

WILL INFLUENZA RETURN?

Q. Will the epidemic again appear?

A. The epidemic will recur, for medical history shows that we have had a series of influenza or grippe epidemics the last of which proved to be of the most virulent type. There immediately occurred to me those of 1867 and of 1889 to 1895. The Metropolitan Life has issued some very definite figures on this latter epidemic covering millions of policy holders, which show an average increased mortality for the five years following of 40 per cent above the normal death rate. Any estimate of economic loss should include the 40 per cent increased mortality that, in all likelihood, will similarly occur in the next four or five years.

Q. Is its origin fairly well known? If not the likelihood of definite information by research.

A. Much private research has been carried on, but its origin and spread is still undetermined. This must be collected and further stimulated, for only thru careful research is there any likelihood of definite information.

Q. What success in the discovery of an antitoxin?

A. The possibility of the discovery of a real antitoxin for influenza is wholly dependent upon the discovery of the actual germ, causing the disease.

Q. The possibility of collecting necessary information and its distribution among the people to reduce the dangers of its spread and increase the chances of recovery?

A. I need but cite two of many similar researches, successfully undertaken, that have practically eliminated the dangers of the spread of disease, to wit, malaria and typhoid. Except for our knowledge to typhoid, the armies of Europe would have been decimated by this disease alone.

Q. The Generally bad after effects of the disease?

A. The generally bad after effects of the disease are unfortunately too well known by the profession. The Red Cross Chapter in Cincinnati is expending perhaps \$200,000 in an effort to examine physically every person that has suffered with influenza; to discover the pathological conditions, bad hearts, bad kidneys and lungs, resulting from this epidemic, and relieving the poverty and chronic invalidism that accompanies it.

Q. The economic loss to the country of the epidemic?

A. The economic loss can hardly be estimated. The 500,000 deaths alone represent \$2,500,000,000 economic loss. Economists all agree to the fact that \$5,000 is the minimum social and economic value of a human life. It is safe to say that 10,000,000 people had the disease and that they lost 150,000,000 working-days, at a minimum combined loss of wage and production of \$7.00 per day, there has been another \$1,000,000,000 of economic loss to the country. In other words, conservatively speaking, we had between \$5,000,000,000, and \$4,000,000,000 loss in this last epidemic.

SOME OBSERVATIONS IN FRENCH CLINICS

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During several months of the distressing waiting period following the armistice I was detailed to attend clinics in the city of Lyon, France and here record some random notes made while watching French surgeons at work there as well as in a few other cities.