

SIR SAMUEL WHITE BAKER.

What Sir Samuel White Baker did toward furthering geographical exploration in Africa and other countries and in the direction of increasing our knowledge of the animal kingdom was reproduced dioramically by the news of his death on Dec. 30th last, at his entrancing country residence, Sandford Orleigh, near Newton Abbot, in Devonshire, England. He had lived more than two years above the allotted span, for he had attained his seventy-second birthday on June 8th, 1893.

In physique, as well as in indomitable pluck, Sir Samuel was a typical Englishman. He was born at Thorngrove, near Worcester, on June 8th, 1821, and received an excellent education. After leaving college, he joined his brother, in 1845, at Nuwara Eliya, in Ceylon, where he remained for eight years. At this period he produced his two books, "The Rifle and the Hound in Ceylon" and "Eight Years' Wanderings in Ceylon," published in London in 1854 and 1855 respectively. In Ceylon he gained a good deal of the experience as a sportsman and lover of nature which afterward stood him opportunely when he undertook extensive exploration.

Returning to Europe from Ceylon, Baker was appointed to a position on the railroad which now runs between Varna and Rustchuk in Bulgaria. This employment was not congenial to a man of so adventurous a disposition, and with his predilection for sport of the heavier sort; he had private means enough to enable him following his own bent, so he resolved to tread the unknown wilds of Africa. Speke and Grant, those noted explorers, had departed from Bagomoyo, in October, 1860, resolved to find the true source of the River Nile. Baker, without more ado, determined to meet them; his young wife refused to be parted from him, and made up her mind that she would endure the hardship and dangers, so on April 15th, 1861, they left Cairo. Mrs. Baker was from Buda Pest, and did honor to her city with her bravery. Mrs. Peary, the dauntless wife of the American explorer of Greenland, has not surpassed in heroism Lady Baker, although their travels lay in such antipodean climates. By the way, Mrs. Petherick was another gallant lady who accompanied her husband in African exploration.

Speke and Grant were not expected on the Upper Nile until the beginning of 1863, so that Baker's party had plenty of time to take their journey easily and with the maximum of comfort to be had along their route. This leisure Baker made the most of. Having reached Berber, he departed from his line of march and explored the Sattite, A tbara, and other northern Abyssinian tributaries of the Nile. Here he had great opportunity to purvey to his desire for sport, to augment his acquaintance with natural history and to add to mankind's geographical knowledge. While in this land he acquired a familiarity with native and Arabic character which proved of valuable service to him subsequently. As a result, we have his entertaining work on "The Nile Tributaries of Abyssinia, and the Sword-Hunters of the Hamran Arabs," published in 1867 at London, England.

Baker's latter mentioned book is entertaining and highly instructive. It reveals

the true sportsman in every page. He was not a mere slaughterer of wild beasts, whose sole aim is to add to his list of butcheries. Not once did he kill a female of any species unless compelled to do so in self-defence, and his noble nature delighted to study the habits of the members of the animal kingdom. Through all, he spoke highly of the famous sword-hunters of the Hamran Arabs in his "Nile Tributaries of Abyssinia," also in a much later work on "Wild Beasts and Their Ways: Reminiscences of Europe, Asia, Africa and America," which was published in London and New York by Macmillan & Company during 1890. Taking up the strain of his work published twenty-three years earlier, he says in his "Wild Beasts and Their Ways" that the greatest of all hunters are the Hamran Arabs of the Settite River on the borders of Abyssinia, who use no other weapon to kill elephants but a heavy two-edged sword. All these intrepid hunters who accompanied Baker during his stay in Abyssinia in 1861 eventually had been killed in desperate close-quarter encounters with wild elephants. Wonderful Nimrods that they were, they led a life of constant warfare with savage beasts, so that it may be said they fell upon their battlefield. Their method was to hamstring their ponderous quarry with keen-edged two-handed swords.

In 1862, on June 11th, Baker arrived at Khartoum. Here he waited until December for the northerly winds. Going thence, he reached Gondokoro on February 2nd, 1863. Speke and Grant came in to this place a fortnight later. Speke had discovered the Victoria Nyanza to be the true source of the Nile, but he had not been able to reach a lake to the westward, which it was believed the River Nile crossed while flowing toward Gondokoro. Baker at once resolved to solve a problem of so much geographical interest. Ignoring the facts that his own men were in a state of mutiny and that the slave-traders had intimated that they would prevent his progress, defying him to penetrate into the interior, Baker started on March 26th. His remarkable resolution and courage enabled him to overcome difficulties which would have completely hampered any less energetic man. Neither did his noble wife succumb. Like Mrs. Petherick, she remained at her husband's side to comfort and encourage him, and no small credit is due to Lady Baker for the ultimate success of the expedition.

After spending some time in the Latuka country, Baker crossed the River Nile at Karuma, had a conference with King Kamrasi of Unyora at Mruli, and on the 16th day of March, 1864, he and his wife experienced the joy of gazing upon that lake for which they had been in quest. It seemed a magnificently large body of water, and upon it Baker bestowed the euphonious name of Albert Nyanza. Possibly having been deceived by a heavy mist which enshrouded a portion of the lake and by exaggerated reports from natives, Baker conceived that this inland sea extended far to the southward, mayhap even as far as the Tanganyika. He followed its eastern shore for thirteen days, until he had gone as far as the mouth of the Victoria or Somerset Nile. Ascending this river, he discovered the Murchison Falls.

March, 1865, found Baker once more at Gondokoro, whence he hastened back to England. There a most enthusiastic welcome was accorded him, to which he refers

modestly in his book on "The Albert Nyanza," published at London in 1866. A well-deserved eulogium appeared in the Journal of the Royal Geographical Society shortly after his return, not to speak of the numberless other publications all round the world which took up the glad refrain to do honor to the discoverer of the Albert Nyanza. Congratulations and eulogy showered over Baker from every quarter. Recognizing his important discoveries and astronomical observations, the Royal Geographical Society conferred upon him their Patron's Medal; the Paris Society did likewise; and he was elected a member of the Royal Society. Already he was a Fellow of the Royal Astronomical Society. To cap his honors, Queen Victoria dubbed him a knight. For about five years thereafter he rested on his laurels, and devoted himself principally to literary production.

During his Albert Nyanza travels Sir Samuel became cognizant of the horrors enacted in connection with the slave traffic, and made up his mind to do all in his power to abolish or ameliorate the evil. With this end in view he offered his services for the suppression of the slave trade, advising the Khedive of Egypt to annex all the territory of the Upper Nile as far as the lakes, and to establish throughout a paternal government. In this way he pointed out to the Khedive that he could take measures for the development of the vast natural resources of the region and turn trade into legitimate channels. All these propositions were favorably entertained by the Khedive, and, as all will remember, he made Sir Samuel W. Baker a pasha, bestowing extensive powers upon him. Jealousy and ill-feeling were by this action engendered among all the other Egyptian authorities, especially among those in the Soudan, and Sir Samuel Baker never had a fair opportunity to accomplish the hard but praiseworthy task which he had undertaken.

With a small flotilla of two steamers and thirty-one sailing vessels, he departed from Khartoum in February, 1870, having a force of only eight hundred soldiers, over half of whom were discharged convicts. Obstacles beset the expedition from the outset, but Baker was determined. Above the Sobat mouth the Nile was choked with matted vegetation, probably the same that had barred the passage of Nero's centurions. Baker but changed his route, and went by way of the Bahr Zaraf to the upper reaches. This course was more formidable to follow than he had surmised, so he did not reach Gondokoro until April 15th, 1871. Sticking to his undertaking, like the courageous man that he was, he consumed two years fighting slave dealers and native tribes. All the time Lady Baker was at his side, and she carefully compiled a meteorological journal. In this warfare perhaps the most stirring episode was the retreat from Mzindi. Gondokoro was evacuated by Baker in April, 1873, and at that time peace had been established in the territory to the south of Gondokoro, the slave traders having been compelled to retire. No new geographical discoveries were made by Sir Samuel's party during these martial travels, but Lieutenant Julian Baker much improved the maps of the regions visited, and Lady Baker's meteorological journal was of service to science.

Sir Samuel W. Baker was grieved at the policy which Britain pursued in the Soudan. He has spoken feelingly in more than one of his books of the deplorable in-