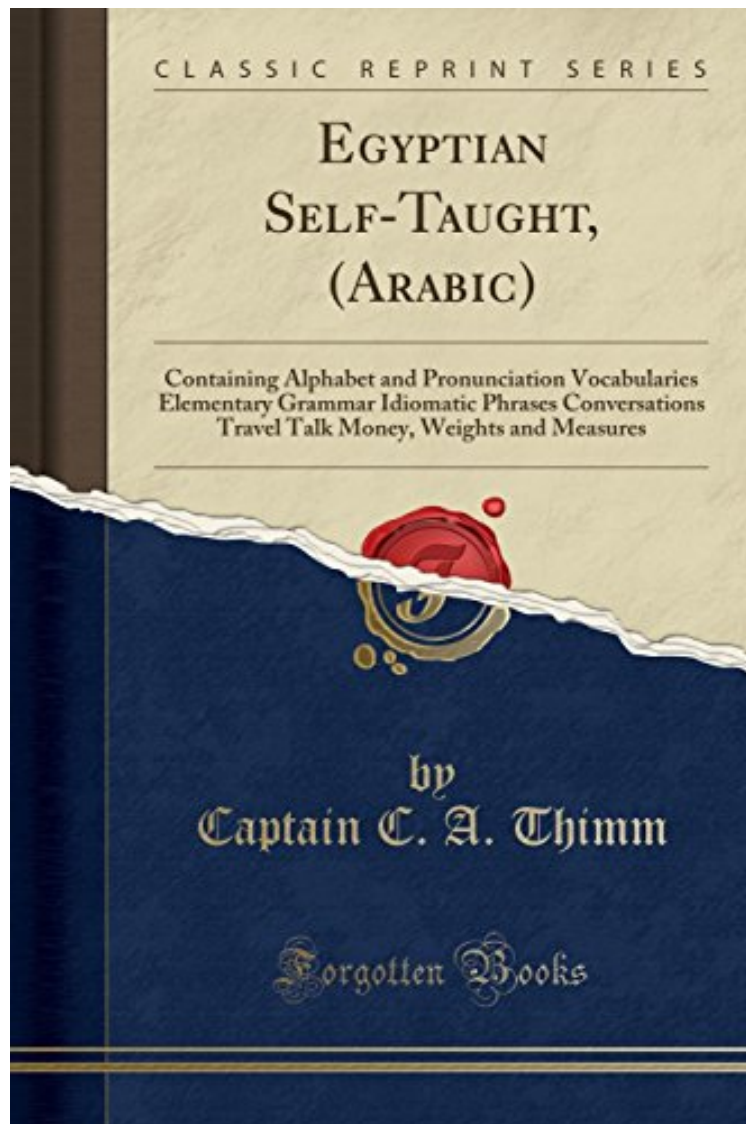


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Captain C. A. Thimm

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before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Egyptian Self-Taught, (Arabic): Containing Alphabet and Pronunciation Vocabularies Elementary Grammar Idiomatic Phrases Conversations Travel Talk Money, Weights and Measures (Classic Reprint):

Excerpt from Egyptian Self-Taught, (Arabic): Containing Alphabet and Pronunciation Vocabularies Elementary Grammar Idiomatic Phrases Conversations Travel Talk Money, Weights and Measures It has been the fashion since the occupation of Egypt to speak slightly of the colloquial form of Arabic in use there. This is partly because, as is the case in every country, the commoner forms of speech seem uncouth and unclassical to students who have learnt their Arabic either in universities, from munshis in India, or from Syrians (who are frequently in Egypt the professed instructors). The basis of the common speech is, however, classical, though not directly recognisable as such. The fact that some of the words have not been encountered in the comparatively scanty literature of the Arabs, nor in the Koran, does not preclude them from being Arabic, though the forms of speech may not rank higher than such English forms as shan't, ain't, and I've. Take, for instance, the word so often heard - ballsh, gratis (used often where "gratis" is scarcely the translation). This is the Egyptian form of bila shey, without anything; and mush (not) is ma shey, like the ne and pas in French, though the proper negative is m, l, or leyss. The Egyptian language has also the characteristic of using many words in their diminutive form. Thus m, water, becomes moyyah; saghr, small, saghayyar, hence also the form shuwyyah which again is scarcely recognisable in the expression bi shweysh meaning slowly. Further, letters are sometimes transposed: zog, a pair, becomes goz; yil'an becomes yin'al, the most common expletive in use, in the form yin'al abuk! "May your father be cursed"! Some scholars are of opinion that the Egyptian Arabic, showing kinship with the Aramaic, is entitled to as high a place in the pedigree of the language as is the language of the Koran. Everyone of standing or education in Egypt speaks with a superstructure of g