A brief history of HM Medical Inspectorate. By M Kipling. (Pp 40; £2.00). Health and Safety Executive: London. 1979.

This little book will be a source of pleasure to all the late Miles Kipling's friends and colleagues. The first dozen or so pages give a short account of the development of the Medical Inspectorate in the last few years of the nineteenth century and some mention of their early investigations. In the second part of the book a series of vignettes of some of the medical inspectors is given and here one meets such giants as Legge, Collis, Bridge, and Henry, together with some of their successors. The book has the clear, attractive style which characterised all Kipling's writings and should be read by everyone in the occupational health professions.

To date there has been no satisfactory general history of occupational medicine. Kipling's book is modest in its dimensions but perhaps it will stimulate someone to tackle the major task of completing a comprehensive history.

H A WALDRON

Air Pollution Chemistry. By J D Butler. (Pp 408; £25.00). Academic Press: London. 1979.

Dr Butler has succeeded in providing a valuable framework on which to build a detailed knowledge of the nature and precise measurement of air pollution. What is more, the carefully chosen points of detail derived from the author's first-hand experience as a physical chemist provide it with a liveliness that should stimulate an interest in the original literature cited.

The first chapter, "Health factors," establishes the levels of risk associated with commonly encountered particulate and gaseous toxic agents. The detail given is sufficient to make clear the need for the reliable sampling and analytical procedures that are the backbone of the book. Some consideration of behavioural toxicology, however, would have helped in the appreciation of current trends in setting some threshold limit values.

Chapter 2 comprehensively covers the sources, sinks, and removal mechanisms of air-borne pollutants of many types. This controversial area of environmental chemistry is handled well, makes good reading, and is an excellent bridge to the next two chapters on sampling and analysis.

The central issues of the modes and times of sampling are made clearly and succinctly in chapter 3. The important and troublesome matters of filtration and particle size analysis of airborne particulates are treated very thoroughly.

The instrumental methods of analysing pollutants, often in incredibly small amounts, is aptly the largest chapter. All the established physicochemical techniques (based on spectral phenomena, mass spectrometry, and all of the chromatographic processes) are considered.

Scientists without a sound knowledge of chemistry will find the chapter on atmospheric reactions a little harder to comprehend than the rest of the book. Although there is some overlap with the earlier "sources, sinks, and removal mechanisms," the separate treatment of these basic chemical processes is justified in that it emphasises the long chain of events that can accrue from reactive chemical intermediates, events that would otherwise be difficult to relate as cause and effect.

Likewise, "meteorological aspects of pollutant dispersions" echoes parts of chapter 3, but with good effect since plume dispersion theory and the like are supported by worked examples of calculations of pollutant dispersion in the atmosphere involving meteorological parameters.

In the last chapter, "urban atmospheres," some aspects of earlier chapters are drawn together in a consideration of the poorly understood equilibria that exist in the heterogeneous systems of urban aerosols. An approach to long-term forecasting of urban air pollution based on such an approach is illustrated using sulphur dioxide as a model pollutant.

The book is very well produced with clear diagrams, tables, formulae, and only half-a-dozen minor errors. References (over 500 in all) are provided at the end of each chapter as well as author and subject indexes at the end of the book. In all it represents good value as a source book for researchers and professionals in the field. I have an uneasy feeling, however, that final-year undergraduates, reading these areas of environmental science, will decide that it is too expensive.

R STEPHENS

Long-term Hazards from Environmental Chemicals. (Pp 197; £8.75). Royal Society: London. 1979.

This book is a collection of papers which

were read at a Royal Society Discussion in December 1977 and originally published in the *Proceedings of the Royal Society* in 1979. The subject matter of the papers ranges widely with contributions on sources of pollution, pollution of the sea, hazards to birds from pesticides, cardiovascular disease in relation to trace metals, carcinogenic risks from environmental chemicals, and the behavioural effects of lead. This will be a well-tryed mixture to the conference addict, who will recognise many familiar faces among the list of contributors.

The book will prove most useful for the non-specialist, or the student who will appreciate the bringing together of this à la carte assortment of papers on environmental problems in a convenient and relatively inexpensive form. For the environmental specialist it adds little to his already overburdened shelves, except as a reminder of an interesting and, at times, entertaining symposium.

H A WALDRON

Notice

Rene Barthe Prize 1981

The Rene Barthe Prize was instituted to give recognition to a recent and original work on occupational health or occupational hygiene. The personal work of authors of any nationality may be submitted. The prize, amounting to 8000 French francs, is awarded every three years on the occasion of the International Congress on Occupational Health, organised under the auspices of the Permanent Commission and International Association on Occupational Health. The next Prize will be awarded in 1981 at the XXth International Congress on Occupational Health. The rules of the Prize may be obtained from: Comité du Souvenir du Docteur Rene Barthe, 30 Avenue de Wagram, 75008 Paris, and the work should be submitted to the same address before 15 December 1980.