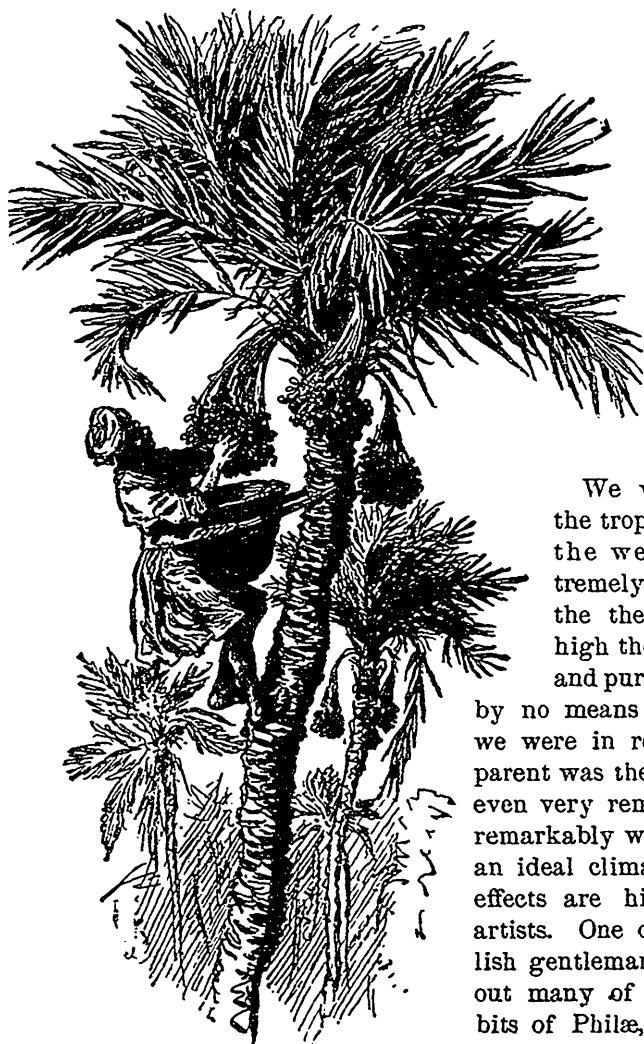


After a six miles' donkey ride over the desert and through villages where we were besieged by numerous small fry begging for backsheesh, we embarked in a rather cumbrous river boat, rowed by half a score of coal-black Nubians dressed in white. As



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we reclined beneath our awnings and glided up between the rocky shores our sturdy boatmen chanted in weird, wild cadence a song akin, I presume, to that which may have greeted the ears of Rameses the Great, or Tothmes, or Amenotoph.

We were now under the tropic of Cancer and the weather was extremely hot; but though the thermometer ranged high the air was so dry and pure that the heat was

by no means oppressive while we were in repose. So transparent was the atmosphere that even very remote objects were remarkably well defined. It is an ideal climate and the light effects are highly prized by artists. One of these, an English gentleman, kindly pointed out many of the finest artistic bits of Philæ, the gem of the Egyptian temples. He pointed out the fine effects produced by

the unknown artists who sculptured those walls over two thousand years ago, and the profound religious symbolism therein set forth—the death and resurrection of Osiris, and the weighing of souls in the last judgment in the spirit world.