

THROUGH UNKNOWN ABYSSINIA.*

Among the crowding calamities of the war in South Africa comes the death of Captain Montagu Sinclair Wellby, of the Eighteenth Hussars. Born in 1866, educated at Rugby and Sandhurst, and given his rank as captain in 1894, he was then able to take up the life of an explorer in Africa, making extended journeys through Somaliland in successive years. In 1896 he went to Asia on the expedition through Cashmere, northern Thibet, Mongolia, and China, which is described in his well-known book, "Through Unknown Thibet." He returned to India, participated in the Tirah campaign, and, that ended, joined Colonel John Lane Harrington, British agent at the Abyssinian court, at Harrar, in August, 1898. Obtaining leave from the Emperor Menelik to traverse any part of his domains, Captain Wellby set out without a white companion at the close of 1898, explored vast regions of Abyssinian territory which had never before known the foot of a European, reached Lake Rudolf, met many strange tribes of natives, and came out at Omdurman in July, 1899. The South African war called him to the colors, and he died at Paardekop on August 5, 1899, having been shot by the burghers on his refusal to surrender after being surprised on a reconnaissance.

The record of his last journey is preserved in the large and handsome volume entitled, "Twixt Sirdar and Menelik," an interesting record of an important expedition, plentifully illustrated, but lacking a map and chronology as well as an index, which makes it less valuable than its real importance deserves. The book is dedicated, by permission, to the Abyssinian monarch, and has had the benefit of preparation at the hands of Colonel Harrington, who records in his introduction the unusual qualities possessed by his friend for the work he took up, noting among other things his ability to make friends of the most uncompromising and antagonistic material, from the "Lion of Judah" himself to the natives of "the devil-infested country of Walamo." These qualities appear in the book as well, leaving it a simple and picturesque recital of fact, modestly told but filled with the spirit of high resolve and courageous humility.

After many interesting experiences in the

* 'TWIXT SIRDAR AND MENELIK: An Account of a Year's Expedition from Zeila to Cairo through Unknown Abyssinia. By the late Captain M. S. Wellby. Illustrated. New York: Harper & Brothers.

Abyssinian capital, where Captain Wellby was given an opportunity to study the methods of the Emperor's armies, the expedition set out from Adis Ababa with a mixed company of Abyssinians, Gallas, Somalis, and Soudanese, a Pathan native officer acting as its lieutenant. The caravan went along the River Maki to Lake Zouai, on the way south to Lake Lamina, previously unexplored and said to contain a great treasure hid by a Danakil chief on one of its islands in the sixteenth century, passing along the Suksuk to Lake Hera or Hora, and thence to the new body of water. Hostile natives prevented intimate acquaintance with the discovery, and the explorers hastened on to Wubarakh. In the country of Walamo there was a curious experience with the "devils" of the country, from which Captain Wellby himself was not exempt — to his own surprise. Lake Rudolf, or Gallop, was attained and some excellent shooting followed, rhinoceros, hippopotamus, elephant, hartebeest, and gazelle contributing to the supply. Passing through many tribes of savages, the gigantic Turkana, the Abba, and the Tamata, the men suffered greatly from lack of water, but found relief among the Shingkalla. The Nile was reached at Nasser, and thereafter it was merely a question of floating down stream with it. The expedition disbanded at Omdurman.

The book is silent concerning the scientific results of the long and devious journey, but these will doubtless find the light elsewhere.

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