

LETHBRIDGE CONFERENCE ON MORE AND BETTER WATER SUPPLY

thing about the possibilities of locating water by divining. He had been hauling water long enough and if there was anything to it he wanted to find out. E. L. Landorff, water service engineer of the C.P.R., Winnipeg, started the discussion by a very able paper in which he told of what the company was doing in the way of testing for water supplies for operation. He depended mostly, he said, on geological information, but he gave the Manfield Water Diviner, a machine which works on some principle that electrical attraction water holds for a certain needle, credit for being about 85 per cent. efficient. After his paper a general discussion took place in which the farmers present gave their experiences in drilling for water. Mr. Isaacs, who lives northwest of the city, said he had had such a machine which is now in the possession of the department of public work at Edmonton and that out of ten wells he had located, water had been struck in eight of them, and in the other two he didn't think they had drilled deep enough. But Mr. Smith, of the C.P.R. department of natural resources, who had had a certain amount of supervision over the drilling of more than six hundred wells in all parts of the west, said they had such a machine in their office in Calgary and it didn't show any efficiency whatever. Mr. Charlesworth said his department had sent their machine away to be repaired, and had just got it back, but intended to give it a good test this year.

However, the trend of the discussion seemed to indicate that no efficient water diviner had ever been found, and it was better not to put much dependence on them where deep drilling was to be undertaken.

The discussion brought out that certain plants, the name of which none of those experienced with them knew, indicated the almost unfailing presence of water close to the surface. The plant is of an onion-like variety with a small burr at the top, and it can be detected by the fact that it is green when other vegetation in the vicinity is dried up. S. S. Dunham and others had had good practical results from noting the presence of this weed, and the chairman asked the government officials present to se-

cure more attention and to have botanists of their departments undertake some research work along this line.

The afternoon session closed with a paper by A. V. White, water power engineer of the commission of conservation, in which Mr. White issued a warning against the waste of underground waters, especially in Southern Alberta where a large artesian well area has been discovered. He declared that our underground waters are the basis of all our resources, and must be conserved. He advocated that a law, similar to one in effect in South Dakota, be enacted making it an offense to allow an artesian well to flow untapped or without valves to regulate the flow. In some of the states of the union the water supplies underground had been seriously depleted until the government took action. Mr. White's address brought forth a resolution dealing with the problem.

At the evening session, which was held in the auditorium of the Central school, M. M. Seymour, M.D., D.P.H., commissioner for public health for the province of Saskatchewan, gave a very excellent illustrated lecture on water for farmers and small communities. After dealing with methods of guarding against pollution of water supplies, Dr. Seymour launched into a subject on which he is an authority—the conservation of rain-water from roofs of farm buildings. He declared that millions of tons of water are allowed to go to waste annually on the plains of Western Canada through failure of our farmers to recognize the possibilities of this scheme. This is a waste which can be overcome at a comparatively low cost, and one of the problems of the farmer could be solved, at least in part, by following such a course. Dr. Seymour has written a pamphlet on this subject, giving the details of the plan, and this will appear in *The Herald* at an early date.

At the evening meeting also, F. H. Peters gave a paper on water stills and water filters, and with samples of various stills and filters, showed what could be done on the ordinary farm in a practical way to overcome the threat against public health through the drinking of impure water.