

AUTHORITIES CLAIM CHECK ON EPIDEMIC

San Francisco Influenza Cases Jump to 1,937; 401 New Ones in Day; Doctors Optimistic

S. Agents to Meet Today to Guard War Workers; Situation Is Serious, Says Health Officer

While the number of deaths from Spanish influenza in San Francisco showed an increase yesterday, ten as reported to the Board of Health, public health authorities declared the epidemic is well in hand. Precautions against further spread of the disease will be redoubled. This afternoon at 5 o'clock representatives of the Shipping Board, Army and Navy officials and local and State Health officers will confer at the Board of Health offices on methods of suppressing the epidemic among war workers.

As another precautionary measure Mayor Rolph has ordered the streets of the business district from Van Ness avenue to the water front thoroughly swept and washed every day. The Red Cross committee on influenza yesterday secured an appropriation of \$50,000 to fight the epidemic.

STATE CASES.

W. C. Billings, chief of the United States Public Health Service for California and Nevada, had a report of 9,952 cases as a total included yesterday, showing a mortality rate of less than 2 per cent.

Dr. William C. Hassler, health officer, had received reports of a total of 1,937 cases in San Francisco up to last night. The new cases reported yesterday numbered 401. With ten deaths reported yesterday, making a total of eighteen, the mortality rate in San Francisco so far less than 1 per cent.

The money appropriated yesterday by the Red Cross will be drawn upon to pay for beds, 500 of which are being provided in the hospitals, to pay the salaries of nurses, attendants and necessary employees, and will be given to many patients in their own homes.

TESTS EXAMINED.

Miss Julia Hinkle and her aides at 100 Market street were kept busy yesterday examining and registering applicants to act as nurses. Those who passed the examination were immediately employed at a salary of \$10 a week. Registration of these special employees will continue as long as there is a demand for their services.

The epidemic has in no way interfered with the activities of the Red Cross, all auxiliaries but the salvage department being in full swing yesterday. The women at the various stations worked in gauze masks.

At the State Normal sewing building on Buchanan and Waller streets, who desire will be given instruction in making contagion masks. It is urged that every home where there is influenza should be provided with such masks. Those wishing to make masks should bring with them a piece of gauze mesh, 18x10 inches in dimension and one and one-half yards of material.

TO CLOSE THEATRES.

Discussing the epidemic throughout California, Dr. George Ebright, president of the State Board of Health, said last night that the situation was extremely serious. He said: "Nothing must be done to frighten the public, but we cannot wink at the fact that this epidemic has begun to assume the proportions of plague, and that vigorous measures to combat it must be undertaken by the health authorities. At the conference tomorrow the closing of moving picture theatres and other public gathering places will come up for discussion."

To date there have been about 3,000 cases of influenza reported in California, and they are now coming in at the rate of 3,500 daily. The mortality rate is also increasing.

SCHOOLS STAY OPEN.

It is not the intention to quarantine the State or to interfere with traffic in any way, but rigorous supervision of reported cases must be exercised. The schools will be kept open, for it has been found that to have regular inspections at the schools better safeguards the health of the children than to send them to their homes, where there are no inspections. Children afflicted with influenza will, of course, be sent promptly home.

Inadequate nursing and hospital facilities present some of the most serious problems now facing the public health authorities in connection with this epidemic, and means must be provided immediately to meet this condition.

15,000 Cases of Influenza in the State Reported

Peak of Epidemic Will Not Be Reached for Ten Days, Says State Health Board.

SACRAMENTO, October 16.—Guy D. Jones, assistant secretary of the State Board of Health, this afternoon announced that 15,000 cases of Spanish influenza have been reported in California. He said the epidemic is on the increase and the peak is not expected to be reached for a week or ten days.

Scores of appeals for doctors and nurses are being received from districts hard hit by the disease, Jones said, but the shortage of doctors and nurses makes it almost impossible to supply the demand. He said the State Board is endeavoring to organize a volunteer staff to meet these emergencies.

Since October 1, Jones said that 52 deaths have occurred in the State from influenza, 64 from complications of pneumonia and influenza and 111 from pneumonia. The greatest number of influenza deaths has occurred in Los Angeles where the disease has claimed 17 victims this month.

MILD AT KEARNY.

CAMP KEARNY, October 16.—Influenza at the camp is being kept well in hand, the few cases that have developed being of a mild type and no death attributed to the disease having occurred for the last ten days. Only three deaths from the disease have occurred, and one of those was of a soldier from an eastern camp who had been transferred here, the others were in the development battalion.

The number of new cases yesterday was 103.

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WASHINGTON ASSERTS ARMY EPIDEMIC HALTED

WASHINGTON, October 16.—While Spanish influenza continues to spread among the civilian population generally, a continued decrease in the number of new cases at army camps tonight led army medical officials to believe the peak of the epidemic among the soldiers has been passed. Secretary Baker said reports indicated measures taken by the surgeon general's office had brought the disease under definite control.

New cases of influenza among the troops reported during the twenty-four hours ending at noon today totaled 5,668, against 6,498 yesterday and against more than twice that number only a few days ago. Pneumonia cases today aggregated 1,895, compared with 1,916 the day before, and deaths were 710, a decrease of 179. Influenza cases reported from all camps since the beginning of the epidemic now total 262,186. Pneumonia cases, 39,276, and deaths 12,340.

636 NEW CASES AT L. A.

LOS ANGELES, October 16.—Six hundred and thirty-one new cases of influenza were reported to the health authorities here today, an increase of 23 over yesterday. Deaths during the day attributable to influenza or pneumonia numbered 22.

96 AT CAMP LEWIS.

CAMP LEWIS, October 16.—Only ninety-six cases of influenza were reported today, against 167 yesterday. This is the smallest number reported in more than a week. There were new cases of pneumonia reported, but only two deaths.