be a crumb of comfort to our general practitioner colleagues in the London area who gave the basic information on which the study depends that their certificate writing has not been in vain; and which the "genius of English healers" has already "put to good account".

J. P. W. HUGHES


Occupational health has so far made but slow progress in the academic sector. Most medical students learn little of the subject. Yet in field, factory, dockyard, mine, transport, and building construction the doctor also serves. All over the world this service is expanding. In Great Britain, the membership of the Association of Industrial Medical Officers has grown in 21 years from 35 to over 800. The Association has chosen the occasion of its 21st anniversary to issue a booklet of 70 pages setting out the functions and aims of an occupational health service. The booklet also describes the present extent of existing services and includes short descriptions of many of the societies and associations concerned with occupational health. Presumably the intention is to clarify, not to plan, and truly clarification is needed. The examples of existing services described, together with the appendix of associated organizations, provide a substantially complete picture. In addition there are useful tables of comparative costs of medical services and a reasonably full bibliography of occupational health publications. The main value of the booklet lies in these factual sections. All the threads in the tangle are here collected neatly. Many hours will be saved for any newly appointed industrial medical officer, social worker, industrial or medical administrator, who may wish to study or to make use of these services. The booklet would have been improved by a summary of the existing law on the subject (that relating to rehabilitation is given), and by at least a cursory glance at the more significant variations in practice in other countries.

On the matter of functions and aims the book is less satisfactory. In the first five pages some 20 or 30 functions are dealt with in a few lines each. Elsewhere, the functions of the National Coal Board's medical service are well summarized under seven heads, and those of the British Overseas Airways Corporation under six heads. Clearly it is possible to make do with a single sentence: "The function of an occupational health service is to foster the health and safety of people at work." Enlarging on this, there is hardly a function of medicine that cannot be found a place in appropriate circumstances—from psychiatry to sanitation, from vital statistics to Civil Defence, from cancer research to control of infectious disease. There could even be a place for paediatrics in factory creches. Where then is the value of a functional breakdown? It should serve to explain the details of the service and to influence those who may doubt its value. Moreover, it should guide the inexperienced on priorities and warn them of pitfalls. Unfortunately, insufficient guidance is given here. A carefully considered and detailed statement on some 10 or a dozen of the main activities consistently associated with preserving health at work would have gone a long way to help those who seek guidance. It is of doubtful value to mention continued observation of young persons, advice on health and employment of older workers, advice on health of senior staff, encouragement of managers to advise staff to obtain medical advice, and accessibility of employees of medical advice as five separate functions (Page 4).

Only rehabilitation is dealt with at any length. The short chapter on this subject begins with the statement: "It has been estimated that there are three million people actually in need of rehabilitation; if this is correct, much remains to be done." Much indeed, but is it correct? This is the type of assertion that the Association's members between them should have confirmed or refuted. One function which should have been discussed in detail is the vexed question of treatment and diagnostic investigation. At this point much is done that should not be done and much left undone that is necessary.

Surely this needs a thorough airing.

Also it is not made clear who exactly is to be served by the occupational health service. Presumably "industrial organization" includes all the personnel in factories, mines, transport undertakings, and construction works, but who else? Will the farmer, the nurseryman, and the orchardist be included? Is an occupational health service to function for professional men, shop assistants, and local government personnel? The objective should not fall short of all who work, even the housewife in some aspects of her labour.

Besides those already referred to, there are short chapters of two or three pages each on the introduction of an occupational health service, the constitution and functions of an occupational health team, and occupational health nursing services. The subject matter is not clearly demarcated, as indicated by the titles, and the principal characters of doctor and nurse wander somewhat indiscriminately across chapter boundaries. The fine intention of this booklet is not fully realized.

T. O. GARLAND


The manufacture of chromates and bichromates used in electroplating, anodizing, and surface treatment of metals, tanning and colour making is a small but essential part of the heavy chemical industry. In the United States as in this country there are some six factories where manufacture takes place. On the user's side the skin hazards of chrome, ulceration, dermatitis, and perforation of the nasal septum, have been well known, particularly in the chrome-plating industry, and the chrome producers until recently were thought merely to share these hazards. But since Lehmann in 1932 described cases of lung cancer in chrome workers suspicion has been increasing that a real risk of this disease exists on the manufacturing side. It is noteworthy that no malignancy has been reported in any of the skin or nasal cases.