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UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

MY TRIP TO AFRICA.



No. 1.—ROBERT LEE HARRIS AND KING TOPPA.
A king of a part of the Crow tribe on the Kroo Coast.



By **ROBERT LEE HARRIS,**
(COW-BOY PREACHER),

Who has made Three Trips to the Dark Continent.

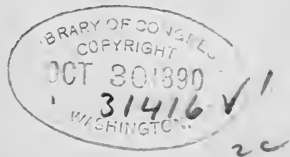


My Trip to Africa.

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BY ROBERT LEE HARRIS
(Cow-Boy Preacher),

WHO HAS MADE THREE TRIPS TO THE
DARK CONTINENT.

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My Trip to Africa.

Africa is an interesting country—a world in itself. The commercial man is hurrying there. The missionary is no less anxious to catch the first sight of her sandy shores, while those who can not feast their eyes upon the interesting sights are eagerly devouring all the books, papers, and letters from which they can gather any information of this absorbing country. This Dark Continent is about five thousand miles long, by about four thousand five hundred miles wide, having from fifteen to twenty thousand miles of shore, and three hundred millions of inhabitants.

This "*world*," for thought and investigation, seems to have just fairly rolled in sight, after having been revolving around some unknown center for ages past. But little was known of Africa until the last few centuries. She has been enveloped in mystery. But now the seals are breaking, and we hope to know more of her contents in the near future. Livingstone and Stanley have done much to break these seals of darkness, and, we believe, William Taylor, the world's missionary, will read her contents to the Christian and civilized world. We do not know why this great country should have gone so long unnoticed, unless it is that she has been obscured from the world's vision by the smoke of God's wrath, for her cruelty, in her representative head—Egypt, to his people Israel. But now the light is breaking, and the dark-

ness is put to shame, and we hope soon to see the sons and daughters of Africa coming up from their graves of superstition to bask in the refulgent sunlight of a Christian civilization. To help on this great day, in a small measure, I started for the west coast of Africa in 1885, to select a mission field for operating self-supporting missions, after which I returned to America, and raised the amount of money needed to pay the expenses of sending a small band of missionaries to this newly selected field. This I did by lecturing on my travels in Africa, sometimes charging an admittance fee at the door, and at other times giving a free lecture and taking a public collection. God gave me great success in raising this money. I will insert a few notices, given of these missionary meetings, to give the reader an idea of them. The first that we insert was written by Miss Kate H. Booth, of our Buffalo (N. Y.) meeting, for a newspaper in St. Louis, Mo.:

“ *We can not always* see the whys and wherefores of God’s providential leadings, but with the poet we can exclaim,

‘Above the rest this note shall swell,
My Jesus doeth all things well.’

“We read the willing and obedient shall eat the good of the land; so I was permitted to attend a missionary meeting in Black Rock church, Buffalo, N. Y., September 24, conducted by Brother Harris. It was good to be there. The presence of the Lord was manifest, and for three hours the congregation was held spellbound.

“Some of our people have entertained false ideas in regard to Brother Harris and his work. His visit

to Buffalo tended to eradicate these views from the people's minds. As he related his experience, moving step by step in the order of the Lord until the call came on him to preach the gospel to the heathen in Africa, our hearts responded, Amen. He has been



No. 2.—BISHOP WM. TAYLOR AND HIS LIBERIAN CONFERENCE
AT MONROVIA.

to Africa, explored the country, seen souls saved in his short stay, and is now come to America for recruits, and intends to sail the 30th of next month. Eight have responded to his call—men and women full of faith and the Holy Ghost—and they are going forth, 'not knowing the things that await them,' but none of these things move them. Brother Harris' time is limited, but he expects to visit as many places

as possible, in order to stir up the people in regard to the work. He is a man young in years but full of zeal and love for perishing humanity. His own words, 'I would rather go to Africa than to heaven,' show where his heart lies. His mission will be self-supporting. All he asks now is the means to send his God-anointed laborers to the field of toil. O beloved, unlock the door of your heart; 'Freely ye have received, freely give.' Other missionaries have returned from Africa, bringing discouraging reports of the land. They did not expect immediate results, and they did not have them. Brother Harris went looking for present victory, and the Lord gave him just what he believed for. The missionary service in Buffalo was a blessing to our souls, and, instead of the meeting being detrimental to the cause of God, it was a means of renewing our covenant and consecrating ourselves more fully to him who has died to redeem us.

"Although our call is not to Africa, yet our hearts are moved for all the sons and daughters of Adam's race. The world will not be converted too quick. The Lord anoint others for the work and send them forth to the harvest field.

'Spread it, spread the holy fire;
Tell it, tell what God has done;
Till the nations are conformed
To the image of his son.'

"Buffalo, N. Y.

KATE H. BOOTH."

MEETING AT ROME, N. Y.

"*I wish to say* to all interested that the Faith Missionary meeting, held on the evening of October 4th, by Brother R. L. Harris, was a grand success.

The idea of self-support, upon foreign mission-fields, as presented by Brother Harris, meets with much favor among our people. After seeing Brother Harris, and listening to his deeply interesting address, and hearing his experience, and the history of his work in Texas, and the account of his call to Africa, with the success of his work there, we saw plainly that upon this work was the seal of the Holy Ghost. Fervent prayers from many hearts will go up to God for the success of his mission. The people responded with a good collection for the transit fund. We wish it had been five times as much. While Brother Harris and his noble band are about embarking for Africa in behalf of the perishing heathen, let us who remain redouble our endeavor to save the heathen at home. Amen. Yours, washed in the blood of the Lamb,

"Rome, N. Y.

F. J. DUNHAM, Pastor."

MEETING AT UTICA, N. Y.

"Public Opinion.—A fair audience met at the chapel on Chatham street, last Tuesday evening, October 5th, in response to the announcement that there would be a missionary meeting, conducted by Brother Harris, the missionary to Africa. We are satisfied the attendance would have been larger could the people have known the pleasure and profit to be derived from the meeting. It was a rare treat, and while we listened we seemed to take fresh courage for the Master's work. Brother Sherman opened the meeting with some appropriate remarks in regard to the work. He stated that the last appointment received by Brother Harris from the conference was the mission field in Africa. Brother Harris followed with

an earnest, thrilling address, to which the audience listened with rapt attention and interest for about two hours. In our humble opinion Brother Harris is the right man in the right place. With a heart baptized for the work, an untiring zeal for the cause and, to all appearances, a power of adaptation to surrounding circumstances, we bid him God-speed and hope that our people will aid him as far as possible with their prayers and contributions. He works upon the plan of self-supporting missions, and only asks sufficient means to pay the passage of his eight missionaries across the waters, and plant his missions. God has saved multitudes of souls through his labors in the past, and wonderfully "supplied his needs." Shall we not lend a helping hand when there are self-denying, consecrated souls who are willing to sacrifice life, friends, and home for the salvation of poor benighted heathen? The Lord has called them to endure the privation and toils of a missionary's life, while we are permitted to labor on more congenial soil, and enjoying the blessings and privileges of an enlightened land. Shall we not aid them in every way possible, and show, by a ready response to their appeals for help, that our sympathies, our prayers, and our means are freely given to help them on in this grand and glorious work? We say, God bless Africa! God bless Brother Harris and his noble band!

"Utica, N. Y.

M. C. OWEN."



The following verses were composed and dedicated to my noble mission band, by myself:

We're soldiers of the King above,
We are an army band,
We'll belt the world with perfect love,
We'll march through every land.
We'll spread the news of Gospel Grace,
Till all the world shall hear,
And every nation shall embrace,
Our King of Kings to fear.

We march abreast, by two and two,
We're preaching as we go;
We've bid our friends and home adieu,
And earthly hopes below.
We leave them all for Jesus' sake,
In heathen lands to dwell,
And tho' we're led unto the stake
The host above we'll swell.

We've summed it up, we take the cross,
After our King to go:
We're counting earthly pleasures dross,
And full of deadly woe.
We spurn them all for joys above,
And take our stand with Him,
Who gave Himself in wondrous love,
To save the world from sin.

Dear comrades, O forget the past,
Press onward for the prize,
Until, through Christ, we reach at last
Our home beyond the skies.
There we'll our arms forever ground,
To war with sin no more,
With Christ, our King, forever crowned
On Canaan's happy shore.

O let us follow those gone up
 Thro' tribulations great,
 Who washed their robes, and drank the cup,
 And entered thro' the gate.
 We'll share the joys of Christ, our King,
 Who trod this way alone ;
 With all the ransomed host we'll sing,
 Around the great white throne.

When ages there have rolled away
 Our joys have just begun,
 Still rising into brighter day
 Of one eternal sun.
 Our happy souls will there be lost
 In wonder, love, and praise,
 To know in full redemption's cost,
 And reign thro' endless days.

R. L. HARRIS.

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The following pages are written for those who are supposed to know but little, or nothing, of Africa, or how to get there ; so I put it in the form of questions and answers :

*First. How did you get to Africa?* I sailed from New York direct to Liverpool. There I took another steamer for Freetown, Sierra Leone, west coast of Africa. We made several calls before reaching Freetown. Our first call was made at Grand Canary, an island about sixty miles long by thirty miles wide. Here the natives, who speak Spanish, came on board by hundreds, bringing fruits and birds—Canary birds—for sale. These people are all Catholics. If there is a Protestant missionary on this island I did not hear of it. This call is only about seven days' voyage from Liverpool, when we have good weather for sailing. We were about fourteen

days making it once, owing to storms in the Bay of Biscay. We remained at this place about six or eight hours, after which we set sail for Goree, as our next stop. This is a small island about one mile in diameter and two miles from the main land. At this place



NO. 3.—AN OLD COTTONWOOD TREE

on the beach at Krootown, where we sometimes hold meetings; also, where we go to see the steamers as they come in from our dear old home.

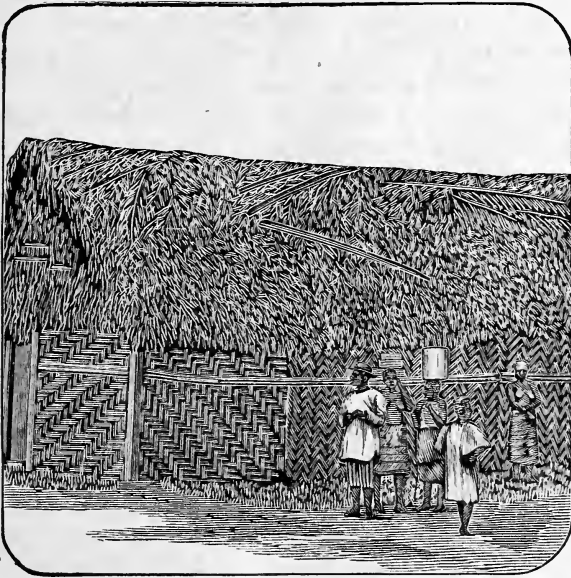
I saw, for the first time, the native African in *all his glory* (?). They were nearly naked and as black as the "*ace of spades*." Opposite this island, on the main land, a railroad starts off into the interior, for about thirty miles. This is the only railroad in west

Africa. Off again for another port farther down the coast. We plow our way southward very near the main land, sometimes coming so near that the sandy shore is quite visible, until we reach the mouth, which is about twelve miles wide, of the river Gambia. Here we left the mother ocean, for a while, making our way up this river to a place called Bathurst, which is the capital of Senegambia colony. It has a population of about four thousand, including Christians, Mohammedans, and pagans. The Wesleyan Methodists, Baptists, Presbyterians, and Catholics have churches in this city. On going ashore, the first scene that greets the eye comprises a multitude of natives sitting along the river bank—beach—in little groups, playing some kind of games in the sand. As you pass up the main street you will see *worse than half naked* natives strolling in all directions in great companies. Some of these natives can speak a little English—enough for begging purposes. The “lonesome” tone of many voices can be heard on every side, as you pass up this street, saying “Hod do, Dady?” for they call all white men “dady” in Africa; “gim me copper.”

It might be well for me to say something about the native dress, just here, as I got the first fair sample of it at this place. As to the cloth part of it, it is very scarce, but as to the jewelry part, it is extravagantly abundant. Many natives wear as many as five rings in each ear, one to three on each finger and toe, and bands on their legs and arms, with beads in great rolls about their loins and necks. But that is no jewelry at all (?). Their way of making cloth is very rude, but they will astonish you with the fine quality which they turn out. Their loom is



a few little sticks setting up in the ground a few yards apart. On these sticks they place their warp, and then run the filling through with their fingers. They weave the strips of cloth about six or eight inches wide, and then sew them together until the desired



NO. 4.—A LITTLE BAMBOO CHURCH  
where I preached my first sermon on the Liberian coast.

width is obtained. I saw a king's robe, which was made in this way, sell for about seventy dollars of our money, at Sierra Leone. The natives also make very fine mats of grass and the fibers of leaves.

Well, from Bathurst we retreated down the river until we got into our old track once more, making our way then to Freetown. This is the capital of

Sierra Leone colony, and it is, by far, the most important port on the west coast until you reach the gold coast. Freetown boasts of thirty-five thousand inhabitants and about thirty churches. These people, many of them, speak English—“*hashed English.*” Its location is on the north side of the Sierra Leone river, surrounded on the land side by very high mountains, the effect of which is extreme heat at certain hours of the day. While the sea-breeze comes in the air is very cool, but the land-breeze greatly raises the temperature to an oppressive degree, frequently causing sickness and death. Here we have a few English people, traders, which “*are a very rare article*” (?) on other parts of the coast. I remained at this place for seventeen days, preaching at night to a *packed house*, or, rather, to the *packed people* in the house, having some converts at each service.

The cause of my stop at this place was due to the fact that the steamer on which I came here did not call at Monrovia, the city (?) to which I started when I left my native land. At last my steamer came. I boarded her for Monrovia, the capital of the republic of Liberia. But before reaching this place we made other calls, both along the coast and up rivers, of which I will not speak at this time. Suffice it to say that we finally reached our goal, on the “*fur*”-away shores of Liberia. Here I went to work for God and souls, God working with me to the salvation of many half-civilized souls. I will let another describe these meetings, the account of which was published in the *Christian Standard* and the *Vanguard*. It was as follows:

ROBERT L. HARRIS.

“This vigorous young athlete (contender for victory) sprang from the bottom. Rescued from a reckless career and gloriously anointed, thoroughly toughened and trained in a series of powerful revivals on the frontier of Texas, he seems fully fitted



NO. 5.—A VEY WOMAN.

for eminent success in Africa. He is in the midst of an instant and apostolic revival work on those shores. A missionary writes: ‘We had a marvelous meeting. The Baptists want him all the week, but he wants to improve the dry weather to locate his missions. He is an excellent general. He holds the meeting without the slightest friction or seeming authority, but he

holds it with such a grip there is nothing erratic, nothing boisterous, every thing on time. My children almost worship him, and the tall and kingly Tappa waits for him, much afraid he will be turned in some other direction, though I do not apprehend for a moment that he will. Brother Harris has great firmness and good judgment, but is affable, agreeable, and truly godly, a grand man for Africa.'

"He seems to seize hold of the work at once in Africa. He is irrepressible and pays no attention to preliminaries." The same missionary reports as follows, writing to the *Christian Standard* of Philadelphia:

"The event of the day here has been the arrival of Rev. Robert L. Harris, an evangelist of Texas. Brother Harris landed Sunday, the 14th inst. We had read of him as a young man of fiery zeal, one who had wielded the sword of the spirit effectually, cutting into sin and popular vices unsparingly, but we were not prepared to see one so young and so full of joyous, buoyant life; he began work immediately, preaching for me at Krootown, a few hours after landing, and at the M. E. Church in the evening. On Monday night, by request, he commenced a series of meetings in the Presbyterian church. The Holy Spirit was present with felt power in every service. The gospel way of salvation from sin was clearly and forcibly presented in every sermon. God helped him to puncture all shams, and teach *entire* consecration of all to God, crucifixion to the world, a plain, earnest, self-denying Christian life. At the end of the week the meeting was transferred to the M. E. church, a larger building; even here every available space was occupied, the battle was waged with telling

effect. Forty were forward for prayers on the second night, and at this writing the whole community seems deeply moved. Many of us felt like singing :

“’T is the old-time religion,  
And ’t is good enough for me,”

as we listened to the truths we do not often hear from the pulpit, such as worldly conformity, in dress, style of living, dealings, etc. The first man that was con-



NO. 6.—LITTLE TOMMIE—A KROO BOY.

verted received pardon as the “mourners” were repeating “*I can*, and *I will*, and *I do* believe that Jesus saves me now.” They had proceeded as far as “*I do* believe,” when the man sprang in the air, and rushed out of the door; returning immediately, he threw his handless arms (had both hands shot off a few years ago) around Brother Harris, giving him a most vigorous hug. The Redeemer’s cause is advancing

all along the line in Africa. The kingdoms of this world are to become kingdoms of our Lord. Men and women are plunging fearlessly into this deadly climate, intent only on following the orders of the great Captain of our salvation to "go." If you can spare a few more "Texas evangelists" or any other



NO. 7.—THE CATHOLIC CHURCH AT KROOTOWN.

men and women with a consciousness of being saved themselves, and who will *go right to work* to save the perishing millions that throng this continent; let them come on; we need them, souls that are perishing need them.'"

*Second. How do the natives live?* Well, they farm some and fish and hunt game some. The men "*cut the farm*," as they call it, and when the brush is sufficiently dry they set fire to it, burning it off. Now the man's part of the farming is done. His wives and slaves come along and do the planting, and when it is ready to gather, they do that, too. But as they do not plant the same farm two years in succession, there is just about as much work on the preparation of the farm as there is in the planting and gathering. The natives have a kind of superstitious notion about planting the same farm two years in succession.

They raise rice, potatoes, "*casidah*"—it grows in the ground; some India corn, but it grows very small. The way that they prepare this "*casidah*" for table (?) use is first by boiling it until well done; then they put it into a "*mortar*" and pound it into a biscuit dough; afterward they place it in a large wooden bowl, pouring over it some kind of soup, either fish, dog, or monkey soup. They eat just any thing—so it is dead or alive.

Their houses are made of sticks and mud, except those of the Kroo tribe, which are made of bamboo mats. Their beds are made of heaps of dirt. They make a frame of sticks, driven up in the ground, in one corner of the house, then fill in with dirt and pack down; over this they spread a grass mat, putting a billet of wood for a pillow, and their place for sweet repose (?) is complete. I took great comfort upon this kind of bed while traveling in the interior. I mean, I took great comfort in *turning over and over*, trying to find a soft spot. I forgot to say that their houses are covered with leaves from trees, which

makes a water-proof roof for about three years. It makes a good hiding place for rats, snakes, etc., too.

*Third. What about marriage?* They buy all their wives when the girls are quite small. Some are sold for wives by the time they are three months old, but they are allowed to remain with their mothers



NO. 8.—A GOLA WOMAN.

The white spots on her arms are the country chalking spoken of in one place in this little book. She has a "Greegree" god tied on the top of her head.

until about twelve years of age, at which time the purchaser takes them home with him for his wives. When their babies are born, they wash out their mouths with red pepper once a day until the child is about three months old. They also grease them all



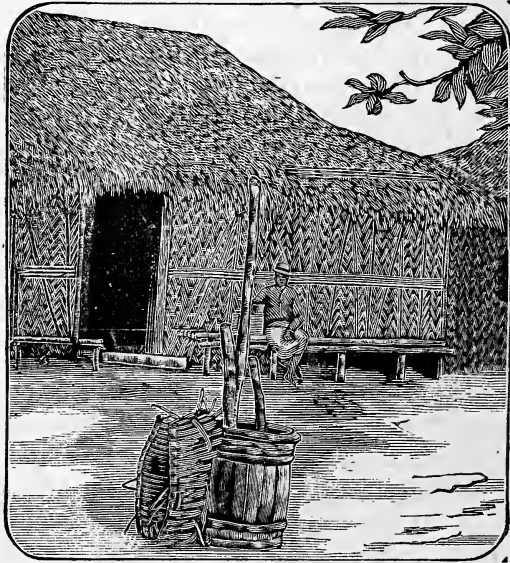
over at the same time, and place them out in the sun to dry. This, they say, makes them strong men and women. No doubt it does, if they live through such treatment.

*Fourth. What about their religion?* Their only religion is what you might call the "fetich" system, which is only a confused mass of foolish notions about the virtues of different things. Sometimes one of them imagines that a bunch of leaves rolled into a peculiar shape will prevent witches, or sickness, or give them a successful journey or battle, or cause their rice to grow better, etc. At other times the idea prevails that a chicken's feather will do all that is necessary in these affairs, and nothing else will do as well. Some of them stuff a monkey's skin with sand and keep it for "good luck." Sometimes they heap up stones in the center of their villages, or set up poles and pile sticks and other things around them as gods, to protect them against opposing tribes. The natives have what is called by some of them, their "jujus," by others their "greegrees," and by many their "medicine," all of which have the same meaning. This "medicine" is made of different things, such as wood, stone, bone, leather, bush leaves, ivory, beads, etc. These they wear tied on their arms, wrists, and especially tied to their hair, and can not be persuaded to leave them off, as they have so much confidence in their virtue. See engraving No. 5, which is a picture of a native woman of the Vey tribe. Notice the peculiar manner in which she has her hair combed. She has but one "greegree" fastened on her hair, while many others have ten or twelve.

Even the children and babies are loaded with these

“greegrees,” by their parents. In cut No. 10 we have three little babies with these things on their arms and feet. I took this picture in Krootown, on the beach near Monrovia.

They also have their sacred men—called “devil-men” by some. These men give the laws, which are



NO. 9.—A BAMBOO HOUSE,

with a god set up in front of it. Consisting of a pole, a keg, and a country king jar—something which natives carry the trade in.

very binding on the people of the place, and nothing could persuade the subjects to break them. For they would expect their “devil-man” to “*witch them to death.*”

The women attach great importance to “country chalking”—painting their persons with whitish or

blue mud. Some of them have it all over their faces, until it is difficult to tell, from their faces, whether they are human beings or not. Some are more modest about it, and only mark their faces with this blue mud. But this "fetich" system is not strange, when we remember that in our Christian land the same system is practiced by the professed friends of Jesus Christ. I have walked in many Christian homes in this lovely country of ours, where a horse-shoe was



NO. 10.—PICKANINNIES.

Three little Kroo babies. See they are loaded down with greegrees around their ankles, wrists, and necks.

suspended over the door for "good luck." Is not that the "fetich" system? Some say, "If you drop the dish-cloth, some one is coming." A lady, a member of the church, said to me not long since: "If you let the baby look in the looking glass, it will die before it is a year old." Another said: "If you break a looking glass, some one of the family will die within a year." You have heard some one say, "That is bad luck," or "This is bad luck," etc., etc., and it is all nothing but heathenism in civilized clothing.

***Fifth. What do they use in the place of money?*** Trade of different kinds; rubber, ivory, calmwood, palm kernals, etc. These they exchange for tobacco, *rum*, cloth, guns, and ammunition. Now, my kind reader, my little space demands that I bid you good-by for the present, hoping and praying for Africa's redemption from the darkness of superstition.

Sovereign of worlds! display thy power;  
Be this thy Zion's favored hour;  
O bid the morning star arise,  
And point the heathen to the skies.

Set up thy throne where Satan reigns,  
In western wilds and eastern plains;  
Far let the gospel's sound be known;  
Make thou the nations all thine own.

Speak, and the world shall hear thy voice;  
Speak, and the desert shall rejoice;  
Dispel the gloom of heathen night;  
Bid every nation hail the light.

—MRS. VOKE.





NO. 11.—OUR LITTLE MISSION HOME, MONROVIA.  
The missionaries lived in the upper story, and taught the children below.



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