BOOK REVIEWS

Occupational Disease in California Attributed to Pesticides and Other Agricultural Chemicals. 1963.

This report maintains the high standard of its predecessor, which I reviewed in this journal (*Brit. J. industr. Med.*, **21**, 329 (1964)). It seemed then that the information given should be treated with caution, as it came from physicians some of whom may have been inexperienced in diagnosing the effects of agricultural chemicals. The present report goes far to meet my criticism in a summary of an investigation on the validity of occupational disease reporting. Physicians were asked if they had had second thoughts on any of their diagnoses, and a number of case histories were thoroughly and critically reviewed by two independent experts. The experts confirmed as occupational in origin 90% of the cases of dermatitis and 75% of the more specific of the other cases, and also found several cases not reported. It is now clear that, although wrong assessments may have introduced a little distortion into the statistics, the distortion is unlikely to be serious and on the side of under- rather than over-estimation of the number of cases.

The report shows an increase of 22% over the previous year to a total of 1,013 cases. The increase was mainly due to widespread Parathion poisoning in one region. Organophosphates accounted for 32% of all cases, and over three-quarters of the systemic cases.

Emphasis is given to the difficulties found in controlling hazards when much of the labour force is unskilled and uneducated and Spanish-speaking under English-speaking supervision. It says little for some of the firms selling chemicals in the region that it is necessary to advocate that labels should be in Spanish as well as English, should be tested for comprehensibility, should be resistant to dirt and water, and should indicate first-aid measures when these may be needed.

Copies are available free on request as long as the supply lasts from the Bureau of Health Education, California State Department of Public Health, 2151 Berkeley Way, Berkeley 4, California.

D. F. HEATH

Report on the Sanitary Condition of the Labouring Population of Great Britain. By Edwin Chadwick. 1842. Edited by M. W. Flinn. (Pp. 443; 70*s*.) Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press. 1965.

One of the most important publications on the public health in the nineteenth century was Edwin Chadwick's *Report on the Sanitary Conditions of the Labouring Population of Great Britain* published in 1842. This famous book has for too long been available only for reference in the larger libraries and thus has been consulted only for historical research. It has now been reprinted and edited by M. W. Flinn and for the first time for many years it can take its place on the bookshelf to be browsed through and dipped into at leisure.

This book starts with an introduction by the editor. This introduction should be read by all who consider that knowledge of the history of industrial medicine is of value or interest. It could well be read for other reasons: the marshalling of arguments and clarity of style are at once a pleasure and a model to all who would set out to present facts and discuss the conclusions. The first part of the introduction looks to the genesis of Victorian public health reform by scrutinizing the many strands of thought which converged on Chadwick towards the end of the 1830s. This is no dull recital about the rich getting the pleasure and the poor getting the blame, which tends to pass off as 'history' in industrial medicine. The researches of contemporary scholars throw much new light on many ideas which have been readily accepted in past years. To take one example, the idea that the last century divided somewhere about the 1860s into a period of individualism followed by a period of collectivism does not fit the facts. When considering the theory of *laissez-faire*, a distinction should be made between economic and social policies. Even the proponents of the theory had to admit that, in practice, the real issue was not whether or not governments should intervene in social and economic affairs, but how much and in which direction and through which channels. The second part of Mr. Flinn's introduction deals with the report itself and includes sections on the making of the report, a discussion on the issues raised in the report, and finally the influence of the report on sanitary reform.

This edition of the Report, which had so much to do with shaping our present system of public health, together with the excellent introductory essay, makes fascinating reading and is well produced and adequately indexed. It can be confidently recommended.

W. R. LEE

Accident Research: Methods and Approaches. By William Haddon, Jr., Edward A. Suchman, and David Klein. (Pp. 752 + xvi; $15.00 or 112*s*. 6*d*.) New York, Evanston and London: Harper & Row. 1965.

This is an unusual and important book. The authors' system is to introduce a facet of the subject, reproduce *in extenso* some relevant published work mostly by other authors, and then add their own comments. Their purpose is a dual one: 'to bring together within a single volume significant studies in accident research and to embed these studies as examples in a text dealing with the methodology of accident research'. They are therefore instructors rather than mere anthologists. The dangers

of this system lie in an inadequate selection of studies to reproduce, and unskilful commentaries. These are happily avoided. Selection had to be heavily restricted but the 90 or so (out of the many thousand possible) articles reproduced seem on the whole well chosen and with few important omissions. One is Häkkinen's (1958) admirable study on Helsinki public transport drivers; perhaps another is Farmer and Chambers' (1926) pioneer work on accident proneness to which a later paper of these two authors was preferred. Further, the authors' comments—sometimes unfavourable but always fair—are soundly based, lucid, and realistic, and as consistently reliable as any this reviewer has encountered. Some may argue that singling out articles 'which embody (common methodological) errors and are seriously weakened by them', even for the authors' laudable purpose, is rough justice; but such sentiment is misplaced. Accident research has suffered heavily from enthusiasm usurping technique, and the authors are right to re-examine critically some of the work on which substantial theories of accident causation are based including, this reviewer is glad to see, *inter alia* that which produced the fashionable 'drive as you live' hypothesis.

This book admirably fulfills its purpose and can be recommended without qualification to all interested in accident research. The frequent excuse that the fundamental statements of principles and techniques are buried in statistical works is no longer valid. The book is well printed and produced, and excellently written though in the modern American 'scientific' idiom.

P. FROGGATT

Häkkinen, S. (1958). *Traffic Accidents and Driver Characteristics. A Statistical and Psychological Study.* Finland's Institute of Technology, Scientific Researches, No. 13. Helsinki.

Farmer, E., and Chambers, E. G. (1926). A psychological study of individual differences in accident rates. *Rep. indust. Fat. Res. Bd, Lond.*, No. 38.

Some Newcastle Papers on Industrial Health and Biostatistics 1956-1961. (Pp. 233, no price stated.) University of Newcastle upon Tyne. 1964.

This elegant volume is comprised of some 30 of the 50 or so publications which have emanated in the quinquennium 1956-61 from the Nuffield Department of Industrial Health in the University of Newcastle upon Tyne. The wide range of research which has been carried out by Professor Browne and his colleagues in these five years is reflected in the variety of the papers. The opening section on the teaching of occupational health is followed by sections on industrial medicine, dust disease of the lungs, biostatistics, occupational hygiene, and ergonomics. Readers of this Journal have already had the opportunity to see many of these papers when they were originally published, and a number of the other articles have appeared in other widely read medical journals, but few of our readers may have seen the papers on occupational erosion of teeth which appeared in several dental journals.

These papers were all published before 1962 but it is striking how up to date they are; this is as it should be, because a university department should be ahead of the norm of contemporary thought and development, and the Newcastle school more than satisfies this criterion. The proportions which the various branches of occupational medicine occupy in this anthology are well balanced. Clinical medicine, statistics, occupational hygiene, animal experimentation, and the philosophy of the subject have all been accorded their due place in the selection of the papers included.

T. S. SCOTT

Review on International Symposium on Electrical Accidents. (Pp. 269; no price stated.) Geneva: I.L.O. 1964.

Thanks to the high standards of safety the number of deaths from electric shock in this country has increased only slowly despite the remarkable increase in the use of electricity. What contribution has medicine to make to this problem? In essence, no different from other industrial accidents and diseases—prevention, treatment, and study of the late sequelae—although rather like the migraine aura, the picture might appear distorted by gross change in one or more dimension.

The international symposium held in Paris three years ago heard contributions from doctors and engineers. The doctors considered first the collection of statistics to relate the various electrical and physical parameters of an accident to the immediate consequences and the development of complications. Whether an attempt should be made to collect comprehensive data on every accident or whether it would be preferable to define a problem and then plan an investigation to attempt to find a solution was unfortunately not considered. After a review of present-day knowledge of the physiological effects of electric current, the meeting next went on to consider the pathological sequelae of electrical accidents. The paper by Professor Andreuzzi on 'Cardiac Disorders, Nervous Disorders and Sensory Disorders' ranged widely but unfortunately is not sufficiently critical and does not allow the interested reader to make up this deficiency as there are no references. The reports by Drs. Hossli and Hauf give a good review of first aid to victims of electrical accidents; the second of these papers is carefully documented.

The technical section contains reports on prevention of electrical hazards and work planning, on protective equipment, on prevention of low voltage electrical accidents, and on safety training and education. An interesting comment on this section will bear on many aspects of industrial accident and disease prevention in the coming years. This concerns difficulties encountered by migrant workers in the European Economic Community. It was suggested that they should not be actively handicapped by unnecessarily large differences between the various national safety regulations.

W. R. LEE

Progress in Chemical Toxicology. Vol. II. Edited by A. Stolman. (Pp. 416; illustrated; 100*s*.) New York and London: Academic Press. 1965.

This second volume in the series edited by Dr. A. Stolman sets out to present background knowledge of selected subjects and techniques and new developments