

then caught the table and held it as though to steady himself.

The trader rose. "You are ill," he said. "Have you bad news?" He glanced towards the paper.

Slowly Armour folded the paper up, and then rose unsteadily. "Gordon," he said, "give me a glass of brandy."

He turned towards the cupboard in the room. The trader opened it, took out a bottle, and put it on the table beside Armour, together with a glass and some water. Armour poured out a stiff draught, added a very little water, and drank it. He drew a great sigh, and stood looking at the paper.

"Is there anything I can do for you, Mr. Armour?" urged the trader.

"Nothing, thank you, nothing at all. Just leave the brandy here, will you? I feel knocked about, and I have to go through the rest of these letters."

He ran his fingers through the pile turning it over hastily, as if searching for something. The trader understood. He was a cool-headed Scotsman; he knew that there were some things best not in