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TRUSTEE GRAY'S HASTE.

HE DOESN'T WAIT FOR HIS COLLEAGUE'S OPINION.

But Discharges Principal Nelson on Sight for Using His Ferule on an Unruly Child—The People Take a Hand and Dr. Gray May get the Bounce.

The little milling metropolis of Fairville does not often have anything in the way of a political cause celebre, and when they do have one they make the most of it. They have two local parliaments, the road board and the school board. PROGRESS readers have heard about animated debates and differences in the road board and now the school board is the scene of battle and contest.

The school board may be likened unto the upper house or the senate, as it bears the prestige of dealing with the most important matter with respect to the metropolis, the rearing of the future generation. Of late a matter of great pith and moment has arisen in this body politic relating to patronage, and two parties arose in the school board, and a third party which was mugwump and which, very much like the falls which flow past the portals of Fairville, was sometimes on the fence and anon on one side, and more anon on the other.

There are three rulers of the destinies of Fairville's schools, Dr. J. H. Gray, physician, Mr. James Ready brewer, and Mr. Robt. Fair, merchant. Dr. Gray was leader of the government, Mr. Ready marshalled the opposition and Mr. Fair and his followers held the balance of power and was the objective point of the manoeuvres of the lobbyists.

Mr. William Nelson, principal of the Fairville public school, was the provoking element of the conflict and around him the combat raged. Mr. Nelson has entered upon his second year in this responsible post as the head of a large school, a fine building and a staff of fine teachers and it is said that he has given general satisfaction as a good teacher, law abiding citizen and active church worker. But somehow he did not suit Dr. Gray, the chairman, secretary and dictator of the board. Last summer one of the teachers laid complaints against Mr. Nelson, complaints that maligned him morally and that were manifestly unjust. But they were sufficient in Dr. Gray's eyes to cause him to discharge Mr. Nelson without troubling his brother trustees over the matter. However, they did not object to a little trouble like that and troubled themselves sufficiently to reinstate the principal.

When the time for the annual election came around in October last the rate payers had some idea of superseding Dr. Gray and choosing another chairman. He had served for three years and they thought it might be better to confer the honor on some one else. However they decided to give the doctor another trial and so they elected him for another three years.

But when they re-elected him he took the reins in his hand more firmly and proceeded to show his authority. Recently Mr. Nelson had occasion to punish a little girl. The child refused to obey her teacher and the latter summoned Mr. Nelson. The child remaining stubborn the principal took his rattan, not a very murderous looking instrument and gave the girl three slaps on the hand.

The matter would probably have dropped there for the girl's mother did not seem to take it much to heart, but Dr. Gray took the pains, it is said, to call on the woman and tell her that if she would lay a complaint before him he would dismiss the principal. She did so and forthwith Dr. Gray dismissed Mr. Nelson without consulting his colleagues. Mr. Nelson, however, did not seem to take the matter seriously for he appears to have gone on teaching. Dr. Gray's colleagues hearing of the action of Dr. Gray did not consider that they should be left out in the cold in the matter and when Mr. Nelson asked for an investigation they willingly granted it.

Mr. James Ready was chairman of the investigation and the various witnesses interested were called. The ferule was produced and it did not look particularly formidable. Things seemed nevertheless to be going with Dr. Gray for though Mr. Ready sided with the teacher, Mr. Fair seemed to agree with the views of Dr. Gray.

At this critical moment public opinion, the great moulding force that cannot be disregarded, the master which quickly brings its servant into line,—asserted itself.

A number of prominent rate payers, merchants and others, the people to whom the school board are responsible, entered. They asked the chairman if they could remain, a concession that was courteously granted. Then they gave their version of the case and it was all in favor of Mr. Nelson. They considered that Nelson had only done what his great namesake had enjoined he did his duty. He had not been unnecessarily severe in punishing the girl and there was no ground for any complaint against him.

Mr. Fair, being the mugwump party, immediately and very correctly switched around to them and to Mr. Ready's way of thinking and Dr. Gray was now left in the cool shades of the minority. Mr. Nelson was justified and Dr. Gray had lost his authority.

But the difficulty did not end here. The matter had aroused the people of Fairville and they felt that they had been unwise in re-electing Dr. Gray. The only way in which they could supersede him was to ask him to resign. They therefore proceeded to circulate a petition to be presented to Dr. Gray as chairman of the board asking Dr. Gray to resign his position on the board.

Dr. Gray evidently got wind of this for he determined to anticipate the petition. He has written out his resignation and it will undoubtedly be presented to the people to whom he is responsible.

MR. RUEL'S RESIGNATION.

The Causes Which Led to it—Library Projects Discussed.

The uneventful and peaceful course of events in the administration of the affairs of the board of library commissioners has at last been interrupted by unseemly strife, and has led to the resignation of Mr. chairman J. R. Ruel and also to the probable resignation of Mr. James Manchester. It is the more to be regretted from the fact that it arose out of a gift which the two gentlemen proposed to make to the city of the Crookshank property on Chipman's Hill as a site for a library building. Gifts should be productive of good feeling but in this case it produced discord.

The common council or rather Ald. Christie chiefly, (for the other aldermen did not seem to have much opinion in the matter) took umbrage because they thought the commissioners wanted to dictate to the council about the location of the building, and in regard to other matters relating to the proposed library, and the ill feeling created reached its culmination at the last council meeting when Ald. Christie said that the commissioners wanted to run things, and they had better look out or they would get their dismissals.

Mr. Ruel could not do anything else than resign in view of these remarks. After serving faithfully as chairman of the board for 14 years, after giving hours every day to the library, being a daily visitor to the institution and overseeing everything, looking after the finances and devoting his fine executive ability to increasing and developing its usefulness to the public, after giving the library many gifts and interesting others and inducing them to give gifts, and finally after offering to help provide a site,—after all these things to have the words hurled at him that Ald. Christie used was very ungracious. He probably has had to resign against his own desires, for to visit the library daily was second nature to him and it occupied a large place in his heart. But out of respect to himself he could not remain after a threat had been cast at him in a manner which an employer would not use to his paid clerk.

Anyhow, the library project is squashed for the present at least and it is doubtful if the common council can be induced to make a grant for the building and so those interested in the library will have to wait until some wealthy citizen makes a gift or bequest for the purpose. The commissioners know of one in particular who could very easily do this if he would.

Messrs Ruel and Manchester will probably press their resignations, and in that event the common council will accept them. Two new men will have to be appointed and they will elect a chairman. It is not likely that they will be able to find a man who will devote as much time and energy to the task as has Mr. Ruel and it is probable, as some of the commissioners believe, that they will have to engage a secretary and head librarian, such as other libraries elsewhere have, a literary man conversant with books, and skilled in keeping the ac-

counts and looking after the finances. The present librarian, Miss Martin, who is kept very busy with her yearly increasing labors would be assistant. A competent official would require a salary of say \$800 but the city council might be asked to pay a portion of it.

Another question remains, and that is the fact that the proportions of the library is outgrowing its present quarter. It is stated that the room of the St. George's society, adjoining the library, could be obtained, however, for \$75 a year which would provide ample additional room.

These are two matters that will undoubtedly have to come up, and these are reasonable solutions of them.

A GAY LOTHARIO.

Has a Wife and Children but That Doesn't Spoil His Sport.

HALIFAX, Dec. 9.—A despatch from Lunenburg announces that the presbytery met there a day or two ago with closed doors. The clerics and laymen were dealing with the case of Rev. Mr. Williamson, whose resignation of the pastoral charge of the Presbyterian church of Clyde and Barrington was accepted conditionally 'subject to further discipline. This is the gentleman who is referred to in the following story.

When he came to Halifax many months ago, his name was without the 'Rev' prefix.

He was not a native of Nova Scotia—in fact, he had never been here before. On his way to this province he became acquainted with a family residing here. In the family was a daughter—a pretty, grown up girl—and with her he became very friendly. On reaching Halifax he resolved to become a clergyman, having already had a college education, and he took steps to fit himself for the ministry.

It is said while here he became a frequent visitor to the home of the young woman referred to and went around much with her. Things went well with him and some months ago it was announced that he had been admitted to the ministry. It is claimed that by this time he and the young woman had become engaged and their marriage in the near future was looked for. Later it was stated that the newly enrolled clergyman had been offered a charge with a fair competence and that he would accept the offer.

Shortly after the announcement of the offer, the clergyman left the city. Friends of the young woman were given to understand that he was going to the adjacent province of New Brunswick to conduct a service or preach there, and expected that he would return in a short time. It is said that he asked the parents of the young woman to allow the marriage to take place in a few days after that time, which would be but a day or two before his leaving for New Brunswick; but they thought it better that the marriage should not take place until he returned. They also understood that the parsonage which he was to occupy was being gotten in shape for his occupancy.

Some days after he left here a letter was received stating that, as he had gone so far he thought he might as well visit his old home. The letter was many miles away from New Brunswick. The young girl's friends were informed that he really left for New Brunswick, and they say they received the astounding information that the young clergyman had gone to his old home for the purpose of bringing back with him his wife and children. At first they were inclined to doubt this statement, but later they began to put some belief in it.

A lawyer was consulted and he wrote to the clergyman on his return. Later another lawyer was consulted, and the course he took was to issue a writ against the clergyman, but it is said no defence was put to the suit. The lawyer, who is one of the most prominent in the city, said it was a pity, if the facts related were correct, that the public should not be made aware of the doings of the clergyman, and he advised that the church authorities should be made acquainted with the matter.

The church authorities here were communicated with, the facts as related above stated to them, and letters shown them in corroboration. It is understood they were very much surprised. They had become aware that he had a wife and children, but did not know of his reported engagement to the Halifax young lady. Now it is announced that the matter will be carefully enquired into.

CHIEF KERR'S ESCAPE

THE CHAIRMAN'S CASTING VOTE SAVES HIM RESIGNING.

His Bold Words to the Safety Board—If His Appointments are not Confirmed He Will Resign—His Tilt With Alderman McArthur—The Religious Question.

Chief John Kerr of the fire department and Alderman-at-large Douglas McArthur had a merry and wordy war at the safety board meeting Thursday. It all arose out of the appointment of a man to drive No. 2 hose cart. Under the old regime the chief could have appointed his man and snapped his fingers at the aldermen but since Recorder Skinner has laid down the law that the chief cannot appoint his men the power of Mr. Kerr is confined to recommendations. But he told nine or ten aldermen yesterday that he did not think much of Recorder Skinner's law and when they ignored their chief's recommendations then he would take it as a want of confidence in him and hand in his resignation. When the vote was taken later it was a tie and only the casting vote of the chairman saved the chief of the fire department the trouble of writing out his resignation. But his bold words did not please the aldermen and when he spoke of a private conversation with a "certain alderman"—who proved to be Alderman McArthur—and proceeded to drag him over the coals the looks of disapproval were unmistakable. Alderman Parry at a later stage did not hesitate to say that had he been in McArthur's place he would have taken none of it. And Alderman McArthur gave the chief as good as he sent and asked him some awkward questions. It appeared that this Alderman met Chief Kerr on the street and proceeded to give him some plain words relative to the application and appointment of Donohue to the vacant driver'ship of No. 2 hose cart. There were hot words and the report got around that McArthur said there were too many papists being appointed on the fire department. Chief Kerr interrupted him in his speech yesterday and said he did not use those words, but the question of religion evidently got into the heads of the Safety committee and some of them became much excited over it. Alderman Waring in particular declared that if that question was going to enter into the appointment of men that he would resign his seat at the board. The question finally narrowed down to this. McArthur disputed the right of Chief Kerr to appoint, and thought the applications should come before the safety board to be considered. Alderman Tufts was of the same opinion and moved so, and then Alderman Waring in a fiery speech supported Kerr, and moved the confirmation of Donohue's appointment, and this was the motion that was carried by the casting vote of the chairman. Aldermen Hamm and McPherson with Waring and Parry voted for Donohue while McArthur, Tufts, Smith and McMullin were against him.

This really ended the matter for the time being but the members of the board did not relish the way that Chief Kerr took the bit in his teeth. He virtually told them that as long as he was chief he proposed to appoint his men and when they refused to confirm his selections he would resign. Many of them would doubtless agree that the man who has charge of a department should have the selection of his men but they don't wish a civic employe to tell them plump and plain that he will resign if they refuse to bow to his judgement. And so some of them told the chief in plain terms.

Chief Kerr was before the committee and gave them much information about the police force. Incidentally he denied the story printed in reference to Mr. Mackay of the C. P. R. and the chairman of the safety board and the things said about the railway official were certainly not complimentary.

A BROOM AND DUST PAN WAR.

Mr. Leonard Nase Pays \$300 for his Wife's Skill With These Weapons.

The better part of a year ago a long standing and oft aggravated disagreement between Mrs. Leonard Nase of Court block Indian town and her aunt Mrs. John Smith also living in the same building, terminated in a scene for which it is understood Mrs. Nase's husband has only lately had to lay out three hundred dollars as a term of settlement.

Relations, such as should exist between matronly aunt and loving niece, were quite

strained in this case and war in its many forms and fancies was carried on constantly. The rear entrances to the Nase and Smith homes were near together and generally the scene of wordy battle was situated in this part of the house. However on the day of final conflict the war was carried into the enemy's country with such spirit that additional forces from the outside were summoned to repulse the powers from the Nase side of the question.

For a short season Mrs. Nase, husband and child took their meals at Mrs. Smith's boarding apartments, but after the first disagreement, the lady in question resigned and ate her meals at her own home all alone. The breach widened and Court's blocks population was quite frequently stirred up by the sounds of words and words, spoken always in a high G key.

At last things began to look dangerous and as the last straws of abuse were being hastily piled on, a sure and certain culmination of the dispute seemed imminent.

One day something was said and a general rush followed. Mrs. Nase chased her aunt into Mrs. Smith's apartments and a case of assault and battery followed. Brooms, dustpans, mats and other such deadly weapons were brandished and juggled, until a few of the so called sterner sex interfered.

Mr. Smith took the matter into the courts and it was put down on the docket of the present circuit. It was one of the last cases to be considered and it is given out on very good authority that the whole matter has been settled, Mr. Nase paying a bill of \$300 damages. Mont. McDonald represented Mr. Smith, and Alex. Baird the other side.

CAUGHT IT IN THE HOSPITAL.

Fred Secord While Under a Surgical Operation Gets Typhoid Fever.

When a patient has been in the General Public Hospital for six or seven weeks and has undergone a severe surgical operation, it appears strange that he should die from typhoid fever. And yet that was the case of Fred Secord this week. He died in the hospital Wednesday night and the visiting physician says that the cause of death was typhoid fever.

Fred Secord was the son of the late Captain Secord and he lived with a widowed mother in North End. He worked in a dry goods store for three years but met with an accident which eventually led to his seeking surgical assistance in the hospital. Six or seven weeks ago he was operated upon and the doctor reported him as doing well up to a few days ago when he contracted typhoid fever and sank rapidly.

Now the question arises how could a patient get typhoid fever in the hospital? Perhaps the query is best answered by a physician who is intimately acquainted with the institution.

He says that it was because the hospital is poorly ventilated and he goes on to state that this difficulty is overcome in summer by opening the windows but that is impossible in winter and that the air is impure and bad for the patients. He mentioned that the probable cost of proper ventilation would be large but that it must be done if the hospital would be up to the times and thoroughly healthful for patients.

A DIFFERENCE IN THE MURPHY'S.

After dinner anecdotes are sometimes told that are not heard or appreciated at the banquet. One of these is current as an echo of the Emerson dinner. It appears that Hon. Mr. Hill illustrated his comparison of governments with a saying of Father Murphy's, a celebrated Irish preacher, who told an opponent that he might go further than purgatory and fare worse. When he mentioned Father Murphy's name a prominent official seated near him remarked jocularly "Yes we had him with us some days ago." "He wasn't the same man" was the grave reply of the speaker.

Calendars for Next Year

The Connecticut Fire Insurance Company of which Messrs Vroom & Arnold are the local agents tends a neat and serviceable calendar to PROGRESS. It is a business calendar not intended to ornament an office but to give such information as an office man requires.

Another comes from Messrs Magee & Freeze, dealers in stoves, ranges and furnaces of 117 Germain street which is surmounted by a pretty half tone view and will no doubt be appreciated by their many customers.