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## EDITORIAL.

### INFLUENZA.

The Ministry of Health is proving its value to the community by the manner in which it is keeping the public informed as to the considerable probability of another wave of influenza developing in this country at an early date.

The Ministry draws special attention to the Memorandum on the Prevention of Influenza issued to local authorities last month, and also emphasises the following matters for public guidance.

Influenza is particularly infectious during its incipient stage, and while the person who has contracted it is still able to follow his avocation and to mix with his fellowmen. Almost everybody, therefore, is exposed to infection at one stage or another of an epidemic. Whilst no certain safeguard against the disease is as yet known to exist, it is important to give attention to the following during an epidemic wave.

#### PREVENTION.

Infection may be guarded against by:—

(a) Healthy and regular habits, and avoidance of fatigue, chill, alcoholic excess, crowded meetings and hot rooms, and unnecessary travelling.

(b) Good ventilation in working and sleeping rooms.

(c) Warm clothing.

(d) Gargling from a tumbler of warm water, to which has been added enough permanganate of potash to give the liquid a pink colour.

#### VACCINATION.

A vaccine against influenza has been prepared by the Ministry of Health, and is available for general use. It is issued to Medical Officers of Health for distribution, free of charge, among Medical Practitioners within their districts, and any person who wishes to be vaccinated should apply to his private medical

attendant. To obtain its value the vaccine should be used before the epidemic occurs. It cannot be guaranteed that the vaccine will necessarily protect from attack, but there is reason to expect that if an attack occurs, vaccination will do much to lessen the risk of complications. Influenza is dangerous mostly because of what may follow it.

#### CURE.

In the event of an attack of influenza the patient is advised to adopt the following measures with a view to securing a speedy return to convalescence and avoidance of complications:—

(a) At the first feeling of illness, or immediately on a rise of temperature, the patient should leave his work, go home and go to bed; he should keep warm and send for the doctor.

(b) On convalescence, the patient should avoid meeting-places and places of entertainment for at least one week after his temperature has become normal.

(c) Recovery should be fully established before return to work.

#### ADVICE TO PERSONS NURSING INFLUENZA.

(a) The patient should, if possible, occupy a separate bedroom, or a bed screened off from the rest of the room. This rule should be observed until the temperature is normal; (b) the patient should be kept warm; (c) all curtains and other articles which prevent a free circulation of the air about the patient's bed should, as far as possible, be removed; (d) inhalation of the patient's breath should be avoided; (e) a handkerchief or other screen should be held before the mouth, and the head should be turned aside while the patient is coughing or sneezing; (f) the hands should be washed at once after contact with the patient.

Forewarned is forearmed, and nurses can render useful service by spreading knowledge in regard to the precautions advisable.

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