

A MYSTERIOUS CRIME.

Sad Fate of an Interesting Young Girl in Caroline County.

KILLED ON HER WAY TO SCHOOL.

A Mother's Anxious Quest for a Missing Child—A Pathetic Story of the Finding of the Corpse by the Parents—Popular Indignation Thoroughly Aroused.

[Special Dispatch to the Baltimore Sun.]

FEDERALSBURG, Md., March 27.—The lower section of Caroline county is in a fever of excitement over the brutal murder of Miss Sallie Dean, the fourteen-year-old daughter of Mr. Jacob Dean, whose body was found with throat cut from ear to ear and otherwise mutilated in a clump of bushes by a roadside within less than half a mile of her home, near the village of Harmony, yesterday afternoon. The identity of the murderer is a mystery, although he is believed to have been some one who knew the girl and was known by her. If he is found his case will be tried by Judge Lynch, for it is the almost unanimous opinion in the neighborhood that he does not deserve any other trial. No more brutal murder has ever occurred in Caroline county or one in which traces of the murderer were more difficult to find.

Evidences of a Struggle.

On Tuesday morning Miss Dean started to school, which is about half a mile from her home. She took a short cut across a field and came out on the county road some little distance from her home. When within an eighth of a mile from the schoolhouse she was met by her murderer and a struggle took place. This was shown by the condition of the ground in the vicinity of the place where the body was found. The ground around and under the bushes—for the scant growth of cedars and scrub pines where the body was found could hardly be called trees—was covered with dead leaves, and these had been stirred up as if by a severe struggle. Then it is thought Miss Dean was dealt a heavy blow on the left temple which stunned her, and she was dragged into the thick undergrowth alongside the road. Hape was without doubt the purpose of the murderer, but the struggle had taken so much time that he was either afraid to remain in the neighborhood longer or afraid of being identified by his victim, so he cut her throat, covered the body with some bushes, buried her school books and little tin pail in which she was accustomed to carry her luncheon and disappeared, leaving an empty bottle on the ground labeled "chloroform."

The Girl's Wounds.

The injuries received by Miss Dean were such as only a strong man could deal. Her throat seemed to have been cut with one slash of a razor or a large knife with a keen edge. From the appearance of the wound and the position of the body it seems that her throat was cut while she was lying on the ground, evidently while she was insensible from the blow on her temple. The wound was a great gaping one. The girl's head had apparently been forced back to the ground, while her shoulders were propped up by a piece of wood about six inches thick, which was found under them, and while in this position one heavy hand had forced the child's head back, while another had drawn a keen-edged knife or razor across her throat from left to right, severing the jugular vein and carotid artery and entirely severing the windpipe. The wound on the temple was inflicted by a blow from a stick which had a sharp edge, probably a piece of plank or fence rail. A livid bruise extended from the edge of the left eyebrow to the top of her left ear, and was such as could not be inflicted by a stick with a rounded surface. The bruise is sharp, clear-cut and distinct, and forms a straight line an eighth of an inch wide. The side of her face was much swollen, as were her lips, eyes and nose. Her nose had bled profusely. This and other injuries were evidently caused by blows. The girl's clothing had been much disarranged, and there were scratches about her legs and arms. A careful examination by Dr. John Dunsaway, of Harmony, showed conclusively that rape had not been committed.

When found a small dead cedar bush and some dead branches hid the body. The head was thrown back. The right arm was thrown backward over her head, while the left was across her breast. One leg was drawn up, while the other was stretched out. The body was stiff and cold and had evidently been lifeless for several hours.

Scene of the Tragedy.

Scene of the Tragedy.

Miss Dean was a bright, pleasant-faced girl, rather large and well developed for her age and had light brown hair. She had been in the habit of going to school by the path she took yesterday. Returning she took another route which led her by the home of William H. Deen, a neighbor, whose children attend the same school and with whom she was accustomed to return in the evening.

The road near which the murder occurred is much traveled, particularly on Tuesdays, which is public day in Denton, the county seat. On Tuesdays all the county officers are at Denton and the road is used by those going from Preston, Bethlehem and Harmony. A number of persons who passed along the road about half-past 8 o'clock, when the murder is thought to have occurred, say they neither saw nor heard any signs of a disturbance. About 200 yards from the spot is the house of Frank Friend, a colored farmer, and on the other side of the road, also 200 yards off, is the house of Mr. Solomon Corkran. The scene of the murder is in plain view from both houses; yet no one about them noticed anything unusual.

The Mother's Grief.

No thought that anything ill had befallen their daughter entered the minds of Mr. and Mrs. Deen until late in the afternoon. Shortly after four o'clock Mrs. Deen started from her home to walk to the home of Mr. William H. Deen. On her way she met three children of Mr. Deen, who asked her why Sallie had not been to school during the day. "She has been," replied Mrs. Deen. "No, she has not. Did you keep her at home?" asked one of the children, Carrie by name. Mrs. Deen and the child each thought the other was joking for a moment. On being convinced that her questioner was in earnest, Mrs. Deen, with a mother's instant intuition, divined that harm had come to her child. She returned at once to her home, hoping to find her daughter there, but not expecting to do so, "for," said Mrs. Deen, "I felt certain that something had happened to her." She added: "I told my husband and my other daughter, Florence, who was the older, and we all started to look for Sallie. My husband went one way and I went another, going in the direction of the school. Presently I heard my husband call out and I cried to Florrie, 'We have found her! She's dead! She's dead!' We ran to where Mr. Deen was standing. There was dear little Sallie covered with blood and with her throat cut. Oh, what a sight it was! It will never leave me as long as I live. My husband was almost crazed with the sight, and so was I and Florrie. We gave the alarm, and neighbors came and took the body home. My husband first found the napkin in which Sallie wrapped her luncheon; then he saw the little tin bucket she carried and her books. A little way off from the bucket and books was the body. The bucket was badly mashed, and there was only one biscuit left in it. Most of the contents were strewn about the ground."

The Deen Family.

During this recital Mrs. Deen was reclining upon a lounge and her husband was sitting near her. He did not often speak, and both seemed nearly heart broken. Over the mantelpiece was a photograph of the school-house, with the pupils gathered in front of it. Among the number was the picture of the murdered girl. Mr. Deen is a farmer and lives in a comfortable little home near Harmony, which is a village of about 100 people, and is about half way between Preston and Denton and about ten miles from Federalburg. His two daughters, Florence and Sallie, were his only children. All day long sympathetic neighbors called to offer their condolences and to do what they could to comfort the distressed family.

Soon after the discovery an empty two-ounce vial, labeled chloroform, was found near the body. It bore on the label the address "J. H. Douglas, Druggist and Apothecary, Preston, Md." Mr. Douglas sold out his business some years ago to R. J. Colston, who still used some of the old labels. Mr. Colston said yesterday that he had not sold any chloroform recently and only sells it to physicians or upon their orders. The label looked as if the bottle had been carried in some one's pocket for some time. It had not been long on the ground.

Theories of the Crime.

James M. P. Hutchinson, who lives near Harmony, composed a jury of inquest.

which adjourned until Saturday in the hope of learning something of the murderer. Some suspicion has been directed toward a tramp who was seen in the neighborhood in the afternoon by Clarence E. Deen and his wife and by Miss Hena Tibbitt. He has not been seen since. He was a man of below the medium height, had a sandy or red mustache, and wore a dark coat and dark trousers, which he carried stuffed into his boots. He carried a stick and a bundle. Another character regarded as suspicious was a mulatto boy of about twenty years, short but strongly built, who wore a slouch hat and a light coat. He bought a railroad ticket from Federalburg to Seaford this morning. He had apparently been out all night and was eating some crackers and cheese when he entered the station.

While the people are looking for these men in hope of finding the murderer, they are firmly convinced that the crime was committed by some one living in the neighborhood, who knew the girl and who was known by her. Suspicion has not been directed toward any one as yet, but there is a good deal of thinking going on.

State's Attorney Robert J. Jump, of Caroline county, was at Harmony today, and it is said has engaged the services of two detectives to work on the case. The funeral of Miss Deen will take place tomorrow.