

Order Barring Gatherings May Soon Be Raised By Health Board

Schools Open Monday; Churches Are Allowed To Resume Services Next Sunday

By reason of the steady decrease in the number of cases of influenza the ban on gatherings in public places will soon be removed. In informal discussion of the situation yesterday members of the Board of Health said churches probably would resume indoor services, with worshipers wearing masks, next Sunday, and the theaters open some time next week. The Board will hold a special meeting this afternoon to take up the question of rescinding orders as to churches, theaters, and other places of assemblage.

"The epidemic is about dead," said Dr. William C. Hassler, Health Officer, yesterday, "but all precautions must be rigorously observed for some days yet. The Board of Health will determine tomorrow as to when the people should be permitted to assemble in their usual places of worship and amusement. The way things are going at present it looks as though danger of a flare-up is almost

past."

TWENTY-EIGHT DEATHS

Fifty-five new cases of influenza were reported by telephone yesterday to the Board of Health. The mail brought in reports of 145 cases, some of which were four or five days old. The deaths for the twenty-four hours ending at 5 o'clock yesterday were twenty-eight, a decrease of three from Monday's report.

A slight increase in the number of cases today and tomorrow would not surprise the Health Board officials on account of the relaxation in the wearing of masks in Monday's peace celebration. Both on the streets and in the restaurants where dancing was allowed, masks were discarded by many of the merry-makers. The period of incubation of the influenza germ is about three days, so the effect on the health of the participants in the big joy doings are not yet apparent.

MASKS STILL NEEDED

The official order for the abandonment of the masks by the public is not probable until some days after the reopening of public assemblies. The Board of Supervisors is expected to rescind the mask-wearing ordinance whenever the Board of Health advises the move.

The use of masks at Fort Scott and the other Coast defense posts has been discontinued by Colonel Frederick Marsh, commanding officer, on the showing from the post medical staff that conditions have returned to normal.

QUARANTINE STILL ON

Civilians visiting the post are required to wear masks, and the artillerymen when visiting the Presidio, are required to don their gauze face covering. The quarantine has not been lifted, and enlisted men and officers must have urgent business in the city before they are given passes. Civilians visitors are questioned before admitted to be sure they are bent on business.

No change in the situation was reported at the Presidio or Letterman General Hospital. Officers at headquarters said that masks would not be discontinued, probably, until the city health authorities took action in San Francisco. The quarantine ban still is in effect at both institutions.

The military authorities have been none the less strict in dealing with mask slackers than have the civilians. A standing punishment of three hours in the guardhouse was established at the Presidio for all men found without masks or wearing them improperly. Offenders were reported by commissioned officers and until the troops learned that the masks were given them to be worn the guardhouse was filled to overflowing a times. Even on the marches and dur-

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Ban on Public Gatherings May Be Lifted Soon

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ing drill exercises, the protective gauze is worn in place.

CHURCHES AND SCHOOLS REOPEN NEXT WEEK

The churches will be allowed to open on Sunday, and the schools on Monday. So it was announced at the Board of Supervisors' meeting yesterday.

Supervisor Schmitz urged that the theaters be allowed to open on Sunday.

The Mayor and several Supervisors advised leaving the decision on the theater-opening to the Board of Health.

A large delegation from the Theatrical Managers' Association, the picture houses, the Musicians' Union and the Theatrical Mechanics' Union appeared before the Supervisors to ask for the quickest decision of the reopening question compatible with regard for the public health.

Morris Meyerfeldt Jr., who said he spoke as the dean of the theatrical managers, told of the hardships that have been caused in the amusement world by the prolonged closing of the show houses. He read telegrams from many theaters on the Orpheum circuit to convince the Supervisors that San Francisco is slower than all other cities in lifting the ban. Unless some assurance is quickly given, several theatrical companies from the East that have been three weeks in San Francisco will leave the city without playing, Meyerfeldt said.

The Supervisors assured the managers that they would be told, and all but assured them that the ban would be lifted. In any event, the churches will be opened Sunday and the schools on Monday.