

Pneumonic Influenza

The epidemic is very prevalent at Wagga, and is increasing at Junee. Influenza is raging at Ballina, and the medical fraternity are amongst the victims. Dr. Small, of Casino, is relieving.

Amongst those down with the 'flu at Grafton are three nurses, two ambulance men, and six members of the Austin family at Ramornie. Grafton Consultative Committee wants the restrictions, but not the awkward masking nuisance. It will find if it takes one it must take the lot. And, by the way, it is easier to have them imposed than abolished!

To date it has cost Dubbo Council about £2000 to fight the 'flu epidemic. About half the amount was spent on beds, bedding and other hospital requisites. The Government has advanced £1000 as the first instalment towards the cost.

The full extent of distress due to the 'flu epidemic in Lithgow is not yet known. The task of investigation is now being carried on, and the result will be duly published. Already the names of 123 children who lost one or both parents have been traced, but the inquiry is not yet half complete.

The experience of Mullumbimby with regard to the epidemic is possibly unique, for whereas a Government proclamation some time since declared the place an infected area, and imposed all the usual restrictions, no notice what-ever has been taken of the proclamation. The position, to say the least of it, is farcical — almost as much so as at Woodburn.

A sad case occurred at Forbes last week. A married couple were admitted one day to the hospital with pneumonic 'flu. The father died the same night, and the mother in the height of her fever gives birth to a child, which died a few hours later. At latest advices the mother (Mrs. Donald Flint) and a son, six years old, were both desperately ill from the malady.

A woman, whose sister died of pneumonic influenza in Sydney travelled by train to Muswellbrook taking the deceased's two young children with her. Within 48 hours the grandmother of the children contracted the disease and died. The woman returned to Sydney, and developed the disease on arrival. This is how the disease is carried about.

Despite the Consultative Committee's special request that it not be held, a big private dance was held in Grafton last week, and we regret to learn that members of the families of at least three members of the Consultative Committee were among the guests. If members of the Consultative Committee cannot themselves be loyal to the Committee, how can they conscientiously ask the public to be so. — 'Argus.'

The business people of Grafton are indignantly up against the absurd regulation of compelling their employees to wear masks while the people who patronise their establishments can walk in and out without this necessity. Yesterday (says Tuesday's 'Examiner') there was spasmodic masking. In some stores and by a few people in the street or the ferry it was carried out, but there is no mistaking the fact that the public do not deem it necessary at this stage, although they are quite willing to loyally fall into line if the position were more serious.

There is work for a woman or young girl down Woodburn way— for someone with a touch of humanity about her. The facts of the case are these: A patient is having a tough battle after an attack of pneumonia; not influenza. He needs attention in the way of nourishment and medicine in day time, and has no one to give it him. For about a fortnight a lady has been doing this, but she has had an insistent call to the bedside of a relative. The question is, who is to take her place? At night the self-sacrificing Nuns of Woodburn have been in constant attendance upon the patient, and attending to their teaching duties in the day. The work has been a tremendous tax on their physical endurance, but it has been done cheerfully, and with that spirit of self-sacrifice characteristic of the Sisterhood. But they cannot be on duty both night and day. Surely in a district like this an appeal in the name of common Christian charity will not be in vain. There must be many who can help. Who will come forward? Those in a position to render the much-needed assistance are asked to get in touch at once with Nurse McCormack. We hope to be able to say next issue that someone has been found worthy of the mantle of womanhood, and has entered upon the task awaiting her.

On Monday the Mayor of Ballina wired the Minister for Health: "Fifty cases of influenza in the Municipality, including the matron and five nurses of the hospital, as well as both medical officers. Fresh cases are occurring daily, but as yet there are no pneumonic complications. Urgently request that you will despatch nurses at once, also a medical

officer." On Tuesday the Mayor received a reply stating that Nurse McMahon had left that day for Ballina, and that the services of another nurse at South Grafton were available if necessary. The Mayor next day, in view of the continuance of cases, wired again urgently appealing for the prompt despatch of a medical officer to meet the needs of the present emergency in the municipality and district.

Major Crane, Police Magistrate at Grafton, and a member of the Consultative Committee, said at a meeting last week that he would limit the executive absolutely to the medical profession. The necessity for that was shown by the conflicting statements made by laymen about the disease. It is rather a significant fact, says a Queensland exchange, that none of the nurses down with influenza in the Brisbane General Hospital are seriously ill. This is claimed to be due to the fact that a nurse is sent to bed and receives treatment as soon as she is feeling ill, whereas people outside frequently disregard the first symptoms, and do not go to bed until really ill.

The smoker scores! A unique incident occurred in the Police Court on Thursday afternoon, says the Bundaberg (Q.) "Mail," and one under ordinary circumstances never heard of in police court procedure, in this or any other State. Those engaged in the work of the court were informed by the Police Magistrate (Mr. T.W. Far-nell) that they could smoke as a possible precaution against the 'flu. It may be added that a person in court was noticed to be apparently feeling the effects of approaching 'flu, and was advised to go home. The court business proceeded, while those so inclined smoked away and "cleared the air," as it were.