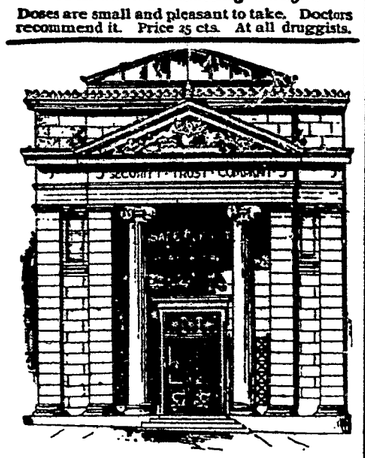


THE DREAM OF THE TOY.

The Sandman lost a dream one night,
A dream meant for a boy;
It floated round awhile, and then
It settled on a Toy.

The toy dreamed that it stood in class
With quite a row of boys;
The teacher rapped upon his desk
And cried, "Less noise! less noise!"

Then, looking at the Toy, he scowled
And said, "Next boy foretell."
"Oh, please, sir," cried the little Toy,
"I don't know how to spell.

"Indeed, I don't know how it is,
I'm sure I am a toy,
Although I seem to be in class
And dressed up like a boy."

"What's that? What's that?" the teacher cried—
In awful tones he spoke,
He came with strides across the floor,
And then the Toy awoke

There lay the nursery very still,
The shelf above its head,
The fire burned dimly on the hearth,
The children were in bed.

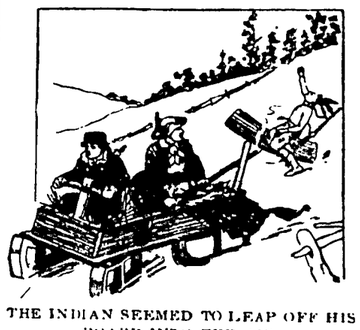
There lay the dolls and Noah's Ark.
"Oh dear me," said the Toy,
"I just had such a dreadful dream!
I dreamed I was a boy."

Katherine Pyle.

A WILD SLEIGH RIDE.

This boy was 15 years old in 1777, when General Burgoyne started from Canada for Albany, and his name was David Spafford. He lived with his father and mother and two little sisters on a farm away up in the Green Mountains of Vermont, where the winters are long and the snow sometimes lies four feet deep for weeks at a time. I myself have known the weather to be so cold there that ice formed in the river more than six feet thick.

It was about the middle of August, 1777, that a message came to Mr Spafford's farm and told how Burgoyne had been traveling southward from Canada with thousands of British regulars and many hundreds of Indian allies who were wild with desire to kill, scalp and burn The messengers added that one of the savages a warrior so tall and heavy as to be a giant, and known as the Wyandet Panther, had murdered the beautiful daughter of a Scotch clergyman, Jenny McCrea, who was visiting a friend at Fort Edward.



THE INDIAN SEEMED TO LEAP OFF HIS BOARD INTO THE AIR.

After this act General Burgoyne had lost control of his Indians, and in small bands they were overrunning the country Mr. Spafford must come at once and join a company of Vermont farmers, who, under Colonel Stark were going to protect their homes and drive Indians and Hessians alike from the country. So Mr. Spafford went, and was badly wounded at the battle of Bennington. After that he was taken home and stayed until winter came, when he insisted that his wife and daughter should go to make a long visit in a large town some twenty miles away

It so happened that when New Year's Day came David Spafford and his father were living alone in the farm house, taking care of the horses and cows, and hoping each morning that word would be brought that peace had been declared.

One night while they were in bed they heard a man shouting and kicking at the door. David jumped up and let him in. He was a farmer who lived five or six miles further in the mountains. His clothing was torn and his face was covered with blood, and he had snowshoes on his feet.

"I can't stop!" he cried out. "I only came to let you know that Indians have burned my house and murdered all my family, and I am now fleeing for my life. They will soon be here and you must start at once!"

Then he turned and sped into the darkness again. For a moment David stood as if stunned. The awful news completely terrified him; but no time was to be lost. He glanced up the mountainside and the clouds away off giared with the reflection of the burning buildings. The lad knew it would be simply impossible for his father to escape on snowshoes, for his wounds had left him so stiff in both legs that he could scarcely walk about the house. Yet something must be done at once.

In such a time one's wits work quickly, and David Spafford had wits to spare. He suddenly remembered that he had a pair of snowshoes exactly like those worn by the man who gave the alarm. So he worked rapidly and put on the snowshoes and ran back and forth between the house and the barn several times, making half a dozen tracks in the snow. The he took the horses and cows out of the barn and laid the whip on them so vigorously that they ran out toward the road as fast as they could go. By this time Mr. Spafford had managed to dress himself.

"Good!" he said to his son. "Now do you think you can carry me to the barn?"

"I'll try," David replied, and taking his father on his back like a sack of flour he succeeded in getting him into the barn and buried in the hay mow.

"Its growing colder," said Mr. Spafford, "and if the crust keeps hardening on the snow we have one chance of escape. Haul the bobsled across the the barn floor until it is just in front of that door in the rear, then bring our guns here and hide yourself in the hay beside me. It's a slim chance and a big risk, but it is the only one, if we want to save our scalps!"

"I see your idea!" the boy cried, and he did as he was told. Father and son had lain there, buried in the hay, scarcely half an hour when, through a chink in the barn, they saw seven Indian warriors surrounding the house. The savages staggered and some of them fairly reeled, for they had swallowed so much rum as to be quite drunk. Several had bloody scalps dangling from their belts.

"I had scarcely hoped for it," Mr. Spafford whispered, but they are so drunk they can hardly follow the trail of the snowshoes, and maybe we will outwit them after all."

After staggering around the house some of the Indians went inside, while others came toward the barn; but after glancing at the empty stalls they rejoined their fellows, who set up a loud shouting. Pretty soon two or three of them rolled out of the house a cask of New England rum, and knocked the head in and commenced to drink heavily. Then some more pulled two or three feather beds out into the moonlight, and ripping them open with their knives, commenced to throw the feathers up into the air, dancing and singing, and every few minutes drinking again and again of the rum One after another of the savages became so intoxicated as to fall down in the snow, and then they rolled over and over in the feathers which stuck to their bodies, until finally every one of the band lay there, stupined with liquor, unable to move hand or foot.

All this time David and his father, hidden in the hay, scarcely dared to breathe, for fear of betraying themselves, but now had come the moment for action

"We can't tell how many of the savages may be coming along, so we dare not kill these, although it would be an easy matter," said Mr. Spafford. "Its almost daylight, too, and we must be moving. Open the rear door, David, and push the bobsled out on the snow I guess the crust is thick enough to bear it now. Then help me down, and we will make one desperate effort to get away."

The brave boy crawled noiselessly down from the haymow and did as he was bid He placed a quantity of straw in the sleigh and wrapped his father up in a buffalo robe, for the cold was intense. Then he stepped in himself, as he did so giving a slight push with one foot. The sleigh moved slowly, but soon gathered momentum, for back of the barn was a steep valley running down for five miles to the frozen river; and in all that sweep there was not a three, or a stump sticking up above the snow, for all had been burned off in a great forest fire years previous.

Within half a minute the sleigh seemed to leap forward like a deer, and then it shot down the mountainside with the speed of an express train. The noise made by the whirring runners on the hardened snow aroused some of the Indians, and hastening through the barn they saw the escape. Two of the savages fired their muskets at David, who was standing up in the sleigh and was steering it, but they were so drunk that their bullets went wide of the mark. A third seized a long board, and with a fiendish yell threw himself on it headlong, as a boy nowadays will throw himself on a sled. This huge, painted, shrieking savage came sliding down the hillside at amazing speed, but he could not catch up with the heavier sleigh. Still he was so near that Mr. Spafford dared to take no chances; and resting his musket on the seat of the sled, he aimed it and pulled the trigger. There was a puff of smoke, a loud report, and a horrible yell, and the Indian seemed to leap off his board into the air, half turning as he did so: and when he struck the snow again, rolling over and over until he came to a full stop, and lay there dead, his dark body outstretched on the white crust

"Did you hit him, faher?" asked David. He spoke with difficulty, for he was continually exerting his full strength in guiding the bounding sleigh and could not afford to look back for an instant

"Yes, and he is done for, my son."

Then both were silent On, and on, sped the sleigh down the mountainside, and to David the snow had a curious appearance. It seemed as if he were sitting still while the great mass rushed by him uphill. But the cold, cutting wind in his face was so strong as to dispel this illusion It almost took away his breath One mile, two miles, three, four, five, they went, until the river was reached, and then came the most dangerous place of all, for the sleigh leaped off the bank and fell a yard below to the ice But it landed right side up, and by good luck there was a clear space of ice straight across where the wind had swept a broad path in the snow. In far less time than it takes to tell of it the sleigh had skimmed over to the opposite bank, and there its occupants met a party of farmer soldiers and lumber men who had heard of the raid from the messenger on snowshoes, and had started to rescue them. But David and his father had rescued themselves, so they borrowed a horse to take their sleigh forward to the town where Mrs. Spafford and her little girls were staying, and the company of rangers hastened on in pursuit of the Indians.

Three Great Men.

Two Sides of the Question.

Willie Strutt was playing with the Timbs boys. His mother called him.

"Willie don't you know those are bad boys for you to play with?"

"Yes mother," said Willie, "I know that, but then I am a good boy for them to play with."

UNAPPRECIATED KISSES.

He never sunk a collier
To bottle up a fleet,
But the pretty maidens kiss him
And exclaim: "Oh, ain't he sweet!"

He never scoffed at danger,
Nor made a poet sing;
He has never done a single
Extraordinary thing.

Still the women, when they see him,
Utter words of wild delight,
And at once begin to kiss him,
Each of them with all her might

But it hasn't swelled his head up,
Hasn't spoiled the little chap—
He is three weeks old and doesn't
Care a continental rap.

THE CRAMPTON MYSTERY.

"Please tell Mr. Crampton that I must see him—I have something of the utmost importance to tell him.'

"Very well, sir."

The maid left Fred Palmer, a bustling youth, with an habitually sensational air, standing by the hat rack, and ran upstairs as fast as she could. The parlor seemed deserted, for there was no fire in it, though it was midwinter. Altogether, the house had a disagreeable feeling of sadness about it. No wonder, considering that the only son of the family had been missing for over a week, and nothing but a crumpled and battered hat found in a passenger coach on the railroad to give a hint of his fate.

Presently the maid came running down the stairs with, "Please come up to Mr. Crampton's room, sir." Which message she delivered breathlessly before she could touch the last step of the flight.

The young man found a picture of bereavement in Mr. Crampton's room. A week before that Leonard Crampton would have been set down by any chance acquaintance as a robust, prosperous man of forty-five. This evening he looked, wrapped in a drab flannel dressing gown, and seated in an armchair close to the fire, like a man of seventy.

"You have something to say to me, Mr. Palmer?" he asked, in a shaky voice.

"Yes, sir, and it would not wait, or I would not have troubled you at this hour. To come to the point, I have traced the—murderer."

Mr. Crampton pulled himself forward by the two arms of his chair and stared with open mouth.

"Then poor Bob—my boy has been murdered?"

"Oh, I beg your pardon, sir," said Palmer, starting back and hesitating—"I—I thought—why, everybody says—I thought you were all reconciled to—to this view."

"Yes—yes; go on and tell me. I suppose it must be so. Sit down."

"The man has left Chicago, sir. The police think he has made his way to Oregon or Washington. They are looking for him on other charges."

"Yes, but I care nothing about other charges. Tell me about this—about my boy."

"Yes, sir," said Palmer; "I am coming to that. This man—commonly known as Nipper Cary—was seen here a week ago last Wednesday, wandering about the town. He had on an old brown traveling cap and a dilapidated summer suit. Said he was looking for work. The police here had no idea as to his identity. Thursday he was seen speaking to poor Bob—"

"Good God!"

"Yes, sir. Then he followed Bob down toward the freight yards. You remember that was the night—"

"Yes. Never mind that—"

"Well, sir, it seems that the wife of the gatekeeper at the Love Lane crossing heard some one call for help—a man's voice. She went out and spoke to her husband about it, and he told her she must be dreaming, that it was a drunken man trying to sing up the lane. Seen after that this same gatekeeper admits that a man answering the description of Cary, only with a derby hat, came to the crossing, carrying a bundle under his arm."

"And which way did he go?"

"Well, the gatekeeper says he turned and walked up the line away from town. It was just after that that the No. 9 train went out, you know, sir. And it was on the No. 9 that the porter found Bob's hat—a derby—under the seat. The conductor said, you remember, that a rough-looking man boarded the train at Whitger's and paid his fare as far as Evanston."

The unhappy father was sobbing, and Palmer respectfully paused a moment in his story.

"What do you think this scoundrel did with my son? Where is the body?"

"I have been looking through Love Lane this afternoon. Mr. Crampton, do you know the cedar clump at the edge of the Carpenter place, just about fifty yards from the crossing?"

"Well?"

"I found the bushes a good deal trodden at one place there. The long grass in the ditch at the roadside is dry now of course, but at this place it was broken and stamped. And two rails of the snake fence have been let down there. Mrs. Carpenter told me that she had never known any one to make a short cut through the cedar clump at that place. But I went and looked about among the trees and found a well there It has not been used for years, and the story goes that it is a used-up oil well."

"And you think?"

"Yes, sir. I think that the murderer threw poor Bob's body down that well."

"But isn't it filled up."

"Not up to the top, sir."

"Isn't there any machinery in it?"

"No, sir. The machinery was all removed long ago."

"Then," said Mr. Crampton, "it may have that well opened, if I have to pay ten thousand dollars for it."

Here was where Palmer found his difficulty in the task he had set himself. The Carpenters—two brothers and his wife or one of them—refused to allow the well to be touched. When Mr. Crampton, accompanied by Palmer, visited the Carpenters' place on the morning after this interview, the Carpenters pointed out that the short, thick undergrowth of brushwood at the mouth of the hole was not disturbed, as it would be if a dead body had been dragged thither and thrown in only a week before. Mr. Crampton pointed to the disturbed fence rails and trampled grass at the break in the fence, and the unquestionable evidence that some one had passed in that way, walked to the old well and gone back again the same way.

But the Carpenters, though they admitted all these evidences, denied the force of Palmer's theory that a murder had been committed thereabouts on the Thursday night of the previous week.

It must be said that the Carpenters were in a minority. Fred Palmer, in whose ability to ferret out a mystery most of his fellow-townsmen had great confidence, had discovered fresh evidence in the shape of a rag with blood on it in the ditch. Apart from all this strong circumstantial evidence, Fred Palmer was the assistant editor of a local morning paper, and at least once before had successfully traced the guilt in another lesser crime to the guilty party.

In the previous case, a small gambling swindle, the opposition paper and most of the inhabitants had ridiculed Palmer's pretensions to being able to solve the problem; this time, at least, the citizens were very wary of premature ridicule.

The upshot of all this was that, while Mr. Crampton consulted lawyers to find a means of compelling the Carpenters to allow their oil well to be excavated, local public opinion in the space of forty eight hours pretty generally came round to Palmer's views; that young Bob Crampton had been murdered for his watch and the considerable sum of money he was known to have had in his pocket; that the murderer was a tramp who had disappeared from the neighborhood on the night of Bob's disappearance, and that Bob's body had been thrown into the abandoned well.

"If you will only bring that villain to justice," Mr. Crampton said to Fred Palmer at a second interview, "you may command any service I am able to do you from now on."

That was just what Palmer wanted to hear from Bob's father, chiefly because Bob's father was also the father of Clara. There was more than mere reportorial ambition in this activity of Fred Palmer.

Palmer knew that Nipper Cary was supposed by the Chicago police to have made his way to Oregon or Washington state. He did not hesitate to follow the desperate villain whose description answered so completely to that of the tramp with whom Bob Crampton had been seen.

He had $500 of his own within easy reach. He resolved to send that sum in his struggle for justice and Clara. So he went and spoke about the matter to his editor and chief.

"And you want to go all the way to Seattle to hunt this desperado?" the editor-in-chief asked, incredulously.

"Just that," said Palmer. "See here; suppose I end by finding the fellow, the paper gets fame, doesn't it? Suppose I don't find him, what does the paper lose? You can get Giles to supply for me."

"Go ahead," said the chief.

And ahead Palmer went. But he did not leave town without one brief interview with Clara, in which he got that young lady—she was very young, besides being heart-broken about her brother—to promise that if he brought her brother's murderer to justice she would honestly try to love him. The promise was not given very willingly, but it was sincere, and it meant an indefinite deal to Palmer, who was very sanguine.

So Palmer, leaving Mr. Crampton to fight with the pig-headed Carpenter family, set out for Oregon by way of Chicago.

Two days later a letter with typewritten address came to Clara Crampton. Don't be shocked. I have just met that ass, Palmer, coming out of a police station. He rushed up and grabbed me by the shoulder. His jaw dropped when he first saw me. He says you all think I am dead. I am not.

"The fact is, a tramp I came across last week followed me all the way out of Love Lane, trying to bulldoze me into giving him something. You know I meant to go out there and make a moonlight study. It ended in my giving him a bloody nose. Then I went on my way, carrying my sketching box and book under my arm. The tramp tumbled so dead-like into the ditch that after I had left him I gave up the idea of making my moonlight sketch and came back to see if he was hurt badly.

"I found that he had crawled on to the Carpenter farm. Then he and I made friends, and I took an idiotic notion to go tramping with him. I had read so much about that sort of thing in magazines. Some days ago I caught on to it that my tramp was not a regular tramp at all, but a big criminal the police here are looking for. Then he suspected me and gave me the slip.

"Since then I have been having a great time looking for him in the slums of Chicago—the police and I.

"I shall be home to-morrow. I am an ass, I know, to frighten you like this. But Palmer is a still bigger ass. He says he will go to the Pacific and begin life afresh. I told him it was the best thing he could do. Your own brother, R. C."—St. Louis Globe-Democrat.