

THE ROYAL SANITARY INSTITUTE.

The Thirty-first Congress of the Royal Sanitary Institute will be held at Birmingham from July 19th to 24th, under the presidency of the Right Hon. Viscount Astor, and will be an important and impressive occasion.

The programme, which, beginning with matters affecting the birth-rate, contains some sixty other subjects, includes matters affecting Child Welfare, Housing, Industrial Hygiene, Still Birth, Clean Milk, the Reconstruction of Slums, and the care of the lonely and aged poor. The one subject which apparently has not a place on the programme is Nursing.

On Tuesday evening, July 20th, Sir Frederick W. Mott will lecture at the Midland Institute on "Body and Mind," and the popular lecture on "Links with the Tropics," illustrated by lantern slides, will be delivered at the same place on Thursday evening by Dr. Andrew Balfour, C.B. C.M.G., B.Sc., D.P.H. There will also be very enjoyable social functions.

BOOK OF THE WEEK.

"SHEPHERD'S WARNING."*

This delightful pastoral story will commend itself to those who appreciate delicate touch and fine workmanship. There are in it abundance of charming little pictures and descriptions of rural life which strike a very natural note and make very soothing and pleasant reading.

Old Bob Garrett lived along of his three "widdied children."

"They 'ent exactly his children as you might say. They call him dad, and don't mind anyone else of the name. He is their grandad to speak accurate. They was his boy Sam's youngsters, and Fred, the youngest of them, killed his mother when he come. A fine hearty gal she was. But there, you never know how 'twill be. Bob finds it as much as he can do to get himself a bit of 'bacca with they youngsters in his house like so many cuckoos. You won't see him down at 'The Gate' not above twice or thrice in a twelve-month; not but what he enjoys his glass, same as enybody else do."

Bob's cottage adjoined that of "Old Hammer and Tongs," so named from the constant and noisy quarrelling of the couple who lived there, and whose disputes ended in tragedy, which left their only child, elfin little Sally, an orphan.

Bob took her in along of his youngsters for a time. "Liddy will let her slip into her bed."

Another aged inhabitant of the village was Luke Medlar. With his weathered face, his old blue eyes, and the fringe of snowy whiskers which surrounded his face and chin like an inverted halo, he looked a kindly and gentle old man; but his heart was bitterly jealous of his neighbours, of their cottages, and particularly of their

gardens. Always well able to ingratiate himself with his betters, he had succeeded in receiving the seals of office as gardener and odd man at the vicarage, and keeper of the churchyard. Often when he was wanted at the vicarage for some tedious operation—such as beating carpets—it was learnt that the grass in the churchyard was in a terrible scobby state and could not last over Sunday without being trimmed, which meant that Luke pottered about with a pair of shears for a short time, only to find that it was necessary for him to slip across to his cottage for a few shakes—an elastic period that often lengthened into a good morning's work at thinning onions. His whole life became subservient to his garden.

Luke was not above transferring the vicarage plants to his own plot, and the vicar's wife would sometimes comment on the similarity of his blooms to those which she had provided for her own garden.

"You always had a wonderful eye for flowers, 'm," Luke would answer with respectful admiration. "But what you say is true. They be the same nemesies. But they was so ett up by the spindle fly. 'Be as 'twill, they'll do for your little plot,' I says to myself. 'Tent as if it was the vicarage.' You see, 'm, I got to make things do." Luke and Bob's youngest grandson, Fred, became fast friends, drawn together by their common love of nature, and in due course became his recognised helper.

As Sally grew into a tantalising and fascinating girl, she became a source of trouble in old Bob's humble cottage. Though he had befriended her in trouble, he had no mind to see either of his boys take up with her.

"When Sally Dean looked back over the eighteen years of her life, it was hard for her to discern the time when Bob and Fred Garrett had not shared it. At first regarding them as merely friendly souls in a hostile land, she found that as the months passed she not only attracted the two boys, but was herself attracted by them. The playing off of the two brothers against each other by Sally provides the romance of the book.

The final picture of old Bob left lonely in his cottage with his cat, in spite of the invitation of his married children to make his home with them, is a pathetic one.

The old man was silhouetted against the light in the kitchen, a tall bent figure in a round hat leaning on a stick. "Jinny! Jinny! Where ha' you got to?" Then when the truant emerged, self-contained and unhurriedly from the darkness, a note of endearment crept into the tones. "Why, there you be! Come along, old gal." H. H.

A WORD FOR THE WEEK.

Believe in yourself, believe in humanity; believe in the success of your undertaking. Fear nothing and no one. Love your work. Work, hope, trust. Keep in touch with to-day. Teach yourself to be practical and up-to-date and sensible. You cannot fail.

*By Eric Leadbitter. London: Allen & Unwin.

[previous page](#)

[next page](#)