attention of civilized lands has been drawn very much of late years to South Africa because of the stirring events taking place there, very little attention has been given to that portion north of the Equator, which is certainly much larger, if not so important. Immediately north of the Equator is that immense extent of country, stretching from the Atlantic to the Indian Ocean, a distance of over 4,500 miles, known as the Soudan, and immediately north of the Soudan is the great Sahara Desert.

The common conception of the Sahara is a great level waste of sand. This idea comes from what is known of the Libyan Desert bordering on Egypt, which until recently was

logist, recently made a journey through the Sahara, and several times was told by his guides that water could not be obtained within a distance of three or four days, but, as he had been observing the country closely as they passed along, he was somewhat skep-



AN ARAB CHIEF.

point, experiences absurd; in fact, he was totally unfitted to exhort. Yet no meeting passed without a word from him. No one liked to tell him that his remarks were not acceptable; and so things went on. The deacons offered long prayers and exhortations to 'take up the time,' but Brother Luscomb was not to be crowded out. The boys tittered and whispered over his antiquated pronunciation, but the old man was not to be giggled out of countenance.

There was also another provoking thing about him, he seemed always to enjoy every gathering for prayer. When all felt that a meeting had been as dead as it was possible for a mid-week meeting to be, Brother Luscomb would come out of it as bright and glowing as if just from an intense revival service, and say with all his heart: 'Raal good meetin',-wan't it, brethring?'

He was a consistent Christian, nobody disputed that, but he was not a consistent grammarian. He said 'set,' instead of sit, and when the youngsters laughed, he obligingly changed it to 'sot.' Words ending in 'ing,' were always deprived of the 'g,' and those in 'in,' or 'en,' as invariably had a 'g' added. 'Prehaps, presuasion, persentiment,' were favorite words with him.

There would have been some hope in the hearts of the brethren and sisters, if there were any signs of his overcoming his faults, but, on the contrary, he became worse as his years grew to be more of a burden. It was suggested by some that he be kindly requested not to 'take part,' when something happened that opened many eyes.

A young man of eighteen strayed into one of the prayer-meetings. He was well known through the town as a hard case, and to see him there was a wonder. Brother Luscomb sat so far in front that he did not see the new comer.

All of the brethren tried to make the meeting as interesting as possible. Deacon G. spoke fluently of a shipwrecked sailor clinging to his mother's testament even in the pangs of death. Mrs. M. sang very touchingly a song that had awakened many a heart to its lost condition. Brother M. said earnestly and meaningly, 'Choose ye this day whom ye will serve,' and then when the tone of the meeting was deep and reverent, Brother Luscomb got up and spoke. Just what he said hardly any one seemed to know. He meandered through some sort of a story about a 'Chinee boy which had stole suthin', an' couldn't, get no peace till he made restitootion,' and 'restitootion' and 'prehaps,' and 'brethering,' with a few other choice words were about all that most of the people present remembered of the story after the speaker 'sot' down.

The 'pillars' round about endured the attack as usual with martyr-like faces, and a feeling of righteous indignation, that the good impressions the young man had already gained should be thus lost.

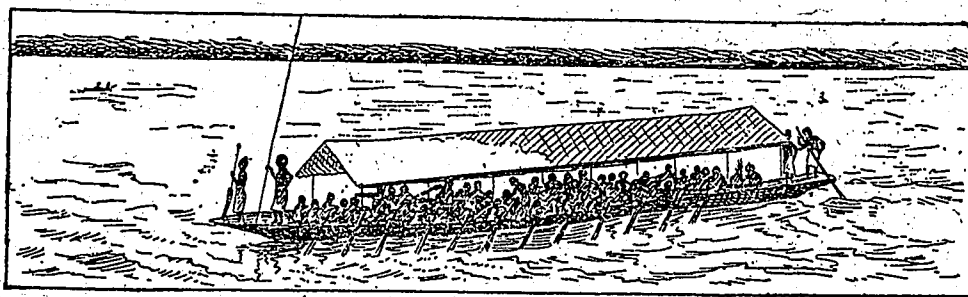
A few weeks after this, the same young man came before the church committee to be examined for admission to the church. In the course of the questions that were put to him it was asked,—

'When did you first decide to serve the Lord?'

'At the prayer-meeting three weeks ago. 'What led you to that choice?' asked the pastor.

tical, and several times ordered a halt and sent out small parties.

His theory of the matter is that the guides purposely led travellers through the most



RIVER SCENE IN AFRICA.

the only part of the Sahara whose character was known with any degree of certainty.

Only one-ninth of the Sahara is sand, the remainder consisting of mountains and rocks, steppes and oases. The western Sahara has extensive plains, with mountains, hills, valleys and watercourses (usually dry), and the land is not so desolate, but that life can be supported almost anywhere within its borders. The valleys are covered with trees, and it is freely habitable in the elevated districts.

The oases have luxuriant vegetation, and are much more common than has commonly been supposed.

A French traveller, who is a thorough geo-

sterile and uninviting parts of the country, so that they would be led to believe it was barren and undesirable. Anyone who has travelled in Africa knows how reasonable this theory is. Of course at certain seasons the sand storms and hot desert winds make the Sahara almost unbearable for man or beast.—'Chris. Alliance.'

Brother Luscomb.

The brethren did not like to have Mr. Luscomb speak in the evening meetings. He was slow, ungrammatical and uninteresting. His gestures were awkward, stories without