

NO FLU MASKS FOR OAKLAND, COUNCIL RULES

Statistics Introduced to Prove It Makes No Difference in the Death Rate; Chamber Crowded

Union Labor Organizations Are Unanimous in Protest; Late Reports Show Epidemic Wanes

Various elements met in a battle over the "flu" masks at the Oakland city council session yesterday, and those opposed to the mask ordinance triumphed.

Temporarily the ordinance has been laid on the table, and Oaklanders may go about, hold meetings or attend gatherings without the gauze covering.

Galleries and lower floors were crowded with opponents of the mask. The Central Labor Council of Alameda county sent J. H. Robinson, Henry Blum and V. C. Donough. The "Boilermakers" Union delegated Michael Gabbitt to the session.

The labor delegates stated they represented 25,000 workers of Alameda county, who were unanimously opposed to the masks.

Mayor John L. Davie, also an opponent of the mask, gave State Board of Health records and read figures from Boston, Buffalo, Washington and San Francisco.

DAVIE GIVES FIGURES.

According to the mayor, San Francisco was the only city of this group to adopt the mask, and the number of cases and death rate in the three other cities was no greater than in San Francisco.

Stockton, the mayor said, wore masks consistently, but the death rate was 10 per cent higher there than in Boston, if rated on a per capita basis.

An experiment with fifty sailors on Goat island, who slept, ate and lived with influenza patients, was related by the mayor. According to him, not one of the fifty developed the slightest symptoms of influenza in three weeks of experiment.

Victory Day, November 11, 1918, when 100,000 persons walked the streets without masks, there was not a single case reported in the city of Oakland, so the Mayor announced.

Health Officer Dr. Daniel T. Crosby and Dr. Edward N. Ewer appeared in support of the masks. San Diego was cited by the physicians as a place where voluntary masking was done and where the disease was almost eradicated.

NEVER SAW "FLU" GERM.

Both physicians admitted that germs were supposed to carry the "flu," but stated they had never seen a "flu" germ.

A discussion followed, in which the labor delegates joined. The council decided to vote for the tabling of the masking ordinance until the Alameda Medical Society presents facts to substantiate its theory that masking is necessary.

Reports of physicians to the health boards of the eastbay cities showed still further improvement in the epidemic. Oakland registered eighty-six new cases and thirteen deaths for the last twenty-four hours. Berkeley reported seventy-five cases and two deaths. In Alameda there were thirty-one new cases and no deaths.

Since the epidemic first came to Oakland last October there have been 580 cases reported to the health board and 901 deaths.

RICHMOND RECORD GOOD.

RICHMOND (Cal.), January 21.—Twenty-seven deaths, out of a total of 544 cases is Richmond's record for the influenza epidemic during the past two weeks, according to a report filed with the City Council last night by Dr. Charles R. Blake, City Health Officer. The official claims this as one of the lowest death rates from the disease in California. His method of handling the epidemic by a strict enforcement of the mask order was commended by the council. During the past twenty-four hours there were twenty-four new cases and one death.