

## BOARD OF HEALTH MEETS WITH THE LOCAL MILK WHOLESALERS

Wood Milk Depots, Shipping in Refrigerator Cars, More Care in Handling Empty Cans, and Selling of Milk by Government Vendors Were Steps Suggested at Meeting Yesterday.

The securing of properlyiced milk depots at shipping stations, the shipping of milk in refrigerator cars, more care in the handling of the empty cans by trainmen, and the selling of milk by government vendors only, were steps suggested for the securing of a wholesome milk supply for St. John at a special meeting of the Board of Health with local wholesalers of milk yesterday.

It was further suggested that the city should erect a plant for the sterilization of milk containers and the pasteurising of milk.

### Exception Taken.

The dealers took exception to the action of the board in prosecuting them for selling unsanitary milk, as they claimed that as long as they had no means of determining the bacterial conditions which had been complained of and which might only be ascertained by a laboratory test.

They also claimed that unsatisfactory shipping conditions over which they had no control, and the handling of the milk by retailers in the numerous grocery stores about the city, were largely responsible for the contaminated milk supply for which the board was holding the wholesalers responsible.

As a result of the representations of the dealers several cases against them in the police court will be temporarily withdrawn, and the board has appointed what will be known as a milk committee whose duties will be to make a full investigation of every phase of the situation and submit a report recommending improvements which will secure for St. John a wholesome milk supply.

Chairman John Kelly presided at yesterday's meeting, the other members of the board present were Mrs. Richard Hooper, Dr. W. Warwick, district medical health officer, Dr. L. M. Curran, Dr. T. Head Johnson, food and dairy inspector, Dr. Abramson, provincial pathologist, W. H. Harding and Secretary T. M. Burns.

### Milk Dealers Protest.

A large number of milk dealers were present and were requested by the chairman to air their views and explain their grievances.

The spokesman for the dealers said that prosecutions had been instituted against them in the matter of bacterial count as found by Dr. Abramson, the provincial bacteriologist. He claimed that it was impossible for the men as farmers to determine the quantity of bacteria in the product handled by them, notwithstanding their eagerness to comply with the law, both in their own interests and for the welfare of their customers.

The conditions imposed by the board were conducive to great hardships, and prosecuting a dealer meant driving him out of business and destroying his means of livelihood. Furthermore he asserted that clean shopkeepers and countless small vendors compromised the wholesaler, as the milk samples subjected to microscopic inspection were seized from them later, and their short earnings in the handling of the milk was then placed on the shoulders of the wholesaler.

In answer to the chairman the dealers stated that the heads of all the producers from whom they obtained their milk had all been passed by the dairy inspector.

Another of the dealers presented

their difficulties. He asked how were they to know when milk was unfit for consumption when it appeared cool and sweet, fresh and palatable.

### Dr. Abramson.

Dr. Abramson replied that the dealers in their own interest should shut the supply of a farmer whose milk was found to carry a high bacterial count as by so doing they would soon isolate the bad herds and improve the good ones which would result to the benefit of all concerned.

The dealer vetoed the scheme, as they were hard put to secure a sufficient supply of milk to meet the demand, even under present conditions, and it was impossible further to discriminate.

The doctor felt that both the dairymen and the dealers in the interests of humanity should endeavor to better this important branch of the food supply and not wait for drastic legislation to secure that end.

Dr. Warwick said that many complaints were received by the board of dirt and sediment in the milk. The dealers were of the opinion that this was largely caused by the way it was handled by sub-dealers, who also complained of the way the milk was delivered to them. Along the C. N. R. the railroad time table did not work out to the advantage of the milk supply. The milk was brought by the farmers in the back lands to the shipping depots at irregular intervals and thus occasioned the fifty hour old milk referred to by the chairman of the board.

### Question to Dealers.

Dr. Warwick asked the dealers if they honestly believed they were handling their supplies in a clean manner. One dealer replied that while conditions were not ideal as yet, there was a great improvement as compared to ten years ago, which was largely due to the education movement in health matters.

Dr. Abramson stated that he was fully in sympathy with the men who were earning their livelihood in the milk business, and their arguments appealed to his sense of logic, but in the interests of public health the authorities were obliged to take action against those selling unclean food. Milk, he said, should be as pure and free from bacteria as water, and it was imperative that the utmost care should be exercised in seeing that it was not contaminated, as the lives of infants and children depended upon the purity of the supply. The concentration of responsibility, the erection of a municipal plant for the sterilization of containers, the pasteurisation of milk, and proper icing equipment at shipping stations would ensure a desirable milk supply and would facilitate the carrying out of the law by the wholesalers and place a responsibility upon the small dealer from which he could not escape.

He urged that the dealers, in their own interests, should endeavor to improve the quality of their product and did not feel that they should be prosecuted if the farmers were to blame, and he thought the way to solve the whole question was to bring about a co-ordinated scheme of improvement through governmental channels.

### Said Act Unfair.

One of the dealers characterized the new health act as unfair and impractical. Two-thirds of the city's

milk supply, he said, was distributed from small grocery stores of all types and conditions, the proprietors of which were largely responsible for present conditions for which the wholesalers were being prosecuted. Milk was brought into the shops and poured into crocks in which there still remained a quantity of the previous day's supply. The container was seldom given a cleaning, and the crock was so heavy that children left in charge of the shop often left it off for flies and dirt to get in. He thought the milk can to be preferred to the crock, and said that 99 per cent of the small milk dealers did not use their milk.

He urged that hot water and a steam jet be supplied the dealers by the city, and that the Board of Health make an inspection of the whole trade right back to the producer.

Another dealer claimed that the cars supplied by the railroads were not of the proper type. They were not refrigerator cars, but were in winter, Sussex was the only shipping station where the milk could be iced, although there was an ice house at Apohaqui where ice had been laid in. Another cause for complaint was the way empty milk cans were handled by trainmen who threw them off the cars any old way with the result that tops were lost and the cans were dented; dirt was introduced and the cans soon made to leak.

### A Private Session.

When the dealers withdrew and the board resolved itself into a private session, Dr. Curran and W. H. Golding were of the opinion that the milk question should be thoroughly gone into and facilities placed in the hands of the wholesalers and producers that would reduce the risk of impurity in the milk supply to a marked degree.

They felt that icing stations at shipping points and refrigerator cars should be insisted upon, and action taken through the proper channels to secure them. It was felt that if the city's milk supply was handled by a chain of government vendors a great improvement would result.

### CARS ARE REQUIRED.

Auto owners who are willing to place their cars at the disposal of the committee in support of Hon. R. W. Wigmore for work on election day are requested to notify Roy A. Davidson at the Seamen's Institute, Phone M. 2509-11.

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## An Appointment For St. John Lady

Miss Elsie McKim Chosen for Important Position in Ontario.

The many friends of Miss Elsie McKim, daughter of Rev. R. P. and Mrs. McKim, Main street, will be interested to learn that she has been appointed to an important position in Ontario. She is now superintendent of Women's Industrial Education and has an office in the Parliament Building, Toronto. Miss McKim will travel through the larger cities of the Province taking up the matter of Technical Education for Women.

Miss McKim was educated at Kingshurst, Rothesay; Havergal College, Toronto; McDonald College, Guelph, Ont., and Pratt Institute, Brooklyn. For the last five years she has been on the staff at Pratt Institute.

The Ontario Government have for some time been looking for the right woman for this position and Miss McKim was interviewed in New York by several Ontario officials who went there for this purpose. She accepted the position and has already entered upon her new duties. She will organize and superintend women's industrial education.

### MARRIED.

**CROZIER-WRIGHT**—At St. Mary's church, on September 14th, 1920, by Rev. R. Taylor McKim, Isabel defunct Crozier to Gay Raymond Wright, both of St. John.

### DIED.

**SMITH**—At his home, Blissville, Sunbury Co., N. B., on the 14th inst., Daniel Edward Smith, in the 83rd year of his age, leaving his wife, one son, and two daughters to mourn.

Notice of funeral later.  
**PATERSON**—Died suddenly at the General Public Hospital, Alexander Y. Paterson.

Funeral private from 7 Dorchester street, on Wednesday afternoon at 3 o'clock.  
**MILLER**—Suddenly on September 14, at 80 Lancaster avenue, Katherine Elizabeth, infant daughter of Ronald K. and Nina K. Miller, aged ten months.

Funeral private this Wednesday afternoon.

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