

and by-and-by Dimsdale lost hope and health and heart. He had Nilotic fever, he had ophthalmia; and hot with indomitable will, he had striven to save one great basin from destruction, for one whole week, without sleeping or resting night and day: working like a navvy, sleeping like a fellah, eating like a Bedouin.

Then the end came. He was stricken down, and lay above Assouan in a hut by the shore, from which he could see the Temple of Philæ, and Pharaoh's Bed, and the great rocks, and the swift-flowing Nile. Here lay his greatest hope, the splendid design of his life—the great barrage of Assouan. With it he could add to the wealth of Egypt one-half. He had believed in it, had worked for it and how much else! and his dreams and his working had come to naught. He was sick to death—not with illness alone, but with disappointment and broken hopes and a burden beyond the powers of any one man.

He saw all now: all the falsehood and treachery and corruption. He realised that Imshi Pasha had given him his hand that he might ruin himself, that his own schemes might overwhelm him in the end. At every turn he had been frustrated—by Imshi Pasha: three years of underground circumvention, with a superficial approval and a mock support.

He lay and looked at the glow, the sunset glow of pink and gold on the Libyan Hills, and his fevered eyes scarcely saw them; they were only a part of this last helpless, senseless dream. Life itself was very far away—practical, generous, hot-blooded life. This distance was so ample and full and quiet, this mystery of the desert and the sky was so immense, the spirit of it so boundless, that in the judgment of his soul nothing mattered now. As he lay in reverie, he heard his ser-