

ST. ALBANS FREE OF INFLUENZA

Any Cases Should Be Reported Immediately to Health Officer

Spanish influenza now forms the chief topic of conversation in St. Albans, as well as in other towns and cities in this part of the country, but though there are a large number of cases of grip and hard colds in the city St. Albans has, to all reports, escaped this disease so far. At least no cases have been reported to the health officer, but this may not be taken to mean anything, as up to this time the disease has not been a reportable one. Now, however, with a concise and emphatic order from the state board of health, all cases will have to be reported immediately to the local health officer, the houses of the victims placarded, and report made to the state board.

There are a great many colds in St. Albans at the present time, perhaps an unusual number and there are also a number of cases of grip. Many people, however, are taking the first sign of a cold as Spanish influenza. Thus it is that the story has started that there are many cases of the disease here and in other places.

The following are instructions issued by the state board of health through the secretary, Charles F. Dalton, to health officers:

Present indications are that within a few weeks, and possibly a few days, Vermont will be visited by an epidemic of the so-called Spanish influenza. Already there are many cases at some of our seaports and the disease will gradually invade the interior states.

The apparent seriousness of this disease makes it necessary that some precautions be taken to limit its spread. The disease is not essentially different from the influenza or grip which we have been familiar with for a good many years (it is called "Spanish" because the present pandemic began in Spain); the same germ causes this disease; it is present in the secretions of the nose, throat, and air passages; it is given off in the act of coughing, sneezing, and talking by droplet infection. The symptoms are fever, chills, head and joint pains and catarrhal discharges from the nose, throat, and eyes. These symptoms last about three days.

The disease itself is not serious. The complications frequently are. Hence the disease should not be slighted. The patient should go to bed at once and call his physician. The complications are bronchial pneumonia, occasionally lobar pneumonia and nephritis. These, of course, are serious.

The disease is hereby declared to be a contagious and infectious disease under Section 6203, General Laws. In accordance with said section, the following rules and regulations are promulgated:

"Influenza is hereby added to the list of diseases to be reported by physicians. Every physician shall promptly report each case attended or prescribed for by him to the local health officer. The health officer shall visit and placard the home premises of the patient."

All persons should understand that this is a contagious disease and that the patient should be isolated in the home and especially from all visitors and neighbors. Handkerchiefs, napkins and towels used by the case may indirectly cause the disease. It is quite possible that healthy persons may become carriers. Children in families in which there are cases should not attend school; and no one from such families should attend public gatherings, especially picture shows, or other indoor entertainments. Rational observance of these precautions may do much to limit the spread of this disease and consequent effects.

Health officers will promptly report all cases to the state board of health, as these reports must be forwarded to