

THE SLEEPER IN THE SNOW 273

little, sniffed at me, and laid his big warm head down on me and went right to sleep again. He seemed to like having me there."

Jim Wright's face relaxed, and a happy grin went over it as he thrust the revolver back into his belt.

"I always knew a bear wasn't anybody's fool!" he remarked, in a tone that brought back a tinge of rose to Melissa's pale cheeks.

"And now we must cover him up warm again!" cried Melissa, turning her head away. "And you mustn't tell any one about this part of the story, or they'd come and find the poor fellow and kill him in his sleep."

"If anybody troubles *this* here bear, Melissy," answered Jim, energetically thrusting back the snow into place, "*I'll* trouble *him*! An' what's more, for what this old chap's done, I'll never kill or harm another bear as long as I live!"

Melissa gave him a look which seemed to him ample thanks. It somehow conveyed him the impression that this was just what she would expect of him.

When they reached the road, where the