The Medical Management of Acute Poisoning. By Gordon Cumming. (Pp. ix + 128; with tables. 10s. 6d.) London: Cassell. 1961.

A book on poisoning is difficult to make readable, for it is all too liable to become a compilation of facts about poisons, many of them obscure, with dubious data on presumed antidotes and management. This book is refreshing in that it has avoided the standard dreary approach, and "emphasis has been laid upon physiological principles in treatment". It is intended "to be read as a whole" by the final year student, practitioner, and casualty officer, who will all undoubtedly benefit from it.

So good is the idea of the author's approach that the book deserves closer criticism. The discussion of a problem is often inadequate or lacks clarity. Repetition of points of general management occurs unnecessarily. There are also inconsistencies, e.g. the author's views on "Megimide" are obscure in the light of his statement that nikethamide and amiphenazole are "the two most used" medullary stimulants. Many other criticisms at this level could be made, and it may be hoped that by ruthless self-criticism the second edition of this book will become the minor classic that it potentially could be, with critical documented discussion in a small compass (as has been done with barbiturates), even if this entails slightly enlarging the book in general as well as its final chapter on psychiatric aspects of poisoning by Dr. Myre Sim.

DESMOND LAURENCE

Fluorosis: The Health Aspects of Fluorine Compounds. By Edward J. Largent. (Pp. 127; 11 figures + 34 tables. \$3.50.) Columbus, Ohio: Ohio State University Press. 1961.

At \$3.50 this is an expensive book. The publishers claim on the dust-jacket that it is a comprehensive, up-to-date review of research on all aspects of fluoride metabolism and its toxicology. This claim is not really substantiated. The most recent reference in the bibliography of 204 entries is dated 1957. Although the review covers a wide range of topics relating to the toxicology of fluorine and its inorganic and organic compounds, the detail with which they are discussed varies considerably. The sections dealing with the effect of fluorides on enzymes and the actions of the organic compounds of fluorine are particularly sketchy. The book also lacks an index, the author evidently hoping to get by with an expanded table of contents. This is not very successful and a good index seems essential for a book with the objectives of this one. This book will not be of much help to biochemists or toxicologists except in so far as it describes the author's hitherto unpublished work on the ingestion, inhalation, excretion, and storage of fluoride in man. It is difficult to say whether "this book fills a need long felt by executives and medical directors in industry, public health directors and technicians, lawyers engaged in negligence suits" as its publishers claim.

H. B. STONER

Report of the Medical Research Council for the Year 1959-1960. (Pp. viii + 326; 11 figures. 15s. 6d.) London: H.M. Stationery Office. 1961.

Each year there is much in the Annual Report of the Medical Research Council to interest industrial medical officers. The volume consists of the formal report of the Medical Research Council, some 50 pages of commentary on "some aspects of medical research" the summary of work being undertaken by the National Institute for Medical Research, the 71 Research Units controlled by the Council, the external staff, and the institutions supported by block grants from the Council; and references to the literature published by members of the scientific staff; the whole is very well cross-indexed.

A good deal of the work supported by the Medical Research Council is of direct interest to doctors working in industry. At least four of the Units (Unit for Research on Occupational Aspects of Ageing; Industrial Injuries and Burns Research Unit; Pneumoconiosis Research Unit; Industrial Psychology Research Unit) are carrying out investigations in industry. Several other research units, i.e. the Body Temperature Research Unit and the Wernher Research Unit on Deafness, are carrying out work of direct interest to the industrial scene. It is valuable for the doctor in industry to know where research work which may be of importance to his problems is being undertaken, and to know the names of the people who are undertaking it.

This year's Annual Report is of particular interest to industrial medical officers because of some of the 10 subjects covered in the commentary, "Some aspects of medical research". Work on the viruses of the common cold, causation of chronic bronchitis, a changing outlook on the surgical treatment of duodenal ulcer, the skin, normal and abnormal reactions in relation to disease, energy expenditure in man, and physiological research in epilepsy, all have direct or indirect bearing on industrial medicine. Colds, influenza, and chronic bronchitis account for about a quarter of all sickness absence in industry. The patient with recurrent duodenal ulcer is always a problem to us.

This year's Report is even more worthy than usual of a place on the bookshelf of the practising industrial medical officer.

P. A. B. RAFFLE

The Penguin Handbook of First Aid and Home Nursing. By A. C. White Knox and J. E. F. Gueritz. (Pp. 128; illustrated. 3s. 6d.) Harmondsworth: Penguin Books. 1961.

This handbook follows the pattern of St. John Ambulance Association publications, which is not difficult to understand in view of the background of the two authors.

The book consists of 125 pages with a few line drawings. It is divided into sections: first anatomy and physiology, the longest chapter in the book, lists first-aid kits for various situations, and then deals with first aid in different circumstances such as on the road, on the farm, and in the home. Finally, there are chapters on transport of the injured, home nursing, and civil defence.