CLOAKROOMS, WASHING FACILITIES, DRINKING WATER AND SANITARY ACCOMMODATION IN FACTORIES

Ministry of Labour and National Service Welfare
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There is great need of authoritative information and guidance on the provision of amenities in factories and a new edition of this pamphlet deserves the widest publicity. Basic information is supplied on the arrangement and equipment of cloakrooms, washing facilities, drinking water and sanitary accommodation. The subjects are dealt with under these headings and excellent photographs illustrate the text. Emphasis is laid upon adequate supervision of the facilities when once provided; this is a matter of least importance and is often overlooked.

The ideal plan is to provide changing and bathing accommodation at the factory entrance so that workers may enter the factory and immediately change into working clothing. After ceasing work they can change and return home in their own clothes.

Essentials of satisfactory cloakroom accommodation are detailed, and plans illustrate layout and space required. Means of drying wet clothes are necessary. A clothes locker has a startling top prevention of the accumulation of litter and screen doors which facilitate inspection. Washing facilities required in different kinds of factories are described, and there is information about provision of soap, towels and nailbrushes. A good system is to fit the basins without traps and discharge the waste into a glazed channel which communicates with a trapped gully situated outside the building. Shallow foot baths provided with showers in a private cubicle adjoining a dressing-room are excellent examples of bathing accommodation. Hot and cold water or mixing valves should be provided. An adequate supply of drinking water must always be available and care taken to prevent contamination. A fountain of the upward jet variety is recommended which obviates the necessity of providing drinking vessels. The regulations of the Public Health and Sanitary Departments are quoted and there is information on the construction of lavatories. To ensure cleanliness it is essential that one person should be made responsible for cleaning.

A. T. J.

BATTLE FOR HEALTH

By Stephen Taylor, M.D., M.R.C.P.

(Nicholson and Watson, London. 1944. Pp. 128. 5s.)

One of the most interesting things in this book (so far as this reader is concerned) is tucked away in the biographical note on the back turn-over of the jacket: it is the statement that ‘Dr. Taylor believes that social advance springs only from a basis of factual information.’ If Dr. Taylor really holds this view, which, one would have imagined, has been out of date these hundred years or more, he had better take a look at the book which he himself has written, and ask himself how much of its punch and appeal derives from mere fact, and how much from other factors. The whole feeling of the book is one of strength, activity, enthusiastic work. He has written this feeling into the letterpress, and the book develops and enhances it very greatly, with its prose and expertly chosen illustrations to the number of no less than 91 and its 13 pictorial charts in colour. The isotype charts are particularly worthy of study by those who are so naive as to believe that social advance springs only from a basis of factual information and thus takes no account of feelings and enthusiasms. Not counting black and white (though these are bright enough colours to be sure), but including stipple, hatching and linings, one can find more than twenty colour effects in the book as a whole. Some of the colours are there to explain, it is true; but they all stimulate. As for the symbols employed in the isotypes, there is no space to detail them here, but the point which Dr. Taylor might care to reflect upon is that they all have a feeling-effect, which is quite separate and distinct from their rational significance. Let him look, for instance, at the figure which represents a unit of doctors, or at the one which represents a unit of doctors, or that which stands for a unit of deaths.

Judging from his note to the reader, Dr. Taylor has not yet found his feet in what he describes as the ‘science of teaching’, for if he had he would recognize that it is not merely a science, but also an art. In a sort of flight from psychological realities, he states in his note that the pictures are not there to look pretty; as if it were a frightful crime to use artistic effect in a work designed to command a subject, to enforce attention, and to engage sympathetic interest. Adopting this larger viewpoint, one has no hesitation in suggesting to Dr. Taylor that he can include the following amongst his soldiers in Battle for Health: Nicholson and Watson who publish his book, L. John Edwards for the Editorial Committee, Adprint, Ltd., London, who designed and produced it, Jarrold & Sons of Norwich who printed it, the Isotype Institute who produced the charts, Paul Rothe who edited the photographs, and a whole regiment designed, in his acknowledge-ments. Some of these cohorts may have been brought into the battle as press gangs, but soldiers they are nevertheless.

Dr. Taylor reviews the battlefield, examines the enemy, gives a progress report on the fight against the main killing diseases, and leads on to final sections on planning for health. The work is excellently performed, and the result is a primer of social medicine, which, one can confidently predict, its readers will have pleasure in possessing and profit in consulting. But the factual information conveyed is only a part of the total effect of the book, which, if it is not important to say so, is a good deal better than Dr. Taylor knows. For as we have said, teaching, like medicine itself, is not merely or even primarily a science.

It is an art.

R. F.

SAFETY SUBJECTS

Bulletin No. 67 of the United States Department of Labour Division of Labour Standards


This valuable little book was prepared to meet a widespread demand for a text-book for use in the training of factory inspectors. Its object is to serve as a source of basic information on industrial accident prevention. It was first produced in a mimeographed form 7 years ago, but has been constantly revised and expanded on the basis of actual industrial experience. Its inspiration is that which is needed for daily use by the safety engineer, but the industrial medical officer will find in it much of great interest and facts which he will often want to know, and which are not in readable form elsewhere. In 1942, 18,100 Americans were accidentally killed at their work, another 102,600 suffered permanent injuries and 2,147,000 more were injured to an extent that incapacitated them for over one day. The estimated annual cost of these accidents is 500 million pounds. Having realized the extent of the problem, the book goes on to describe the development of the accident prevention movement and methods for discovering the sources and causes of accidents. It wisely stresses that safety and prevention of accidents is the responsibility of the management. Good planning of plant and a spacious lay-out are of great importance in the prevention of accidents. Industrial accidents of all kinds are then fully discussed, but it is not possible here to mention all the information in this book which is crammed so full of facts. It is surprising to find at the end of each chapter a series of examination questions; and these rather detract from an otherwise pleasantly produced book.

If available it is likely to be a useful reference book in the medical department of any large factory.

K. M. A. P.