

Great care has been taken to make a comprehensive study of the world literature and 730 references are quoted. There are some redundancies, threshold limit values are given on p. 7 and repeated on p. 79. A treatment schedule which includes under the heading 'renal' the comment 'the attitude should be one of optimism', and under 'digestive' 'stomach dressings and supervised restarting of alimentation' is presumably quoted to show the paucity of available treatments.

The section on disturbances of the metabolism would be more logically placed at the beginning of the monograph and the industrial physician might wish that more mention had been made of the industrial situations where there is the possibility of dangerous exposure.

As well as a list of references, which quotes only main authors, the book is well indexed. It is a most valuable review of the subject and should have a place in all libraries of industrial toxicology.

M. L. NEWHOUSE

**Medical Service and Medical Research Annual Report 1968/69.** (Pp. 40; illustrated). London: National Coal Board. 1970.

This account of the medical work of the National Coal Board Medical Service includes an illustrated description of the new Institute of Occupational Medicine in Edinburgh, which was formally opened in April 1969. Although primarily concerned with health problems in coal mining, the Institute will give facilities to other industries who wish to finance research projects there. The setting up of this Institute, which is to be closely associated with Edinburgh University in teaching and research, is an important step and it is to be hoped that full advantage will be taken of the facilities which it can provide. It will be interesting to see how changes in the importance and use of coal as a fuel and the demands for research from outside the coal industry affect the development and orientation of the Institute over the next decade.

The main part of the report describes the work of the medical service in the oversight of the general health of juveniles and adults in physically tough and dangerous jobs in coal mining and various research projects being carried out by the service or on its behalf.

The service employs 42 doctors and 232 nurses and the range and scale of its activities are impressive. Pneumoconiosis is still a big problem in coal mining, and, as is pointed out in the report, although the overall picture is one of declining disease, there is a reverse trend in some areas. There has been a marked drop in the prevalence of pneumoconiosis in men under 35 years of age.

Measures to control the amount of dust at the coal face have been applied vigorously for many years, but it appears that there is still some way to go to achieve approved standards in all working places. The trend to more intensive mechanization and greater dust production is partially responsible for this, and dust suppression is to be tightened up by the introduction of new standards during the next year. A study of the coal fraction of the respirable dust and the radiological response measured by the progression rate per million shifts on the coal face has shown that they are closely related. This work

has shown how the relative effects of different possible standards for airborne dust can be estimated in terms of expected pneumoconiosis prevalence.

There is also research into a variety of other diseases and potential hazards, for example bronchitis and emphysema, the disposal of dust particles in the lung, occupational deafness, mineral oil and skin cancer, Raynaud's disease, the use of cement and vermiculite sealants, back stress in mining, and the design of protective clothing against cold.

The Coal Board Medical Service's interest in maintaining high standards of occupational health nursing is demonstrated by their lending a senior colliery officer to a university on a part-time basis as the tutor to an occupational health nursing course.

R. I. MCCALLUM

**Clinical Toxicology of Commercial Products**, 3rd ed. By Marion N. Gleason, Robert E. Gosselin, Harold C. Hodge and Roger P. Smith. (Pp. 1428, in sections; 230s.) Edinburgh and London: E. & S. Livingstone. 1969.

The object of this book is to assist the physician to deal quickly and effectively with acute chemical poisonings arising through the misuse of commercial chemical products. The second edition dealt with those likely to be used in the home or on the farm, but this edition is extended and includes a number of industrial products not previously dealt with. It is again a mine of information. It is carefully and clearly set out in seven distinct sections, each section quickly distinguishable by the colour of the edge of the pages. The first section (red) describes the general principles of the first aid and emergency treatment of poisoning by substances that have been inhaled or ingested; in it the authors deal with such basic matters as the induction of vomiting, antidotes, decontamination, eye lavage, and the identification of the agent, and they describe a number of techniques such as gastric lavage. Most of this part will be familiar ground to the doctor, but the layman confronted with an emergency will find help in the more simple parts of the instructions. The second section (blue) is an alphabetical list of chemical substances likely to be encountered as poisons in the home, in agriculture, or in general medical practice. There are cross references to other sections, especially the third, in which are detailed experimental and clinical data on a large number of compounds grouped into classes with descriptions of their toxic symptoms and signs and the recommended therapy. Section four deals with general supportive treatment instead of the particular therapy given in the previous section, and in it are given detailed consideration of the modern techniques of many therapeutic measures such as assisted respiration, treatment for shock, haemodialysis, correction of electrolyte balance, and parenteral feeding.

The largest section (772 pages) is comprised of a list of some 17,000 trade names of products which could be toxic on ingestion, with a description of their ingredients supplied by the manufacturers. A useful asterisk system indicates the likely toxic items in those which are mixtures. Section six is complementary to this in that it

gives the formulae of the preparations commonly used in domestic or other fields. These are presented in functional groups, such as, for example, cleaning materials, agricultural pesticides, and paints.

The final section is an index of the names and addresses of manufacturers of products to whom reference can be made for more detail than can be given in the text. These are all American firms. The restriction of the manufacturers' names to those in North America limits the usefulness of this section for European readers but does not detract from the value of the main body of the book. In any case, it is more likely that this enormous volume will be bought for reference by the specialist or for a hospital library than by the general practising physician. The most assiduous reviewer could not hope to read every word of it, but the random samples taken and studied demonstrated the high order of accuracy and the meticulous cover given to the thousands of commercial products, chemicals, and mixtures which are included. Equally, none of importance, except those of very recent introduction, appears to have been missed.

T. S. SCOTT

**First Annual Report (1968–1969) TUC Centenary Institute of Occupational Health in the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine.** (Pp. 20; 3 figs, 2 tables.) London: London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine. 1970.

When the head of one institute is invited to review the work of the head of another, a situation is produced which my mother would have described as 'piquant'. The colour of the covers of this report is an attractive blue, mid-way between the Oxford and Cambridge varieties, and it appropriately suggests nothing of a Conservative nature. The contents set out a record of the first full year's work of an institute created by the grafting of a new information and advisory service for industry on to Professor Schilling's original department in the London School of Hygiene. Horticultural experience gained in a secluded corner of Northumberland, combined with that of carrying out a similar manoeuvre many years ago in the Newcastle department, has taught us that grafts of both kinds need considerable cosetting in their early years. The first five are crucial.

The operation of a card index system of advice in a medical field is tricky. Administratively, it seems attractively convenient, but most enquirers from industry do not realize the full implications of what they are asking. The beginning of the answer to most of these questions is: 'It depends . . .', and one of the commonest things it depends upon is how the material is used. Boiling water in ordinary households is a lot more dangerous than uranium in the reactors of nuclear power stations. Statistics prove it! But to have earned in this new service over £3,500 in the first year at between £500 and £600 a job is good going – and most interesting.

On the teaching side the institute has started a new M.Sc. course in occupational medicine, and it is continuing its M.Sc. courses in occupational hygiene, for which there is an increasing demand.

The research of the institute needs no praise from the reviewer. Its excellence is matched only by its timely relevance, as is illustrated by the work on both asbestos

workers and trawler fishermen. An important and sinister finding is the demonstration of under certification of mesothelioma as a cause of death in asbestos workers. Studies on the health of cotton and viscose rayon workers have also given interesting results. Shift systems, washing powder manufacture and the action of smoking on the 'ciliary escalator' are also being investigated.

A most interesting first report. We wish the new institute well.

R. C. BROWNE

#### Books Received

**Water Pollution Control in Developing Countries. Report of a W.H.O. Expert Committee.** (Pp. 38; 6s.) Geneva: W.H.O. 1969.

**Catalogue of World Health Organization Publications.** (Pp. 146; no price stated.) Geneva: W.H.O. 1969.

**Lectures in Medicine.** 2nd ed. By C. W. H. Havard. (Pp. 399; illustrated; 70s.) London: Staples Press. 1969.

**Nutritional Anaemia. Report of a W.H.O. Scientific Group.** (Pp. 37; 8s.) Geneva: W.H.O. 1968.

**Genetic Counselling. 3rd Report of the W.H.O. Committee on Human Genetics.** (Pp. 23; 4s.) Geneva: W.H.O. 1969.

**Sensitization to Drugs.** Edited by S. Bole, C. Baker, and J. Tripod. Proceedings of the European Society for the Study of Drug Toxicity. Vol. X. (Pp. 256; illustrated; 134s.) Amsterdam: Excerpta Medica Foundation. 1969.

**Measures of Adjustment of Rural Manpower to Industrial Work and Urban Areas.** O.E.C.D. Social Affairs Division. (Pp. 111; 14s.) Paris: O.E.C.D. 1968.

**The Hypertensive Vascular Crisis. An Experimental Study.** By F. B. Byrom. (Pp. 131; 90 figs; 30s.) London: Heinemann Medical Books. 1969.

**Official Services for Occupational Safety and Health.** (Pp. 232; free) Geneva: I.L.O. 1968.

**Community Water Supply. Report of a W.H.O. Expert Committee.** (Pp. 23; 4s.) Geneva: W.H.O. 1969.

**Statistical Tables on the Health of the Army 1966.** (Pp. 205; tables; no price stated.) London: Ministry of Defence. 1969.

**Kinetic Handling.** (Pp. 11; illustrated; 2s.) London: British Safety Council. 1969.

**The Corner House Group Health Department. Report for the Year 1968.** A. M. Coetzee, Director of Medical Services. (Pp. 24; 22 tables.) 1969.

**Steel Castings Research and Trade Association. 16th Annual Report. Part II. Research Division.** (Pp. 27.) Sheffield: Steel Castings Research and Trade Association. 1969.

**Anglo American Corporation (Central Africa) Limited. Annual Report 1968.** (Pp. 16; illustrated.) 1969.

**Biochemistry of Mental Disorders. Report of a W.H.O. Scientific Group.** (Pp. 40; 6s.) Geneva: W.H.O. 1969.

**The Care of the Injured.** 2nd ed. By P. A. Ring. (Pp. 166; 121 figs; 30s.) London and Edinburgh: Livingstone. 1969.

**World Directory of Medical Schools. 1967 Supplement.** (Pp. 39; 6s.) Geneva: W.H.O. 1969.

**British Standards Institution. Annual Report 1968 to 1969.** (Pp. 47; illustrated.) London: British Standards Institution. 1969.

**Anglo American Corporation of South Africa Limited. Medical Consultants Report 1968.** (Pp. 41; 1 table.) 1969.