

# EPIDEMIC ON THE WANE AND CONDITIONS IMPROVED IN NUMBER OF STATES

## Planning at Harrisburg to Permit Opening of Places of Amusement Soon—Analysis of Reports from States and Military Camps.

(By Associated Press.)

Washington, Oct. 23—Continued improvement in the influenza situation in army camps and in a number of states was shown by reports today to the surgeon general of the army and the public health service. New cases in army camps totalled only 2,738 with 327 deaths. The disease now is epidemic at only three camps, Lewis, Washington, McClellan, Ala., and Kearney, Calif.

States where the number of new cases reported shows a decrease include Connecticut, Delaware, New Jersey, Indiana, Maryland, Missouri, Nevada, North Carolina, Oklahoma, Oregon, South Carolina, Tennessee and Wisconsin. In portions of other states improvement has been shown and for the country at large, the peak of the epidemic apparently has been reached.

Conditions still are serious in some states, particularly Colorado, Iowa, Kentucky, Kansas, Minnesota, Nebraska, Ohio, Texas and Mexico. It is estimated there are 125,000 cases in Ohio.

The effect of the epidemic on the railroads was shown by the railroad's week report of traffic conditions. Illness of railroad men interfered seriously with freight movement and unloading. Repair work at railroad shops also has been hampered, while a decrease in passenger traffic was not noted.

Reports that influenza germs may have been brought into the United States and spread by enemy agents landed from submarines, are being investigated by government agents but no basis for them has been found. Investigators of several government departments declared today they were convinced after an inquiry that the disease was brought to this country through the natural channels of affected seamen, travelers or imports, and not by malicious methods.

Philadelphia, Oct. 23—At the meeting today of the health authorities it was decided that because of the high death rate due to influenza the order closing saloons, theatres, schools and churches and prohibiting public gatherings shall remain in force indefinitely. The meeting placed the matter of future opening in the hands of Dr. Cairns, health officer, who yesterday went to Harrisburg and consulted Dr. Royer, acting commissioner of health. It was agreed that at a meeting next week there shall be a further discussion of the closing ban which has now been in force three weeks.

A still further decrease in the number of new cases of influenza in Philadelphia was reported today. Deaths continue high, 431 being reported for the twenty-four hour period.

Harrisburg, Oct. 23—Plans whereby decisions can be reached to lift the bans against amusement places and saloons were worked out today at the state health department and Governor Brumbaugh said today in regard to the matter "I am hoping to see the ban lifted early through local authorities. A plan whereby deaths will show when the danger point is passed is being worked out."

The health department announced that several investigations are being made into the value of serums for prevention of influenza and that inquiries into housing conditions are under way. In places in Allegheny, Lackawanna and Luzerne counties where housing conditions are bad, said Acting Commissioner Royer, the percentage of deaths has been high.

Reports were received today of spread of the disease in Allegheny county and of many deaths in the hard and soft coal regions. It is feared now that the death rate for the month in the state will go over 20,000.

The state council of National Defense here, in co-operation with the state authorities, sent out a letter urging members of the councils in the counties to work to prevent profiteering by doctors, druggists, undertakers or others and to bring any cases to the attention of the authorities.

New York, Oct. 23—Although 5,390 new cases of Spanish influenza were reported here today, the greatest number since the outbreak of the disease, Health Commissioner Copeland held tonight to his assertion that the epidemic was on the wane.

He cited as proof of this that police had received fewer ambulance calls and that the hospitals were less crowded and explained the increased number of cases by assertions that physicians had only just found time to make their accumulated reports to the health department. Of today's cases, he said, 685 alone were reported by eighteen doctors.

He added, on the other hand, that he thought many practitioners were not reporting their cases and declared that settlement workers were daily uncovering new cases.

Although Dr. Copeland asserted tonight that he was receiving many complaints of overcrowding in the subways, officials of the Interborough Rapid Transit Company today told the Public Service Commission that, because of alarm occasioned by the influenza epidemic, surface, elevated and subway lines were carrying approximately 400,000 less passengers a day than a year ago. Thousands of persons, they said, are walking to and from work.