

THE PUBLIC HEALTH.

SLUM CLEARANCE.

The Prince of Wales, addressing the annual meeting of the Association of Municipal Corporations at Guildhall, appealed for "a great national effort, irrespective of party or of politics," to deal with slum clearance and rehousing.

INTERESTING STATISTICS COMPILED BY QUEEN'S INSTITUTE.

It used to be thought that acute illness could not be successfully nursed at home, and that without the facilities provided in hospitals for the use of the nursing staff the patients must necessarily suffer. But statistics compiled by the Queen's Institute of the nursing of various notifiable diseases show the result of home nursing to be exceptionally good. In 1932 13,470 cases of pneumonia were nursed; of these 1,229 were living in London, 7,475 were in other cities and urban districts, and the remaining 4,272 were in rural and scattered areas. Of these patients 68 per cent. became convalescent.

The results vary somewhat in various districts and are difficult to account for, but the facts that medical facilities are not so easy to obtain in scattered districts and the nurses have many miles to travel probably account for rather higher mortality there than in London.

In London 66.4 per cent. became convalescent, 16.1 per cent. were sent to hospital, and 11.6 per cent. died; in the urban areas 65.5 per cent. became convalescent, 11 per cent. were sent to hospital, and 16.9 per cent. died. In the rural areas 69.3 became convalescent, 7.1 per cent. were sent to hospital, and 13.9 per cent. died. In some cases the patient was provided for in some other way after a few visits had been paid, but before convalescence—such as by a resident private nurse or the care of friends.

Queen's nurses have attended 3,307 cases of measles, 639 of which were complicated with pneumonia. The death rate for this disease was 8.3 per cent. in London, 10.8 per cent. in urban areas, and 7.9 per cent. in rural areas, and the proportion of convalescents at home was 79.6 per cent. Four hundred and sixty-five cases of puerperal fever and puerperal pyrexia have also been nursed, resulting in convalescence at home of 74.3 per cent., while 23.6 per cent. were sent to hospital and 1.5 per cent. died. The nurses have also attended 776 cases of ophthalmia neonatorum, 349 of chicken-pox, 695 of whooping cough, 446 of infantile diarrhoea, 145 of pemphigus neonatorum; and 12,925 children under five have been nursed. The number of visits paid to all these patients was 43,014.

This work is in addition to the midwifery undertaken by 949 Queen's nurses and 2,814 village nurses working in connection with the institute who attended 67,496 cases, with a maternal mortality of 2.1 a 1,000.

THE HEALTH OF ENGLAND.

In "The Health of England," Dr. T. W. Hill, Deputy Medical Officer for West Ham, presents us with a programme for a preventive public health service which demands, and will no doubt receive, attention from those interested in this all-important subject. The book is published by Jonathan Cape. Price 6s.

Dr. Hill demands centralisation of administration in Public Health, and the taking over by the Ministry of Health of the Health services at present scattered amongst various State Departments, such as the school medical service, the control of mental deficiency, the factory medical service, and the port sanitary services. Then, covering the entire country, he advocates the appointment of supervising medical officers on a population basis, and, disposing of general medical practitioners as altogether out of date, he insists on a periodical health examination

for everyone as the kernel of a genuinely preventive system. He is opposed to any Government that attempts to cut down the Social Services, and to any political party that seeks to reduce the standards of life without which health is impossible, but believes in planning and control, not that money may be saved, but in order to give men and women "the happiness that is their natural heritage," for he holds that "most disease is unnecessary if the simple rules of personal hygiene—food and drink, rest, open air and sunshine, recreation, cleanliness—are carried out; and if the periodical health examination is adopted from birth to old age, the saving in expenditure to the State would amount to tens of millions of pounds which could be utilised in other directions; the improvement in health and efficiency would be no less conspicuous."

Whether the freedom-loving Britisher will submit to so much shepherding, however, is an open question. And, after all, the general practitioner is frequently also the trusted family friend, and as such his advice has a psychological value and a beneficent influence.

THE PUBLIC HEALTH PARLIAMENT.

At the invitation of the Corporation, the Congress of the Royal Sanitary Institute was held at Blackpool from June 17th to 24th, 1933. Lord Cozens-Hardy presided.

The wide field covered is shown by the following list of subjects discussed:—

- A general medical service for the nation.
- Some psychological problems in industry.
- The training and qualifications of nursery nurses.
- The place of the maternity hospital in maternity and child welfare schemes.
- Acute rheumatism in children.
- Social care work of a rheumatism supervisory centre.
- Decentralisation as an aid to economy in public health administration.
- Hospital administration and its relationship to the health department.
- Infant life protection.
- The training of health visitors.
- The working of the first orthodontic clinic.
- Publicity and public health.
- Estimates of future population in relation to local government.
- Sickness in the insured population of Scotland.
- The position of women in the National Health Insurance Scheme.
- The latest developments in regard to slaughter and inspection of food.
- The diseases of poultry, rabbits and game.
- The relation of wrapping papers to food.
- Food adulteration.
- Changes in sanitary administration.
- County Councils and their sanitary obligations.
- Housing and economics.
- Marine fishes.
- Refuse collection and disposal.
- Housing and slum clearance.
- The Town and Country Planning Act.
- Progress in municipal engineering in Blackpool.
- Special aspects of a surveyor's work in a seaside town.
- This Congress is regarded as the most important public health gathering of the year, and a large attendance is always assured.
- In connection with the Congress, a large Health Exhibition had been arranged in the Winter Gardens. The exhibits included infant and invalid foods, household and kitchen appliances, hospital appliances, refrigerators, electrical and gas appliances, disinfectants and disinfecting apparatus soap, and sanitary and drainage appliances.

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