

ANNOTATIONS

THE LAST THIRTY YEARS IN PUBLIC HEALTH¹

THE friends of Sir Arthur Newsholme, and they are many, will welcome this latest addition to the list of his books. It is not, as he says in the introduction, either solely autobiographical or a history of the course of public health during the thirty years it covers. It is, however, a most entertaining commentary on that wide variety of topics and events relating to the public health which have interested him during that period.

The book is in three parts. The first is a somewhat detailed account of his experience during eleven years of official life in Whitehall as Medical Officer of the Local Government Board, the predecessor of the present Ministry of Health. To American readers this is of interest principally as evidencing the great difference between British official procedure and that in this country. The formal official relationships, the importance of commissions and reports, and the necessity for providing uniform procedure for the whole country, are somewhat surprising to those accustomed to the free and easy methods of American health administration. Out of this somewhat confusing maze of reports, memoranda and orders, however, there emerges before the eyes of the reader a solid body of achievement which has transformed the whole course of British health organization and procedure and made their system the admiration of health administrators everywhere.

Doctor Newsholme's central theme is the necessity for an amalgamation of curative and preventive procedures if maximum results are to be obtained. It is presented early in the discussion and is emphasized throughout the book. His views on the control of tuberculosis, of venereal disease, and on maternity and infant hygiene, are soundly based and convincingly presented.

The second part of the book is concerned with his recollections of

¹ Newsholme, Sir Arthur: *THE LAST THIRTY YEARS IN PUBLIC HEALTH*. London, George Allen & Unwin, Ltd. 1937. 15 shillings.

American public health and social work. It contains a detailed itinerary of his travels in America and of his activities at Baltimore and elsewhere. Particularly interesting are his comments on Welch, Sedgwick, and Chapin. The final chapters of this part are devoted to a presentation of the American scene, particularly in public health and social work, as it appears to English eyes. One chapter is devoted to a discussion of the prohibition experiment with which he was in the beginning highly sympathetic. Every American reader will regret that Sir Arthur did not give himself freer rein in his comments on American public health.

The third part, devoted to the increasing socialization of medicine, presents an interesting critique of the Report of the Committee on the Costs of Medical Care and the attitude of the American medical profession in relation to health insurance. The final chapters give a brief account of his observations in Russia, and of other countries where the socialization of medicine is in progress.

Most American readers, on finishing this interesting volume, will be inclined to agree with Doctor Newsholme's essential thesis as to the need for the integration of preventive and curative medicine, and with his further conclusion that successful attack on many pressing problems of health can not be made until more adequate provision, through social insurance or otherwise, is made for the medical care of the less fortunate part of the population.

ALLAN W. FREEMAN, M.D.

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SHADOW ON THE LAND—SYPHILIS¹

ALREADY favorably received throughout the country, and soon to be reprinted in a paper-bound edition suitable for wholesale distribution at minimum expense, *SHADOW ON THE LAND* is recognized as one of the most useful of the many recent contributions to popular literature on syphilis and its control. Other reviewers have pointed out that one of the chief virtues of the book is its simple, understandable style with avoidance, wherever possible, of the use of qualifying phrases and highly technical terms. The author makes free use of anecdotes and examples,

¹ Parran, Thomas: *SHADOW ON THE LAND—Syphilis*. New York, Reynal and Hitchcock, 1937. 309 pages. \$2.50.