BOOK REVIEWS

Taschenbuch der Arbeitsmedizin. By H. Buckup. (Pp. viii + 272; 19 figures. DM. 27.00.) Stuttgart: Georg Thieme Verlag. 1957.

A pocket book on industrial medicine designed for *all* interested in the subject was the target of the author of this little volume, "little" in size but astonishingly packed with information arranged in alphabetical order. Since the volume is meant to be used for quick reference the author has had to be very selective in choosing the items. This was clearly made possible by his wide experience in the Ruhr. Such items as lead, hydrocyanic acid, arsenic, mercury, and others in our own list of notifiable industrial poisonings and diseases are given understanding and relatively detailed emphasis. On the other hand occupational skin disease as a distinct section is perhaps passed over too quickly although skin effects are referred to in the consideration of separate substances. Among the many inorganic and organic compounds which have become increasingly important, one is glad to note significant space given to cadmium, isocyanates, trichloroethylene (author gives 1,024 mg./m.³ as M.A.C., *i.e.*, about 180 p.p.m. and mentions that the Russians quote 50 mg./m.³ as M.A.C., *i.e.*, about 9 p.p.m.), synthetic resins, and polymers, epoxy (ethoxy-line) resins, ethylene glycol dinitrate, and many others. In a useful little table giving the symptomatology of chlorinated hydrocarbon intoxication we note that the author includes hexachlorocyclohexane among the aromatics (!) and attributes central and peripheral nervous effects to methylene chloride (dichloromethane). This latter point requires correction, we suggest, unless chapter and verse can be given for it. The organic phosphorus insecticides receive significant space but it is perhaps impossible to summarize present knowledge on these compounds in a few hundred words.

Tabulating the New York Department of Health list of the confirmed and probable occupational carcinogens, the author includes "isopropyl oil" (a somewhat volatile hydrocarbon product of the interaction of sulphuric acid on propylene) as a certain lung and nasal sinus carcinogen, although it is dubious whether H. F. Smith's quest for a carcinogen (1952) a few years ago in the manufacture of isopropanol really led to more than a suspicion, although he had certainly found a high incidence of cancer of these parts among the workers.

It will perhaps be a surprise to some readers that the use of crude NaNO₂ is stated to be probably associated with cancer of the skin. On the other hand the inclusion of o-toluidine and chloro-toluidine as bladder carcinogens and of chlorinated hydrocarbons as probable hepatic carcinogens is, as far as we know, far from being confirmed or generally accepted. Even crude anthracene, as a skin carcinogen, must rather be regarded as a com-

plex mixture jointly, in some tar distilleries, containing carcinogenic agents of composition distinct from anthracene. On the other hand, the author gives benzidine as only a "probable" bladder carcinogen, whereas nothing can be more certain.

In the field of more general interest in occupational medicine, we cannot refrain from quoting the author's words on pay: "Pay should correspond to production and should assure the needs of life for the worker and his family; equal pay should be given to women, men, and young persons for equal work. . . . The nature and magnitude of pay can have a significant industrial medical influence." He makes a special point that whereas a supplement in pay is not recommended because there are health hazards, it is recommended because of the working difficulties entailed by the use of protective methods. This seems to us a sensible point of view inasmuch as many workers in this country seem to imagine that "dirt and danger money" is a kind of insurance against hazard.

The curve relating the hour-to-hour variation of working capacity to variations in blood adrenaline (and precursor) shows the well-known maxima and minima during the day and the curves showing the great physiological diminution in pulse pressure in the early hours of the morning will be of much interest to works medical officers who have to do with night shifts.

The largest section in this really interesting book (or compilation) is that on dust diseases of the lung. Having given the limits of "safety" of dust concentration for dusts of varying silica content recognized in the U.S.A., U.S.S.R., Britain, and Belgium, he proceeds to give the German formula, which attempts the calculation of a figure for dust value (*Staubwertzahl*) making allowance for the silica content of the constituent minerals of the dust and for the fine dust concentration (m/v), the dust value being equal to (*mineral value* × *fine dust concentration*)/10. A dust value below 50 is regarded as not serious, but values over 100 imply an urgent demand for protective measures. We are unable to say how valuable this arithmetical approach is. The German proposal for a simple graphical, radiological, international classification of silicosis is also given and is worth careful comparison with the more detailed classifications proposed by other countries. For those who possess the German language, this little book is a worth-while purchase.

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Health in Industry. By Donald Hunter. (Pp. 288; 18 plates. 4s.) London: Penguin Books. 1959.

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