

January 28, 1919.

Dear Sir:-

The report of attempts to transmit influenza to healthy volunteers as quoted by you is substantially correct. This research work was done carefully, but definite conclusions should not be formed from the negative results obtained. However, it is clear that the spread of the disease does not take place in as simple a manner as many people have supposed.

Theoretically, quarantine is of value; practically, this measure does not accomplish much unless patients ill with the disease are isolated in the very early stages, and the difficulties in the way of discovering and isolating persons in the very early stages are insurmountable. The most effective means at our disposal at the present time for combatting the spread of this disease are to see to it that the people at large observe the principles of good personal hygiene; that ventilation in the home, in the office, and in the shop is maintained; that overcrowding indoors is avoided; and that those who become ill are put at rest early in the disease and treated rationally. Overcrowding in street cars might well be mentioned also.

Study of the results obtained in various parts of the country during the recent epidemic seem to indicate that little has been accomplished by the attempted enforcement of radical quarantine and closing measures. These too often result in reactionary conditions which are also potent in making for the spread of the disease. Responsibility for separating the sick from the well must devolve upon the individual members of a community. The people must be taught to protect others by remaining at home upon the first indication of the illness.

Very truly yours,

Surgeon General , U.S. Navy.

George W. Lane, District Attorney,
Durango, Colorado.

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