BOOK REVIEWS


This report reviews 497 mine workers, 97% of whom had been underground workers who suffered from traumatic paraplegia. In the main the report examines the social problems attendant upon and the welfare services available for this condition.

It is surprising to learn the degree of independence achieved by these men. Despite half the cases having complete paraplegia (the other half had varying degrees of partial paraplegia) only 27 men were confined to the house. No fewer than 409, or 83%, were able to go out alone.

There are many other tables in the report concerned with nursing care, bladder and bowel control, etc., but probably one of the most useful functions of the report is to spotlight the inconsistencies shown by various ministries and local authorities, both with regard to procedure and speed of action. The inconsistencies are particularly applicable to speedy provision of motorized wheelchairs, widening of doors, provision of hand rails, and charges by local authorities for the provision of mattresses and bedding. A standard procedure should be laid down which allows prompt attention to these matters instead of the frustrating delays which now obtain.

The degree of cooperation between the National Coal Board and the National Union of Mineworkers is highly commendable in the way that washing machines, television sets, and holidays are provided.

Finally, there is a plea for the provision of facilities for paraplegics who are willing and able to earn a living.

This report may have a limited appeal to industrial medical officers but some of the problems which are spotlighted are applicable to other forms of disability and other industries.

R. A. TREVETHICK


This useful monograph forms one of a series on the practice of industrial hygiene, prepared by l'Institut National de Sécurité in France. Previous monographs dealt with benzol, carbon monoxide, dermatoses in the metal industry, and chlorinated solvents. The authors of the present volume, A. Vallaud and P. Salmon, are respectively chief of the technical services and engineer to the Institute. In six chapters they give a remarkably complete account of the dangers attending the manufacture, handling, and use of sulphuric acid in industry, beginning with a recapitulation of the physico-chemical properties of the acid, and the conditions under which accidents arise. Though they are not medically qualified, they also deal with the toxicology and treatment of acute and chronic poisoning by sulphuric acid. This section is adequate but not authoritative, and the authors are