

sired by the government. The problem is a new one and calls for inventiveness and adaptability as well as that spirit of cooperation which the colleges have already so abundantly shown.

#### THE EPIDEMIC OF SPANISH INFLUENZA

IN an effort to prevent an epidemic of Spanish influenza throughout the United States, Surgeon-General Blue of the Public Health Service has provided a list of methods for the control of the disease. From a telegraphic survey made by General Blue it was discovered that the disease had broken out in six United States seaport towns, Fort Morgan, near Mobile, Ala.; Newport News, Philadelphia, New York, Boston, New London and New Orleans.

Dr. Blue's bulletin of information on the disease issued primarily for physicians, contains information as follows:

**Infectious Agent**—The bacillus influenza of Pfeiffer.

**Sources of Infection**—The secretions from the nose, throat and respiratory passages of cases or of carriers.

**Incubation Period**—One to four days; generally two.

**Mode of Transmission**—By direct contact or indirect contact through the use of handkerchiefs, common towels, cups, mess gear or other objects contaminated with fresh secretions. Droplet infection plays an important part.

**Period of Communicability**—As long as the person harbors the causative organism in the respiratory tract.

**Methods of Control**—The infected individual and his environment.

**Recognition of the Disease**—By clinical manifestations and bacteriological findings.

**Isolation**—Bed isolation of infected individuals during the course of the disease. Screens between beds are to be recommended.

**Immunization**—Vaccines are used with only partial success.

**Quarantine**—None; impracticable.

**Concurrent Disinfection**—The discharges from the mouth, throat, nose and other respiratory passages.

**Terminal Disinfection**—Thorough cleansing, airing and sunning. The causative organism is short-lived outside the host.

**General Measures**—The attendant of the case should wear a gauze mask. During epidemics per-

sons should avoid crowded assemblages, street cars and the like. Education as regards the danger of promiscuous coughing and spitting. Patients, because of the tendency to the development of broncho-pneumonia, should be treated in well-ventilated, warm rooms.

#### SAN FRANCISCO JOINT COUNCIL OF NATIONAL ENGINEERING SOCIETIES

FIVE national engineering societies which have San Francisco sections on September 4 organized what is to be known as the Joint Council of the Engineering Societies of San Francisco. The societies represented are the American Society of Civil Engineers, the American Institute of Electrical Engineers, the American Society of Mechanical Engineers, the American Institute of Mining Engineers and the American Chemical Society. Four representatives from each of these societies, making twenty men in all, form the joint council, which in turn is officered by an executive committee of five. The members of this executive committee are: C. D. Marx, chairman; E. C. Jones and E. C. Hutchinson, vice-chairman; N. A. Bowers, secretary-treasurer, and E. O. Shreve, assistant secretary.

We learn from the *Electrical World* that this organization is the outcome of several meetings of the secretaries of the five societies involved at which plans for more effective inter-society cooperation have been worked out. Some of the expected advantages are a closer touch among members of the several associations, putting the several employment bureaus together in one central office, joint meetings to discuss subjects of common interest, cooperation for the sake of economy as in mailing notices, consolidating headquarters at the Engineers' Club, etc.

In a paper on this subject read at a recent joint meeting it was pointed out that membership in a national engineering society has always carried with it a certain amount of prestige. Here in the Far West we have been content with little besides that as a return for our annual dues. In recent years local sections have taken on new importance, and it is not now uncommon to find the man who believes he can get more real benefit from his

local section than from the national organization.

Our parent societies have joined in forming the United Engineering Society, and the plan has proved eminently successful from every angle. May we not begin now to lay the foundation for branches of that organization in western centers? Why not the San Francisco branch of the United Engineering Society? At least we may suggest this as an ultimate possibility, another incentive among the opportunities that await our pioneer joint council.

The joint council will have regular meetings once a month, the executive committee convening at the pleasure of its members. The constitution tentatively adopted at the September 4 meeting sets forth the following as the purposes of the organization:

1. To foster closer relationship among the engineering societies of San Francisco, especially in those matters (a) where cooperation will make for more efficient "win the war" service, (b) where cooperation will make for more efficient service to the state of California, its cities and counties, and (c) where cooperation will expedite progress toward those ideals common to our several organizations.

2. To plan and carry out arrangements for joint meetings of the several societies whenever such meetings are deemed advisable and to endeavor to make joint meetings effective in developing closer relationships among members of the several societies.

3. To act generally as the clearing house for matters which involve the several societies, especially where the common good will be enhanced by working through an executive head representative of the several organizations.

The first act of the joint council was the decision to urge upon the governor of the state the appointment of an engineer as member of the state railroad commission. In making this recommendation it was pointed out that "the best interest of the state would be served by the appointment of engineers as members of commissions dealing with problems the solution of which requires technical training and experience" and that the appointment of an engineer to fill one of the

vacancies on the state railroad commission would doubtless "be regarded by the people of the state as indicating a wish to place the public service on the highest plane of efficiency and will be creditable both to the appointing power and to the engineering profession."

#### CHEMISTS AND THE CHEMICAL WARFARE SERVICE

MAJOR GENERAL WILLIAM L. SIBERT, director of the Chemical Warfare Service, addressed, on September 1, the following letter to the chemists of the United States:

This is a chemical war: therefore the War Department must have immediately available all possible information regarding chemical materials and chemical man power. Of these two essential elements chemical man power has so far received less attention. The census of American chemists made by the American Chemical Society in 1917 has been of great assistance to the War Department. Without it the present state of progress of the United States in chemical warfare would have been impossible of attainment.

However, during the same period conditions have undergone rapid and radical changes. The old census, excellent as it was, is no longer completely adequate. With the organization of the Chemical Warfare Service as an independent branch of the War Department, unifying all the elements of chemical warfare, it is obvious that the War Department must have its own set of records on a matter so vital to its own success. Moreover, these records must contain information which a short time ago was apparently of little importance. The new census must be made primarily from the viewpoint of the military status of chemists.

The importance of a prompt return of the census blank, properly filled out, by every chemist of the country, can not be overstated. American chemists are presented at this moment with one of the greatest opportunities to serve their country by the simple process of answering this questionnaire with all possible speed.

It is stated in the *Journal of Industrial and Engineering Chemistry* that as a result of the letter from the Adjutant General of the Army, dated May 28, 1918, 1,749 chemists have been reported on. Of these the report of action to August 1, 1918, shows that 281 were ordered to remain with their military organization