

# State House News

## ASK FOR REPEAL OF COMPULSORY VACCINATION LAW

### Petitioners Assert Inoculation Not the Reason Smallpox Has Been Brought Under Control

From Our Special Reporter

Boston, March 23—Asserting vaccination causes disease and death, opponents of compulsory inoculation against smallpox, armed with information which they claim proves their contention, urged the legislative committee on public health today to favorably report on a proposal to abolish compulsory vaccination as a requisite to school attendance. They held that greater sanitation alone has reduced the number of smallpox cases.

Mrs Othilie Lawson of Arlington, chairman of the committee for medical freedom, said it was not the bill's intention to prohibit vaccination, but simply to allow citizens their constitutional right to decide whether they wanted such treatment.

#### Says Vaccination Does Not Prevent Disease

Mrs Jessica Henderson of Wayland, secretary-treasurer of the committee, said compulsory vaccination has been in force in this state for 52 years and in that time it has been proved that not only does it not prevent smallpox, but it cripples for life and causes death in some cases. She stated that the 1855 Legislature, in passing the compulsory law, exceeded its rights and encroached on the constitutional prerogatives of the people. In 1873-1874, she stated, after 68 years of vaccination in the state, occurred the greatest smallpox epidemic in Massachusetts history, wherein vaccinated people died as readily as unvaccinated. Sanitation and not vaccination has brought smallpox under control, she asserted, and "we question whether physicians have the right to thrust their services on the public as they do now under the law."

Mrs Henderson pointed to the condition in Australia with the lowest smallpox death rate in the world, yet only 2 1/2 per cent of its inhabitants are vaccinated. In New York state in one epidemic, she said, 27 vaccinated children died from smallpox, and more than 100 were seriously harmed. She submitted petitions containing thousands of names, she said, asking for repeal of the compulsory law.

Mrs Grace Corlew of Lowell emphasized the point that a question of personal liberty is involved in the compulsory law, affecting the human body, which is "sacred to its owner." With her husband in charge of the Middlesex county truant school in North Chelmsford for 11 years, she stated that not one death had occurred there and their policy had always been cleanliness and isolation from those who were sick, instead of using medicine exclusively. She declared inoculation places a terrific strain on the heart.

John D. Wright, former secretary to ex-Gov Frank G. Allen and to Winston Churchill, said there is no such thing as pure vaccine, since it was a poison to begin with. More people are dying today from vaccination than from smallpox itself, he asserted, and the disease has been reduced to minimum in the abolition of filth attendant to progress of civilization.

Representative John J. Gilmartin of Fitchburg doubted that his city had an epidemic of smallpox in 1932, as was stated at the time. He claimed somebody made a mistake and it was covered up. Forty thousand persons were vaccinated at the time and he talked with physicians who were not vaccinated themselves and who said there was no smallpox.

Others who spoke in favor of the legislation included Representative Harry D. Sisson of Pittsfield and Dr. Mary Jane Walker of New Bedford. A standing vote of the audience showed more than 100, the majority in attendance, as in favor.

Dr Henry D. Chadwick, state health

commissioner, in opposition, gave figures showing incidence of smallpox among persons vaccinated. In 1931, he said, a carrier at a dance where there were 35 persons communicated the disease to the only unvaccinated persons, the other 34 escaping. In another outbreak, six persons were exposed and the five unvaccinated contracted the scourge, the vaccinated person escaping. Since February, 1932, there has not been a case of smallpox in this state, he said, and contended this proved the efficacy of the inoculation. He said a checkup at Fitchburg after the 1932 outbreak, failed to reveal a doctor who attributed deaths to vaccination. He said smallpox is prevalent only in the states that lack compulsory vaccination laws.

Dr Frederick Russell, professor of preventive medicine at Harvard school of preventive medicine, said Massachusetts has fewer cases of smallpox than any other state in the Union, which is self-evident proof that the law is good and that it is intelligently enforced. While at a world medical conference at Geneva, Dr Russell said he was reproached for the smallpox record of the United States and had to reply that the condition was due to states lacking compulsory vaccination laws. "It is the 'gold star' states which give us our bad reputation in Europe," he asserted, referring to states so called by the sponsors of the repeal legislation.

## SLIGHT EMPLOYMENT LOSS IN FEBRUARY

### Springfield and Holyoke Show This While Pittsfield Has Very Small Gain

From Our Special Reporter

Boston, March 23—One hundred and fifty-two wholesale and retail trade outlets in the city of Springfield, making monthly statistical reports to the state department of labor and industries, had 3812 persons on their payrolls for the midweek of February, as against 3843 in the January midweek, a February loss of 0.8 per cent. Their aggregate payroll for the January week was \$90,781, as compared with \$83,198 in February, a loss the latter month of 2.9 per cent.

Forty-two such outlets in Holyoke reported total employment in February of 801, and in January, of 822, a February drop of 2.6 per cent. Their total weekly payroll in January, was \$18,133, and in February, \$17,910, a drop of 1.2 per cent.

Thirty-nine such outlets in Pittsfield employed 9933 in January and 9935 in February, a gain of 0.2 per cent; and their aggregate payroll in the January week was \$18,586, and in February, a gain of 0.4 per cent.

It is estimated that 55 per cent of all employes in such establishments in the state are represented in this data. Changes which occurred in the 19 leading trade cities varied, due to local conditions, but few changes of importance were noted, and none were attributed to any one factor, except the special February sales by one chain department store group, the report states.

A total of 4909 outlets in the state reported 85,054 employes in February and 85,534 in January, a February loss of 480 employes, or 0.6 per cent. The aggregate weekly payroll of these places was \$1,823,278 in February and \$1,822,671 in January, a February loss of \$9393 or 0.6 per cent.

## STATE HOUSE NOTES

From Our Special Reporter.

West Springfield Woman Passes Tests  
Boston, March 23—The state civil service department has made public a list of 13 persons who have passed tests to be eligible for appointments. Mabel F. Martin of 133 Morgan road, West Springfield, is third on a list for choice of a position as head of research learning in the state health commissioner's office, which pays \$5000 a year. The woman who heads the eligible list now holds the position provisionally.

Eligible for Belchertown School Post  
Three women were announced by the civil service department today as eligible for appointment to a position

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