

MAYOR CLASHES WITH TWO M.O.H.

His Worship Charges Laxity in Connection With Flu Outbreak

ENDS IN WRANGLE

Col. McCullough and Dr. Hastings Resent Criticism of Chief Magistrate

Dr. Risk, Chairman of the Local Board of Health, called a meeting of the board yesterday afternoon to confer with the military authorities regarding Spanish Influenza, and to decide what measures, if any, might be necessary to curtail the epidemic. The meeting came to order, and Mayor Church precipitated one of the warmest scenes that have been witnessed at the City Hall for many months. Col. McCullough, the Provincial M. O. H., said the Mayor was a joke; his Worship returned the compliment. Dr. Hastings, M. O. H., was dragged over the coals by the Mayor, and after deciding no steps were necessary, an adjournment was called.

Dr. Hastings remarked at the opening that he had just returned from Washington.

"We are here to consider the local situation," said the Mayor, "not that of New York. It isn't necessary to go to Washington or New York to learn the cause of the disease. What is the use of the Board of Health?"

In reply to Dr. Risk, Col. McCullough, who said he was present representing the Assistant Director of Medical Services, said there was no conflict between the Medical Officer of Health and the Military authorities, but the military had full control of their camps and did not intend to relinquish their power.

Dr. Hastings' Homecoming.

The Mayor alleged that the Base Hospital was a fire-trap, was overcrowded, and a member of the Board of Trustees of the General Hospital had appealed to him to investigate the matter from a fire standpoint. "Two gunners got their deaths there last winter."

"Dr. Hastings should have been here looking," he said, "after his duties, instead of going to Washington."

Dr. Hastings—I knew what I was doing.

Mayor—Well, in future, get the consent of the Board of Control before you go away.

Dr. Hastings appealed to the Chair.

Mayor Church—Now, when I get through, it will be time enough for you to speak.

The Mayor said that no adequate measures had been taken to protect troops. There was a great dearth of accommodation and the Government had fallen down all along the line. At Niagara there was not a hut where the men might get warm and dry their clothes. The same was true of Petawawa. If the war were over it would take two years before the men could be brought back, owing to lack of accommodation.

Checking the Epidemic.

Col. McCullough—The military authorities have taken steps to check the epidemic and will continue to do so despite what the city may do.

Mayor Church said the local board had done nothing, and unless it became active, should be abolished. As to the military authorities, they did not move the troops from Niagara until he had appealed repeatedly to Ottawa.

Col. McCullough—The Mayor knows nothing of what he is saying, or else he would not make such statements. In fact the general impression in the city is that he is a joke.

The Mayor—That is an impudent statement. My opinion of you is that you are a standing joke yourself, and that your department has failed utterly in dealing with the situation. Your Administration is a joke. You are fifty-fifty a military and a civilian official. Mr. Chairman, Col. McCullough should apologize.

Alderman Risk—I think you have evened it up.

Col. McCullough—There is no use my staying here.

The Mayor to Col. McCullough—You had better not come down here and try to spring any of that stuff or you will get put out of here pretty quick.

Col. McCullough to the Mayor—The Mayor will not put me out. He does not own the City Hall.

Mayor Church—Providence will cure the epidemic.

Dr. Hastings' Defense.

Dr. Hastings said that all possible was being done. It was important that the people should not become panicky and lower their vitality. The Mayor's remarks about the department were unwarranted, and he should apologize.

Mayor Church—You should apologize for drawing your salary. What have you done to regulate the military camps?

Dr. Hastings—We have nothing to do with the military camps.

Col. McCullough said the disease would spread so rapidly there would be little gained by reporting it.

The epidemic had spread through England in July and August, and was now sweeping over the States. The disease spreads like wild fire, and would sweep over the country without about half the people getting it. He was very reluctant to close up business places, and as much crowding prevailed in a busy store as in a theatre.

Col. McCullough: "I cannot understand how the public tolerate criticism from irresponsible people, such as has been going on," he added. "The military authorities have been criticized by those who know nothing about sanitation or health matters. It is scandalous. It is time the military authorities put an end to the noisy, chattering criticism. The sooner it is done, the better for the soldiers."

Health Board's Duty.

The Mayor, to Dr. Hastings: What have you done?

Dr. Hastings: We have issued statements to the press, giving the public all the necessary information.

Mayor: I thought you had more than a paper organization. You

took a trip to Washington, that is all you did.

Dr. Hastings: That is utterly untrue.

Mayor: All the Board of Health does is meet once a month, pass a few accounts and adjourn. I move we adjourn. It will be no great loss if we never meet again.

The Mayor said, as Col. McCullough was leaving the room, "I will take the matter up with Ottawa."

Col. McCullough, replying to his Worship, "They don't pay much attention to you."