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The Nile Tributaries Of Abyssinia: And The Sword Hunters Of The Hamran Arabs

Samuel W. Baker

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Originally published in 1867, Sir Samuel Baker's journal chronicles his exploratory venture to Africa in search of the source of the Nile and is perhaps the greatest adventure story ever written. Baker, who was one of the most significant and noted British explorers of the nineteenth century, commenced upon a one year journey to study every individual pathway to the Nile, fully accompanied by his wife Florence (whom he had first encountered in an Ottoman slave market). Testing himself to the limit and testament to his strength of character, Baker's highly descriptive, often humorous and fluid writing documents this treacherous and arduous undertaking, recounting highly interesting stories of the native people as well as conveying the details of his exploration. From his hunting expeditions with the Hamran Arabs to his extensive journeys on camel-back and his life at camp, Baker's experiences are far removed from the modern world, and his eloquent and highly readable depictions offer the reader with an inestimable illumination into what life and survival was really like in Africa in the mid-nineteenth century.

PREFACE CHAPTER I. ABOVE THE CATARACT CHAPTER II CHAPTER III. WILD ASSES OF THE DESERT CHAPTER IV. ROUTE FROM CASSALA TO SOUAKIM CHAPTER V. THE STORM CHAPTER VI. SHEIK ACHMET ABOU SINN CHAPTER VII. THE DEPARTURE CHAPTER VIII. THE PLAGUES OF EGYPT CHAPTER IX. FORM A RAFT WITH THE SPONGING BATH CHAPTER X. A FEW NOTES AT EHETILLA CHAPTER XI. THE FORD CHAPTER XII. OLD NEPTUNE JOINS THE PARTY CHAPTER XIII. THE LIONS FIND THE BUFFALO CHAPTER XIV. A FOREBODING OF EVIL CHAPTER XV. ANTELOPES ON THE SETTITE CHAPTER XVI. ABOU DO IS GREEDY CHAPTER XVII. WE REACH THE ROYAN CHAPTER XVIII. A CAMEL FALLS, AND DIES CHAPTER XIX. SEND A PARTY TO RECONNOITRE CHAPTER XX. ARRIVAL AT METEMMA, OR GALLABAT CHAPTER XXI. FERTILITY OF THE COUNTRY ON THE BANKS OF THE RAHAD CHAPTER XXII. WE LEAVE THE DINDER

"This day a herd of twenty-eight giraffes tantalized me by descending a short distance below the level flats, and I was tempted at all hazards across the river. Accordingly preparations were immediately made for a start. The sheik of the village and several of the Arabs were hippopotami hunters by profession; these fellows could swim like otters, and, despite the crocodiles, they seemed as much at home in the water as on land. We prepared an impromptu raft. My angarep (bedstead) was quickly inverted; six water-skins were inflated, and lashed, three on either side. A shallow packing-case, lined with tin, containing my gun, was fastened in the centre of the angarep, and two tow-lines were attached to the front part of the raft, by which swimmers were to draw it across the river. Two men were to hang on behind, and, if possible, keep it straight in the rapid current.

"There was not much delay in the launch. I stepped carefully into my coffin-shaped case, and squatted down, with a rifle on either side, and my ammunition at the bottom of the tin-lined water-proof case; thus, in case of an upset, I was ready for a swim. Off we went!"

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