San Francisco Wins Victory
In Its Battle With Influenza

SAN FRANCISCO fought the Spanish influenza to a standstill. The victory was officially announced at noon yesterday and was greeted by the ringing of bells and the blowing of whistles. San Francisco at once threw away its gauze masks and everybody was glad.

The victory over the epidemic in San Francisco was won by the courage of the City Board of Health and the willing cooperation of its people themselves.

Schools, churches, theaters, moving picture houses, dancing halls, were all closed at the first appearance of the invaders. Thousands of men and women voluntarily put on the gauze masks recommended by physicians. Afterward the Board of Supervisors, by ordinance, compelled the universal use of the mask.

The people of San Francisco acted every mandate of the Board of Health willingly and with promptness. There was no quibbling over the order. No one sought the aid of the courts to set aside any of the regulations imposed by the Board of Health.

The epidemic swept the city, killing hundreds of lives. But there remains the consolation that hundreds of other lives were saved by the cheerful obedience of the people of the entire city to the rules laid down for combating the epidemic.

Other cities which did not go to the length of the measures taken by San Francisco have not fared so well. Our sister city of Los Angeles was and is still sorely stricken. In that city the number of new cases reported daily still mounts into the hundreds. The official report from Los Angeles shows a total of 1,119 cases in the first week of the epidemic, between October 5 and 12. In the week between November 9 and 15 there were 2,694 cases in the sixth week of the epidemic. On November 19 the new cases reported numbered 14. Los Angeles did not require the use of the gauze mask. Schools, churches and theaters were closed but afterwards reopened.

The Los Angeles Examiner has given a vigorous editorial, comments on the methods used by the two cities in combating the epidemic in which it said of San Francisco:

"Stauffer, superintendent of the health department, in fact, ordered the masks cheerfully. Dr. J. Woody Hutchinson, who has been through the severe Boston epidemic, where the disease killed in the United States, had strongly advocated the general use of the mask and the San Francisco Board of Health thought the advice good. The effect of the mask was marked. New cases promptly decreased. In numbers and the death rate, went down. San Francisco had less than a dozen new cases on Monday and only several deaths. The illness was negligible. On Saturday last the theater reopened and the city is going. Dr. Hutchinson came here and urged the general use of the 'flu mask. Was he heard? On the contrary, he was not only unheard but was driven away from the city with a private illness with his own private illness for his advice. The recent exhibition in the council chamber when this happened will live long as one of the most grievous instances of official manners, and beguile ignorance the city has ever witnessed."

Let the Social and Medical Authorities of the city investigate the cause of the disease in San Francisco, from the start to the finish, and then have the experience of Los Angeles. The layman has held his peace on the subject because he knows not who, and, realized his folly, but now he has a right to know and, in justice to the two cities, the truth should be established. Give us the facts and figures, and let us judge the future. The disease and its attendant circumstances have cost this city millions, and the truth now demands to be reported so that the most effective manner of battling with the disease henceforth may be known. The simple question to determine is: Is it better to mask or not to mask? The two cities offer the two examples. What do their respective experiences prove?