

III

THIS began the second period of Dimsdale's career. As he went forth from Cairo up the Nile with great designs in his mind, and an approving Ministry behind him, he had the feeling of a hunter with a sure quarry before him. Now he remembered Lucy Gray; and he flushed with a delightful and victorious indignation remembering his last hour with her. He even sentimentally recalled a song he once wrote for her sympathetic voice. The song was called "No Man's Land." He recited two of the verses to himself now, with a kind of unction:

"And we have wandered far, my dear, and we have loved apace;
A little hut we built upon the sand;
The sun without to brighten it—within your golden face:
O happy dream, O happy No Man's Land!

"The pleasant furniture of spring was set in all the fields,
And sweet and wholesome all the herbs and flowers;
Our simple cloth, my dear, was spread with all the orchard
yields,
And frugal only were the passing hours."

A wave of feeling passed over him suddenly. These verses were youth, and youth was gone, with all its flushed and spirited dalliance and reckless expenditure of feeling. Youth was behind him, and love was none of his, nor any cares of home, nor wife nor children; nothing but ambition now, and the vanity of successful labour.

Sitting on the deck of the *Séfi* at El Wasta, he looked round him. In the far distance was the Maydoun Pyramid, "the Imperfect One," unexplored by man