

# “Your fate may be in your own hands”

The Bethlehem Gadfly Spanish Flu April 1, 2020

 Latest in a series of posts on the Spanish Flu 

*For perspective on our current coronaviavirus situation, we are following the entrance of the 1918 Spanish Influenza, that paragon of pandemics, into the minds and bodies of Lehigh Valley residents who got their news through the Morning Call (the files of the Bethlehem Globe are closed to us at the moment).*

September 28.

15 days after “arrival.”

When the Flu starts to hit the fan, the medical experts weigh in.

One can imagine this list cut out of the *Morning Call* and taped to the “ice box.”

Except for the advice to maintain what we now familiarly call “social distance” as a precaution, it’s remarkable how simplistic and commonplace the Surgeon General’s advice is: cover your mouth when you cough, keep clean, watch the temperature, get fresh air, chew your food, wash your hands, pee a lot, use clean utensils, wear comfortable clothes.

The “declaration” that the Flu is not new and that sunshine is the best medicine ironically masks what we now too are experiencing as a crucial problem: shortage of medical staff to treat the multitude of cases — a medical system going in to overload.

## 12 INFLUENZA DON'TS.

Twelve safeguards against the spread of Spanish influenza have been issued by the Surgeon General of the Army, as follows:

1. Avoid needless crowding; influenza is a crowd disease.

2. Smother your coughs and sneezes; others do not want the germs which you would throw away.

3. Your nose not your mouth, was made to breathe through. Get the habit.

4. Remember the three Cs—a clean mouth, a clean skin and clean clothes.

5. Try to keep cool when you walk and warm when you ride and sleep.

6. Open the windows always at home at night; at the office when practicable.

7. Food will win the war if you give it a chance; help by choosing and chewing your food well.

8. Your fate may be in your own hands; wash your hands before eating.

9. Don't let the waste products of digestion accumulate; drink a glass or two of water on getting up.

10. Don't use a napkin, towel, spoon, fork, glass or cup which has been used by another person and not washed.

11. Avoid tight clothes, tight shoes, tight gloves; seek to make nature your ally and not your prisoner.

12. When the air is pure breathe all of it you can; breathe freely.

## LET SUNSHINE INTO THE HOUSES, SAYS DR. ROYER

(By Associated Press.)

Harrisburg, Sept. 29—Spanish influenza, which is so prevalent in several parts of Pennsylvania, is declared by Dr. B. F. Royer, state health commissioner to be nothing more than a recurrence of the old fashioned grip. The commissioner says Pennsylvania has many cases of the disease and as it is short of physicians and nurses for its own people, it can not render much assistance to other states in treatment of cases.

"This is the time to let sunshine into the houses," Dr. Royer said tonight. "Avoid crowded places, entertainments and churches where there are crowds. Keep in the open air as much as possible. Sunshine is what is needed to keep in good trim."