Coal Board medical service and its Institute of Occupational Medicine is well represented among the authors, but the editor is mindful that 'mining transcends national boundaries' and he has enlisted many specialists from other major mining countries.

After a very short preface the book plunges straight into pneumoconiosis. The first six chapters are on dust diseases of the respiratory system and there is a later chapter on the radiological 'control' (the purist might prefer 'monitoring') of dust disease in coal mines in the U.K. The uninitiated reader may find the description of the role of emphysema in coal worker's pneumoconiosis rather complex, but few will quarrel with the present view that the disability in simple pneumoconiosis arises from chronic bronchitis rather than from emphysema. This conclusion is qualified by the reminder that the proper clinical assessment calls for consideration of the degree of chronic bronchitis, emphysema, heart failure, and the amount of dust in the lungs as evidenced usually by radiological appearances. After considering tuberculosis as a possibility, it is concluded that the cause of progressive massive fibrosis is still unknown.

At a time when so many teachers and research workers tend to pontificate about the response of the lungs to silica, it is right that we should be reminded that it is not yet fully understood. The call for further study on the antifibrogenic action of substances such as the polymer polyvinyl pyridine-N-oxide and the role of the granular pneumocyte in the complex reaction of the human tissue to dust is cogent. Again, as in so many other research problems, we are reminded that lesions in experimental animals do not exactly reproduce the human disease, so that too definite conclusions cannot yet be drawn from the speculative theories derived from animal experiments.

The section on asbestos is also well up to date. The author shows clearly the action of the long and of the short asbestos fibre in fibrosis but that their relationship to chronic pleurisy and plaque formation is less clear. He considers that the grading of asbestosis as slight, moderate or marked is unreliable and prefers 'asbestosis with massive fibrosis' to 'marked'. I would have welcomed more on cancer of the lung and mesothelioma caused by asbestos, especially as the author of this chapter has been so closely associated with the discovery of the latter and done so much original research on both. Presumably space was limited and this chapter is a model of condensation on a diffuse growing subject.

There is a chapter on the physiological aspects of dust disease in miners in which are described the tests of pulmonary function and the functional changes in the different types of pneumoconiosis. The differential diagnosis and the management of the various types and stages of pneumoconiosis are clearly set out, and a complicated matter is made to appear relatively simple.

On dust inhalation, retention, and elimination there is much sophisticated physiology and physics counterbalanced by some oversimplification on the medical aspects. This is an authoritative dissertation on present knowledge. Emphasis is rightly laid on the evidence that the terminal velocity of individual particles rather than microscopic size is the important consideration in estimating the respirable factor in a fibrous dust. The observation that slow, deep breathing leads to greater overall deposition in the lungs than does rapid shallow

breathing is a simple point worth bearing in mind, but it is unlikely that this can be of any practical use in prevention. In subsequent sections there is wide ranging discussion on the instruments which give a true measure of the hazard of dust to man, and detailed comparisons are made of the merits of different types of instrument most suitable for use.

The rest of the book consists of articles on many subjects of concern to the doctor in the mining industry, ranging from heat diseases and dermatitis to noise and extremes of temperature. Some of these are of general interest and others very special to mining. Of the latter, mines rescue, mines hygiene or ventilation, the control of dust in mines and, maybe, mine gases are esoteric, but the principles expounded are applicable to many other situations. I am still slightly puzzled why vibration syndrome should be included under uranium mining.

Emergency treatment of accidents is virtually confined to resuscitation, crush syndrome, and amputation. One might have expected more on the emergency surgical, as distinct from the epidemiological and psychological aspects of accidents which comprise the greatest hazard of the industry. There is little guidance on the setting up or running of medical centres or on first aid in the mines and its teaching, the supervision of both of which comprises a substantial part of the work of the mines medical officer, in this country at any rate. I would have liked to see a chapter reviewing the legal aspects and statutory requirements in this and other countries, and a short history of the mining industry would have been interesting.

After reading this book one realizes how extensive the knowledge of the mines doctor has to be, not only of medicine. He has a great opportunity for developing a special interest—medical, physical, psychological, environmental or epidemiological.

The editor is to be congratulated on assembling such a team of writers and compiling such a worthwhile book, the first on the subject, as he claims. It seems a pity though that, with his long experience as Chief Medical Officer of the National Coal Board, he has not contributed any of the text, not even on administration. The reason probably is that he had a formidable enough task correlating, preparing, and editing, over such a wide spread of subjects, a task which he has signally succeeded in accomplishing.

T. S. SCOTT

Occupational Health Practice. Edited by R. S. F. Schilling. (Pp. 466; 20 figs; £4.50) London: Butterworths. 1973.

This excellent book is mostly written by Professor R. S. F. Schilling and his staff from the TUC Centenary Institute of Occupational Health in the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine.

After a foreword by Sven Forssman, the Scientific Adviser to the Swedish Work Environmental Fund, the book covers in 22 chapters the up-to-date practice of occupational health. The historical development of the subject is traced, the reciprocal relationship of health and work, the general functions of an occupational health

service, and also the various types of special examinations. The chapter on 'Well person screening' is written by that redoubtable protagonist, Dr. H. Beric Wright. Treatment services, epidemiological methods, and field surveys have a chapter each, as does also the important subject of absence from work supported by a medical certificate.

In the second half of the book the emphasis becomes more environmental, with chapters upon the psychosocial and organizational environment, ergonomics, the physical and thermal environment, airborne contaminants, ventilation, protective clothing, and mental health. There are further chapters on occupational safety and accident prevention and the prevention of occupational disease and ethics in occupational health practice, and the book closes with a chapter on education in occupational health. There is a clear index and a list of contributors stating who they are, which adds to the interest. The book is interspersed with clearly designed tables and line diagrams. It is bound in a tasteful maroon colour with gold lettering.

If I were asked 'What is occupational health?' by a sceptical colleague, I feel that I could not do better than press this book into his hand, and at £4.50 it would be quite good value.

R. C. BROWNE

NOTICES

Second International Advanced Course in Epidemiological Methods

The Institute of Occupational Health, Helsinki and the Industrial Medical Association of Finland are arranging a course in epidemiological methods, with special reference to occupational health problems, in Helsinki, Finland, 20-31 August 1973. The Director and main lecturer will be Professor Olli S. Miettinen, M.D., Ph.D. The course will be in English and a maximum of 30 participants will be accepted. An academic degree in medicine, chemistry, technology, sociology, or related fields is required. The fee is \$120.

Further details are available from Sven Hernberg, M.D., Director of Epidemiology and Biometry, Institute of Occupational Health, Haartmaninkatu 1, 00290 Helsinki 29, Finland.

Laser Safety Course

The Medical Laser Laboratory and the Office of Continuing Medical Education (CONMED) of the University of Cincinnati, Ohio announce the fifth semi-annual Short Course on Laser Safety 6-10 August 1973 at the University of Cincinnati, Ohio.

For further information contact Laser Safety Course, CONMED, 114 Medical College, Cincinnati, Ohio 45219, U.S.A.

British Occupational Hygiene Society

It is proposed to hold a fourth International Symposium on Inhaled Particles and Vapours in September 1975 in the United Kingdom, provisionally at Edinburgh. (The dates of the Symposium will be close to, but will not

overlap those of the International Conference on Occupational Health which, it is anticipated, will be held in the same month.)

The Symposium will again aim to present the results of the latest research into the inhalation and retention of harmful dusts, gases and vapours, the way they are handled by the body and their effects; it will be concerned with basic mechanisms rather than with case histories.

Further information may be obtained from Mr. W. Wood, Institute of Occupational Medicine, Roxburgh Place, Edinburgh, EH8 9SU.

Fifth Summer School on Alcoholism

The fifth annual Summer School on Alcoholism will be held at the Brighton College of Education, Falmer, 1-7 September 1973, under the auspices of the Alcoholism Education Centre which receives support from the Department of Health and Social Security.

The aim of the School is to broaden their basis of knowledge about alcoholism in its more important aspects, so that those working in this field will become better equipped for their task.

Applications are invited from social workers (including supervisory staffs of hostels), students of social science, nurses, doctors, probation, prison, and Local Authority social workers, health education officers, health visitors, magistrates, teachers, and all professional groups involved in the problems raised by alcoholism.

Further information may be obtained from The Summer School on Alcoholism, The Maudsley Hospital, Denmark Hill, London SE5 8AZ.

Medical Code of Practice for Work in Compressed Air CIRIA Report 44

This new Medical Code, intended for work in compressed air in tunnels, in caissons or other pressure chambers, results from investigations carried out over a number of years, in co-operation with CIRIA, by members of the Medical Research Council's Decompression Sickness Central Registry.

The new Code includes recommendations on general medical supervision, compression and decompression procedures and, unlike the previous regulations, recommends treatment procedures for decompression sickness. It also incorporates for the first time the now well established 'Blackpool' Decompression Tables.

Further details from D. E. Lennard, CIRIA, Telephone 01-839 6881.

CORRECTION

'Ventricular fibrillation threshold for AC shocks of long duration, in dogs with normal acid-base state' by Janet R. Scott, W. R. Lee, and S. Zoledziowski, vol. 30, 155-161.

Throughout the abstract of this paper the currents are wrongly stated as micro amps (μ A) whereas they should be in milli amps (mA).