

CHAPTER II.

SAM LUTON, SUNDOWNER.

"HURRY up, boys, the moon will soon be down."

Jim Brown, the prosperous settler, had a rough but cheery voice, and none whom he addressed had ever heard it raised in anger. It was good policy perhaps for him to avoid a display of temper, even when much provoked, but that with the man who was simply Jim to everybody, even to his men, was a minor consideration.

"If 'taint possible to get the best out of a man with reasonable words, you wouldn't do it in a year by howlin' at him," he would say.

The helpers he addressed were five in number, three men and two youths, and they were harvesting by moonlight, for the autumn days are precious in the Canadian West. A great deal had to be done in a short time, and it was work, work, on the farms from early morn till dewy eve, and half through the night when the moon was shining.

One of the youths was Jack, and the other bore the name of Pete. He must have had another name, but it had not been used for years. It is doubtful if anyone there could have recalled it, as at no time in the past had it been often made use of. Pete was a tall, lean young fellow, with a lank face, uncommonly plain, and made plainer by his visible condition of chronic discontent with his lot. When quite a little fellow he had been brought from England by his father, who was a widower. Inborn idleness and drink had killed the father when he was one of Jim Brown's labourers, and the boy was left on the farmer's hands. As idle as his deceased parent, he was