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POOR MABEL STEVENS.

THE SAD STORY OF A CHILD'S DREAM AND LONELY LIFE.

Intense Excitement Over Her Sudden and Mysterious Death—Revelations at the Coroner's Inquest—Remarkable Disclosures in the Evidence.

MONCTON, Feb. 2.—On the morning of Wednesday January 4th the community of Moncton were startled to hear that Mabel Hallett, the sixteen-year old adopted daughter of Mr. and Mrs. H. T. Stevens, had died suddenly either during the night or early that morning.

Those who had seen the little girl going to her daily work as usual, the day before, were naturally shocked beyond expression, and almost inclined to be incredulous at first, but the lowered blinds of the Stevens residence and the early visit of the undertaker left no room for doubt, and the information was soon made public, that Mabel Hallett had been seized with violent cramps in the night, and died early in the morning in spite of all that could be done to save her life. It was generally understood that the family physician, Dr. Ross, had been called, and endeavored to relieve the sufferer, but during the day, it transpired that the doctor had not reached the house until after the patient was dead. Immediate preparations were made for the funeral.



MABEL GLENNIE STEVENS.

and in spite of the intense cold of the weather, which would have made it possible to keep a body in perfect preservation for at least a week, the interment took place at two o'clock the next day.

Had it not been for the hurried burial, it is possible nothing more would have been heard of the matter, but as it was, when the friends of the dead girl had recovered from the shock of her sudden death and hasty burial sufficiently to think clearly, and go through the mental exercise known as putting two and two together, they came to the conclusion, in the light of facts which will presently appear, that some investigation into the cause of death was necessary, and after the usual delay which seems inevitable in such cases, the matter was laid before the proper authorities, and an investigation ordered.

The day fixed for the opening of the inquest and the exhumation of the body was Saturday, January 28th, and on Friday night three young men called at the house of Mr. Burch, caretaker of the cemetery, and asked to be shown Miss Hallett's grave. As they were all unknown to Mr. Burch, he refused, and one of the trio remarked, "If you lift that body up tomorrow, you will get yourself in trouble." Mr. Burch was alarmed, and at once put a man on guard for the remainder of the night.

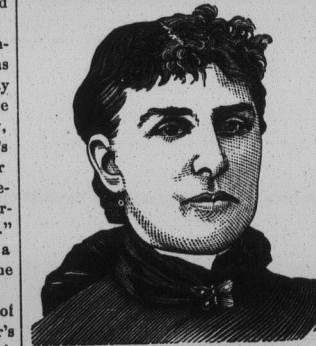
The next morning, in the presence of Coroner Keith, of Petricodiac, the coroner's jury, Dr. Mitchell of Dorchester penitentiary, Dr. C. T. Purdy of this city, and the respective solicitors of the friends of the dead girl, Mr. and Mrs. Stevens, the grave was opened and the body exhumed, and carried to one of Mr. Burch's hot houses, where it was viewed by the jury. When the poor little corpse, which looked like that of a child of eleven or twelve years old, was laid on a table, and unveiled to the light of day, there were strong men amongst the spectators who turned away to conceal their tears, so piteous a sight was presented. Under the left eye was a contusion, with the blood congealed, the fleshy parts of the arms were marked, bruised and abraded; the legs were marked all over; near the bottom of the coffin under the fleshy part of the right calf there was a large spot of blood, and above that spot the leg was all marked and abraded. The official description of the body, mentioned that the arms and legs were completely covered with abrasions.

The cause of death given in the burial certificate was "Inflammation of the bowels and heart failure," but the post mortem examination showed the intestines to be in a perfectly healthy state without the slightest trace of inflammation or ulceration, the brain was healthy and the only organ which showed any abnormal symptoms was the heart which gave evidence of a tendency to fatty degeneration, but none of the physicians who conducted the autopsy, Drs. Dunlap, Purdy and Church, were prepared to state that the weakness was sufficient to cause death, unless in case of a sudden shock, and all agreed that it was a most unusual thing for a girl of her age to die of

heart failure. Public sentiment became thoroughly aroused, and as the inquest progressed so many damaging facts connected with the child's treatment came out, that excitement ran high, and many circumstances hitherto almost unmarked assumed a new significance. People recalled the pathetic figure of little Mabel Hallett, as they were in the habit of seeing her, wending her solitary way to and from school, or later still, her daily work, as a dressmaker's apprentice, always alone, always silent, seeming to shrink from observation; with her stunted figure and solemn, perfectly colorless face, which looked as if childlike laughter, or even a smile must be an utter stranger to it. Stories perhaps scarcely credited at the time they were current, or listened to as probable exaggerations, received such startling confirmation that people were shocked at the culpable apathy which had prevented them from interfering in the motherless girl's behalf while she lived, instead of waiting until the grave had closed over her bruised and wounded body, and she had passed beyond the reach of all earthly sympathy or comfort.

Kind hearted men and women remembered with a pang of useless regret how they had heard of Mabel Hallett going to the convent school many a morning, without her breakfast, and how the kind sisters' pitying the lonely child's condition had fed her, and given her some of the love and care she so sorely needed; how on one occasion when she had been imperfect in a recitation, or guilty of some trifling breach of discipline, one of the sisters was about to administer the customary rap over the fingers, and, surprised at the child's unnecessarily earnest pleadings that her fingers should not be touched, insisted, greatly against the culprit's will, on seeing the fingers, and was shocked at the appearance they presented, bruised, blistered, and swollen, and perhaps still more shocked at the reluctant explanation.—"I've been whipped so much over my fingers that they are dreadfully sore."

How, on another occasion, when a lesson was not perfect, the sister in charge told Mabel that she would be obliged to keep her in till she had it correctly, the child threw herself wildly on her knees and implored so piteously, "Don't keep me in! Oh, don't keep me in, anything, but that! If you do, they will kill me when I get home!" that the sister astonished at her excitement and too kind hearted to get her into trouble, allowed her to go at the usual time. Coming down to later times, during the year just past, Moncton people remembered hearing that the adopted daughter of the house of Stevens was not allowed to come to the table with the family, or even after them, but was compelled to take her meals in the kitchen with the servants; and how she frequently went to



Mrs. H. T. STEVENS.

her work in the morning fasting, and was given breakfast by her employer Mrs. White, whenever that worthy woman could find out from the reticent little creature that she had not broken her fast.

These, and many other things came up in the minds of the good people of Moncton, as witness after witness told his, or her tale, at the inquest. When the doctors were unanimous in failing to find any adequate cause of death, unless some violent shock were administered; when the body was declared to be undeveloped and poorly nourished; when one physician of wide experience gave it as his guarded opinion that the diagonal marks upon the dead girl's legs were inflicted before death, and caused by whipping; giving as his reason for so doing that he had, as surgeon to a penitentiary attended many whippings and floggings of prisoners and was familiar with the appearance of the skin afterwards; and when another physician who had always been considered a very clever member of the profession, appeared so singularly devoid of information and to be in so agnostic a frame of mind that he was not sure of anything except his own identity, when on the witness stand, and was unable to express even an opinion as to the cause of death, or hazard a conjecture, as to whether the marks on the body were ante, or post mortem, for the curious reason that he had not examined the external condition of the body, but confined his observations to the internal organs; and was unequal to the responsibility of giving the jurors any definite

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FOUR CANDIDATES OUT.

THE FIGHT IS LIKELY TO BE HEARD FROM BEFORE LONG.

No Danger of the Mayor's Office Going Back This Year—Retrenchment and Reform to the Front—The Tax Reduction Association in the Front in the Fight.

Hon. Thomas R. Jones is to the front this week as a candidate for the office of mayor, and is pushing a canvass with great vigor. His platform is civic reform and reduction of taxation. Mr. Jones says if he is elected he will not wait for reforms to be forced upon him, but will inaugurate them from the chair. He claims that his eight years of experience at the council board have given him angles of what is needed, and how it is to be accomplished.

Mr. Jones was a candidate for mayor two or three years ago, when W. A. Lockhart was successful in winning the seat. Mr. Jones made a good run, however, and claims he would have been elected had he not been lured into a false sense of security by his too confident friends.

In this election he is looking after matters himself and he has been one of the busiest men in St. John during the past week.

When Mr. Jones is at the Union club he can look across the street into the grocery candidate Tufts, who is to the front with another programme of reciprocity, retrenchment and reform. There is a wide difference between the programme of the two. For instance Mr. Tufts leans to the idea that officials should work for less pay, while Mr. Jones believes that they should have plenty of pay but that there should not be so many of them.

Mr. Tufts is the only total abstinence candidate in the field, though all the others claim to be in favor of temperance. If Mr. Tufts gets the same kind of a vote that ex-mayor Thorne did, a few years ago, he may stand a good chance of election.

Mayor Peters is keeping on the even tenor of his way, and accepts invitations to all social functions. Now is the time for committees in charge of entertainments to secure the presence of a live and most affable mayor.

Mr. Sturdee is also hustling. He does not attend as many places as the Mayor, because the latter, on his official complicity gets more invitations, but Mr. Sturdee is seeing a good many people in and out of doors in his daily walks. Had the race been between him and Mayor Peters it would have been a very interesting one, but there are two other candidates in the field and there is likely to be a fifth man. He will be the nominee of the St. John Tax Reduction Association.

This is an organization of the citizens which has come to the front within the last week or two and has already enlisted the co-operation of a number of leading business men and property owners. It aims at the reduction of taxes by a thorough reform of civic affairs. It has had one meeting, another was announced for last night, too late for PROGRESS to notice. The lines on which the association proposes to start are those which PROGRESS has advocated from time to time for the last three years. As a preliminary the association intends to secure legislation to reduce the number of aldermen and have them elected by the citizens at large, the mayor to be elected on the same day. Other reforms will follow, as a matter of course. To accomplish anything, the association must have the support of the citizens, and it is believed that the ratepayers will join in the movement in sufficient numbers to carry the reforms without difficulty. The idea is to secure the desired legislation at the approaching session of the legislature, and have the next elections run on the lines laid down.

If none of the present candidates for mayor suit the association, it will put its own man in the field. Is he the right sort of a man he will stand a good chance to win.

WHO RUNS THE RINK?

City Officials Appear to take a Deep Interest in the Affair.

Early in December, when there was a fuller water supply than there is now, a number of young men applied to the council for permission to flood the Shamrock grounds for the purposes of an ice rink. The request was very promptly refused, and that seemed to be an end of rink projects in that locality. It was not, however, but the wrong men had made the application. They had not excited the interest of the North End members.

At the meeting of the council, held on Thursday of last week, a petition was received from John Walsh, asking for the use of the city water to flood the grounds which the council had decided should not be flooded last December. It was referred to the chairman and director of public safety, with the superintendent of sewerage and water-supply as an annex, and power was given to act. Somebody did act very promptly, and on Friday Ald. McGoldrick was hustling around, apparently with the idea that the city should assist the lessees of the grounds

in getting the rink in shape without a moment's loss of time.

The petition had come from John Walsh, but H. R. McLellan was understood to be the chief factor in the matter. His friends in the council seemed to think they could not do too much for him, and Ald. McGoldrick as well as Ald. W. A. Chesley had a busy day Friday. It does not appear there was any discussion of the matter in committee, but the alderman was looking for Mr. Murdoch to get the water turned on. Mr. Murdoch at first declined to accede without the authority of the board of management, but finally the water was secured, and Chief Kerr was asked to lend the fire department hose. He declined, but permitted them to take some old hose that was on hand. District engineer Brown and some of the North End firemen were employed by the rink people to attend to the work. Then it was thought that the city street sweeping machine might be utilized for cleaning the track, and that one of the watering carts would be just the thing for forming the foundation ice. These were sent for, but not obtained, so the ice was flooded with the hose. Whoever manipulated the hydrant failed to shut it off properly, and the next day it was frozen. Had a fire occurred in the vicinity at this time there would have been no water. When a report was sent to the water office, the hydrant was put in order, and one of the officials of that office had to stay there the greater part of the next night to see that no further damage was done.

This week it is understood that Mr. McLellan and his party have retired from the rink, but somebody else is running it. The man who seems to be taking the most interest in the matter is Ald. Chesley, and on Thursday he was very busy at the telephone trying to get all the facilities that were desired.

It is a great thing to be in the council, or to have a pull in it.

HE WAS A BRISK WOODS.

Mr. Adam Bell Proves to be a Hustler in the Matter of the Heart.

Mr. Adam Bell, the well known cigar manufacturer of this city, has proved himself to be as much of a hustler in his love affairs as in his business transactions. His attentions recently to Miss Grace Bruckof were so marked, that her father, Mr. William Bruckof, in the light of the fact that his daughter was only seventeen years old, considered it best to intimate to Mr. Bell that in his opinion she was "over young to marry yet," and he satisfied him that, as far as he was concerned, his consent could not be obtained at the present time at least. Those who are in the confidence of the families state that Mr. Bell was quite willing to wait any reasonable length of time, provided he could be assured that at the end of the period Mr. Bruckof would give his consent. This apparently was too much in the nature of a promise to pay, to suit the King street merchant. He had even more objection to promising to give up his daughter at a certain time than he has to making a promissory note, and everybody who knows him knows that he has no occasion to do that. At any rate, Mr. Bell was not only not satisfied with the brief interview that he made with Mr. Bruckof on Charlotte street on Tuesday morning, but meeting with the object of his affections coming from the Business College about noon that day, he informed her of what had taken place, and proposed that they be married at once. Miss Bruckof consented and accompanied by two friends, Mr. Bell and his fiancée took a coach to Fairville where the ceremony was performed by the Rev. Mr. Titcombe. They returned to the Hotel Dufferin in this city and enjoyed a good dinner after their romantic adventure. The bride and groom remained at the hotel for the night, and in the meantime their respective parents interviewed each other on the situation. It is quite evident that they came to the conclusion that there was nothing to do but to allow the young people to have their own way; since they had gone so far, and on the following day Mr. and Mrs. Bell left for Fredericton and Woodstock on their honeymoon trip.

AS GOOD AS TEN DOLLARS.

PROGRESS has a number of appreciative testimonials on the Webster dictionary it has been offering as a premium. They were sent unsolicited and are valuable to us. More of them are wanted, and to the five persons sending us the five best appreciative letters regarding the dictionary and its value a paid up subscription to PROGRESS for another year will be presented. You can say enough in 25 words, but take 100 words if you can express what you mean better.

THE MUSIC HAS STARTED.

The Cairns and Crisp investigation is proceeding at Fredericton before a committee appointed to hear and determine the charges and counter charges of the respective ministers. It is a little early yet for PROGRESS to discuss the matter.

AT A WOMAN'S MERCY.

THE EXTRAORDINARY CASE OF A PROMINENT CLERGYMAN.

He Had the Pen of a Ready Writer—The Precious Facility With Which He Wrote Compromising Letters—The Scenes in a Drama of Startling Interest.

Mrs. Leonard Nase of Indiantown has twenty-two love letters in her possession, written to her by the rector of her church, which her husband values at \$1000 each. It may be more proper to say he asked that amount for them and did not get it; consequently the bulky epistles were used to the material injury of the man who wrote them, they were shown to the head of the provincial church, the bishop, and the resignation of the rector followed as a matter of course.

It is the same old story of a handsome, wilful and reckless woman and a weak and yielding man, who, drawn into the fatal web of her fascination, acted without thought and without judgment, wrote letters while in an exalted mood that would have horrified him in his sane moments, compromised himself fatally by his act and blasted a career that was full of promise and hope.

The affair was of short duration—only about two months—yet long enough for more than a score of letters to be written and passed.



Mrs. LEONARD NASE.

The woman wrote as many as the man, the only difference being that hers were burned when read; his were not.

The rector of St. Luke's is one of the best known men in the city. He is acknowledged to be as eloquent, it not the most eloquent among the clergy of the church of England. He is equally at home upon the platform and, possessed of a pleasing, courteous address and an attractive personality was popular not only with his congregation but with all who enjoyed his acquaintance.

A few of his intimate friends heard the story of his fall some time before the public knew anything of it. More than a fortnight ago the rupture came and from that moment the rector of St. Luke's ceased to attend to the ordinary duties of his church. A brother minister took his services for him until it was seen what phase the matter would assume.

The breaking off of the correspondence was the work of the rector. How he was awakened to a realization of what he was doing is something that he can hardly explain himself. "My conscience must have been asleep" was the remark he made to a friend "and it awoke to a terrible awakening. My remorse was terrible, almost too much to bear and I did the only thing that a man and a professing christian could do. I ceased corresponding at once and caused the door that opened into a passage way between the two houses through which the letters passed to be nailed up."

This act of the rector's seemed to have incensed Mrs. Nase to such an extent that she at once wrote to him to the effect that since he had seen fit to close the door in question she presumed the correspondence had ceased, adding that it had gone quite far enough and that she proposed to show his letters to her husband. This letter came through the post office and was no sooner received than the rector made an attempt to see the woman and secure the foolish and injudicious vapors that he had written and thought were in ashes long ago.

The next time he saw Mrs. Nase was in the presence of her husband, Mr. Leonard Nase. The scene that took place is almost beyond description. "Hell hath no fury like a woman scorned" was literally true in this case. Seizing a huge iron poker the woman declared that nothing but money could hush the matter up; and unless it was paid she would ruin the rector and drag down the church. "I hate the church and I have never belonged to it. I was born a baptist, raised a baptist and am still a baptist."

Mr. Nase remained quietly by while this was going on and made no move to stop the torrent of his wife's forcible abuse. Later he made a formal demand in writing for money for the letters and this letter is now in the hands of the rector's lawyer, Hon. Mr. Pugsley.

Mr. Nase made another demand upon the rector in the presence of the latter's wife, asking \$1000 a letter for the 22 letters which would otherwise be placed in the

hands of Bishop Kingdon. He was well aware that the rector did not have that amount of money, but had not much doubt, evidently that he could raise it from his wife's property for, turning to the latter he remarked that he cared not how it was raised so long as he received it.

This evident attempt at blackmail was not listened to for a moment, and within a day or two when Bishop Kingdon was in the city on his way to Montreal, Mrs. Nase called upon him and presented the letters to him to read.

The Bishop's letter to the rector simply showed him that in suspending himself from his pastoral duties, he had followed the proper course.

In the meantime the lawyers were not idle, and Mr. Pugsley, representing the rector, and Messrs. Barnhill and Currie representing Mrs. Nase began to consider what settlement could be arrived at. Mr. Nase threatened to sue, though for what it is difficult to imagine, and the rector's friends advised to prosecute for blackmail, the evidence of which was furnished him by the threatening demand for money for the letters.

It is said that Mrs. Nase dislikes the idea of a court room and a witness box, and that on this account, the affair came very nearly a settlement at one time. When the counsel for the rector suggested that it was very probable the affair would go to court and that both parties would have an opportunity to speak under oath. He intimated that the reputation of each would have to be considered, and in order to do this properly it might be necessary to call many persons about town, who were well acquainted with the facts. When the case was presented in this light, Mrs. Nase failed to see the satisfaction in it, and said abruptly to her husband: "Come, hub, let's get the letters and burn them."

Mr. Nase objected and said a settlement could only be effected on the basis of dollars and cents. Acting on that principle Mr. Nase has, PROGRESS understands, instructed his lawyer to proceed against the rector for alienating the affections of his wife. Those who know the circumstances think this would be a most interesting suit.

In the meantime the wardens and vestry of St. Luke's had been made acquainted with the principal facts, and were called to meet a week ago last evening. At that meeting the rector proposed to "make a clean breast" of the whole business, resign his charge or do what he was advised to do. Before the meeting was opened, however, a messenger on behalf of Mr. and Mrs. Nase intimated to the rector that it would not be wise for him to tell all that had taken place—and especial emphasis was placed upon the letters demanding hush money—for if he did so it might provoke the publication of his letters to Mrs. Nase. Whether this had the desired effect or not, it is a fact that the vestry meeting was postponed until the first of this week, when after making a candid confession of what he had done, the rector placed his resignation in its hands in these words:

ST. JOHN, JANUARY 30TH, 1893.

Jas. S. GARDNER, Esq.

Dear Sir,—I hereby offer, through you, to the Wardens and Vestry of St. Luke's Church, my resignation of the rectorship to take effect from Jan. 25th, 1893. (A copy of this resignation has been sent already to his Lordship the Bishop.)

I have been your rector for fourteen years and nearly three months. I need not say with what thankfulness I look back upon those fourteen years of an exceptionally happy pastorate, among a people some of whom are precious to me as seals of my ministry; many endeared to me by the sympathy of joy and of sorrow, and all beloved in the Lord; nor need I add with what real sorrow I turn away from associations and friendships which are very dear to me and to my little family.

May the blessing of the Almighty God rest upon the church and the people.

Though I am no longer your minister, yet it is a great joy to me that however separated by distance, I can be present with you in spirit; and that always and everywhere I may be allowed to count myself with gratitude and love,

YOUR FRIEND IN CHRIST,

Nearly a week before the publication of the facts referred to above, PROGRESS was in possession of them and gave them thorough investigation. That they were true could not be doubted, but the conclusion arrived at so far as Mr. Stevens was concerned was that he was temporarily, at least, "off his balance." He did not seem to realize what he was doing or saying and under those circumstances the effect of a general public exposure upon his mind was dreaded by those who knew him best. In deference to their wishes PROGRESS held back the story, the facts of which have come out day by day this week.

Mr. Stevens' indiscretion can hardly be accounted for on the ground that he was sane but it would almost appear that his mind has been unbalanced in some degree for some time past. In this connection a letter from an intimate friend of his to the editor of PROGRESS may be quoted in part:

"I believe that if the letters he wrote were submitted to medical men, familiar with the study of insanity, they would, taking into consideration his past record pronounce him insane. I have known him ever since he has been in the city. Even before his injury eleven years ago he was the queerest man I ever met, and has done

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