

The Sun, 21 March 1922

# GRAVE CHARGES MADE IN FIGHT ON BRYN MAWR

**Dr. M. Carey Thomas Ac-  
cused Of Determination  
To Dominate School.**

**OUSTING PRINCIPAL  
ALSO LAID TO HER**

**Parents' Meeting Told She  
Had Threatened To De-  
stroy Institution.**

Open charges that Dr. M. Carey Thomas, retired president of Bryn Mawr College and a member of the board of managers of Bryn Mawr School, had threatened to destroy the latter institution if her wishes were not carried out were made last night at a meeting fathers of present and former pupils.

It also was stated that in case the school ceases to function, the property will revert to Miss Thomas under the terms of the will of Miss Mary Garrett.

The meeting, which was held at the Protestant Episcopal diocesan house, was called by Bishop John Gardner Murray to adopt testimonials of regard and appreciation of the work done by Miss Edith Hamilton, who recently retired after 20 years' service as head mistress of the school.

**Resignation Forced, It Is Alleged.**

Early in the evening the declaration was made that Miss Hamilton's resignation had been forced by Dr. Thomas. An attempt to reach Dr. Thomas over the long-distance telephone last night after the meeting was unsuccessful. At her home in Bryn Mawr, Pa., it was said that she had retired and could not be disturbed.

In calling the meeting Bishop Murray said he was actuated by a feeling of the deepest gratitude to Miss Hamilton for the work she had done as head mistress of the school and declared that his four daughters owed to her as much as they did to their home training.

When the Bishop concluded his preliminary remarks the meeting organized by the election of him as chairman, and William Ingle, president of the Baltimore Trust Company, as secretary. In accepting his post Mr. Ingle said that if the meeting were to produce anything of value there must be a full and free discussion of the situation at the school and not merely "pretty words."

"Miss Hamilton has received a serious blow in the house of her friends," he declared. "If she has any friends here they should take more forcible action than giving her a box of candy with a pink ribbon on it."

Bishop Murray attempted to forestall precipitate action by insisting that he would not serve as chairman of an indignation meeting.

**Came Only To Pay Tribute.**

"When I asked you gentlemen to come here tonight," he said, "I did so with no other thought than that of paying tribute to Miss Hamilton. I am not going to appear in the guise of an after-thought speaker who pulls from his pocket

dinner speaker who pulls from his pocket the draft of the speech he is surprised at being called upon to make. Certain resolutions have been prepared by Mr. Sidney Hall, at whose suggestion I called this meeting and then they can be discussed. Afterward we can consider a more substantial form of testimonial."

Almost before the Bishop had finished speaking, Sewell S. Watts, of the banking firm of Baker, Watts & Co., was on his feet.

"During the last 72 hours things have moved so fast and so furiously that we whose daughters are students at the school are filled with a sense of fear and alarm concerning the future of Bryn Mawr," he said. "The situation affects every teacher and the smallest child who goes there. I am credibly informed that the very existence of the school is imperiled.

"Things of the most personal nature have been injected into the controversy and we cannot shut our eyes to the condition that exists at the school. I understand Bishop Murray's feeling in the matter, but I also feel that there should be mutual consultation even if the Bishop is not present."

#### **Sees Much To Be Regretted.**

Mr. Hall then arose with his resolutions and prefaced the reading of them by saying he had no knowledge of the present situation.

"During the last 60 hours, however, there has been much said and done that is sure to be greatly regretted," he continued, "in this city. Every word of this resolution comes from my heart."

Mr. Hall then read the resolution, which began, "Whereas, because of ill health"—and continued at some length voicing in terms of "deep appreciation" the gratitude of the patrons of the school for the work done by Miss Hamilton and the ideals which had characterized it.

Dr. John H. Latane, dean of Johns Hopkins University, then inquired if ill health were the real cause of Miss Hamilton's resignation. Dr. Harry Fielding Reid, at whose home Miss Hamilton spends much of her time, said she had not been well for a long time.

"Early in the winter she went before the board and offered to retire or to continue her work if she were allowed a longer vacation during the summer," said Dr. Reid. "Soon afterward she received a letter from Miss Thomas informing her that the board had voted unanimously to accept her resignation."

#### **Watts Starts Explosion.**

Mr. Watts then interjected:

"Just to throw the fat into the fire," he said, "I understand that during the last 48 hours Miss Hamilton has been subjected by Miss Thomas to the most harrowing ordeal. Miss Thomas has even threatened to close Bryn Mawr

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# GRAVE CHARGES MADE CONCERNING BRYN MAWR

**Dr. M. Carey Thomas Accused Of  
Determination To Dominate  
School.**

**OUSTED PRINCIPAL, IT IS SAID**

**Parents' Meeting Told Of Alleged  
Threats To Destroy In-  
stitution.**

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School if Miss Hamilton does not follow her directions. Is that not true, Dr. Reid?"

"That is true," Dr. Reid replied.

As a result of this discussion Mr. Ingle moved that the clause "on account of ill health," be stricken from the resolution, and this was carried.

D. K. Este Fisher then attempted to make peace.

"If we will cease to criticize those in authority at the school and devote ourselves to the good of the institution I think we shall accomplish much more than if we continue to criticize," he said. "The more the parents interfere the worse will be the situation."

"We are all interested in seeing the standards of the school maintained, but I feel sure we can safely leave this with the board, composed of persons with experience and ability. We have no reason to suppose that they will appoint as successor to Miss Hamilton a person who will lower the things for which the school stands."

"Miss Thomas is one of the ablest educators in the country. Acting with Miss Mary Garrett, who placed the greatest confidence in Miss Thomas' ability, she brought Bryn Mawr School into existence, and we cannot suppose that she intends to do anything which will change its character. Miss Garrett's will specifies that unless certain standards are maintained the school will lose the property in which it is located and the property will revert."

Answer Raised Laughter.

"Revert to whom?" shot back Mr. Ingle.

"To Miss Thomas," replied Mr. Fisher amid a roar of laughter.

When the laughter had subsided Mr. Fisher said that any suggestion that Miss Thomas was seeking to destroy the school for sordid motives was impossible and that he was surprised at the implication.

Mr. Ingle took issue with Mr. Fisher in regard to the disinterestedness of the board. He enumerated the personnel—Dr. Thomas, Miss Reilly, her secretary, and Dr. Thomas' sister, Mrs. A. Morris Carey—"three with one voice," he designated them—Dr. Florence Sabin and two members of the alumnae, who, he added unanimously adopted resolutions indorsing Miss Hamilton and had instructed their representatives on the board to read them at the board meeting.

"These resolutions never were presented and the inference is that you could not expect these two young girls to cope with a woman like Dr. Thomas. The board, therefore, is not a representative body, but an organization dominated by a single mind."

Failed To Receive Resolutions.

Mr. Hall came to the defense of the two alumnae members, Miss Amy Steiner and Miss Anna P. Bond, and declared that they had failed to receive copies of the resolution from the secretary of the alumnae and consequently had gone to the board meeting.

substantial memorial to Miss Hamilton to be presented with the resolution. A copy of the resolution is also to be sent to Miss Thomas.

Angry Interview Alleged.

Affairs between Miss Thomas and Miss Hamilton moved rapidly over the week-end. Miss Thomas presented her self on Sunday at the residence of Dr. Reid, 609 Cathedral street, where Miss Hamilton is staying, and the two at once went into conference. During the interview, it is said, Miss Thomas became exceedingly angry and, according to Dr. Reid, shouted so that she could be heard all over the house. She charged that Miss Hamilton had violated the ideals of Miss Garrett and herself and declared that she had completely mismanaged the school. What Miss Hamilton said in reply is not known.

Miss Thomas is also said to have participated at a meeting of teachers yesterday and to have laid down the law in no uncertain fashion. A board meeting yesterday afternoon followed, at which Miss Mary Harris, whom, it is said, Miss Hamilton had wished to become her successor as head mistress of the school, was voted down. The board, it appears, had no other candidate to offer and, after much discussion, it was decided to hand over the school to a committee of teachers who are to run it until other arrangements are made.

Miss Hamilton also resigned as a member of the board, thus completely severing her connection with the school.

All the teachers of the school are expected to meet again this afternoon and it was said by one of them last night that definite action would be taken at this meeting.

unarmed to the board meeting.

Bishop Murray then ruled all the discussion out of order and asked the speakers to confine their attention to the resolution. Mr. Ingle then moved that it be referred to a committee to revamp it and add "such protest" as the situation seemed to warrant.

"Miss Hamilton needs sympathy," he said. "A 15-year-old girl could draw up a statement of honeyed words that would do her no good whatever."

"Will it add to her peace of mind if we tag on a 'cuss word' for somebody else?" inquired the bishop, and persuaded Mr. Ingle to withdraw his resolution, and the motion was carried. Mr. Ingle then suggested that 50 patrons of the school underwrite a fund of \$10,000 for two years at least and turn the money over to Miss Hamilton to found a school to which people who had been impressed with her work might send their daughters. He withdrew this motion also when Dr. Latane pointed out that the sum was entirely inadequate.

**Says Teachers Are Ready To Quit.**

In reply to a question concerning the attitude of the teachers of the school, Dr. Reid declared that all of them were ready to leave. Mr. Watts then remarked that the present crisis in the affairs had been threatening several years.

"I was called in to go over the financial situation with Miss Hamilton," he said. "The institution was then in serious straits and Miss Hamilton was uncertain about just what was happening. All she knew was that each year yielded a deficit.

"I found that all bills were sent to Miss Thomas' office at Bryn Mawr College and were paid from there. All receipts collected here also went to her. Miss Thomas has reduced the indebtedness on the institution to a mortgage, which she holds.

"I had the buildings at Preston and Cathedral streets appraised by John E. Marshall & Sons and the land by William Martien. Altogether the appraisal amounted to about a half million dollars. The mortgage is for about \$70,000, a very valuable mortgage and one which any banker in the State would be glad to take up.

"A new schedule of charges was then arranged, much against Miss Hamilton's inclination, for she disliked to take any step which would result in turning away any girl who desired to come to Bryn Mawr, but since then things have been looking up. The salaries of the teachers have been increased, and last year the books showed a profit of about \$12,000.

**Gives Miss Hamilton Credit.**

"During the years which meant so much to the school there has been no policy set by any board or anyone else but Edith Hamilton. She did the things that made the girls love her, and are we to stand by and see this woman who has done so much for our girls publicly insulted? Shall we not come to the support of these women who tonight are uncertain of their very livelihood? Are the parents, faculty and alumnae not to raise their voice against the will of this one woman? We ought to recognize the fact that the interest of the entire city is at stake and take care that this school revert to nobody."

Upon motion of Dr. Reid, who then declared that the meeting "was getting nowhere," Bishop Murray appointed Dr. Latane, Mr. Watts, Mr. Hall, James Gustavus Whiteley and Randolph Barton, Jr., a committee to recommend a