BOOK REVIEWS


This study, a thesis for the degree of Doctor of Technology, was carried out at the Institute of Occupational Health. Its main value lies in the full summary and review of the literature on this subject. The aim of the experimental study was "a general clarification of the characteristics requisite for a driver." The work is in two parts. The first is a statistical study of accident proneness in about 1,000 bus and tram drivers in Helsinki. It was found that such factors as age, driving experience, and duration of employment exerted a considerable influence upon accident rates. Correlations between the accidents in two consecutive years were in the order of 0.25 to 0.35 and between two consecutive four-year periods in the order of 0.6 to 0.7. The author concludes that a long period of observation, such as the eight years of the present study, is necessary for the consistency of accident rates to be sufficient for experimental use. This is a valuable warning to those whose periods of study of accident rates relate to only one or two years, or even less.

In the second part, 100 volunteer bus and tram drivers, in high and low accident groups, were subjected to a battery of intelligence, psychomotor personality, and mechanical aptitude tests. Although there was some variation between the test results, no single test appeared to be of practical value in differentiating between high and low accident groups. If multiple prediction by means of the five best test variables had been used for selection of drivers, the number of accidents would have been reduced by 34% if only 50% of the drivers had been accepted for employment. These valuable research studies should continue, but at present it is doubtful whether satisfactory practical tests of accident prediction are available for those who are engaged in driver selection.

T. G. FAULKNER HUDSON


The British Occupational Hygiene Society has initiated this new journal. Since its foundation a few years ago, brief reports of the Society's meetings have been welcomed for publication in the British Journal of Industrial Medicine, as have a number of the papers read at its meetings. The Society is now firmly established and naturally feels the need to have its own journal.

This first issue of the Annals is devoted to noise in industry. There are 11 authoritative papers, covering such aspects of the noise problem as the clinical and physiological effects of noise, noise measurement, noise suppression, the effects of noise on work, a study of occupational deafness, auditory damage after short exposure, and an account of the Scottish audiometer calibration service. A discussion is reported after several of the papers, though there is no mention of their having been read at a meeting. Busy readers may regret that only one paper is equipped with a summary.