effects on health of lead and biological guidelines. There is much of interest here, but to those not altogether familiar with the subject an impression of some confusion may be given, particularly as regards acceptable indices and effects at different levels of exposure, especially in the chapter on neurotoxicity. Although not an easy task, a greater clarification of some of the issues would have been welcome.

In the second part of the book on the sources of lead in man and their control much attention is devoted to atmospheric sources and their contribution to the body burden by inhalation and secondary ingestion from fall-out. By comparison other sources receive rather scant attention, which, enhanced by a certain amount of repetition, gives rise to a somewhat unbalanced portrayal of the overall picture. Since the author seems to consider that in general the atmosphere is not a major contributory factor a more balanced assessment would have been appropriate.

Obviously much work and research has gone into compiling this volume, for which the author is to be congratulated. It is a worthy addition to the mounting literature on the subject and merits a place on the library shelf, despite some indigestible qualities and an element of imbalance.

P S I BARRY

Woods injurious to human health: A manual. By Björn M Hausen. (Pp 189; DM 69.) Walter de Gruyter; Berlin, New York. 1981.

That wood and other plant materials are a source on occasion of potent irritants and sometimes strongly sensitising substances

should come as no surprise when you reflect on the effects of, for example, poison ivy, the primulaceae, or even nettles. The relative absence of problems associated with the widespread use of wood could give rise to a false sense of security. Dr Hausen has in a remarkably compact manual summarised the various ways in which those who work with, play with, live with, or decorate themselves with wood can be affected by the various varieties. He has also compressed effectively notes on the mechanisms so far as they are understood by which the effects occur with brief notes on experimental methods, including the extraction and preparation of antigens and a section on the chemistry and immunochemistry of these substances. To the specialist these parts may be superfluous but the bibliographies attached to each successive section make the manual an excellent research source.

The manual's main value lies in its comprehensive list of woods (78 in all) and includes a description of their appearance, source, uses, notes on the known health hazards—for example, dermatitis, asthma, allergic alveolitis, etc—supported by the appropriate references together with notes on the chemical constituents isolated and considered to be the prime allergen or irritant. Dr Thomson's translation flows smoothly and the manual is a pleasure to read. The diagrams and other illustrations are excellent. It will prove an excellent addition to the library of the occupational physician, particularly those advising the timber and furniture trades and many more specialist colleagues. In addition it should find its way into any reasonably sized medical library and is a "good read" for the physician with a general interest in

some, perhaps not so unusual, causes of skin trouble or respiratory illness.

H F V RIDDLE

Notices

Xth Annual International Congress of MEDICHEM. Paris, 14-16 September, 1982.

The Xth annual congress of MEDICHEM will take place in Paris from 14 to 16 September 1982. The general programme chairmen will be Professor AM Thiess and Professor PE Fournier. Topics for discussion will include: occupational diseases in chemical industry, medical legal responsibilities in chemical industry, methods in epidemiology of noxious effects of chemicals on man, evaluation of maximum allowable concentrations of chemicals, and toxicological problems in the chemical industry.

Information on the meeting is available from Professor ML Efthymiou, Hospital F Widal, 200, rue du Faubourg-Saint-Denis, 75475 Paris Cedex 10-France.

The 10th Asian Conference on Occupational Health will take place in Singapore from 5 to 10 September 1982. Contributions will include those pertaining to occupational medicine, occupational health nursing, safety, toxicology, ergonomics, occupational physiology, occupational psychiatry, and related subjects. Scientific papers on any subject relating to the health of workers of industrial environment will be welcome.

Information on the meeting is available from the Secretariat, 10th Asian Conference on Occupational Health, Kreta Ayer PO Box 241, Singapore 9109, Republic of Singapore.