

# OFFICIALS GET FIGHTING GRIP ON EPIDEMIC

Deaths Number 91; Total of 19,656 Cases Thus Far Reported in City

Danger Still Great as Ever and Warning Is Issued Against Carelessness

950 CASES YESTERDAY

WE HAVE a good grip on it," said City Health Officer William C. Hassler last night as he scanned the record that showed for the first time in ten days a drop in the daily report of cases to less than 1000.

"We have a good grip on it, but we must not let go that grip. The danger is as great as ever, and the worst thing that can happen is to let the people grow careless. If we want to stamp this thing out quickly and not suffer with it for months, as Eastern cities have done, we must keep up every precaution until every possibility of reinfection is gone."

The cases reported yesterday totaled 950, of which a large proportion were turned in by mail. Deaths during the day from influenza and its complications numbered 91. The total number of cases so far reported in this city is now 19,656. Altogether 1067 persons have died of influenza complicated by pneumonia. In addition to this, the death rate for lobar pneumonia has quadrupled for October and that for bronchial pneumonia has tripled.

## PNEUMONIA FALLS OFF

The record of pneumonia cases taken to the hospitals also shows an improvement in the situation. Although the number of new cases handled by the emergency service jumped Wednesday to 133, only three less than the high mark of the epidemic, it fell off markedly Wednesday night. From 7 P. M. Wednesday to 7 A. M. Thursday twenty-two new cases were taken to the hospital, as against sixty-six in the previous night.

The hospital situation was reported much better yesterday. Though the San Francisco Hospital is still crowded with pneumonia cases, it was able to receive all the new cases that came in. Today additional room will be made available through the opening of the Red Cross Hospital and the beginning of evacuation of the convalescent hospital.

With the increasing supplies of anti-influenza vaccine, Health Officer Hassler is now furnishing quantities of it to all parts of the State in response to calls that pour in by telegraph and telephone. As San Francisco has the only supply in the State the local health office has become the vaccine dispensary of California.

## SERVICE SURGEONS SEND CALL

The Army and Navy surgeons, even as far down as San Diego and Camp Kearny, have wired calls for supplies of the Leary vaccine and have been furnished with it to the limit of local ability. Army transports and merchant ships leaving port have been supplied with quantities sufficient for their crews and passengers, and hospitals and physicians generally have been furnished with the immunizing serum.

In spite of the publication of a statement from San Jose that the Leary and other vaccines had been found to be of no avail, the physicians have the greatest confidence in it and larger numbers of persons than ever presented themselves at the hospitals yesterday for inoculation.

The Central Emergency Hospital, which takes all comers night and day, had a line of applicants for inoculation yesterday extending at times around the Ivy-street side of the building and into Polk street. The surgeons handling the vaccine needle had not a moment's rest all day.

At Mount Zion Hospital dispensary 820 persons were inoculated with the Leary vaccine yesterday. The dispensary is open for this purpose each day between 10 and 12 in the morning, and it was announced yesterday that for the benefit of workers it will be kept open Sunday at the same hours.

Persons who wish to receive the vaccine at the Stanford University clinic should apply at the office of the clinic, Sacramento and Webster streets, and not at Lane Hospital, it was announced yesterday. The hours for inoculation there are from 4 to 5 o'clock in the afternoon.

At the hospitals named and also at the University of California Hospital, the Children's Hospital, St. Francis Hospital and the Harbor Emergency Hospital inoculation with Leary vaccine is given free of charge.

## PLANT MEN INOCULATED

The Union Plant Hospital of the Bethlehem Shipbuilding Corporation has undertaken the inoculation of the 18,000 men at that plant. Already the executive heads, the members of the office force and the foremen have been inoculated with Leary vaccine and the men are being handled as fast as possible. The Union plant has had 5200 cases of influenza, but only seventeen deaths. The hospital force has been busy night and day with influenza cases, both in the hospital, in its ward at St. Luke's Hospital and in its out-patient department.

The Leary vaccine is recommended by Dr. William C. Hassler, city health officer, who submitted himself to inoculation, and who says the experience of physicians in the East has demonstrated its value as a preventive of influenza.

Light on the effect of influenza on the death rate in San Francisco is shed by records of the health office for the month of October. According to the Board of Health, the average number of deaths in San Francisco in normal times is twenty-one a day, or 630 a month.

For the month of October the total number of deaths in San Francisco was 1335. Of these 1067 died from influenza complicated by pneumonia. The number of deaths from lobar pneumonia was 133 and that from bronchial pneumonia was 51. As that represents four times the normal

and three times the normal death rate from bronchial pneumonia, it is considered that the increase is to be ascribed to influenza although the death certificates in these cases did not mention the malady.

The number of deaths from other causes than influenza and pneumonia during October was therefore 585.

The statistics also show that the mortality from influenza has been heaviest among men of military age. This has been the experience throughout the United States, and is ascribed by the physicians to the fact that the disease first took hold in this country at Camp Devens, where 15,000 soldiers were down with it. In this camp, the doctors say, the influenza acquired a character which it has maintained in its spread throughout the country.

## FEW UNDER 25 DIE

The figures for this city show comparatively few deaths below the age of 25 and above the age of 45. Furthermore, while the numbers of males and females are about the same below 25 and above 45, between these ages males are greatly in the majority.

Under the age of 25 a total of 102 men and 96 women have died of influenza in this city. Above 45, about 60 men and 30 women have died. But between these ages the dead number 487 men and 194 women.

Influenza has been more fatal to the foreign-born population than to native Californians. Among native Californians there have been 343 deaths and among the foreign-born 376 deaths. Natives of Italy have suffered most, with 131 deaths, and natives of Ireland next, with ninety-five deaths. Among natives of France there have been fifty deaths, among natives of Norway and Sweden fifty-three, and among natives of Austria thirty. The death rate among Chinese and Japanese has remained about normal.