will find this work of great value to them, and it will also serve as a reference book to all involved in the diagnosis of all the types of dust inhalation disease.

CHARLES L. SUTHERLAND

Promotion of Medical Practitioners' Interest in Preventive Medicine. W.H.O. Tech. Rep. Ser. No. 269. Twelfth Report of the W.H.O. Expert Committee on Professional and Technical Education of Medical and Auxiliary Personnel. (Pp. 22; 1s. 9d.) Geneva: W.H.O. 1964.

The fact that a report with this title is needed is a sad reminder of the division of the medical profession into those whose interest is in curing disease and those whose interest lies in prevention. The medical practitioner, by tradition, can usually deal only with persons who seek his help after symptoms of illness have developed. How is the important contribution of preventive medicine to the teaching of medicine to be made? This report attempts to answer this question.

The report is divided into five chapters, and the best of these is that which deals with Preventive Medicine in Undergraduate Teaching. Here we are taken right away from the old set course of lectures in Public Health to the idea of this subject being taught at all stages of the curriculum; it is not to be regarded as a special subject but as an aspect of all subjects. This chapter is worth reading by all medical teachers.

The chapter on aiding the practitioner in the preventive aspects of his work is less stimulating. Doubtless this is because an international report has to cater for all countries, whether industrialized or in an early stage of development.

This report provides important reading for anyone who wants to see industrial medical services expanded. For if new doctors are to be brought into this field nothing will have been achieved if they are not interested in the principles of prevention.

W. R. LEE

Report on the Medical Research Council for the Year 1962-63. (Pp. 280 + viii; 16s. 6d.) London: H.M. Stationery Office. 1964.

This report of some 280 pages is not so formidable to assimilate as it appears at first sight. About three-quarters of it can be regarded as a reference as it consists of a summary of the research which is being conducted by the National Institute for Medical Research and by the many research units and working parties which are supported or sponsored by the M.R.C. In this section the reader can find out, from among the many fields in which the Council is active, what is being done in those which are of interest to him. The industrial physician will be particularly interested in the work of the research units on body temperature, pneumoconiosis, carcinogenic substances, toxicology, industrial injuries and burns, social medicine and radiation and in some of the specialized advisory committees such as those on occupational health, the aetiology of bronchitis, railway accidents, and those on radiation.

The report contains eight special articles on various aspects of medical research. These are to be published by H.M. Stationery Office in September, 1964, under the title *Current Medical Research*. Although none of them is on occupational health the industrial medical officer will be interested and rewarded by reading, among others, the articles on epidemiological research in psychiatry, organ transplantation, and clinical genetics.

Probably the most important part of this annual report is the M.R.C.'s statement on Responsibility in Investigation on Human Subjects. There can be little doubt that this will form the basis of the ethical code to be observed by the medical profession—and probably to be accepted by the courts—for a long time in the future. In 1953 the Council issued a statement on this subject but it referred only to investigations on patients; now, the ethics in regard to those on healthy subjects and other volunteers are included. These two classes of subjects, patients and volunteers, are considered separately.

Procedures undertaken, as part of patient care, that is, to benefit the individual either for treatment, prevention or assessment, are governed by the ordinary rules of professional conduct which apply to the doctor-patient relationship. If the new procedure is aimed at benefiting the patient, and if the patient's consent is obtained or can be assumed, the fact that the procedure is new is relevant only insofar as special care is needed and should be exercised. It is, in fact, a matter of professional judgment whether the new procedure offers a better chance of benefit than existing measures. This principle can be extended to the investigation of a new vaccine, as the intention is to benefit the individual by protecting him against a future hazard. Controlled clinical trials raise special problems and the Council advises that they should always be planned by a group of investigators and never by an individual alone. Any patient taking part should be withdrawn if, in the opinion of any of the doctors participating, it is in the patient's best interest.

Investigations on volunteers may involve either healthy or ill persons. They are usually undertaken solely for the purpose of contributing to medical knowledge and are not designed to benefit the particular individual. For these reasons they require 'true consent'. The report discusses and amplifies the rights of volunteers and the question of their consent and of consent in the case of the young and the mentally subnormal. True consent is defined as consent freely given with proper understanding of the nature and consequences of what is proposed. Particular care is necessary when the volunteer stands in special relation to the investigator, for example patient and doctor, student and teacher [and, although it is not specifically mentioned in the report, workman and factory doctor].

So specialized has medicine become that in many types of investigation only a small number of experienced men are likely to be competent to pass an opinion on the justification for undertaking it. If any doubt exists, research workers should obtain the opinion of experienced colleagues on the desirability of the procedure or should refer to one of the specialized scientific societies. [Members of the Association of Industrial Medical Officers will not need to be reminded that its Research Advisory