

Book Reviews

125 years after its original publication. Written in a leisurely style, it makes fascinating reading with its wide experience, its careful observation, its critical analysis, its objective assessment, and its emphasis on prevention. It is interesting to note the author's advocacy of periodic health examinations, his views on intemperance, 'the great bane of civilized life', and his reactions among others to commercial travellers and to *bons vivants*. The book includes aphorisms from Thackrah's writings and a selected bibliography in which we miss a reference to F. F. Hellier's paper, 'Charles Turner Thackrah and industrial dermatosis', *Trans. St. John's Hosp. derm. Soc.*, 1956, No. 36, 1-2.

W. R. BETT

A Short History of Public Health. C. FRASER BROCKINGTON, M.A., M.D., D.P.H. London, J. & A. Churchill Ltd., 1956. Pp. vii+235. 15s.

Apart from the first chapter, which deals with the eighteenth century, the period covered by this little book is only from about 1800 to the present day, and, except for a few occasional references by way of comparison, it is confined to the history of English public health.

The first part, about a third of the book, is devoted to a necessarily very brief sketch of the development of the organization of public health in this country from the early attempts to control cholera, poor law reform, factory legislation, and the registration of births and deaths, through the reforms of Chadwick and the growth of local government, to the modern period since the formation of the Ministry of Health. This part is concluded by a forecast of the future.

The second part of the book deals in detail with different aspects of public health in the latter part of the nineteenth and first half of the twentieth centuries. In this way the growth of housing, maternal and child welfare, care for neglected children, mental hygiene, control of tuberculosis and venereal diseases, and care for the aged, are surveyed one after the other. In an attempt to make the book a work of reference for students the author has perhaps crowded into the small space at his disposal more detail than its scope really warrants. The result is not as readable as a broader treatment of the essentials of the subject would have been.

C. C. BARNARD

A History of the Therapy of Tuberculosis and the Case of Frédéric Chopin. (Sixth Series: Logan Clendening Lectures on the History and Philosophy of Medicine.) ESMOND R. LONG, M.D. Lawrence, University of Kansas Press, 1956. Pp. 71. \$2.

Chopin lived his adult life with illness. For fourteen years from 1835 until his death at the age of thirty-nine, cough, sputum and haemorrhage were