

PLAGUE CONFERENCE.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE CONFERENCE HELD IN WASHINGTON, D. C.,
JANUARY 19, 1903.

[NOTE.—In the supplement to PUBLIC HEALTH REPORTS of January 23 will be found statements narrating the object of the Conference, the requests upon which it was called, and the law relating thereto; also a list of the health officers in attendance, the opening address of the chairman, and the resolutions which were adopted. Following is a report of the proceedings of the Conference, portions thereof heretofore published (January 23) being omitted.]

Proceedings.

The roll having been called, there being present also Assistant Surgeons-General George Purviance and J. H. White, the chairman, the Surgeon-General of the Public Health and Marine-Hospital Service, remarked as follows:

The CHAIRMAN. I would suggest an important matter at the start, namely, the wish of the Conference with regard to the public press and our meeting. I consider it very important that any reports regarding this Conference should be right and proper. We have had so much trouble with the newspapers over these matters, I would like to call the attention of the Conference to the matter of the press, and receive suggestions. I did not think it advisable of my own motion to invite reporters to be here. In the first place the accommodations are rather limited, and I thought I would wait and see whether we would want to have them. It has been suggested we might have the reporters come here and say what they pleased. Another suggestion is, that we might have a committee to determine exactly what we will give out to the press.

Dr. FULTON. I do not know what the views of the Conference are in respect to publicity. I do not know how they can be ascertained without some one giving his own views. My own views are these: I think that this Conference can not hold itself responsible for anything that the newspapers may say in any event, no matter how the news gets into their hands. I should myself dislike very much to be on any committee to examine the news or to give it out. It seems to me that very much the best way is to allow the newspaper reporters full access to our meetings and decline any responsibility as to the quality of the stuff which they send to their papers. It is true the situation has been very much complicated by a certain sort of publication, and it is perhaps the very general lack of publicity which has complicated the situation in certain parts of the country even more. Certain interests have made the statement that they had controlled the Eastern press. It would seem a perfectly absurd boast, quite empty to my mind, for any power to say a thing of that sort, since they only had the sum of \$20,000 wherewith to do it. Still it has done a certain amount of newspaper injury

in the plague situation. For that reason, if for no other, it seems to me it would be a great deal better to have our meeting entirely open. We can not be responsible for anything the newspapers say in any event, and, therefore, I do not see we should assume any part of the responsibility, which we certainly would do if we appointed a committee to say what should go out from our meeting. For Washington itself, I want to say that my belief is that this is the best newspaper city on the American continent. It is the city in which the Associated Press has the least influence. All the great dailies the country over have some of their very ablest men right here, and while some reporters may get the wrong views and the wrong end of the string and may send out such news as we would prefer had not gone out, we will not be responsible, and that will happen in any event. I move, Mr. President, in order to bring the matter to the attention of the Conference properly, that the meeting be quite open to reporters.

Dr. HURTY. I second the motion.

Dr. HOLTON. I am very sorry to disagree with the gentleman, but a report that goes out from here, whether it is true or not, will have a great deal of weight all over the country, and while perhaps it is true we can not control it exactly, if a report is published in any papers signed by a committee appointed by this body it will have still more weight, and I do not see why it should not be perfectly correct. I can see how it would influence members of this Conference not to express themselves freely if the reporters were present. They might not want to be quoted as saying this or that, and a good many things may be said that we should not want to go into the press. I am opposed to having reporters of the press here, but I do believe in the suggestion of the Surgeon-General, that a committee of supervision, to give out what is necessary for the public to know and what the conclusions of the Conference are, would be the safest and best way.

The CHAIRMAN. I only mentioned the matter to bring it before the Conference. I do not wish to influence the Conference at all one way or the other. I am perfectly satisfied with anything the Conference wishes in the matter. Any other remarks upon the subject?

Dr. WOODWARD. My own experience has been that the more open you are with them the more accurate you will get your report. We can not prevent the reporters from interviewing individual members of the Conference. There is certainly no reason which I can see to think of attempting to muzzle the individual members of the Conference, and so it seems to me the best way would be not to hold them responsible, but let them get their own news and hold them responsible for their own work. So far as the resolutions of the Conference are concerned, they will eventually be made public. I am certainly in favor of having the press here.

Dr. HURTY. I seconded the motion of Dr. Fulton, and I think he is exactly right in advocating an open session. I do not like executive sessions. We are not responsible, as he has said, for anything the papers may print, and it seems to me that Dr. Holton's argument in favor of a committee favors the other view in fact, for he said that it probably would dampen free expression. I do not think it will dampen free expression of opinion, but it will make us more careful in what we say and more thoughtful. I believe in the fullest publicity and would advocate that the reporters be admitted. Let them report their views as they see it. We can express ourselves in our resolutions.

The motion of Dr. Fulton was carried.

The CHAIRMAN (preparing to read his statement relative to the

plague situation). I have deferred presenting this formal communication until all might be assembled. I believe we are all here now, excepting Dr. Albright and he will be here in a few moments.

(The Surgeon-General then read his statement. See supplement to PUBLIC HEALTH REPORTS of January 23, 1903.)

THE CHAIRMAN. I have a telegram, received this morning from Surgeon Glennan, with regard to the last week's inspection of Chinatown, a summary of the inspection of Chinese for the week ended January 17 inclusive. Number of sick inspected, 16; number of dead inspected, 9; autopsied to determine cause of death, 3. No plague.

DR. ———. What was the period, Doctor?

The CHAIRMAN. One week ending January 17. * * * Now, with regard to Mexico. I first received notice of the presence of plague in Ensenada, Lower California, which is about 75 miles below San Diego, while in New Orleans, and I immediately conferred with and notified Dr. Liceaga, president of the superior board of health of Mexico, who was there attending the American public health association, and got his assent to my sending a man into his country—to Ensenada. I had there at New Orleans, attending the convention, Passed Assistant Surgeon Grubbs, an expert, who has taken a special bacteriological course in plague. I immediately sent him to Ensenada, and have received a report from him that it is genuine plague. Since that time we have placed a man in Ensenada, have had the collector of customs instructed, and also appointed a physician at the border crossing to inspect all people that may come from Ensenada. These must have the certificate of the man in Ensenada as to their freedom from plague, but I believe there have been only 2 cases since Christmas. The disease is apparently under control there.

Assistant Surgeon-General WHITE. Pardon me, those 2 cases were since not confirmed.

The CHAIRMAN. That is so. But there is no doubt there have been a number of cases in Ensenada, and, because of its proximity to the border, I consider the situation serious. We have to aid us the collector of customs, who has some 4 or 5 deputies on the border, and our own man and a man in Ensenada to give certificates to people wishing to come into the United States either overland or by boat to San Diego, but the disease seems to be very well under control. It was also reported to be in Guaymas, which would be a very serious matter on account of the direct railroad connection between Guaymas and Nogales, Ariz. Dr. Grubbs was sent down there. I received a wire from him, dated in Guaymas, last week, stating that there is no plague in Guaymas. The situation in Mazatlan has been reported by Dr. Liceaga to me to be plague, and the newspaper reports have dealt with the situation, showing how serious it is. It is, however, a long distance down the coast, and Mazatlan has no direct railroad connection. I believe it is about 140 miles to the nearest railroad point.

Assistant Surgeon-General WHITE. That is Durango.

The CHAIRMAN. The Mexican authorities seem to be taking very active measures there. Now, as to how plague got into Mazatlan, it is a question that, so far as I know, is not yet absolutely determined. It may take considerable investigation to absolutely determine it. The first suspicion was that it came from San Francisco, but I received a letter from the United States consul at Vera Cruz, stating that it was attributed in Mexico to direct communication with China. We know that the Chinese from San Francisco would be rather loath to go down into Mexico because it is so hard for them to get back

into the United States, but whether any Chinamen from San Francisco went down there or not, as reported, I do not know. It is stated that the vessel *Curacao*, of the Pacific Mail Steamship Company, carried plague from San Francisco to Mazatlan, but the proof of this I am not aware of. Perhaps, Dr. Fulton has been in direct correspondence on this matter and can give the proof of it. I do not know.

Dr. FULTON. No, I can not, General Wyman. I have had direct communication as you say, but it is not supposed that it was taken down there as human plague, but went down there on the *Curacao* in rats.

The CHAIRMAN. Of course it is a matter that must be studied out. No one can make a positive statement about it, but a Mexican newspaper is reported by the United States consul at Vera Cruz as stating that the disease had come from China direct to Mazatlan.

Dr. BRACKEN. I suppose the consul at Vera Cruz is not in touch with Mazatlan any more than we are.

The CHAIRMAN. Well, yes; being nearer the source of information. I will read what he says. Consideration should be given to it; I think I have his letter here. This is addressed to the Secretary of State. It is the duty of the consul to inform the Secretary of State, and it is sent by the Secretary of State over here, to us:

VERA CRUZ, MEXICO, December 20, 1902.

SIR: I have to confirm my telegram of to-day reading as follows: "Rumor reports cases contagious disease believed bubonic plague at Mazatlan, La Paz, Guaymas, Pacific coast, Mexico."

Although the ports referred to are situated on the Pacific coast and at a considerable distance from here and without any direct communication with gulf ports, yet, should the rumor prove to be true, there might be some danger by way of the isthmus of Tehuantepec, and I thought it my duty to report it by wire for such action as it may merit.

It is reported by the principal newspaper of the City of Mexico, published in Spanish and known for its connection with government circles, that on the 15th instant a vessel arrived at Mazatlan from China with a number of Chinese passengers for said port, and the next day cases of a strange disease appeared, which the local physicians diagnosed as a high fever, with symptoms of yellow fever. However, later on it was discovered that these cases had all the appearance of bubonic plague. So far, it seems, no decision by bacteriological investigation has been reached, so as to determine the true nature of the disease.

The chief physician of the local sanitary board of health at this port told me this morning that he had been requested to proceed to the port of Mazatlan, there to take charge of the investigation and determine the nature of the disease. In his opinion, he was quite sure that, whether or not it is bubonic plague, all proper measures have been taken by the sanitary authorities at those places to prevent its further spread and to stamp it out at the places infected.

Respectfully,

J. GONZALES PAGES,
United States Vice-Consul.

The ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE.

Now, you know that the Chinese are trying to evade our immigration laws in all manners possible, and Dr. Grubbs reports that it was thought plague had got to Ensenada from Mazatlan. The Pacific Steamship Company's vessels ply along the coast and they go down to Mazatlan and touch at Ensenada on the way back, and it may be that some Chinese came up from Mazatlan, as being a more convenient place to slip across the border into the United States. I am only giving you the conjectures on the matter, and, of course, if it is proven that it came from San Francisco, it is a much more serious matter.

(Quotes from Dr. Grubb's letter, December 26, 1902. See PUBLIC HEALTH REPORTS of January 16, 1903, pp. 74 and 75.)

Now, we do not know how long the disease may have been in Mazatlan, but the supposition is that when we hear of an outbreak like that it may have been there a considerable time.

I believe that is about the sum and substance of what I have to say to you gentlemen, except to renew my sense of pleasure at having you with us in this matter, and trust that in the multitude of counsel there will be wisdom, of course.

Dr. WOODWARD. Mr. Chairman, it seems to me that we will profit more by the Conference if we proceed along some orderly system and I think that has been very well begun by the Surgeon-General himself—that is to say, take up the present situation confining ourselves for a while to what has been and is being done and then discuss finally what should be done. Then the Conference will be in a better position to draw up resolutions. If we can just arrive at some admitted facts as to the present situation I think we can then proceed to discuss what remedies have been applied. Can you briefly give us a statement of that, with regard to plague in San Francisco, and of course, the plague in Mexico? There seem to me certain objections to the introduction of plague there from China. Of course we have to regard the period of incubation and the length of the voyage from China to San Francisco, and San Francisco to Mazatlan. We have of course, admittedly, in the city of San Francisco—that is, on the basis of the reports of the Public Health and Marine-Hospital Service—we have had 41 or 42 deaths, which represent somewhat more than 10 deaths per 100,000 from plague alone in the city. We have also, according to the official statement, 3 of those cases which have been brought in from neighboring towns. Now we have plague in the neighboring country which may or may not have originated in this country. We have, as I understand it, Australia quarantining against an American city; we have Victoria alarmed and afraid that it may have to quarantine. Those facts, of course, are pertinent in addition to what is being done. Why should they quarantine? Then there is one question that has been asked that we all, of course, know nothing of, which I think, the Conference might consider, and that is whether the bills of health issued to outgoing vessels from San Francisco are what are known as “clean bills of health.” There are other facts connected with the situation, beside the bare number of cases of plague, and those I think should be considered preliminary to taking up the action that has been taken. These inspections that have been made should be described somewhat more in detail. I can hardly see how a casual inspection done by the representative of the governor of California would disclose plague if confined to visiting the community. Have they examined the death certificates, or have efforts been made to verify or disprove the accuracy of certificates of cases of death? Let us have a full knowledge of the situation, and then consider the remedies that have been applied.

The CHAIRMAN. I will ask Dr. Gardner to give an account of the methods of inspection that have been carried out.

Dr. GARDNER. Of outside districts?

The CHAIRMAN. Outside of San Francisco.

Dr. GARDNER. True, it was the first inspection we made, and we made it as thorough as was consistent with one visit. We first called on the health officer of the town and the president of the board, if they had one, and inspected the death reports—the certificates of death, by whom signed, and by what authority they were issued, and in nearly every instance, with the exception of a few in the town of San Jose, they are signed either by the coroner or a white physician. Where they were signed by the

coroner; in nearly all instances where the coroner was not a physician (which unfortunately occurs in our country occasionally), they were countersigned by a physician who had been in attendance, or who saw the body, or made a post-mortem. With a few exceptions, I believe the death records were regular, so far as we could see. There were some cases which I took exception to as not being correct. Among others I found that in some places the cause of death was entered as "died from natural causes," a term which I think is entirely out of place—did not indicate anything more than probably that the man was not killed or poisoned—and is a term which I do not think should be used by any physician signing a death certificate. Also "old age" was sometimes used, which I hardly think is appropriate, "septicaemia," and one or two other causes. In the cases where septicaemia was given as a cause of death, we invariably found that the patient had an injury in which blood poisoning had followed. The inspections then were proceeded with along the lines that the health officer either delegated an inspector or accompanied us himself to Chinatown, where he made an inspection of the entire place. In all Chinatowns they have what they call a hospital; in other words, a hall of peace or tranquility; it is where they expect a Chinaman to die; they place him in this room and leave him alone to die. These places, as a rule, were clean. In the city of Fresno we met a Chinese physician who was a graduate of an American college, of the name of Kim, a very bright fellow, who went through Chinatown with us, and in our conversation with him—with Dr. Glennan present and also members of the board of health of Fresno—in questioning him about plague, it was his opinion positively that plague had never been in Fresno. He had seen plague when a boy in China, and he said the plague in China was not what we called plague in San Francisco. He said when plague was mentioned in his native town, everybody flew to the mountains to get away from it. That was simply his expression of it. In the city of Fresno—I mention this simply to show you the indifferent manner in which plague is treated in some places in California—I wrote a personal letter to the president of the board, Dr. G. H. Aiken, a very estimable gentleman, asking his opinion personally and privately of plague ever having existed there, and in his reply he said, "Doctor, we have considered it of so little moment that it has not been discussed in our board for two years." True, it is possible there might have been sick Chinamen that we did not find in one inspection. We inspected every spot that we could find. We took our time, so far as visiting every room, and we had no objections raised from the Chinamen, and they seemed to be perfectly willing to let us enter. We generally were accompanied by an officer or some member of the local board of health. In that way we visited all the towns mentioned with the exception of two, Watsonville and Boulden Island. Watsonville is a small town in the heart of the sugar-beet industry, and there are very few Chinamen in that place. I question if there are 10 in the whole community. The work done there now is largely by Portuguese and Italians. Boulden Island is an island in the delta of the Sacramento River, and at high water is below the surface—the ground is below high water mark—and the result is the island is leveed, which is so in all the islands of the lower Sacramento River. If there is a place in the world it seems to me where plague should thrive—if it has ever been there—it is there. They have no sewerage, it is impossible. The habits of the people of the island are simply filthy. It is filled with Chinamen, Portuguese, and Italians. Each has his vegetable garden which is farmed the entire year round, and in making inquiry before I left San Francisco, I found

there are very few Chinamen on that island. I question if there are more than 15 or 20. Communication with San Francisco is by sailing boats which call once or twice a week simply to take off vegetable products for the market. How they could get plague to Boulden I do not understand. Although I have never been there, I have been on adjacent islands occupied by a similar class of people. Their condition is about what you will find in any rural district occupied by that class of people. Chinamen, Portuguese, and Italians, so far as cleanliness is concerned, are all about the same in those rural districts. As to the other places, in Bakersfield, they have 2 Chinatowns, what they call the old and the new one. One is pretty close to the town, and is almost deserted, and the other is built half a mile out, and built entirely of brick structures with sewers, flush traps, and closets, well lighted, and very fairly ventilated for a Chinatown. Dr. Taggart, who was the health officer of the county there, says they have very little sickness in Chinatown; very little trouble with them. Of course, there is a large influx of foreigners there, of people from all over the country, on account of its being the center of the petroleum district in California. This has brought in a population there which is very undesirable. That is about all I can say in regard to the inspection. I will be glad to answer any question and give any information I can.

Dr. FULTON. I would like to ask Dr. Gardner one question. I understand you to say that you were not at Boulden Island?

Dr. GARDNER. I have been on adjacent islands similarly situated. We did not have time to go there. I was pressed for time on account of business, which I could not neglect. I had intended to go to Boulden Island.

Dr. HOLTON. How many days did your inspection involve?

Dr. GARDNER. It took us something over two weeks. I forget definitely. The towns were pretty close together, Alameda, Berkeley, and Oakland, directly across the bay from San Francisco; San Jose, about 50 miles south of San Francisco; Davisville, Sacramento, and Stockton—Davisville, 60 miles south of Sacramento—so that we did not lose a great deal of time in going from one place to another. Fresno and Bakersfield are in the extreme south end of the San Joaquin Valley.

A MEMBER. There are 6 or 8 towns?

Dr. GARDNER. Nine; and we also went, while we were there, to Los Angeles and looked over the records there, and the clinical histories of the Chinese in Los Angeles.

Dr. FULTON. Is there a law in California which requires a burial permit to be issued before a human body can be interred?

Dr. GARDNER. Yes; it is signed by the town physician.

Dr. HOLTON. When was the law passed?

Dr. GARDNER. The certificate is issued to the caretaker of the cemetery, and on that certificate he issues a permit. The attending physician gives a certificate stating the cause of death, the length of time of illness, the primary and secondary cause. That is presented to the caretaker or the superintendent of the cemetery, and on the strength of that certificate he issues a burial permit to the parties interested.

A MEMBER. That is the State law?

Dr. GARDNER. I understand it is the State law. I can not be sure, but I know it is the customary action all over the State, even in the country towns.

Dr. WOODWARD. They file this certificate with the caretaker of the cemetery?

Dr. GARDNER. The certificate of death is issued by the attending physician—that is, taken by the undertaker, probably, who has charge of the funeral, and presented to the superintendent of the cemetery, and, in lieu of that, he gets a burial permit. At the end of the month, the superintendent of the cemetery returns those death certificates to the health officer of the city and they are then placed on record.

Dr. FULTON. The point is, Mr. Chairman, that California is not known as a registration State. It is known, indeed, to not be a registration State in any effective sense. It has never been recognized by the United States Census Office, and with the great city of San Francisco, which undoubtedly has good burial-permit laws included, and with any city as large as Sacramento and Los Angeles, which presumably have effective ordinances on the subject of funerals, even then the officially recorded mortality in the State of California does not reach 40 per cent of the normal, definitely easily proven mortality as collected by the enumerators of the United States Census Office at the end of the year and since that enumeration of itself, the census enumeration, which simply means making inquiry at the end of the year of the deaths which have occurred between June and June, has always proven never to exceed 60 per cent of effectiveness, it shows that the registered mortality in California and the number of death certificates available simply bear no relation whatever to the normal mortality in ordinary times, and they must be extremely fragmentary, as the mathematics I have given you will show.

Dr. GARDNER. In reply to what the Doctor has said, you must understand that in California we have a large population in the mountains, in the mines, in the lumber woods, in which sanitary laws and those things are totally disregarded. And we have very little redress, and you could not enforce a thing like that in a mining camp. It would simply be impossible.

Dr. FULTON. We do it.

Dr. GARDNER. You may. It is in very few camps. The average mining camp has no regard to sanitary laws whatever, and we would simply be trifling to try to enforce those things. I have been in those places, and when you go to enforce those little nice things in sanitary laws and regulations you will find yourself very much at sea.

Dr. SWARTS. Is there any law requiring them to put dead bodies in cemeteries?

Dr. GARDNER. There is no law.

Dr. LEWIS, of North Carolina. Even suspicious cases then could be taken out and buried without any certificate?

Dr. GARDNER. There is a law in the cities, but in the mining camps there are very few cemeteries, whereas in towns or cities they have the regulations compelling dead bodies to be buried in cemeteries, but I referred to the mining camps of which I have been speaking.

Dr. LEWIS, of North Carolina. You say then that a body could be taken out of one of those towns and buried outside?

Dr. GARDNER. No. While the Chinese are all buried together, I don't know of a cemetery in California that is not owned by the whites, and of course a portion set aside for the burial of foreigners, Mongolians especially. In the city of Sacramento, the old original cemetery, the one of early days, which was started probably in '49, called Helvetia (?) Cemetery, outside the city limits, but controlled by the city, was set aside twenty years ago for the burial of Mongolians exclusively. The cemetery is deserted so far as the burial of whites is concerned. They are buried in the city cemetery. These are the only burial grounds in the city, one for the Chinese—also, a Jewish cemetery—and

one for the whites, but the permit has to be issued just the same. The superintendent of one cemetery is the superintendent of them all. The Jewish cemetery is a private cemetery, but, for all that, the burial permit goes through the regular course, and in Fresno you will find that there is a portion of the public cemetery or a plot adjoining which is set aside for the burial of Chinamen, and the rules and regulations govern them just the same as anybody else.

Dr. FULTON. Do you know anything about the Boulden Island cases that were alluded to?

Dr. GARDNER. I do not. It was reported there was one. You probably know as much about it as I do. I know very little about it.

Dr. FULTON. I only recall one. That one Boulden Island case, so far as my information goes, is not very definitely proven to have been connected with Boulden Island. It was in your reports so, fully confirmed in the conclusive manner in which all your cases are confirmed. It was a case who had only been at Boulden Island a very short time—that is, probably a matter of hours, and not more than two days. He came, however—it was impossible to trace the man—he came from those little neglected settlements a little farther up the river above this delta island, Boulden Island. It was, however, definitely a case of plague, and he was rightly attributed to Boulden Island, but he was not there long enough to do any harm. He died in San Francisco. I thought there were 2 cases, but this one was pretty definitely not infected at Boulden Island.

The CHAIRMAN. Dr. Lewis, have you any suggestions to make?

Dr. LEWIS, of New York. Mr. Chairman, I have no suggestions to make, but I would like to know a great many things. One of them is this: If it is possible for bubonic plague to exist in a community for six months more or less, without the diagnosis having been made certain definitely by an authority that we can accept, it strikes me that the first duty of this Conference or of this department, if you please, is to teach us how to make a diagnosis of plague. That clear, the question of segregation, isolation, sanitary treatment, etc., becomes very simple. If I read rightly what we have heard concerning this matter, that has been the entire difficulty in California, and to-day or yesterday—I have not read to-day—there were so-called authorities in San Francisco who declare there never has been a case there. That is why I came to this Conference, Mr. Chairman. Is this department conducting a series of investigations in the bacteriological laboratory which will enable us in the future when a case occurs in our own jurisdiction to make a diagnosis?

The CHAIRMAN. We have done that for sometime, Doctor. We have trained a certain number of officers in the diagnosis of bubonic plague, and have sent them wherever we found they were needed so as to make certain of the diagnosis bacteriologically.

Dr. LEWIS, of New York. I supposed that was the case. Then why is it that one department in San Francisco says it is not plague and another says that it is?

The CHAIRMAN. Well, that is the great question.

Dr. LEWIS, of New York. Where is the difficulty?

The CHAIRMAN. There has been a positive denial, which, of course, we attribute to a desire to not have the truth known. There has been no difference of opinion with regard to the findings of our own officers there and the commission of experts that went out to California. There has been no question in this Bureau or in the minds, I believe, of the profession that the diagnosis is correct, that it is bubonic plague,

but I suppose that there have been other instances where a contagious disease—the presence of it—has been combated for various reasons.

Dr. LEWIS, of New York. Has there been anything brought out in your investigations showing how the original case reached San Francisco or how long ago?

The CHAIRMAN. That is pretty difficult to determine. It has been there, we know, for very nearly three years, and it is not beyond the bounds of possibility, or even probability, that it was there before that and undiscovered. Dr. White might say something on that; he was out there.

Assistant Surgeon-General WHITE. Gentlemen, I would like to say on that point, that I was told by Dr. Buckley, who was a member of the city board of health, that, looking back over his cases, after plague was discovered in San Francisco, and identified as plague beyond a shadow of doubt, that he distinctly remembered a case of his own in private practice in Chinatown, which as compared with these cases which had been identified as plague, he now felt certain was plague. That was at least a year, and possibly longer, prior to March 6, 1900, when the first case was authentically announced.

I believe it is entirely possible that plague may have been introduced into Honolulu from Hongkong before the world realized that Hongkong was infected, and you can follow that same kind of a chain right along and find the introduction from Honolulu into San Francisco before the world realized that Honolulu was infected, the infection being generally present in a place long before it is discovered. Dr. Lewis' difficulty of diagnosis is not so much a difficulty of diagnosis as a failure of people to awaken to a realization of the fact that they have to look out for plague; and having seen plague clinically, I know that if you are not looking for plague you are not apt to find it. You can very easily mistake it for something else, and especially a case of septicæmic plague. It would not present any symptoms that would make a man think of plague who had not previously seen a case of plague.

Dr. HOLTON. Is not that just as true with respect to pneumonic and pulmonic cases? Are not they just as liable to be overlooked?

Assistant Surgeon-General WHITE. Just as likely. In fact the bubonic infection is about the only one that would attract the attention of an inexperienced man, and that has been honestly diagnosed as a syphilitic bubo.

Dr. BRACKEN. I think Dr. Lewis used a very fortunate term when he said that certain "so-called sanitary authorities" in California disputed the existence of plague; they are not sanitary authorities, they are "so-called sanitary authorities." They were created as tools. They are not sanitary authorities, they are tools. Now, I think there are a good many who are not very familiar with this subject, and I think it would be well for us to hear from Dr. Fulton, probably. He is very familiar with these things from the outset. From the force of circumstances, Dr. Fulton has been made very familiar with this subject, I understand; first, simply through his connection with a medical journal, and later, because he was chairman of the programme committee of the conference of State and provincial boards of health which met at New Haven.

Dr. HOLTON. I want to ask one question. Are we to understand that one comes from a scientific conscience, a scientific diagnosis; and the other from a commercial conscience, which has not any science in it?

The CHAIRMAN. That is my understanding of it, Doctor.

Dr. FULTON. While I would respond with the greatest pleasure to

any request of this Conference, Mr. Chairman, I do feel absolutely unable to give a *short* account of the plague. Hardly anyone could do that. It is certainly the wrong time to give a long account of it. I do not think that I know more about it—I may possibly know as much about it as any man who has not been on the ground; but there are a great many gaps in the knowledge I have picked up, and I can not see that it would profit the Conference if I should tell the story. I hope that Dr. Bracken will not insist upon the matter. I think we are ready to get down to business. The Surgeon-General has laid the foundation upon which we can proceed.

The CHAIRMAN. That is, the situation at the present time.

Dr. FULTON. Dr. White has added very much to it, showing the ordinary history of bubonic plague and that very important history, which is always just past the possibility of proof, but which we must include in our considerations just as much as if it were a matter of proof.

I hope the Surgeon-General is going to give the press the words of welcome that he gave us here and his outline of the situation. I should like to see that done first, and if we are going to have the meetings open I should like them to be open before we go much farther. I hope that Dr. Bracken will not insist that I say anything about plague.

Dr. BRACKEN. I will not insist, but the point was that Dr. Lewis evidently had not had an opportunity to go into the details, and for anyone outside of the United States Service, I think probably Dr. Fulton is the best-informed man.

Dr. SWARTS. I think the question before the Conference is whether there is any plague in San Francisco at the present time. From the statements, I could not see that there was at the present time, and during the last week there was none. If there is any further evidence that will go to show that it is still present there—

The CHAIRMAN. I would like to give my own opinion that there is infection in Chinatown at the present time, but within the last week we have not found any cases. That has been the difficulty with this disease. You have got to search for it and find it, and if you don't find it one day you may find it the next. There is no question about Chinatown being infected, and in all probability there are some cases in Chinatown to day, but in the last week, with the examinations that were made, none were found. We may get a report to-morrow that cases are found. We will search as with a fine tooth comb. We have one officer with a Chinese interpreter and another officer with a Chinese interpreter going through Chinatown twice a day. At least—I don't know as to the exact details—but one is in the habit of going twice a day and I suppose the other is too, and the city board of health has an officer in there searching out cases. If you could see Chinatown you would understand how that would have to be done. You have to go and hunt around in these out-of-the-way places where cases are reported. We find out the cases that are reported sick and go and see them. We are doing that to the very best of our ability, and by constantly attending to it, and laying out a plan of action that shall last rigidly right along, we will find cases as we have found them. Dr. Williamson himself told me he thought there was not very much plague in Chinatown, but that did not imply that it is not there, and the fact that we have got a report for one week that no cases have been proven is no indication that we do not believe it might have been there, and we will find it. If you gentlemen can suggest any assistance, any other way of finding out and getting the cases, I would be glad to have it. I do not know how else exactly we could operate. There may be something else we might do, but we

have special men, whose only business in life is to go into Chinatown and hear about the sick and investigate and see if they can find a case of plague. The dead are brought to the morgue. All dead from Chinatown are sent to the morgue that we conduct and are post-mortemed there, and, as shown in this (indicating paper), there have been 3 cases just post-mortemed. Those 3 cases died in Chinatown during the week. Next week we may have a report that 1 of the cases post-mortemed has proven to be plague.

Dr. SWARTS. Is it known how many cases are under quarantine in Chinatown?

The CHAIRMAN. We do not know that there are——

Dr. SWARTS. Suppose that there is plague. I believe the mayor of San Francisco admitted there was plague, and then he states he is advised that there is not, so we can place no dependence upon that. Then what we have to depend upon is what comes from the Public Health and Marine-Hospital Service, which states that there is plague there at the present time, but it is not known how many cases there are there.

The CHAIRMAN. I might not have made myself perfectly clear with regard to ambulant cases. Those cases that came to New York three years ago on the schooner *Taylor*, Dr. Doty found because his mind was alive to plague. He said that the ordinary quarantine inspection would never have discovered those men at all; that they were ambulant cases; the men might under ordinary circumstances have gone through. Then, if they had gone through and had died of plague, and the disease not being recognized, plague had broken out, it would have been a great mystery how the plague got into New York. As I understand plague, these ambulant cases are numerous and patients are not confined to bed. They walk around with the plague. They may get well, and on the contrary there may be, as it were, an explosion, and the cases may become very virulent (even ambulant cases), and mortality result. I suppose that is the character of almost all the cases we have had. Is not that your idea?

Assistant Surgeon-General WHITE. Yes, sir.

The CHAIRMAN. Probably the men who have died had the disease some time, walked around with it, and finally it became virulent and they died.

Dr. SWARTS. What is the population of Chinatown?

The CHAIRMAN. About 17,000. I think the population has diminished.

A MEMBER. I would like to ask if we are to understand if all the cases which have been identified as plague in San Francisco are now dead.

Assistant Surgeon-General WHITE. Some 3 or 4 cases, that were positively diagnosed clinically, recovered. I do not remember the exact number. The rest of them died. In line with what the Surgeon-General said, if you will allow me, I know of 1 ambulant case, clinically diagnosed as plague, in which my assistants very much desired to make a bacteriological investigation, and when they came to obtain the blood to make their examination, Mr. Chinaman had been spirited away and they never saw him again.

Dr. LEWIS, of North Carolina. In regard to the inspections in Chinatown, as I understand, the inspections are made by 2 officers with an assistant and the Chinese would recognize them as the officials. If the Chinese desired to avoid detection, the idea occurred to me that perhaps it might be well to employ a Chinese detective, pay him a regular salary, and then give him a good big bonus for every true case of plague that

he turns up. He does not appear at all. The Chinese do not know where the information comes from, but if he finds a case he reports to these officers and tells them where this case is and they go and make the inspection. In that way they avoid that suspicion.

The CHAIRMAN. We have really adopted that plan, with the exception of giving the bonus.

Assistant Surgeon-General WHITE. I will say that I am afraid that will not work, because I have offered the bonus out of my own pocket while I was out there and the Chinaman simply played tricks on me. I believe that he was an agent of the Six Companies and tried to fool me.

Dr. NOLTE. I would like to ask Dr. White a little more about that body that was spirited away.

Assistant Surgeon-General WHITE. We never succeeded in making that diagnosis on him. He evaporated, and we never saw him again.

Dr. NOLTE. You have no reason to believe he died?

Assistant Surgeon-General WHITE. No, sir.

Dr. HOLTON. Let me ask, you do not question but that the infection might be remaining in Chinatown in the rats?

The CHAIRMAN. Yes, undoubtedly.

A MEMBER. Last week you did not have a case among human beings?

The CHAIRMAN. It does not prove there was none there. We did not find them.

A MEMBER. We will say you did not find them. Now, the infection must have remained unless the rats had all been killed, so that this week you may have a case, one or more cases, having been infected by the rats, that did not show last week. That is the way it looks to me.

Dr. WOODWARD. To revert a minute to that Chinaman who escaped, I think that might throw some light on the situation. We want to know in whose custody that plague-suspected Chinaman was, and how he happened to escape, so as to determine whether any Chinaman is liable to escape, even though he may be discovered alive.

Assistant Surgeon-General WHITE. This was a suspicious case, not definitely diagnosed as plague, and it was manifestly impossible to corral every sick Chinaman in Chinatown and put him under quarantine. If you were out there and saw the situation, you would understand that if you tried to quarantine every sick Chinaman in Chinatown, you would not find a sick man.

A MEMBER. Yes, we understand ; but were you morally certain?

Assistant Surgeon-General WHITE. Clinically, yes ; but they wanted to get the consent of this fellow to make this necessary examination. He had not been quarantined, but in an hour or so, they came back with the intention of making the examination.

Dr. WOODWARD. Under the laws as they exist there, or as they are enforced, a case can not be quarantined for plague, or for any other serious contagious disease until it is shown that he has plague with mathematical certainty. In other words, he can not be quarantined practically until he has consented to have his bubo tapped, which he don't have to consent to at all.

Assistant Surgeon-General WHITE. I would hardly put it as strongly as that, but you are dealing with a very peculiar people who, if you apply our laws and regulations to them, will thwart you. If you apply the same laws and regulations to the Chinaman that you do to the Anglo-Saxon, you will simply be thwarted at every turn. You can not do it. I went out there with the impression that you could. I became fully convinced that you can not do it.

A MEMBER. What is the difficulty?

Assistant Surgeon-General WHITE. They have no faith in the white man, sir. They believe the white man is trying to deceive them all the time, and they try to deceive the white man, and in the battle of wits we have our full equal when we meet the Chinaman.

Dr. FULTON. Are you sure that Chinaman did not turn up again?

Assistant Surgeon-General WHITE. No; I could not say that the Chinaman did not turn up again. That would be impossible, because there is a great deal of resemblance among Chinamen. Then you would get another name.

Dr. FULTON. You did know his name, then?

Assistant Surgeon-General WHITE. We got the name. They will change their name every night just as easily as they change their clothing.

Dr. FULTON. If I have the story right, as you were one of the actors, that Chinaman had been substituted by another Chinaman when your assistant got there. When they went down stairs to call Flint and Mark White your men returned in a rather short time, and that cubical was occupied all right, and when you put your hand on the man and he turned over, nobody knew anything at all, but I understand that man was found a few days later in the shop of a Chinese undertaker, in a Chinese undertaker's house.

Assistant Surgeon-General WHITE. I think that is another case. I have some recollection of something of that sort.

A MEMBER. Was the trick played twice?

Assistant Surgeon-General WHITE. Yes; that trick was played in addition to the other.

Dr. WOODWARD. I do not want to appear unduly persistent, but it seems to me that, to a certain extent, it is the gist of the whole question. If it is impossible to quarantine a Chinaman who is morally certain to be suffering from plague, is it any the less easy or more easy to quarantine a man who is known to have plague? It is simply an application of the same principles in each case.

The CHAIRMAN. I think they do it, if they find a case of plague.

Assistant Surgeon-General WHITE. Occasionally there are slips like that. They make an honest endeavor to corral those people, but the contacts get away from them. You find a Chinaman sick, but you will find nobody with him, though you know there has been somebody.

Dr. NOLTE. The only way you could quarantine a Chinaman sick is after he was dead; that is the only time?

Assistant Surgeon-General WHITE. It comes pretty near that, sir.

Dr. HOLTON. How much authority—what is the law of the United States under which you act, and how much authority have you to step into San Francisco and quarantine, or into New York or Baltimore?

The CHAIRMAN. The law says that we shall aid State and city boards of health in the execution of their laws and regulations. If they are insufficient we may make regulations which the State or city board of health must enforce, and if they are not enforced the President may detail officers to enforce them. Now, of course, I have considered that matter very carefully, and to step in and override, with the public opinion against you, would be a thing that I think every member, every State officer here, would not like to see. It would be an attempt to do something that would cause a great deal of trouble. We have never been obliged to do that in any epidemic. We have managed some other way. The system of our Government, and the plan of operations of the health departments, our department and your depart-

ments, indicate a recognition of the State's authority over its own people, and the city over its own people so far as possible. That is the sentiment, the moving spirit. We want to do everything we can to make every State attend to its own affairs. If we should do otherwise, of course we would have to pay all the expenses, and if we made a precedent we might be called upon very often, which would weaken the State boards of health and city boards of health. My attitude, and the attitude of the Treasury Department, has always been to recognize fully the authority of the State and not attempt to do anything to override it. Of course, "Silent leges inter arma." If there be a war, the President may take unusual action in the interest of the public; if there were a vast epidemic, I don't know what might happen, but as to the present, I do not think that action contrary to the usual policy can be considered.

Dr. SMITH. I think there exists in the mind of no man here any doubt as to the belief of General Wyman and his Service as to the true state of affairs in California. We have had definite assurances as to what he considers the state of the plague there—that plague does exist, that plague has existed. I think there can be no doubt either in the mind of any of us as to the entire honesty of the efforts which the Service is making along lines which we as sanitarians recognize to be probably most efficient at the present time. What I want to know is, How far and with what honesty of purpose the State and local authorities in California are going to cooperate with this Service? How soon the perversion of fact and lukewarm efforts, and this insistence that plague does not exist, on the part of those authorities there, is going to cease? In other words, how soon they are going to stop their obstructive tactics and get down and cooperate with General Wyman and his Service. That is what I want to know and that is what my board wants to know. If I mistake not the temper of this Conference, that is what everyone of us wants to know. I shall not be satisfied to go back and make report until I can report something definite one way or the other with reference to this matter. General Wyman has informally, as some of you know, stated to us certain assurances which he has had, and which I am perfectly willing to admit, by virtue of his official position, ought to be accepted by him. He is not in a position where he can say to a man, who officially expresses his intention of cooperating, that he does not believe him. We are under no such obligation as that. So far as we are concerned we have a right to demand something more definite and more specific than anything that has been offered to us so far, and it seems to me that the proper thing for this Conference to do is to find out some way, if possible, to get that assurance, and until we get that assurance I, for one, shall not be satisfied with the question as to what is to be done there. So far as the Public Health and Marine-Hospital Service is concerned, I have not the slightest doubt that they are doing everything they can and will do everything that they can, and that they have the correct idea of what ought to be done, but we have not any assurance that we can bank upon, definite documentary evidence of any kind, as to what the authorities out there are going to do.

Dr. WOODWARD. The Surgeon-General, I think, has very correctly defined the position of the Public Health and Marine-Hospital Service in such matters, but we were informed by the representative of the State board of health of California that the Public Health and Marine-Hospital Service was in entire charge of the situation in the city of San Francisco; that, I assure everybody present, was a matter of surprise to me. It was entirely new, and I think the record ought to be straight

on that point in justice to the Public Health and Marine-Hospital Service, for which I have the greatest respect.

The CHAIRMAN. Often, in assuming this assistance, we practically do the work. We do it, however, recognizing the authority of the State and city, and I do not understand that we have taken the work over, excepting in the way of assistance, and what is more, I will ask Dr. White to explain the situation when we went out there to clean up Chinatown. We believe, no matter what the situation has been heretofore, the best plan of operating is to make the city board of health attend to the city, but of course if they do not do it, then the State board of health ought to see that they do it, because it is in the State. The agreement that we made with regard to cleaning Chinatown was that our officer should have charge of the business, but the State board of health was to assist and so was the city board.

Assistant Surgeon-General WHITE. They were to do the work under my advice.

Dr. WOODWARD. Cleaning Chinatown?

Dr. LEWIS, of North Carolina. I understand that the attitude of the Public Health and Marine-Hospital Service is simply that of an assistant to the local authorities, which position I thoroughly indorse. Let us consider what would be the effect if we realized the state of mind or the attitude of the State board of health of California and the probable attitude of the new city board of health that is to be appointed by Mayor Schmitz, who absolutely denies, since he talked with you (addressing the chairman), the presence of plague in San Francisco.

The CHAIRMAN. He admitted it to me, but I have been informed he denied it in his message to the city council.

Dr. SMITH. Now, can you have any confidence whatever in the sincerity of the efforts of either one of those boards to attempt to do the proper work? How can you assist those boards which do not believe in the presence of plague and whose efforts in the management must be, to say the least, half hearted.

It strikes me that the results of the efforts of the city boards and the State boards of California, and the Public Health and Marine-Hospital Service of the United States, occupying its relation to them—which I fully indorse—I do not see how we can depend at all upon the result of those efforts. It seems to me that we want something definite and positive that we can depend upon.

Dr. BRACKEN. It seems to me that the conditions, so far as the Marine-Hospital Service is concerned, may change from this time, as compared with what they were in the past. The city board of health up to the present time has been most efficient, one that the Public Health and Marine-Hospital Service could rest upon to help it out. If they change their tactics it would be very different. It seems, as Dr. Smith suggests, that we have a right to demand something of the State of California and of the city of San Francisco, something that will satisfy the States throughout the Union, and also foreign countries. So, up to the present time, the good work that has been done in San Francisco has been done by the Public Health and Marine-Hospital Service and the city board of health. So far as the State board of health has done anything, it has been obstructive. So far as I can learn, the State board of health is not ready to become very active, and a passive man is worse than no man at all for accomplishing anything. So far as indications are concerned it would seem that the city board of health is about to fall in line with the State board of health on the neutral or passive position.

Dr. LEWIS, of North Carolina. I agree with Dr. Bracken, that we have a right to demand of the authorities of California that the proper action should be taken. How are we going to enforce that demand? We can demand all day long and it amounts to nothing. If we can bring some pressure to bear upon the business of San Francisco, if they do not carry out the proper precautions, that would be the practical way to work it. If we can put the general public of the United States in such an attitude in relation to this question that if the State of California and the city of San Francisco do not take steps that are entirely satisfactory to your Service and the State boards of health of the United States, the business of that port and of that State will be very seriously damaged, then I believe that the authorities of that State and city will take the proper action and the business will be managed, and I do not believe that there is any other possible, practical way to demand it, because, even if you were willing to take charge against the public opinion of those localities, of that State and city, your efforts would be neutralized in spite of everything you would do. You might take an army out there and there would be such opposition to you that you could not carry out the proper measures. The only way to do is to bring such pressure to bear upon that State and city that their interests—business interests—will be seriously impaired if they do not take the precautions. If we do that the work will be accomplished; if not, then I do not believe we will accomplish anything whatever, and we will be in the same state of uncertainty that we are in now, and the same state of plague in all probability.

Dr. HOLTON. I agree with Dr. Lewis perfectly. That brings up a question I had in mind. I want to ask if you have the power to quarantine all of the State of California, as against the rest of this country?

The CHAIRMAN. I certainly have, when the conditions demand it.

Dr. HOLTON. Has not the time arrived when conditions do demand it?

Dr. LEWIS, of New York. Hardly, it seems to me.

Dr. LEE The representative from California has given us to understand, very directly and exactly, his own position. He believes that the plague has existed in California. He is not willing to appear as representing the board which delegates him as entertaining that opinion. Now, could he not, by wire, to-day, obtain from the governor of the State, from the State board of health, from the board of health of San Francisco, and from the mayor of San Francisco, pledges that they would, in every possible way, sustain the Public Health and Marine-Hospital Service, and, moreover, make a definite statement that they do believe that the plague has existed in San Francisco? If we can obtain a positive pledge of that kind, from the authorities of California, we will be in a position to go home satisfied.

Dr. BRACKEN. I, for one, would not be satisfied with a positive reply from the present board of health of the State of California, nor from the present board of health of San Francisco to any such telegram. Dr. Holton raised the question as to whether we are ready to quarantine against the State of California. It seems to me we are not ready. To quarantine against a State is a pretty serious thing, and it seems to me that we should define our position and say to the State of California, "If you do thus and so, well and good; if you do not, then you can expect thus and so."

The CHAIRMAN. I might suggest here, that we are going to have another meeting. The annual conference, which is required by law to be called, must be called—I will confer with some of you gentlemen as to the time—but it will be called before the 1st of July; I think about

April, perhaps, or we could make it some other convenient time, and then the matter could be brought up again. It would be a very fit subject for discussion at that time, as well as other matters which are to be considered.

A MEMBER. There is nothing to prevent our considering it at that time.

Dr. FULTON. I would like very much to make a motion to include the ideas advanced by both Dr. Lewis and Dr. Lee, which certainly crystalize the whole matter. I should like to make a motion asking the representative from California to present us, within a few hours, with official assurances that the plague is recognized in San Francisco, and that the most active work will be done, the city board of health being responsible for San Francisco, and the State board for California—definite assurances with official signatures added received within a few hours. At the present time, I do not see that that would modify very extensively the present views of this Conference, but it would save the State of California from having a sufficient force here vote to quarantine that State. We are all in the position to make that demand, and if there is anything which raises the thing to the point of a necessity, it is the present attitude of the State of California. It seems, however, that a motion made at this present time would not be in order, because this Conference, at the present time, has no organization. It was understood that the representatives of the press would be present at our meeting, and they are not present, and we have no chairman and no secretary, and we are not in permanent organization at the present time.

The CHAIRMAN. With regard to the organization, the regulations made under the law, by the President and the Secretary of the Treasury, make me the chairman of these conferences, which are called to meet here. Perhaps it was an oversight on my part. And we ought to have a secretary. I simply brought in 2 stenographers to take down everything that is said, with a view to having the full proceedings either published or at least made known to the Conference, and so far as members of the press are concerned. I had no authority to invite them here. I determined to put that matter before you. I told them I did not know, but I thought probably a statement would be given out by the Conference. If there are any out there now, they are free to come in. They are not shut out.

Dr. FULTON. Mr. Chairman, you must excuse me for making that point. I thought that we should have had a permanent organization. I did not read the law. It is entirely satisfactory to me in all respects, except that the members of the press are not here. That was a point on which we spoke with great definiteness when the question was before us. I think it would be a good thing to have a secretary of this Conference.

Assistant Surgeon-General PURVIANCE. There are no representatives of the press out there now.

Dr. LEE. I nominate Dr. Swarts as Secretary.

The nomination was seconded and Dr. Swarts elected.

The CHAIRMAN. Dr. Swarts will be secretary of this Conference.

Dr. HOLTON. It may seem strange that a man from the interior should take any interest, more than a general one, in this matter. Perhaps the gentlemen do not understand that there are only 2 ports in the East where Chinamen can be admitted. These ports of entry for Chinamen coming into this country are Richford, Vt., and Malone, N. Y.; the others are in North Dakota and one in Washington. They are the only ones along the internal lines where they can be admitted.

We have had for three years Chinamen inspected coming into our State. We have been afraid they might come with bubonic plague. We have found them coming with smallpox on 3 different occasions—once 15 who were in the stage having the scales dropping off as they were traveling. We quarantined them until such time as it was safe, and disinfected them and let them go. There have been, until these past eighteen months, I think, more Chinamen entering through the port of Richford, Vt., than any other port in the United States. The United States district attorney for Vermont got after them so sharp that they have diverted to Malone—a great many of them. I wanted to explain why I am especially interested. I hope there will be something done that will relieve us of the apprehension that we have felt with regard to this matter.

Dr. SWARTS. I ask that the stenographic notes be available to the secretary.

This was acquiesced in.

Dr. LEWIS, of New York. If this representative body is satisfied, as I believe it is, with you, sir (addressing chair), that plague exists in California, and we make such a statement emanating from this meeting to the public, is it not a fact that all the public sentiment that is necessary to enforce any sanitary regulation in San Francisco will be applied by the outside public? That is my view of it, that if the public, both in foreign countries and in our own, are satisfied that it is plague, they will do the rest. It strikes me, as I said before, the first thing, the proper thing, is to settle the question for the public. We were satisfied before we came.

Assistant Surgeon-General WHITE. I want to say, in reply to Dr. Lewis, that the main point in regard to public sentiment, in accomplishing work of this kind, is to have the public sentiment of the community in which you are working, behind you. If you have the public sentiment of the people of California with you, you can accomplish anything in the State. If it is against you, then you could hardly accomplish anything if you had an army behind you, and for that reason, a frank admission by the State and city boards of health that plague is there, would convince the people of California that it was there, and then the road would be much easier and clearer.

Dr. BRACKEN. I thought, General Wyman, that we had gone over this subject very thoroughly, and I suppose the wise course would be that the State boards of health and the officials representing States here should go into conference and formulate some resolutions and then bring them before you and consider the thing in session here, acting upon those resolutions. If there is anything further to say, I will not make the motion. I was going to make a motion that we adjourn, probably till 3 o'clock, so that we could have a session and formulate our resolutions and present them to you at that time. I will make that motion.

Dr. THOMPSON. I would like to have Dr. Fulton state the motion he made a while ago. I would like to second it.

The CHAIRMAN. Did anybody second it?

Dr. BRACKEN. I made the motion that when we adjourned, it be until 3 o'clock.

Seconded and carried.

Dr. THOMPSON. The motion Dr. Fulton made—I would like to have him state that motion again, so as to give Dr. Gardner an opportunity to telegraph and get those replies from California before we meet this afternoon.

Dr. FULTON. I move, Sir, that the representative from California, Dr.

Gardner, be requested to present to this Conference within as short a time as possible, definite, signed assurances from the governor of the State and the mayor of San Francisco, which will bind the city board of health and the State board of health so far as those 2 men can control those offices to assume each their several and joint responsibilities in the suppression of plague, and to pursue them to the utmost in harmony with each other and in full cooperation with the United States Public Health and Marine-Hospital Service.

Dr. THOMPSON. I second the motion.

Dr. SIMONS. We are going to act prematurely, I think. There are none of us here not fully aware in our own mind as to the existence of plague in San Francisco, and the dilatory manner in which the authorities have dealt with it. I would like directly to make a motion and give a suggestion, that this Conference declare that they do believe in the existence of plague there.

Dr. BRACKEN. That is exactly the proposition I wanted to adjourn to consider, before we demand information from the other side. We want San Francisco and California to put themselves on record.

The CHAIRMAN. Dr. Simon's motion, being entirely different, at the present time is out of order, unless he offers it as an amendment.

Dr. SIMONS. I gave it more as a suggestion than a motion. I am in harmony with Dr. Fulton's motion, but I want, before we demand this action by the California authorities, to declare our belief as to the existence of plague and demand that they show their ability and willingness to meet the conditions which we believe to exist.

Dr. FULTON. I ask to be allowed to put a preamble to my motion, which will say that this Conference believes, without a shadow of division of opinion, that plague exists and has existed in San Francisco.

The CHAIRMAN. Dr. Fulton amends his motion by having that put in as a preamble. Gentlemen, you hear the preamble.

Dr. GARDNER. I should like very much that Dr. Fulton kindly put that resolution in writing.

The resolution was put in writing and adopted.

Dr. BRACKEN. I move we adjourn (it is 12.30), and that we are to reconvene at 3 o'clock.

Carried.

Afternoon session.

The Conference reconvened at 3.25 p. m.

The chairman read the following letter from Dr. Currie, of the Public Health and Marine-Hospital Service, stationed at San Francisco, Cal., regarding rats:

[This communication was received by Surgeon-General Wyman after reading his address at the morning session, in which he read a somewhat similar report from Dr. Currie, dated December 26, 1902, see PUBLIC HEALTH REPORTS Supplement, January 23, 1903.]

SAN FRANCISCO, CAL., January 12, 1903.

SIR: I have the honor to transmit herewith report of the total number of rats examined in this laboratory since November 8, 1902, the date on which the city board of health began to systematically trap rats in the Chinese quarter. In connection with the number of rats found to be suffering from plague, I deem it important to call attention to the fact that of these—15 in all—12 were found in 1 house or within a radius of a few feet from it, namely, 629 Merchant street, which is located one-half block from the Chinese quarter. The 3 others were found in different localities in Chinatown.

From the beginning of this work up to November 8, 1902, we had, by offering small rewards, been able to obtain 50 or 60 Chinatown rats for examination, but none of these were found to be infected with pest.

Owing to the discovery of this focus with its 12 plague rats, the proportion between the number of rats caught and the number of those infected with plague at first sight appears large, and unless the facts were known, incorrect inferences might be drawn as to the average per cent of rat infection in Chinatown. In view of this fact, I think that examinations will have to be continued for many months before any conclusions can be reached as to the extent of rat infection in this district.

Respectfully,

DONALD H. CURRIE,
Assistant Surgeon, P. H. and M. H. S.

A. H. GLENNAN,
Surg. P. H. and M. H. S., San Francisco, Cal.

The CHAIRMAN. The chair awaits any motion or any remarks from any of the members.

Dr. HOLTON. I move the reconsideration of the resolutions that were passed this morning directing the member from California to telegraph to the governor and other officials there, and I do it for this reason: That he was to ask of them assurances of what they would do in the future. We, as boards of health, have adopted resolutions saying to them, that if they do certain things it will restore confidence. I do not see now, the confidence having been lost, how any assurances which they could make at this time would be of any particular value. Their action will determine whether we are to have confidence or not, and it would be not only useless, but perhaps aggravating for them to receive such a telegram as was indicated in this motion. Therefore, I move reconsideration.

The motion was seconded.

The CHAIRMAN. I understand that both gentlemen voted for the original motion. Those in favor of the motion will say aye. (Several responded.) Contrary, no. (Several responded.) The ayes seem to have it. No division is called for.

Dr. SIMONS. I hope the motion will prevail, Sir. I think it will avoid undue irritation in this matter. You have given an ultimatum which the boards can not comply with. If this measure is pushed the governor will have to convene the board, and that will take a week or ten days at the earliest. He can not give any assurances as to what the board of health will do, nor could he expect the boards to give any assurance; the chairman certainly could not consent to or indorse that measure until he acted with his board.

The CHAIRMAN. Unless there is objection, the ayes have it, and the motion is carried.

Dr. HOLTON. That being before the assembly, I would move that the original motion of Dr. Fulton be laid on the table.

The CHAIRMAN. You hear the motion, that the resolution that was offered at the morning session be laid on the table?

Dr. WOODWARD. Might we ask whether that resolution has been acted upon?

The CHAIRMAN (addressing Dr. Gardner). Have you sent this request to the board?

Dr. GARDNER. No, Sir; I asked for information in regard to it, for it is simply impossible for me to make such a request on the authorities of San Francisco. The present governor would not vouch for the present board of health without convening them and getting an expression of their sentiments in the matter. Mayor Schmitz probably could convene the local board, but even that would take time, and I could not possibly get an answer to the messages in time to be of any service at this Conference, and I asked for information in regard to the matter, and understand it was held over until this afternoon session.

The motion to lay on the table was carried.

Dr. WOODWARD. It seems to me that we have dealt at some length with the present situation with reference to plague. Could not we suggest a description of the *modus operandi* with reference to handling it there at the present time?

The CHAIRMAN. Dr. White, can you answer that—up to the 1st of December, say?

Assistant Surgeon-General WHITE. As I understand the situation, gentlemen, the method of handling this disease, which was carried on up to quite a recent date, was that which was put in vogue by the city board of health of San Francisco in the spring of 1901, or practically then. It was that each Chinaman taken sick in the city of San Francisco should, so far as possible, be examined, by a representative of the city board of health, and by a representative of the Public Health and Marine-Hospital Service, and of the State board of health, if this latter gentleman elected to be present. Any Chinaman showing symptoms of plague was subjected to a more careful investigation, in order that a positive diagnosis might be arrived at, and in so far as possible the contacts with these suspicious cases were to be kept under observation. If the man died, his body was taken to the morgue at 641 Merchant street, where the Public Health and Marine-Hospital Service had established a laboratory, and a bacteriological examination followed the autopsy made at that point. Then the body was buried with appropriate precautions, either wrapped in saturated bichloride sheets or in some cases put in a coffin and covered with quick lime. The morgue was properly disinfected at frequent intervals to prevent infection of that and neighboring buildings and a disinfection done of the place where the man died and any room contiguous thereto. It happened in many instances that it was impossible to get any contacts because in many instances the first intimation of a case of plague was the finding of the dead body of a Chinaman, whose identity was occasionally, with great difficulty, established. No one would admit having been with him before he died or having any knowledge of who or what he was. Consequently, contacts in all such cases went free. And this is not so much a matter of neglect of proper sanitary precautions on the part of the board of health of San Francisco as might appear on the surface.

I believe I am justified in saying that I can take to several places in San Francisco a party of gentlemen, allow myself to be locked into a room from which there is no apparent egress except the door by which we enter, and then undertake to meet the gentlemen on the street in five minutes afterward without going out by that door. There are more contrivances on the part of the Chinamen for escaping the police than any Caucasian would ever dream of—false doors in all conceivable places. Therefore, if a Chinaman happens to die in one of those places so provided, when the health authorities come to investigate the sick or dead Chinaman, they find him, and him alone; his friends are gone.

The disinfection work done after such cases has, I believe, been effective. The effort on the part of the city board of health to take into custody all contacts and keep them under proper isolation and observation has been honest, but it would be too much to say that it has been successful, the city board of health having been hampered not only by the conditions which I have named, but also by a lack of funds, a very painful lack of funds, and, finally, hampered by a lack of confidence on the part of their own people, which, I believe, embarrasses a board of health more than any other one thing with which they could be put in conflict. Imperfect as the work which has been done is, I believe it has been honestly done by the city board, but it is impossible to claim

that it has been thoroughly effective. Had it been with Caucasians it probably would have been effective; if it had been with negroes it probably would have been effective, but with the Chinamen it could not be, in the nature of things.

Dr. THOMPSON. I would like to ask you a question about that. Suppose you did not find that Chinaman, would they have attempted to bury him themselves? Have they Chinese undertakers there?

Assistant Surgeon-General WHITE. They have Chinese undertakers, and nearly all these undertakers have, in connection with their establishments, what they call a hall of tranquility, of which Dr. Gardner spoke a while ago, and the Chinese frequently go to these halls of tranquility when they feel that death is near, in order that they may die there and be taken care of by the undertakers. They are then taken to their own Chinese burial grounds by the Chinese undertakers and buried, with a view to their future exhumation and return of their bones to China. The city board demands a certificate of the death of each Chinaman in San Francisco, and endeavors to carry out that demand. To what extent it is complied with, I do not know.

Dr. THOMPSON. You think it is complied with always?

Assistant Surgeon-General WHITE. I can not say that, Doctor. I suggested to the city board when I was there that they should pass an ordinance, or have an ordinance passed, preventing the burial of any Chinaman until the body was accompanied by a certificate that he had not died of plague, in order that as soon as possible we might obtain an opportunity to examine the dead Chinamen. This ordinance was passed, and I believe it is still in effect, though I am not sure of it. It was in effect for a year. But there is one point which was significant, to say the least, and that is, during the time I was there, despite this effort to find all the sick and the dead, the death rate apparent in Chinatown was lower than an ordinary health community would show, and that is as compared with the total population of Chinatown, whereas the death rate as compared with the sick which were shown was tremendous. My recollection is that it was something like 50 per cent of all the sick which were shown.

Dr. BRACKEN. I would like to ask Dr. White if we are to understand that these Chinese undertakers performed the functions of an undertaker in every respect?

Assistant Surgeon-General WHITE. Yes, sir.

Dr. BRACKEN. If so, it is rather in contradiction of a statement that was made by Dr. Gardner that there were no Chinese undertakers; as a matter of fact, the undertaking was all done by white men and that the Chinamen, acting as undertakers, simply take up matters when the white undertakers have done their duties.

Assistant Surgeon-General WHITE. I did not investigate that matter very closely, Doctor. I know that we turned the bodies over to men that were sent—the Chinese undertakers—after we had finished our functions with them, and did not interest ourselves any further with regard to them.

A MEMBER. Did they perform what we would call in the East, the ordinary term—the laying out of the body—these Chinese undertakers?

Assistant Surgeon-General WHITE. I do not know what they did with them, Doctor. We turned them over to them after we had finished the autopsy. Certainly they had to be prepared in some fashion; but if we found the case to be negative we turned the body back to them in the ordinary fashion. If we found it to be plague, we put the body in such a condition that it had no need for an undertaker.

Dr. HURTY. What precautions, Doctor, did you take to keep from infecting yourselves?

Assistant Surgeon-General WHITE. My assistants all took Haffkine prophylactic, sir, several doses, following that with an injection of Yersin serum. Myself—I took no precaution, except that of ordinary care in handling things of that sort. I took the risk.

Dr. HOLTON. What is considered the danger of infection at the present time?

Assistant Surgeon-General WHITE. I would hardly like to answer that question, Dr. Holton, as I am not a bacteriologist. One of my assistants might have been able to readily answer that. I could not. I had the executive function, and I would not like to undertake to answer that question.

Dr. HOLTON. I think I have seen it stated somewhere recently that the bubonic cases were not communicable from person to person, but that the pneumonic cases were; that in the bubonic cases it must be the intermediate host of the rat. I do not know whether that was correct or not.

Assistant Surgeon-General WHITE. That may or may not be so, sir; I would not like to answer that. I would not like to answer a scientific question unless I was positively sure of the ground I stood on.

The CHAIRMAN. Any other remarks?

Dr. BRACKEN. Mr. Chairman, Dr. Fulton is here now, and has the resolutions. I suggest that he present them.

Dr. Fulton then read the following resolutions, which were adopted by the Conference:

I.

The presence of plague in California is established beyond debate by—

1. The investigations of Kellogg, of the San Francisco board of health, Ryfkogal, for the California State board of health, and Kinyoun, of the Marine-Hospital Service.
2. By the later investigations of Pillsbury, for the State board of health, and by those of J. White, M. White, Flint, Currie, Carmichael, Blue, and Glennan, for the Public Health and Marine-Hospital Service.
3. By the findings of Flexner, Barker, and Novy, composing a special committee acting under Federal authority.
4. By the findings of independent and disinterested investigators (supplied with materials from autopsies made at San Francisco, and working in San Francisco, Chicago, Boston, New York, Washington, Baltimore, Philadelphia, and Ann Arbor).
5. By the occurrence of a case of human plague in Ann Arbor due to an accident in the manufacture of Haffkine's prophylactic fluid with a culture of plague bacillus obtained in California.
6. By the autopsy records of 90 cases of plague, now in the possession of the Public Health and Marine-Hospital Service and of the San Francisco board of health, and published in part in the Occidental-Medical Times of San Francisco.

II.

The presence of plague in any community where proper restrictions are not taken to prevent its spread, is an injury to the best interests of that community. Such injury is in any case avoidable by the proper cooperation of all interest involved, commercial, professional, and governmental. This Conference regards the habitual publication of the actual facts relative to infectious disease and preventive procedures as the surest route to popular confidence, and is one of the means best adapted to minimize the injury liable to result from the presence of such diseases.

III.

The present danger to California and to the United States lies primarily in the persistence, during nearly three years, of a definite nidus of plague infection in that part of San Francisco known as Chinatown; but the gravity of this circumstance is greatly

increased by the gross neglect of official duty by the State board of health of California and the obstructive influence of the recent governor of California, by the failure of the city government of San Francisco to support its city board of health, and by the obstacles opposed to the operations of the Public Health and Marine-Hospital Service.

IV.

The Conference will consider the safety of the country sufficiently assured as soon as satisfied that a competent city board of health of San Francisco, and a competent State board of health, in cooperation with the Public Health and Marine-Hospital Service, will proceed under definite, harmonious, and effective laws and ordinances; that they are provided with ample funds, and that they are jointly and severally in the free exercise of their lawful powers.

V.

The Conference expresses its conviction that the Public Health and Marine-Hospital Service has deserved well of the State of California and of the country, and that it would go far toward the restoration of popular confidence if the Public Health and Marine-Hospital Service officials were admitted to the same relations with the State board of health as have been steadily maintained with the city board of health of San Francisco.

The praise of this Conference and the gratitude of the city of San Francisco are due to Drs. John M. Williamson, Vincent P. Buckley, W. B. Lewitt, Rudolph W. Baum, Louis Bazett, and Dr. McCarthy, of the city board of health of San Francisco. These men possess the unreserved confidence of the executive health officers of the country.

Dr. FULTON. The next resolution—I am not sure of the status of this resolution (reads):

The secretary is instructed to inform the Hon. Elihu Root, Secretary of War, and Surgeon-General O'Reilly, of the United States Army, that, in the opinion of this Conference, the existence of plague at San Francisco is a consideration of weight against the maintenance of an army-transport station at San Francisco, and that the gravity of this consideration is greatly augmented by the official misconduct of the State board of health of California, and by the hostility of the mayor of San Francisco and of the public press of that city to the view that plague is present.

This is the one which was passed and which was reconsidered. [Referring to the meeting of members between the two sessions of the Conference to formulate resolutions.]

A MEMBER. That came up and was under discussion when we adjourned. We adjourned without acting on it.

Dr. BRACKEN. Mr. Chairman, as I understand it, the meeting in session up to 3 o'clock and the Conference in session now are not one and the same body. I mean that it was a body of men at that time that were considering certain questions. You, of course (addressing the chair), are now at the head of this, and it is a different proposition. This resolution was brought up before our meeting at that time—the meeting of the members—and it was first passed and then moved for reconsideration; then an adjournment was taken, so that it is really before that body still and not before this body.

The CHAIRMAN. Then it is not to be offered here at the present time?

Dr. BRACKEN. Unless they want to introduce it as a resolution here. I just wanted to explain the status.

Dr. FULTON. I do not want to introduce it. Then, that is the last resolution, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Is there anything else, then?

Dr. BRACKEN. I was under the impression there was one more resolution with reference to our commendation of the Public Health and Marine-Hospital Service.

Dr. SWARTS. I think the fifth resolution covered that. I thought that the sentence "The praise of this Conference and the gratitude of the city of San Francisco are due to doctors so and so and to the Public

Health and Marine-Hospital Service," was not to be considered by this Conference, and I would like to ask for the benefit of those present as to the feeling of the present chairman in regard to this. In other words, the resolutions include, as I understand, not only the action of these various officers and the city board of health of San Francisco, but also the Public Health and Marine-Hospital Service. Now, as we are a body, is the Public Health and Marine-Hospital Service commending itself?

Dr. BRACKEN. I wish to explain that this resolution was divided into 2 parts. One was commendatory of the local authorities, and we have passed that. The other was No. 4a, and was commendatory of the Public Health and Marine-Hospital Service, and it was thought they would hardly want to act on that resolution in this body, but I thought it was no more than right that General Wyman should hear the resolution, and I remember that, as it was presented, it was numbered 4a by the secretary.

The CHAIRMAN. I am the presiding officer of the Conference. There are 21 of you, I believe, and 1 of the Service. The resolution did not strike me as being improper at the time for me to put it, and the resolution has been passed.

Dr. HOLTON. That is the point I wanted to make. That resolution commending the Public Health and Marine-Hospital Service was acted upon, the State boards of health being together, and they say that the Public Health and Marine-Hospital Service has done so and so, and they approve it.

The CHAIRMAN. The resolution has been passed and it would be necessary to reconsider it if any action be taken on it. I do not think it makes very much difference, Dr. Holton.

Dr. HOLTON. I did not want it to go out to the world that the Public Health and Marine-Hospital Service had commended itself.

The CHAIRMAN. It was instigated entirely by you gentlemen. Any other motions before the Conference?

Dr. LEWIS, of New York. One resolution which has been read was not acted upon by the Conference, and I for one would be pleased if the chairman would place Dr. White in the chair and tell us what he thinks about it. I do not know whether the other members feel as I do. The last one read—

The CHAIRMAN. That one, I believe, is not to come before this Conference. It is not before the Conference.

Dr. FULTON. I have just been ascertaining the views of those who were in favor of that resolution this morning, and they favor its being brought up at the present time, this one about the transports.

Dr. FULTON (reads):

This Conference regards the entrance of Federal troops through San Francisco and their subsequent dissemination throughout the United States as a most serious menace to the safety of the country at large, until and unless the present unfavorable conditions in San Francisco are ameliorated by the adoption of the measures indicated in the other resolutions passed by this conference.

Dr. FULTON (continuing). This, Mr. Chairman, is the resolution upon which the gentleman from New York asked that you speak, putting your assistant surgeon-general in the chair.

The CHAIRMAN. I can speak from here quite as well. Of course, I want to leave this entirely to you gentlemen. This is a conference with me, and if you choose to pass that resolution I have nothing further to say, excepting that, in my judgment, it would not be advisable to pass that resolution. There are certain reasons. There is a great deal of rivalry between San Francisco and Seattle at the present time,

and I am inclined to think that the effect of that out there would be unfavorable to the good effect of these other resolutions. I do not wish to discuss it or overpersuade you gentlemen, but that is simply my judgment. Of course, in this matter, I yield to your judgment. I would like to know what Dr. White thinks about it. I call on him because he is the assistant surgeon-general of the Public Health and Marine-Hospital Service in charge of the domestic quarantine division of this Bureau under the law.

Assistant Surgeon-General WHITE. Gentlemen, I am constrained to concur in the Surgeon-General's opinion—not because he is Surgeon-General, but because I believe truly that the opinion correctly outlines the situation—that we would, in passing such a resolution, win the animosity of California, that it would be taken in the light of a punishment for past offenses, and, instead of doing good, it might do harm, and lead up to further ill feeling. I believe that the incentive to proper action on the part of the State will come more out of a promise that they will not be restricted in their commerce, provided they do what is right, than out of a direct punishment inflicted on them now for what they have done in the past, and I, therefore, do believe that it would be ill advised to pass such a resolution.

Dr. SMITH. Mr. President, may I ask a direct question of Dr. White, through you? Is it your judgment that the passage of these resolutions by this body would hamper the work which your Service proposes to do, and is doing in the management of the plague investigation?

Assistant Surgeon-General WHITE. No, sir. I do not think it would hamper our work unless the passage of the resolution was directly attributed by the State of California to the Service. If they felt that this Service took the initiative in these resolutions and that this Service was responsible for them, rather than the Conference being responsible, then it would hamper our work. Otherwise, I do not think it would. But I take the stand that the resolutions are somewhat aggressive in their nature, and probably will not accomplish as much good as taking a different stand, the stand which was well outlined by Dr. Lewis, of North Carolina, this morning, when he said that they have to understand that certain things which are right must be done or certain forcible measures will be applied toward the eradication of the trouble.

Dr. BRACKEN. It may be well not to pass such resolutions as these at the present. We as a Conference have absolutely no confidence in the sanitary authorities of California and of San Francisco at the present time. We are dependent entirely for all that we have upon the Public Health and Marine-Hospital Service at present. I feel that it might be wise not to pass this resolution at the present time, but the Californians might just as well understand that they have sneezed at things enough, that we mean business all the way through the United States from this time on, and that this threat will be held over them, and not only this but the St. Louis Exposition; there are two or three more things, to use a slang expression, “up the sleeve,” and we will be in conference again in less than five months, and they might just as well understand that this thing will be threshed over again and they will get it a little harder next time than they do this time.

Dr. FULTON. I am in favor of passing this resolution, with the distinct understanding that the undivided responsibility rests with the members of the State boards of health who are here present. We should certainly in the most definite way absolve the United States Public Health and Marine-Hospital Service from any responsibility, and, indeed, give them credit for advising against the passage of these

resolutions. It is possible that these resolutions may create some little animosity in California, provided they are strong enough to display any animosity, but from the inception, certainly from the fourth week after the outbreak of plague in 1900, this contest has been a bare-knuckle contest, and this is the first time on the part of the city board of health and of the State health authorities under the now retired Henry Theophilus Gage—this is the first time the State boards of health have come up to take a hand in this matter. I do not believe that there is power in San Francisco—that there is any room for animosity out there. This thing was intended to inspire fear, and that is what it must inspire. It is the one weapon which, to my mind, is irresistible in this contest. At the present time there is a probability, at least there is a possibility, that the transport service will be taken away from San Francisco; the matter is now in the air, and the business interests of the State of Washington on the one hand and the State of California on the other have locked horns upon it. The sanitary situation in California is, at this moment, absolutely in the hands of the one power whose chief interest, at the present moment, is the retention of the transport service at San Francisco.

Now, I am not afraid of its appearing to us as anything like "hitting in a clinch." I think it is a perfectly definite blow, and I admit that, at this moment, I am taking this step on the very lowest ground of expediency. I think it is expedient for this Conference to pass this resolution. It also should be passed on the ground of right. If we do not pass this resolution, we do assume, to my mind, a certain definite responsibility, to cover the interval between now and when we shall meet again upon this subject, and the responsibility which we assume is, that there is no danger of plague coming in by incoming soldiers and being disseminated through this country in that way. Are we willing to take that responsibility under the present conditions as we know them in San Francisco and in California? That danger is definite. The history of plague in California is not unique in any way, except that the opposition to the diagnosis and the opposition to the preventive measures—that is unparalleled in the history of the world. Otherwise, as a clinical phenomenon affecting the body politic, the history of plague follows the usual rule.

Soldiers are coming in there from the Philippines and being distributed all over the United States. They have a little money to spend. They get their leave of absence and they spend their money. They can visit Chinatown, and, if anything has been made clear here, it is that plague is not seen. If we knew where plague is we could then say that persons could go and come with safety through the streets of San Francisco, even through the streets of Chinatown, but that is precisely what we can not say. We have had the most direct and convincing testimony that Chinatown in San Francisco is a unique little settlement in these United States. The habits of living and everything else with the Mongolians themselves defy all the rules of our Western civilization. He is a full match for us in the contest of wits. If we waive this resolution at the present time each and everyone of us will take home with us the responsibility of saying that, for the present, there is no danger of an incoming soldier coming to one of our States with bubonic plague.

Dr. SIMONS. Mr. Chairman, I spoke against that motion. I hope it will not prevail. I think we are going outside of our jurisdiction to be instructing the Secretary of War and the army and navy authorities. Those gentlemen are fully qualified and competent. These men land at the Presidio, 5 or 6 miles from the city of San Francisco. They are

under military discipline and control. We have at work in the city of San Francisco certain precautionary measures and inspections, and I hardly think the authorities will be so lax as to allow a body of soldiers on leave with plenty of money to be dissipating in Chinatown, so I hardly conceive that is any immediate risk. We have laid down an ultimatum, which those gentlemen can not honorably accept, and I am opposed to degrading them. I think it is too irritating. It must be necessarily degrading to them to hold out to them that their trade will be destroyed and the transport service be taken elsewhere unless they conform to certain regulations. We have laid down certain measures as an ultimatum, which if they conform to, will be all that is necessary. I think it will hardly be necessary to advise the Secretary of War and the army and navy medical authorities as to what they should do with their returning troops.

Dr. FULTON. That is not in the resolution. That is not before the house.

Dr. SIMONS. I think you mentioned the army and navy authorities, and also the name of Secretary Root.

Dr. FULTON. This is a resolution introduced by Dr. Woodward to avoid that very thing.

Dr. WOODWARD. I drafted that as a substitute on that basis.

Dr. SIMONS. Even so, I do not like it.

Dr. LEWIS, of New York. If this is a useful resolution, and a necessary one, why not make assurance doubly sure and prohibit the landing of passengers from Honolulu at San Francisco, where the plague already exists, and where the danger is just as great, if passengers mingle among the people out in Chinatown and then be distributed around the country? Why not include the merchant marine at Hongkong and other places in the East? I do not believe, myself, that the danger is imminent, but if there is an imminent danger, it is just as imminent from this other source as from the Government transport service.

Dr. BRACKEN. Does Dr. Lewis admit, Mr. Chairman, that the quarantine at New York is no better than at San Francisco—I did not mean the quarantine, I mean the matter of the introduction of plague through New York City is no better guarded than at San Francisco?

The CHAIRMAN. I must say, gentlemen, if I may speak again on this subject, that it is a matter of grave doubt with me whether, even passed as you suggest, as coming from yourselves, and not from us, and at our protest, it will not hamper us. It is pretty difficult to determine right at once whether it would help or hamper, but I am inclined to think it would hamper in our work. There are other measures which we might be called upon with equal propriety to suggest, as the placing of inspectors at the border, and quarantining the State, and if the Government does not do it, each individual State has the right to do the same thing. Why should we single out this one measure which would seem to be restricted simply to the Government transport service? I am inclined to think that even with the strong presentation of the subject which Dr. Fulton has made—he certainly has made a strong presentation—and we have that behind us anyhow—we could appeal to the Secretary of War at any time; but to me, it is like showing a weapon. I fear it would have that effect. Of course, I admit the force of what Dr. Fulton has said, but my judgment would still be adverse to the resolution.

Dr. LEWIS, of New York. Mr. Chairman, I would like to make a motion, in view of the opinion expressed by yourself and Assistant Surgeon-General White, that the consideration of this matter be postponed until the next Conference.

Dr. THOMPSON. Mr. Chairman, that motion is out of order, and the motion before the house is seconded.

The CHAIRMAN. The motion to lay it on the table until another time simply postpones it as unfinished business. The chair will decide the motion is not out of order, that further action be deferred until the regular meeting.

Carried.

Dr. HOLTON. I would like to present a substitute:

Resolved, that the Surgeon-General of the Public Health and Marine-Hospital Service be requested to inform the various State boards of health at least two weeks before the annual meeting of the Public Health and Marine-Hospital Service and the State boards of health to what extent the sanitary recommendations this day made to control and prevent the existence of plague in California have been carried out, to the end that they may then be prepared to take further action that may be necessary to accomplish the end desired.

Seconded and carried.

Dr. GARDNER. I would like to know from this Conference, and from the President, exactly the position the Public Health and Marine-Hospital Service occupies in San Francisco, compared with the local board of health and the State board of health—whether they are in supreme command of the situation there or not?

The CHAIRMAN. As explained by Dr. White at the morning session, we are not.

Dr. GARDNER. The impression has been that you were in charge in San Francisco, and it has been there for some time, although I am not familiar with much of the doings of the health office until here within the last two or three weeks at the most—that your department was in charge in San Francisco, and that the other boards were merely supplemental to your work. I believe that is the impression to-day of Governor Pardee—in fact, I am sure of it; that that is the understanding he has of the situation, in fact he assured me in his office a day or two before I left that it was his intention to give your department every possible support, both in the way of moral support and financial aid. It seems that there has been some dispute here that you were probably acting secondary to the other organizations there. Our impression there is, that it is not so. I would like to have this defined accurately, so that when I return I can definitely state to the governor of the State and the mayor of San Francisco, exactly the position you occupy.

The CHAIRMAN. If the State board of health and the city board of health would request us to take complete charge we would do so, but our present status there is that we recognize the city board of health as in charge of that work and that we are assisting them. It is understood also that the State board of health is assisting them. The law requires us to render such assistance to the State and local boards of health as we can, and that is our attitude, and it has been our attitude in all our dealings with the board of health. We do not want to override or assume complete control, but we want to maintain the autonomy of each board of health—the city and State board of health. Practically, in assisting them, very often our suggestions are accepted, and it would seem that we took the whole charge, but legally and specifically we do not. It is the city board of health that is supposed to do this work in San Francisco, with the State board of health to assist them. If the city board of health fails, it is the duty of the State board of health, under the law, to see that the State regulations are carried out, and if both should fail, then the United States Government has the right to see that the regulations are carried out, but the sentiment and

the attitude of the General Government toward the States is to recognize, uphold, and support in every possible way the State and municipal authorities. We want them to feel the responsibility of doing the work and get the credit for doing it, but we will assist them in any way in our power. Dr. White was in charge, I understand—under the ægis of the State board of health—of the work of cleaning Chinatown, but we have not assumed to take charge of the whole situation.

Assistant Surgeon-General WHITE. I did not exercise any quarantine functions.

Dr. GARDNER. In case the request came from the governor of the State and the mayor of the city, would you be willing to take full control with the assurance that you would get every support from those two gentlemen of the State board of health and all pecuniary aid necessary?

The CHAIRMAN. I should be very glad, if that should be done, to accept the invitation, but of course I should have to put it before the Secretary of the Treasury, my superior officer. I have no doubt he would acquiesce, but at the same time the expense should be paid by the city and State authorities. I mean the extraordinary expenses. We could arrange with them.

Dr. LEWIS, of New York. Suppose that the city board of health and the State board of health do not agree with the governor and the mayor—they say they are not willing to resign their power and responsibility.

The CHAIRMAN. That is a matter between the State board of health and the governor and the mayor of the city.

Dr. LEWIS, of New York. Would you accept a request from the governor and the mayor rather than the State and city board of health?

The CHAIRMAN. That is the way the law reads, the boards of health. We would solve that problem when it comes up. It might be a legal problem we would have to study over.

Dr. NOLTE. I just want to ask for information on two points that might be pertinent to the object of this meeting. Do the port officers at San Francisco in clearing a vessel from that port give that vessel a clean bill of health or not?

The CHAIRMAN. That is a matter which really does not come within this office. It is a customs matter, and I have not received any definite information on the subject. It is a matter for the consuls of the foreign countries. I do not know.

Dr. FULTON. Mr. President, with the permission of the Conference, there are two little matters from outside, one of which is directly addressed to this Conference, and the other of which is not, but is of importance in connection with this subject, as showing the difficulties that the United States may have to encounter, and of course the brunt of which falls upon California. I have here a copy of the report of the health officer of British Columbia, Dr. C. J. Fagan, the secretary, to his superior officer, who is the attorney-general of British Columbia, Hon. D. M. Eberts. I will not read the first part because it relates entirely to his visit to New Orleans at the meeting of the American public health association. Just before that he came from San Francisco, and this is what he says upon that subject to his superior officer (reads):

PROVINCIAL BOARD OF HEALTH,
Victoria, British Columbia, January 6, 1903.

SIR: * * * Acting on your instructions, I visited San Francisco in order to inquire into the situation there re plague.

Every facility was afforded me by the authorities. I had free access to all records and had the privilege of attending the investigation at present proceeding.

The conditions existing at San Francisco are beyond doubt, very serious. As you

already know, plague has been present in that city since March, 1900, from which time to date there have been 93 deaths proved to have been due to plague. Up to July of last year the disease existed in the form of bubonic plague.

On July 20, 1902, 1 case of primary pneumonic plague was found, and subsequently 4 other cases were discovered. On August 26, 1 case of tonsillar plague was found, and subsequently 2 others.

When it is considered that such cases from their very nature involve free expectoration of plague-infected material, it will be seen at once that the situation is serious; and the first proof of these conditions being serious is the fact that since November 8 the rats have become infected.

The United States Marine-Hospital Service has established a bacteriological laboratory in Chinatown, and every death of doubtful cause is inquired into and a post-mortem examination made. The city authorities have men employed catching rats, and every rat caught is sent to the bacteriological laboratory for examination.

As I said above, the first plague-infected rat was found on November 8, and since that date 1.1 per cent of rats caught and 50 per cent of the rats found dead were declared infected. Now, this state of affairs is to my mind more than serious.

(Interrupting.) You have observed that these figures correspond to the figures given by Dr. Wyman. In the twenty-three days 50 per cent of dead rats and one-tenth per cent of living rats were found infected—the twenty-three days from November 8 at November 30.

(Concludes reading letter.)

While the disease was confined to the Mongolian population and remained in the bubonic form, the danger of spreading was limited; but now that we find it as pneumonic and, further, find the vermin to be infected, we can not but regard the condition as critical.

Under your instructions, regulations for the detection of plague were put in force in September, 1900, and such regulations are in force now. It is hoped that through them we will be able to recognize the disease on its first appearance and so be able to deal with it promptly. The dangers, great as they were, which prompted the adoption of these regulations, are now very much increased. I would, therefore, recommend that a circular be again issued stating the conditions that exist in San Francisco and urging local boards to actively follow the instructions already given.

Respectfully,

C. J. FAGAN,
Secretary.

Hon. D. M. EBERTS, K. C.,
Attorney-General.

Dr. FULTON (continuing). The other is from the president of the superior board of health of Mexico, and it is addressed to me personally, and asks me to bring this up at the Conference:

(Reads letter.)

MEXICO, MEXICO, *January 3, 1903.*

SIR: I have just received your favor of the 27th ultimo and note contents.

We have a very strong presumption and are morally convinced that the bubonic plague was brought to this country from San Francisco, Cal., but as our investigations on the subject are not yet terminated, I do not see how I can make a protest against the board of health of California on any such ground.

At the same time, as I know with certainty that for the last two years the plague has been continuous in Chinatown, if I should ground my protest on that consideration, I would do so in the name of the Mexican Republic and in the most energetic manner possible.

I want you to understand that in Ensenada only a few isolated cases of plague have appeared, and that in Mazatlan a slight epidemic has existed from December 13, and which has caused 72 deaths from that date to December 31 last.

I want you to declare solemnly before the Congress that is about to meet in Washington, that the sanitary authorities of Mexico are accustomed always to tell the truth; and that, consequently, from the moment that they had knowledge of the existence in Mazatlan of a disease which was suspected of being the bubonic plague, the fact was communicated on December 15 to the Surgeon-General of the Marine-Hospital Service; a bacteriologist was sent to Mazatlan in order to ascertain if the disease was in fact the plague, and that on December 31 that bacteriologist declared that it really was the plague that was there prevailing. This declaration was communicated on the same day to the different State governments of this Republic, to the Surgeon-General of the

Marine-Hospital Service of the United States, and to the international committee of the American Republics.

I would be obliged by your calling attention to the different conduct that has been observed by the sanitary authorities of Mexico, in connection with the plague, and that which, for the last two years, has been followed by the board of health of San Francisco, Cal.

I am sincerely obliged to you for your courteous expressions, and with the best wishes for the coming year.

Respectfully,

E. LICEAGA.

Dr. H. S. FULTON,

Secretary of the Board of Health, Baltimore, Md.

Dr. FULTON. Of course we all realize the error which our very esteemed friend makes there in speaking of the board of health of San Francisco.

The CHAIRMAN. What does he mean?

Dr. FULTON. He means the State board of health, of course. He says the board of health of San Francisco.

The CHAIRMAN. We have given Dr. Liceaga the full information as we have gotten it with regard to the plague, even writing to him especially on the subject immediately on receipt of the report of the commission. We sent our officer to Ensenada, as I told you this morning, with his assent, and he accepted the statement of our officer.

Dr. FULTON. I think they should be considered. Indeed, I think this Conference should make some reply to Dr. Liceaga. It would seem that this is incumbent upon this Conference as a matter of courtesy, that we should acknowledge his protest, and, I think, the justice of it. The question of the clearance of ships from San Francisco is a more important one, and we have not been able to get an answer about that at this Conference. It is currently reported on the coast that vessels are constantly clearing from the port of San Francisco with clean bills of health. I did not know that it was under the Public Health and Marine-Hospital Service.

The CHAIRMAN. It is not. It is simply a customs-house custom, as it were. The bills of health that we get from foreign ports coming to this country are signed by our own consular officers. There is a kind of a clearance which I think the vessels get from the custom-house, and there is a quasi-bill of health—some statement—but it does not count for anything. Every foreign government should depend upon its own bill of health; it has consular officers in the different seaports. Every civilized government is represented in every commercial seaport, and it should be the duty of these foreign governments to have their own consular bills of health, and they should have the information just as we are obliged to get it from all these European and Asiatic ports and put it on the bill of health.

Dr. NOLTE. Does the chair make that explanation in response to my request?

The CHAIRMAN. Perhaps I did not make myself as clear at first.

Dr. NOLTE. I would like for it to go down as an answer to my question.

Dr. BRACKEN. It seems to me it might be well to possibly suggest at least, or express our wish that the United States Public Health and Marine-Hospital Service, in the event of the authorities in San Francisco and the State of California not taking hold of this matter vigorously at once, to request that a line of inspection be established of all railroads passing out of California. I think it might be well for us to make that request, that in the event of the State and the city not taking pretty vigorous methods in dealing with this question of plague, an

inspection at the line of California be established for all railroads going out of that State. I make that motion.

Motion was seconded.

Dr. GARDNER. I hope that motion will not prevail. It is unnecessary. From the assurances I have had and presented to this Conference—the assurances of the governor of the State and the mayor of the city and the best men there, the Merchants' Association—I see no reason why this thing may not be handled properly, and particularly with the assurance that you will take full charge there if requested, which I have no doubt will occur. I fail to see why any resolution of that kind is necessary. It seems to me it is pressing the button farther than there is absolutely any need for.

Dr. BRACKEN. I think, Mr. President, it is very necessary. We do not request you to take such action now, but we know we have been fooled by the past, and we simply made the provision that if they do not take such action we would like to have you take this action.

Dr. SWARTS. At what time should this embargo take place; upon whose judgment?

Dr. BRACKEN. We will leave that entirely in the hands of the Public Health and Marine-Hospital Service. I had thought of fixing the date fifteen days, but if they get down to work in less time, then leave the matter in the judgment of the Public Health and Marine-Hospital Service as to when this action should be taken. They might just as well understand we don't want things coming out of there.

Dr. WOODWARD. Mr. Chairman, I agree with the Doctor, but this is hardly the time to pass that resolution. I believe we will be together at the end of no very long period and it seems to me that we might safely leave that to the judgment of the Surgeon-General, who has authority in the premises in any case. I should rather hope that the resolution would not be passed.

Dr. HOLTON. We just passed a resolution saying that the Surgeon-General notify the State boards two weeks before they meet how well these recommendations have been followed to prepare us for taking such action as may then be necessary. Dr. Gardner is in a position to explain to them what it means.

Dr. FULTON. Is not a solution of this question possible within a reasonably short time? Can not this Conference take a recess which will give Dr. Gardner, of California, an interval sufficient to ascertain the will of the governor of California and the mayor of San Francisco? A motion prevailed this morning by which Dr. Gardner was empowered to make a certain inquiry of the governor and the State board of health and the city board of health, and a few hours would suffice for that, and if we take a recess until that time it might not be necessary to press the button any further. I simply offer that as a suggestion.

Dr. SMITH. My attitude, with reference to the assurances which Dr. Gardner has to present—is just exactly what it has been. If we get an assurance simply from the governor and from the mayor, they are in a position later, if it becomes convenient, to disclaim any responsibility for what their two boards may do because it is not conceivable that a State board of health or a local board of health is absolutely subject to the rule of its governor and mayor and if we have any assurances from California, I want them to come from the State board of health as an organization, and from the city board of health as an organization—then there is no chance for anybody to escape the responsibility. If it comes from the mayor or governor alone, the State board of health and local board of health are in a position to say, "We are not bound by

that. We are going to act in this just as it seems to us best, and if the governor and mayor gave you assurances of that kind, they did it on their own responsibility." I know what the board of health of Maine would do if the governor of Maine undertook to answer by telegram or letter as to what our State board of health would do. We should tell him, just as frankly as we should tell anybody, we should do exactly what our judgment dictated—that we were expected to by law. If we are to have assurances from California, I want them to come from the organized bodies.

Dr. BRACKEN. There is nothing before the meeting now with relation to that. The motion that requested Dr. Gardner to get information was reconsidered, and the thing is out of our hands entirely. If there is opposition to my motion, I am perfectly willing to withdraw it until the next meeting. I do not want to press the button too often, but I did not think it would do any harm. Dr. Fulton was anxious to have something put up here in the matter of bringing people in from the Orient, and I thought that would be just a little persuasion, for if they did not do thus and so, they would get it. I can quite understand Dr. Gardner objecting to that, as he is chief surgeon of the Southern Pacific Railway, as it would discommode the Southern Pacific.

Dr. GARDNER. What disturbs that disturbs the State. I wish to explain to the gentleman who spoke before, in regard to why I stated that I would get the assurances of the mayor and the governor. It is that, as you know, probably some of you, both of the boards of health are at present undergoing reorganization, and it would be almost useless to ask either one of those bodies for an opinion, because it might be changed in a week or two.

Dr. SMITH. I am willing to wait for it, but I want it to come from them when it comes.

Dr. GARDNER. When does this motion take effect? There will be no question about the assurances of the boards of health, if you will only give us time. As you understand, Governor Pardee only took his office a week ago yesterday, or Friday, and the governor just coming into his position has his hands full with a new legislature to open, so it is impossible for him to attend to every detail in a moment. If you want the assurance of the mayor and governor by telegraph, I may get it for you to-night. I could not promise to get it from the boards of health. The State board is scattered from Los Angeles to Oregon, and it is impossible to get them together, although I have no doubt that I will get them. As far as the city board of health is concerned, you know also there is a little clash there, and I can not say whether it would be worth while for me to undertake to get an expression.

Dr. SWARTS. I think Dr. Bracken's motion is before the house at the present time. The expression of opinion, or the introduction of that resolution, would have quite as much influence perhaps, having been heard before us all, as the actual action; and taking that action, might serve as a goad and neutralize the good effect of our other actions to-day. Dr. Gardner says they have not had time to reorganize, and by that time we shall probably meet again, and I move that this resolution of Dr. Bracken's be laid upon the table as unfinished business, to be taken up as unfinished business.

Seconded and carried.

Dr. SMITH. In view of the communication which Dr. Fulton presented to this Conference from Dr. Liceaga, I move that the secretary of this Conference be directed to acknowledge to Dr. Liceaga the receipt by the Conference of this letter presented by Dr. Fulton, and to trans-

mit to him a copy of the resolutions adopted by this Conference to-day as expressing the sentiments of this body.

Carried.

Dr. BRACKEN. I make the same resolution in reference to Dr. Fagan's communication.

The CHAIRMAN. The same resolution is offered—to be sent to Dr. Fagan.

A MEMBER. Dr. Montizambert, as I understand it, is Dr. Fagan's superior officer. Let the copy be sent to Dr. Fagan through Dr. Montizambert.

Dr. FULTON. It is just a courtesy, but it is simply a copy of his report, and I do not see that we have to recognize it at all.

The CHAIRMAN. You hear the motion, that a copy be sent to Dr. Fagan, it being understood that it goes through Dr. Montizambert.

Dr. FULTON. That is not an official communication to this Conference.

Dr. BRACKEN. I think I had better withdraw the motion.

Dr. LEWIS, of North Carolina. I move that the city board of health and the State board of health of California, when reorganized, be respectfully requested by this body, to furnish us with the plans that they propose to carry out in regard to stamping out plague in San Francisco. We would like to know what they are going to do.

Dr. SIMONS. I would like to give a suggestion, that a copy of these resolutions, as adopted by this Conference, be sent to those respective boards, they to be asked to acknowledge the receipt thereof.

Dr. LEWIS, of North Carolina. I accept the amendment.

The CHAIRMAN. You have heard the motion that copies of these resolutions be sent to those 2 boards, with the request that they acknowledge them and give us the plans that they propose to carry out.

Carried.

Dr. SWARTS. I would like to ask instructions, as stated, when the boards will organize?

Dr. BRACKEN. I think you had better take out "when the board is organized," as they are in a state of flux now, a state of chaos. Send it to them anyhow.

Dr. SWARTS. Before adjournment, I should like to ask for information from the surgeon-general in connection with this emergency clause as to the proper method—as to a call and when coming from 18 States only requesting to be present—I would like to ask an interpretation of the law in the future; or, in other words, can 5 States call for a conference and only 5 States be present and take action?

The CHAIRMAN. They can not take action for the rest of the States, but they can take action for themselves.

Dr. SWARTS. Hereafter would they all be notified?

The CHAIRMAN. Only those that called. I thought it was plain, but evidently there was some misunderstanding about that. In this section 7 of the last law there are three kinds of conferences contemplated.

First, I may, when I desire, call as many of the States together as I choose; invite them to come. They are not obliged to come. I have the authority of law to make the invitation. Then, I must, under the law, invite all the States at least once a year. Then 5 States or more than 5, but it must be as many as 5, may request a conference, and if as many as 5 request it, I am obliged by the law to call that conference, but the law explicitly states that it is a conference of only those States making the request. If you read the law very carefully you will find that it is the case.

Is there anything else to come before the Conference?

Dr. FULTON. There seems to be some doubt about whether we should adjourn finally. If we adjourn until 8 o'clock, perhaps Dr. Gardner would be in a position to tell whether he would be likely to get any telegrams from the governor or mayor, which, while it would not satisfy us entirely, would make us feel more comfortable.

Dr. GARDNER. I have had no request, Mr. President, as to sending the telegrams. That was countermanded. I had a copy of it, and the thing was so unwieldy that it was simply impossible, and it was rescinded, as you know, before the lunch hour.

Dr. HURTY. I want to move, on behalf of the boards of health represented here, a vote of thanks for the very great courtesy and kindness Surgeon-General Wyman has shown us.

Carried.

The CHAIRMAN. Gentlemen: I wish to express to you, or attempt to express to you, deeply, my feelings in regard to this resolution. This is the first conference we have had under the new law. I have looked forward to these conferences with the greatest interest and the greatest pleasure. I wish you to understand that I expect to draw largely my inspiration from you, and expect to get the help from you which I feel I ought to have with regard to these great public measures. I desire to express my appreciation of your conservatism, and of the kind, thoughtful manner in which everything has been done. I need not say how much I appreciate the very intelligent and skillful consideration of this very difficult problem. It shows to me that I have here with me in conference a body of experienced men, not only experienced in medicine, but experienced in dealing with public affairs, which is in some respects of far greater moment. I thank you heartily for your presence and for the assistance which the results of this Conference will give in this very unique and very difficult situation that we have in San Francisco, and I trust and believe that we shall be successful as a result of our meeting.

Upon motion, the Conference then adjourned at 5 o'clock p. m., *sine die*.