

you; but you soon got over all, Bill, and became the hardiest little fellow among us. I once heard my mother say that you were a *love-begot*, and that your father, who was an English gentleman, had to part from both you and your mother on taking a wife. And no more can I tell you, Bill, for the life of me.'

"We slept that night on the sand, master, and found in the morning that the enemy had fallen back some miles nearer Alexandria. Next evening there was a party of us despatched on some secret service across the desert. Bill was with us; but the officer under whose special charge we were placed was a Captain Turpic, a nephew of Colonel Westhope, and his heir. But he heired few of his good qualities. He was the son of a pettifogging lawyer, and was as heartily hated by the soldiers as the colonel was beloved. Towards sunset the party reached a hollow valley in the waste, and there rested, preparatory, as we all intended, for passing the night. Some of us were engaged in erecting temporary huts of branches, some in providing the necessary materials; and we had just formed a snug little camp, and were preparing to light our fires for supper, when we heard a shot not two furlongs away. Bill, who was by far the most active among us, sprang up one of the tallest date trees to reconnoitre. But he soon came down again.

"'We have lost our pains this time,' he said; 'there is a party of French, of fully five times our number, not half a mile away.' The captain, on the news, wasn't slow, as you may think, in ordering us off; and, hastily gathering up our blankets and the contents of our knapsacks, we struck across the sand just as the sun was setting. There is scarce any twilight in Egypt, master; it is pitch dark twenty minutes after sunset. The first part of the evening,