Book Reviews


This is the second edition of a publication which first appeared in 1956. The work has been considerably revised in the light of recently developed techniques in the field of chromatography. Special attention has also been paid to the use of commercially available indicator tubes.

The editors state clearly that this is a manual of methods evaluated and used within I.C.I. and published as a source of information. Viewed as such, rather than as a comprehensive textbook on air sampling, this is a valuable publication for persons wishing to refer to acceptable methods for the determination of pollutants. Clarity of style and presentation is maintained throughout.

The text contains five chapters and an index. Reference is made in the text to other relevant literature. The first four chapters provide brief, but clear, discussion of basic considerations. The opening chapter reviews the general requirements of analytical methods for air contaminants and includes a table of Threshold Limit Values from various sources for the substances considered in detail later in the text; the second chapter discusses methods of obtaining atmospheric samples, ranging from the partially evacuated vessel, through hand pumps, to the sampling train operated by an electrically powered pump; the third chapter discusses various analytical methods, including colourimetric, titrimetric, impregnated papers and tubes and gas chromatographic methods; the fourth chapter is devoted to a consideration of methods of generating standard atmospheres for calibration purposes.

The final chapter forms the greater part of the text and quotes in detail methods of determining the airborne concentration of some 60 substances, or groups of substances, commonly used in the chemical industry. In many instances two methods are quoted; one which enables approximate but rapid determination to be made, and one which is more elaborate, but also more accurate and specific. The range and accuracy of the various methods are indicated.

The inclusion of methods using commercially available indicator tubes is a useful feature. The performance of any tube quoted has been carefully evaluated. It is made clear that not all the available tubes have been studied and that hence omission from the text does not imply disapproval. Many, however, will welcome this recording of the authors' experience with some indicators of this type.

Hygienists and analysts concerned with the routine determination of some of the substances covered may well use other methods for their special requirements. The methods quoted in this book, however, provide a basic collection to which persons in search of a proven method can refer.

D. Turner


Pneumoconiosis statistics were first published in this form by the then Ministry of Fuel and Power in 1953 and related to the year 1951. The information is presented simply and is easily read, but slight modifications over the years in the method of presentation have much improved the tables. Direct comparison over the whole period during which this Digest has been issued is difficult because of changes in legislation and geographical areas, but in this most recent Digest comparative figures are given from the year 1959 onwards. As is emphasized in the introduction, the figures relate to claims for benefit under existing legislation and are not a direct measure of the true prevalence of pneumoconiosis. Nevertheless, one feels that as survey work, such as that which has taken place in the coalmining industry, is being undertaken in other dusty industries, including the asbestos industry, together with a greater willingness of men and women to be X-rayed and the higher likelihood of chest radiographs being taken in hospitals, some measure of the true prevalence is being approached.

The Digest begins with a summary of present legislation concerning pneumoconiosis, and one must bear in mind here the limitations of legal definitions of occupational lung disease. The overall impression of the figures presented in the tables which follow is of an increase in the number of radiographic examinations and a fall in the number of definite diagnoses of pneumoconiosis. This is a very satisfactory impression, but because the Digest is concerned only with radiologically diagnosable occupational lung disease, it would be wise not to be complacent. Furthermore, in asbestos work for example, the trend in diagnosed cases appears to be in the reverse direction, and we may perhaps expect even larger numbers of diagnosed cases in the future. As in previous years, it is clear that at the majority of boardings at which the disease is first diagnosed, the percentage of disablement is very low, and only relatively few claimants are grossly disabled. At the same time, the hoardings affect men in middle to old age much more than men below the age of 45 years. In the coalmining industry, the South Wales area is still predominant among the coalfields in Britain with a high
rate of 3.6 per thousand. However, the rate for the country as a whole and for South Wales has fallen since 1959.

Although the information has unsatisfactory features, it is difficult at present to conceive of a better method of looking at the pneumoconiosis situation than this Digest.

R. I. McCallum


The ability to work is a good indication of mental health so that a person’s attitude to his job and the stresses which might impose on him are extremely important. Two recent books examine this complex relationship in quite different ways.

Rogg and D’Alonzo’s book *Emotions and the Job* is an interesting and promising attempt to examine the interplay of emotional disturbances and employment. The authors discuss the various problems which may arise in association with anxiety, depression, schizophrenia, alcoholism, etc. when they occur in the employee. Specific difficulties in relation to the adolescent and women in industry also receive a chapter each, as does a consideration of the responsibilities of the employer and employee to each other and hints about the control of job stress. A short chapter devoted to psychotropic drugs reveals among other things that about one quarter of 3,000 employees used these at some time during a 12-month period. The important relationship between accident and emotional stress is discussed in an interesting chapter illustrated by reference to case histories.

The psychiatric orientation of the book is, of course, that of the United States, and many of the views expressed will prove rather astonishing to British psychiatrists. Thus one reads on page 13 that anxiety may overwhelm the individual and result in his becoming psychotic. This type of concept is very much at variance with British teaching where, for the most part, psychosis and non-psychotic mental disturbances are regarded as quite distinct phenomena. On the treatment of depression is the statement that less than 15% of patients are helped by medication as opposed to electrical treatment. This is an opinion again much at variance with British experience. It is also an important point, for though the use of anti-depressant drugs does not in itself prevent an individual from working efficiently, electrical treatment, by its relative complexity and interference with memory, necessitates, for a short period at least, absence from work.

The way in which the book is planned is quite admirable, and it would be extremely interesting and useful if a comparable work were available which was more relevant to the British industrial and psychiatric climate. *Emotions and the Job* is, however, quite easily read and if general principles are sought it should be very instructive.

The prognosis of the major psychiatric illness, schizophrenia, is of the utmost importance to the patient, his relatives, and employers, for though complete recovery with all that this implies does occur, more often one has to assess the degree of residual impairment which will remain. Unfortunately, there are few illnesses about which it is more difficult to prognosticate.

Ozzie G. Simmons, who is Professor of Sociology and Director of the Institute of Behavioral Science at the University of Colorado, has furnished us with eight fascinating case studies of schizophrenics in his book *Work and Mental Illness*. Each case history is a short biography of the individual, and we can trace his development up to the onset of the illness, the disruption of his life which this and his stay in hospital produce, and the success or failure of his return to work after discharge. Each case history is labelled according to the type of outcome which it illustrates, e.g., ‘worker to worker’, ‘worker to non-worker’, and ‘worker to marginal worker’. The case histories are beautifully detailed and a delight to read. They are given again in short summary form in the final chapter in which Professor Simmons states his conclusions. Four optimal characteristics of employability are described, and each case in turn is tested to see how well the criteria are met. The influence on the patient of his family background, illness, and hospitalization is also analysed critically. Particularly searching is Professor Simmons’ appraisal of the part played by hospitalization and the difficulties which this imposes on the patient’s attempt to return to full employment. He is particularly scathing about occupational therapy which he describes as pointless, childish, and humiliating. Attempts at rehabilitation by the hospital and social welfare agencies fare equally badly.

Many of the problems encountered by the patient in his work situation are demonstrated by the case histories as stemming not from schizophrenia but from ‘the complexities and strains inherent in the development of the career itself’.

The case studies form part of a research project which was directed by the author, and the orientation is a sociological rather than a psychiatric one. This is an intriguing study of the development of the individual in respect of occupational record and gives splendid insight into the relationship between this and schizophrenia. It should be of great interest and very instructive to all who come into contact with the schizophrenic in the work situation.

G. Hopkinson


A review of the latest edition of an established and respected textbook tends to reveal more about the reviewer than of the book itself; and, for a book that encompasses the whole of medicine, there is probably no single individual adequately equipped to criticize the combined efforts of its many authors. In this dilemma, your reviewer instinctively and critically inspects those sections relating to his own special interests and finds that renal and endocrine disease, electrolyte disorders, and the metabolic diseases are admirably dealt with. Reading at random, the section on chemotherapy and antibiotics serves to show how quickly dated one’s own...