

had worked its awful consequences; the door of mercy did indeed seem to be closed against him.

"Is there any message, Casper Cameron," I asked, "that you would like to send East?"

At mention of his name he gave an ironical laugh, and repeated it slowly, "Casper Cameron." Then he added: "I suppose I may as well tell you, for you're better stuff than I at first took you for. My name is not Cameron at all. I have no right to that name."

It came instinctively from me, and I could not refrain from the expression, "Thank God for that."

"Ah! so you're grateful. Well, I don't wonder," he answered. "I guess I'm not much credit, now that I'm done for, to any one."

"Would you please tell me the story," I said, eagerly, for I was most anxious to learn it.

He paused for quite a time as if uncertain whether or not he should comply with my request. "Well," he said, speaking slowly, "what's the odds? I suppose I might as well tell you, but I do it on one condition."

"What is that?"

"That you do not interpret it as any sign of weakness on my part, or any desire to do a decent act or make any amends before I die. As I have already told you, I want to die as I have lived."

I readily gave the promise.

"I would like to lie down," said Casper. "I grow weaker, and the pain is very great when I talk."

Placing my arm about his waist I laid him on the green sward, using my coat as a pillow. The sun was slowly dropping into the west. It was a peaceful scene