

off in the direction of the city. Now and then he stood to listen; suddenly he heard the sound of the sleigh bells in the distance. "Yes, he is coming,—I must prepare." The horse soon appeared on the clear snow. Ferg rushed forth disguised, reached the sleigh, and demanded money. The stranger shouted to his horse, but Ferg was too quick to be eluded. He pulled his opponent with all his strength from the sleigh and let the horse dash off at a great speed. Ferg fought like a madman, and though the stranger was a much stronger man, yet he repeatedly threw him to the ground. After a long struggle he unfastened the belt, and with one snatch he pulled off overcoat and belt; then ran away.

When he reached home he thought of the stage manager lying half dead on the snow, and passion after passion rolled in storms over his soul. He did not feel easy. He hid the treasure, and, tossing sleeplessly all night, decided to leave the house early the following morning. He went to a distant town in the Southern States where no one knew him or would suspect him of being a criminal. Fifteen years passed away and the mysterious robbery of the stranger was seldom spoken of except as an instance of the deepest cunning on the part of the perpetrator, whoever he was, for as yet he had not been found, though several had been arrested on suspicion, and one had been confined for eighteen months. But never for a moment did Ferg's friends dream that it was he who committed the crime. Ferg alone knew it, but oh, how well he could solve that long-discussed mystery!

Conscience may be momentarily lulled, but she will rise again and again to assert herself in all her powers,—so it was with Ferg. In the midst of his sleep he would be awakened by the ringing of sleigh bells in his ears, even in the daytime he would often ask if others around did not hear the bells, but they only rang in the ears of his conscience.

As he grew older he became more terrified lest he might be tempted to reveal the awful secret. When he first left his house he took a separate room in the George Apartments and joined a young men's club called the "Brilliant," whose object it was to meet occasionally and play at whist, read the leading newspapers, magazines, and discuss the political questions of the day, but still he felt unhappy; he could not shut out conscience,—the thief was always before his mind. One day a friend asked him what was the reason he looked so despondent. Ferg answered him in an indirect way, giving him no satisfaction. He was