

A Science Service Feature

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? WHY THE WEATHER ? Mailed June 5, 1933

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RED SEA CLIMATE

In most parts of the world the traveler can get relief from excessive heat by forsaking the land for the sea. Not so, however, if he embarks upon the Red Sea during the period from May to September, inclusive. Lieut-Col. G.M. Giles describes the climate of this notorious inferno as follows:

"The whole region is almost rainless, subject to suffocating calms, and the presence of the large, but completely land-locked, sheet of water renders the relative humidity constantly high. Moreover, the whole basin is comparatively shallow, so that it becomes highly warmed even in its depths. At its southern end the temperature of the water at the surface may reach 95 degrees Fahrenheit, and 90 degrees Fahrenheit has been registered at a depth of 5 fathoms. In the Gulf of Suez pleasantly fresh days may be met with during winter, but in the south the mean temperature of a day seldom falls below 80 degrees Fahrenheit, and in July the mean maximum temperature exceeds 108 degrees Fahrenheit. July is the hottest month, but there is little to choose between the discomforts of any of the four months, June to September. The least hot month is January, but the climate is a singularly uniform one, the night bringing comparatively little relief, and when followed by a breeze of about the same speed as the ship, cases have occurred in which steamers have actually been obliged to put about and steam against the wind, in order to prevent the crew from falling victims to heat apoplexy."

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