officers and personnel managers who are seriously interested in the problems of performance and ageing. But it is not easy reading. In particular, the rather abstract chapter entitled, "On the Nature of Skill", although a masterpiece of condensation, may be unenlightening to those not conversant with contemporary psychology. (On the other hand it should be compulsory reading for third year psychology undergraduates.) In conclusion, it may be said that if someone wished to know what kind of sustained research had been done by experimental psychologists in this country since the war, no better examples could be found for them than the investigations reported here.

P. C. WASON

Een Onderzoek naar de asthmatische aard der Borstklachten van de Arbeiders in de Steenkolenmijnen (The Role of Asthmatic Predisposition in Coal Miners' Chest Complaints). By K. de Vries. (Pp. v + 124; 7 figures, 30 tables, 217 references. No price given.) Groningen: J. B. Wolters. 1958.

It has become increasingly obvious that in anthracosis (coalworkers' pneumoconiosis) there is no close relationship between the severity of respiratory symptoms and the radiological changes in the lungs. The ingenious study described in this thesis was undertaken in order to investigate the hypothesis that miners' chest complaints are influenced by an asthmatic predisposition. An earlier survey of school children living in a mining community enabled the author to sample children with asthma and asthma-free controls, matched for age, sex, and place of residence. The male mining relatives of these two groups, 260 in the asthma and 104 in the control group, were then compared using the information given on the health record cards available for each man. (It should be noted that the meaning of the term "asthma" used in this work is wider than that now current in this country and includes what we should call chronic bronchitis and emphysema.)

The ages of the two groups were similar; but the occupational histories differed, the proportion of miners working underground being lower in the asthma group, a finding the author attributes to self-selection. The number of days of disability due to dyspnoea, wheezing, chest pain, and cough was higher in the asthma group than in the controls and also in those working underground compared with those on the surface. Periodic radiographs of the chest of every miner have been taken since 1949. No significant difference in the prevalence of anthracosis was observed between asthma and control groups, but among the young miners in the asthma group a significantly higher proportion of non-anthraco-silicotic lesions of the lower lung field, costophrenic sinus, and diaphragm was observed.

The author concludes that his findings support the hypothesis. He considers that they also indicate that miners' chest complaints are influenced by the underground milieu but not by the degree of anthracosis.

A detailed English summary and English subtitles to the tables and diagrams enable those who do not read Dutch to understand the greater part of this interesting monograph, which includes a very complete review of the literature.

I. T. T. HIGGINS

Occupational Allergy. Lectures held during a course on occupational allergy organized under the auspices of the European Academy of Allergy; Foreword by D. A. Williams. (Pp. xvi + 329; illustrated. Fl. 30.-) Leiden, Holland: H. E. Stenfort Kroese N.V. 1958.

This book consists of 38 lectures given in May, 1958, under the auspices of the European Academy of Allergy. It is concerned with allergic reactions affecting the skin, eyes, and respiratory tract. The occupational aspects are broadly treated, since consideration is given both to those workers with pre-existing allergic manifestations and to the sensitization effects induced by working conditions; these are treated in some instances by industrial groups (bakers, pharmaceutical workers, printers, mine workers, cigar makers, cotton printers, and even the medical profession and its auxiliaries), in others by discussion of offending substances (kapok, wool, turpentine, formaldehyde, wood dust, coffee, and penicillin). Other lectures discuss the diagnosis of allergic diseases and delimitation of their occupational aspects, some consideration of the mechanism of sensitization, therapy, prevention, and compensation. A useful contribution from Dr. D. A. Williams evaluates statistically the "social consequences" of asthma, urticaria, other allergic disorders, eczema, and dermatitis; this work is based on the reports of our Ministry of Pensions and National Insurance, and it is probably true to say that comparable information hardly exists for other parts of the world.

The merits of this book grow out of its broad scope, its widely European authorship, and the speed of publication. Its weaknesses mainly stem from the same origins. The lectures are uneven in quality and include much that is already well known. They overlap considerably, and some contain large numbers of spelling mistakes and printers' errors. Some include details of the author's place of work and country of origin, others leave the reader to guess. Some give properly set out lists of references, others mention authors (with dates) in the text, but give no other help to those who would like to consult the original source. The chapters which stand out as specially good concern nasal affections as occupational diseases and occupational sensitization of the air passages by organic dust; there are also stimulating discussions of turpentine and of the dyes used in cotton printing.

J. R. SQUIRE

Noise and Your Ear: Modern Monographs in Industrial Medicine. 1. By Aram Glorig, Jr. (Pp. viii + 152; illustrated. 46s.) New York and London: Grune & Stratton. 1958.

Acoustics, Noise, and Buildings. By P. H. Parkin and W. R. Humphreys. (Pp. 331; illustrated. 70s.) London: Faber and Faber. 1958.

Here are two recent additions to the current flood tide of literature concerning noise. They arrive at a time when British industry and industrial physicians are taking a much closer interest in this particular aspect of the physical environment, and at a time when for many of us life is on the verge of becoming even noisier. Although each is written for a different public each, in its own way, is authoritative.