

## WHAT IS BEHIND THE HOLDING OF "TYPHOID MARY" AT OAK PARK HOSPITAL?

"See that woman wearing the blue dress, the one leaning out of the corner window—that's Typhoid Mary."

The old lady shrunk back into the room as she overheard the remark while the man and woman on the street below stopped and peered up, eager to catch a glimpse of her.

With an expression of pained pride the old lady sat down on the couch by the wall. For a moment she looked blankly out of the window over the heads of the curious ones, then she stretched sobbing upon the couch.

The woman was Mrs. Mary Burke of Maywood; the place, the Oak Park hospital. She is detained there under orders. Whose orders? Mrs. Burke does not know.

It has been said of Mrs. Burke that she is responsible for the 48 cases of typhoid that developed among people who attended the Oak Park high school banquet June 18. The salad served at the banquet was blamed for causing the typhoid. It was claimed that Mrs. Burke made the salad.

Loop newspapers have printed columns about "Typhoid Mary." None of their reporters have ever seen Mrs. Burke. An attendant of the hospital told Mrs. Burke that orders had been given to the hospital that newspaper men were not to be allowed to see her.

"I did not make the salad," Mrs. Burke told the Day Book reporter in her room at the hospital Tuesday afternoon. "I was only a dishwasher at the high school. The evening of the banquet I peeled some potatoes, but they had to be boiled before they could be used. Wouldn't boiling kill germs if I had any? The only things I touched were vegetables that were cooked afterward."

A week ago a machine drew up in front of the home of R. J. Spears, Maywood, where she lived. Police-

men put her into it and took her to the hospital. No warrant was shown. Mrs. Burke is not under arrest.

"Go ask Dr. Frances E. Chapman," suggested the hospital house physician when asked who ordered Mrs. Burke's detention.

In the office of the Oak Park health department Dr. Chapman was found at her desk. Out loud she was reading a page of a great stack of copy that lay on her desk. It appeared to be the transcript of an interview with one of those who had been to the high school banquet.

"Did you eat any of the salad?" The reporter heard her read this question from the transcript.

The reporter announced who he was. "I cannot see you. I will not," she said.

"Is Mrs. Burke being detained under order of this health department?" persisted the reporter. "Ask Dr. Bowers there," came the reply.

"Mrs. Burke is detained by Oak Park authority under an order issued by the secretary of the Illinois State Board of Health," said Bowers.

That ended the interview. As he went out the reporter turned in the anteroom. The door was slammed in his face.

"I am treated fine here," said Mrs. Burke. "But I do not know what I shall do if I do not soon gain my liberty. Now they are talking of moving me to another hospital. I will not go. I am not ill. I have not even been given a drop of medicine. They do not even say I have typhoid. I know I have never had it."

Friends of the old lady—she is 55—are preparing to take drastic action unless she is soon released unless some one comes forward with a good reason for her being held a prisoner. They ask, "Are Oak Park health authorities merely trying to establish an alibi for letting an epidemic develop?"