

strength of the French in Egypt; for though they didn't surrender to us until about five months after, they kept snug behind their walls, and we saw little more of them. Our colonel had gone aboard of the frigate desperately ill of his wounds; so ill that it was several times reported he was dead; and most of our men were suffering sadly from sore eyes ashore. But such of us as escaped had little to do, and we contrived to while away the time agreeably enough. Strange country, Egypt, master. You know our people have come from there; but, trust me, I could find none of my cousins among either the Turks or the Arabs. The Arabs, master, are quite the gipsies of Egypt; and Bill and I — but he paid dearly for them afterwards, poor fellow — used frequently to visit such of their straggling tribes as came to the neighborhood of our camp. You and the like of you, master, are curious to see *our* people, and how we get on; and no wonder; and we were just as curious to see the Arabs. Towards evening they used to come in from the shore or the desert in parties of ten or twelve. And wild-looking fellows they were; tall, but not very tall, thin and skinny and dark, and an amazing proportion of them blind of an eye, — an effect, I suppose, of the disease from which our comrades were suffering so much. In a party of ten or twelve — and their parties rarely exceeded a dozen — we found that every one of them had some special office to perform. One carried a fishing-net, like a herring have; one, perhaps, a basket of fish, newly caught; one a sheaf of wheat; one a large copper basin, or rather platter; one a bundle of the dead boughs and leaves of the date-tree; one the implements for lighting a fire; and so on. The first thing they always did, after squatting down in a circle, was to strike a light; the next to dig a round pot-like hole in the sand, in