

picks up the rifle of a dead soldier, unclasps his cartridge belt, and plugs away steadily at the night shirt brigade, as the soldiers have nicknamed the Arabs from their long white robes.

But, see! what change is this in his face as the foe forms in a compact mass for another rush? And listen to the request he makes to the men around him:

"Don't shoot within a dozen yards each side of that banner!" he says in such a tone of voice that the soldiers look up in surprise and see a white, set face.

"Let them come right up before you fire," he adds, "and wait till I give you the word. You'll agree to that, won't you, Roberts? It's a matter of life and death." This to the officer in command of the company.

"Matter of death to us all, I think, if you don't speak in time," growled Roberts, frowning at the advancing dervishes, "but have your way."

MacPherson makes no answer, the palor of his face increases; now it is ashy gray as the Arabs rush in on the square. Of all the oncoming hundreds, he sees only two men—one the standard bearer, and beside him a young fellow, wonderfully light of skin for an Arab, and with a cap on his head instead of the usual tangled headdress of greased hair worn by the dervishes.

Kneeling as the Arabs come within fifty yards of the square, he takes deliberate aim. A flash, and at the same instant the standard bearer falls prone to the earth. The fair faced Arab seizes the banner and rushes to the front. Another shot and he, too, falls. In a voice that rings above the din of the battle MacPherson gives the order to fire, and the Arabs, met by a volley at such range, stagger, and through the smoke are seen to fall back a few paces. Instantly MacPherson rushes out from the square, and before his comrades or the enemy have time to interfere, he is again in the midst of his comrades, trembling and pale, but bearing in his arm the young Arab, who still grasps the banner he plucked from the dead leader's hand.

The Arabs, mightily thinned in that last brush, fall away. The fight is over and the men crowding around MacPherson, who is bathing the wounded Arab's thigh where his bullet entered, ask what it all means.

Robert, who is under the impression that the banner was the prize coveted by MacPherson and that his care for the Arab is an afterthought, remarks that the game was hardly worth the candle, but MacPherson, looking up for a moment, says, pointing to the wounded Arab:

"My brother."

Instantly the men, most of whom have heard the story of the colonel's bereavement, crowd around the

stretcher. Sure enough, the resemblance cannot be disputed.

"See," says MacPherson, becoming less constrained as the intense strain of the last few minutes is relaxed, "I can trace on the back of his right hand the outlines of an anchor. I remember when he put it on he was a very small cub. His hand looked as it was poisoned, and he came to me and got me to scrape most of the ink out again. That's why the mark is so faint. Roberts, send a man out there to bring in the big fellow I shot. That was Aboo, and I think you will find a bullet in his head."

The last words are spoken faintly, and MacPherson falls back into the arms of a soldier. Where he stood, there is a pool of blood, and on examination, it is found that he, too, has been wounded in the thigh.

They were an odd looking pair, the brothers, as they walked together in the garden of the army hospital at Cairo. It was fortunate that Jack knew Arabic, for his long lost brother had to learn English over again, having heard never a word of his mother tongue from the night when Aboo, after gagging him, tumbled him into the boat lying astern of the dehabeeh until his brother's bullet brought him back to civilization. Of his wanderings, he could tell little, except that his captor and he had been wayfarers for years in the Soudan and along the desert highways until the insurrection broke out, when he was pressed into the madhi's service, Aboo being a volunteer. After awhile, he told his brother, he became rather fond of fighting.

"Imphm!" said the colonel, as his elder son translated these remarks, "there is some of the MacPherson in him yet, then." He nodded paternally toward Bob, and then turning to Jack, said tenderly: "God bless you, my boy, for bringing back my Benjamin even with a bullet!"

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