

came. But it was the frightful smoking shot that annoyed us most — these horrid shells. Sometimes they broke over our heads in the air as if a cannon charged with grape had been fired at us from out the clouds. At times they sank into the sand at our feet, and then burst up like so many Vesuviuses, giving at once death and burial to hundreds. But we stood our ground, and the day passed. I remember we got, towards evening, into a snug hollow between two sand-hills, where the shot skimmed over us, not two feet above our heads; but two feet is just as good as twenty, master; and I began to think, for the first time, that I hadn't got a smoke all day. I snapped my musket and lighted my pipe; and Bill, whom I hadn't seen since the day after the landing, came up to share with me.

“‘Bad day's work, Jack,’ he said; ‘but we have at least taught the enemy what British soldiers can endure, and ere long we shall teach them something more. But here comes a shell! Nay, do not move,’ he said; ‘it will fall just ten yards short.’ And down it came, roaring like a tempest, sure enough, about ten yards away, and sank into the sand. ‘There now, fairly lodged,’ said Bill; ‘lie down, lads, lie down.’ We threw ourselves flat on our faces; the earth heaved under us like a wave of the sea; and in a moment Bill and I were covered with half a ton of sand. But the pieces whizzed over us; and, save that the man who was across me had an ammunition-bag carried away, not one of us more than heard them. On getting ourselves disinterred, and our pipes re-lighted, Bill, with a twitch on the elbow — so — said he wished to speak with me a little apart; and we went out together into a hollow in front.

“‘You will think it strange, Jack,’ he said, ‘that all this day, when the enemy's bullets were hopping around us like