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**NINE-YEAR-OLD LAD GIVES LIFE FOR LITTLE SISTER**

Haileybury Hero Dies from Injuries Received in Fire Last Week.

At Haileybury last week a nine-year-old lad, Homer Gagnon, in a gallant effort to save his younger sister from death by fire, suffered such burns that he passed away some hours later. The little girl is also dead. The father and mother are at present seriously ill from burns and shock. The story is one of heroism and unselfish courage—a story that does true credit to the North—a story that should not be forgotten. The facts of the case are outlined in last week's issue of The New Liskeard Speaker, as follows:—

"A terrible tragedy took place Tuesday morning at the home of Mr. Albert Gagnon, Marcella St., Haileybury, when their house took fire and two children, Homer, aged nine years, and little Anna, aged five years, were so severely injured by fire and smoke that they died later on in the day. Homer gave his life for his sister as he tried to take her to safety.

"Mrs. Gagnon, at time of writing, is dangerously ill, suffering from severe burns and shock. Mr. Gagnon is seriously ill with burns and cuts arms and hands, but hopes are entertained for his recovery. Both are at the Hospital in Haileybury. The other two children, baby of six months, and daughter of two years, were not seriously injured and are at the home of their aunt, Mrs. Phil. Lemieux.

"About 5.30 in the morning Mrs. Gagnon lit the oil stove to heat some milk for the baby, then placed the boiler on, turned the lights lower and went into the bedroom. Suddenly an explosion was heard and immediately the place was in flames. Mr. Gagnon and Mrs. Gagnon picked up the two little ones, the baby and the two year old daughter, and took them to safety. Then it was noticed that little Anna was not there. Both rushed into the house and Mr. Gagnon met Homer dragging the little one towards the door. They were both taken outside by their father. Mr. Gagnon entered the house again, but could not make the door for exit and smashed the window in the end of the house and crawled out. He was not only badly burned but suffered severe cuts from the broken glass.

"Neighbours were on the scene, the doctor was phoned for and arrived in but a few minutes taking time but to

**South End Pupils Write on "A Public School Playground"**

Clever Essays Submitted in Competition Under Auspices of Home and School Association. Winners of First Place in Boys' and Girls' Classes.

Last week reference was made in The Advance to the essay competition for Junior and Senior Fourth Classes, under the auspices of the South Porcupine Home and School Association. The Home and School Association is doing excellent work in encouraging interest in educational matters by the competitions inaugurated and the pupils appear to do their part also in most creditable way on each occasion. If the prize-winning essays are examples of the general work of the pupils, then congratulation is certainly warranted to all concerned.

In the competition referred to the subject for the essay was: "A Public School Playground." There were three prizes for Boys and three for Girls, the judges awarding the places as follows:—Boys—1st, John Sharp; 2nd, Jim Baker; 3rd, Harry Martin. Girls—1st, Valerie Rapsey; 2nd, Beatrice Dowser; 3rd, Vern Laforest.

The Advance has much pleasure in presenting herewith the First Prize Essays. Master John Sharp and Miss Valerie Rapsey are to be congratulated on their neat, thoughtful and cleverly-written essays. The essays show noteworthy literary skill as well as a thoughtful turn of mind.

**A Public School Playground.** (First Prize—Girls. By Valerie Rapsey).

This is no passing fad. The essential idea that lies behind an ideal playground is to provide a place of wholesome, happy and healthful a-

draw on his trousers and slippers on his feet. In probably twenty minutes the house was demolished and the four—father, mother, Homer and Anna—were in the hospital.

"Through all the terribleness of suffering and excitement, Homer, though so desperately injured, did not cry nor even complain of suffering. His uncle sat beside him in the hospital as life was ebbing. Asked him if he suffered, but he said he did not. He was upheld by the great thought that although he was to die, he had saved his little sister, Anna, not realizing, the dear brave little fellow, that little Anna had already passed on."

musement during the recreation periods of the school day.

My preference would be situated so as to afford suitable drainage and dry ground at all seasons. In winter, hills, which descend on three sides, provide enjoyable slides, while in summer they are terraced. The boys' section is the larger division. It is divided into two parts, the larger area being devoted to the more strenuous games of baseball and football. In the shadier parts the smaller games of jacks and marbles are played. The girls' portion of the grounds is by far the more beautiful division. The ground, which was gravel on the boys' side, is in the nature of a lawn, their sports being naturally quieter. The walks which intersect the grounds provide ample room for skipping and hop-scotch. Rope and seat swings furnish a more peaceful recreation when the weather makes the more active sports impossible.

In our playgrounds, with the exception of the girls' division on the eastern side, the grounds are not in a very good condition. During the wet part of the spring and fall it is difficult to get playing space, all parts being so wet and muddy. However, the matter of improving these parts has been taken up by the ladies of the town and they, co-operating with the trustees, have fenced the grounds. A high board fence will soon separate us from the livery stable, on our west. This fence will not only shut off a disagreeable neighbourhood, but also form a background for climbing plants, which will add to the beauty of the grounds. Swings, teeters and boxes of sand have been furnished for the younger children, while base, foot and overhead balls amuse the older ones. Gradually the grounds will be levelled off and playing equipment placed on them. The marshy land to the south of us we hope in a year or more will be levelled off as a baseball diamond for the boys.

As yet, of course, our grounds can not be compared with those in cities, but we hope, through the aid of the Pioneer Home and School Association, to have, in the near future, a school playground that will be a lasting joy and second to none in this Northern Country.

**A Public School Playground.** (First Prize—Boys. By John Sharp).

One of the great necessities of all schools, and what may be said as lacking in many, is a fully equipped playground.

"The high degree to which we have standardized our education, the beauty of the architecture, shown in the buildings and inside fittings, the fully equipped schools, and, lastly, the training, that teachers have to undergo before being qualified to teach, are of great credit to the Minister of Education and also to the good work of school boards throughout the country."

Having read the above one would think that everything required to educate children to perfection had been provided for. But there is an old saying that "all work and no play makes Jack a dull boy." So, periods of fifteen minutes, one in the morning and one in the afternoon, have been provided for recreation and to prepare the children for the lessons following these intermissions. Now, having allotted the time for these recesses, how should this time be spent? A playground in itself is of infinite value, but a playground should be equipped with ideas for assisting education and most of all facilities for getting the children to play athletic games during these few minutes to make them strong and able, in order to accomplish their inside duties.

This model playground should appeal to all sides of the child's nature. A sense of beauty could be lent to the whole grounds by having flowers in beds or borders, a few trees, and, possibly, a plot of grass. Having children look after plots of their own, planting seeds and tending and watering them, is of great educational value. This has been and is being done in many places throughout the Province. The flowers and vegetables are taken to the Fall Fair and prizes are awarded. For amusement entirely, to which the greater part of the grounds should be devoted, there could be provided swings and teeters for the young children, and a baseball diamond a football grounds, and, possibly, equipment for basketball, for the larger boys. The girls could be supplied with plenty of room for skipping and playing hop-scotch. A fence around the whole grounds would greatly improve the appearance.

Children who have some such playgrounds as stated above are found to have more vim or zeal for their lessons than those who do not enjoy such privileges. It should be the duty of teachers to see that the children use their playgrounds during recesses.

Patrons of the Public Library would do well to note in last week's Advance,—that the Library will be closed on Wednesday afternoons in conformity with the Town By-Law in regard to early closing during May, June, July, August and September.

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