

COMMUNICATION

FROM

THE NATIONAL BOARD OF HEALTH

RELATIVE TO

A continuation of the immigrant-inspection service.

DECEMBER 14, 1882.—Laid before the Senate by the President *pro tempore*, ordered to be printed, and referred to the Select Committee to Investigate and Report the Best Means of Preventing the Introduction and Spread of Epidemic Diseases.

NATIONAL BOARD OF HEALTH,

Washington, D. C., December 13, 1882.

SIR: At a meeting of the National Board of Health, held this day, a statement, embodying the views of the representatives of certain State and local health boards as to the importance of continuing the immigrant-inspection service, conducted under the auspices of the National Board, was submitted, and on motion the following resolutions were adopted:

That the statement submitted expresses, we believe, the opinion of the more prominent sanitarians of the North and West upon the subject of immigrant inspection, and seems to this Board eminently wise and just.

That the president transmit a copy of it to the President of the Senate, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and to the chairmen of the Committees on Public Health in the House and Senate.

In accordance with the terms of the above resolution, I herewith respectfully transmit a copy of the statement in question; and am, sir,

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

J. L. CABELL,

President National Board of Health.

Hon. DAVID DAVIS,
President of the Senate.

WASHINGTON, D. C., *December 12, 1882.*

At a meeting of representatives of State and other boards of health, who have come here to place before the National Board of Health the importance of continuing the sanitary inspection of immigrants for the prevention of the introduction of contagious diseases into this country, and their spread throughout the country, W. M. Smith, M. D., health officer of the port of New York, was chosen chairman, and Dr. Henry B. Baker, secretary of the Michigan State board of health, was chosen secretary.

The subject having been verbally presented to the National Board of Health, at its meeting this day, and the Board having requested a summary statement in writing of the views of those present, the subject was discussed at some length, and a communication to the National Board of Health was formulated as follows:

To the National Board of Health :

GENTLEMEN : The undersigned respectfully represent that the maintenance, at the principal ports of entry in the United States, of an efficient sanitary inspection of immigrants as to their protection from small-pox, and as to their liability to communicate that disease, is necessary to prevent the frequent introduction of small-pox and other contagious diseases among the people of this country ; and that such inspection is necessary to secure efficient action at ports of departure and on board ships on the part of the transatlantic steamship lines engaged in the transportation of immigrants.

There is also urgent need for constant watchfulness to detect contagious disease occurring in immigrants after they have passed the ports of entry—the disease not having appeared when they were examined at the port of entry.

We therefore urge upon you the necessity for continuing such inspections as have been established.

This inspection service is such that its benefits have no relations to State boundaries, but its protective influences extend widely throughout this country, consequently expenses therefor should not properly be borne by any local or State board of health. We believe that it is the duty, and one of the highest duties, of the national government to maintain this inspection service whenever needed in this country.

In our opinion, the sum of \$25,000 will be sufficient for this service during the remaining months of this fiscal year.

WM. M. SMITH,
Health Officer, Port of New York.
JOHN H. RAUCH,
Secretary State Board of Health of Illinois.
H. R. MILLS, M. D.,
HENRY B. BAKER,
Secretary Michigan State Board of Health.

We concur in this report and the recommendations.

ELISHA HARRIS, M. D.,
Secretary State Board of Health, New York.
W. SNIVELY, M. D.,
City Physician, Pittsburgh, Pa.
J. E. REEVES, M. D.,
Secretary State Board of Health, West Virginia.
JOHN J. SPEED, M. D.,
Secretary State Board of Health, Kentucky.
O. W. WIGHT, M. D.,
Health Officer, Detroit, Mich.
THAD. M. STEVENS, M. D.,
Secretary State Board of Health, Indiana.
E. S. ELDER, M. D.,
Health Officer, Indianapolis, Ind.
J. T. REEVE, M. D.,
Secretary State Board of Health, Wisconsin.
ROBERT MARTIN, M. D.,
Commissioner of Health, Milwaukee, Wis.
OSCAR C. DEWOLF, M. D.,
Commissioner of Health, Chicago, Ill.
R. J. FARQUHARSON, M. D.,
Secretary State Board of Health, Iowa.
W. W. CANTWELL, M. D.,
Health Officer, Davenport, Iowa.
G. C. CRAIG, M. D.,
Commissioner of Health, Rock Island, Ill.
W. B. CONERY, M. D.,
Saint Louis Board of Health.
E. M. HUNT, M. D.,
Secretary State Board of Health, New Jersey.
T. L. NEAL, M. D.,
Health Officer, Dayton, Ohio.