cient accuracy in the routine data to identify a change in risk of cancer amongst specific groups of workers.

The report discusses follow-up of patients and the examination of survival data. It fails to point out that if the occurrence of deaths amongst the registered cancer patients can be identified through the national death registration system, survival analyses can be readily carried out. These survival rates will be useful to put statistics from cancer treatment centres in perspective, and gauge the effect of cancer control programmes, though greater emphasis could have been laid on the advantage of age-corrected survival analyses. The report quite rightly points out that treatment can be compared solely by controlled clinical trials, though long-term follow-up of all patients provides the only valid measure of success in cancer treatment.

The report provides a useful and interesting discussion on cancer registries. Accurate morbidity statistics serve as a background to the detailed study of cancer and may exert subtle influences on the generation of hypotheses; hard evidence for their use on these grounds may not be readily forthcoming. The report should be of interest to those undertaking research into the aetiology of cancer or responsible for the organization of cancer control programmes.

M. R. ALDERSON


It is very encouraging to see that this admirable handbook has been revised so soon. The first edition appeared in 1967 and is already widely accepted as the standard reference book on the hospital management of acute poisoning, whether accidental or self poisoning. The pattern of self poisoning is constantly changing with the introduction of new drugs prescribed by practitioners for functional diseases and with the changing fashions of drug taking amongst teenagers. The authors make a very strong case for the centralization of treatment of these patients into a special centre for every large conurbation. The changing pattern of disease, the rapid advances in methods of treatment, the need for medical and ancillary staff with special training and experience are all in favour of the system. It is perhaps unfortunate that few doctors can be found who are willing and qualified to set up and run such centres.

This book provides authoritative information about those drugs that can be treated with specific antidotes, by forced diuresis, by peritoneal or haemodialysis and at what stage and level of poisoning these special but sometimes hazardous methods are justified. This information is extremely difficult to obtain elsewhere. There are few specific antidotes for poisons, and to be effective most of these must be administered immediately. Some poisons can be removed rapidly by forced diuresis or dialysis. But in most cases the only treatment available is to keep the patient alive while the body metabolizes or excretes the poison. It is the overenthusiastic application of the inappropriate treatment and lack of adequate supportive therapy that are the chief dangers which face a poisoned patient at the present time. The authors emphasize again and again the difficulties of objective diagnosis and the importance of past experience in the recognition of those cases which require specific treatment and those for whom 'intensive supportive therapy, see p 17,' is the main recommendation.

The section on industrial poisonings is necessarily brief for a book intended for use in hospitals, but the authors stress the importance of proper first-aid arrangements where toxic chemicals are being handled and also stress the importance of consulting the Poisons Information Centres when in doubt as to the nature of commercial materials.

This valuable little book should be read by all practitioners, especially those involved in industrial and schools medical work. It is essential for the hospital casualty doctor. I hope that the authors will maintain its value by frequent revision and that the next few years will see useful advances in rapid diagnostic methods for determining what poisons are present, and that current developments in membrane chemistry will increase the number of poisons that can be removed rapidly from the body.

P. C. ELMES


This book is a very practical guide to the management of soft tissue injuries, with particular reference to the head and limbs. It is intended for use by casualty officers and other junior hospital staff, and doctors practising in the remoter areas without convenient hospital facilities.

The first 11 chapters present a concise but detailed account of the general principles involved. The remainder of the book outlines the care of particular injuries of the head and neck and extremities. The scope here has been extended to include chapters on the treatment of fractures of the facial bones and lower jaw.

The book demonstrates how meticulous attention to detail can lead in the great majority of cases to primary healing without complications. This expedites recovery and return to normal working efficiency, and avoids the need for secondary procedures.

The quality and clarity of the instruction are greatly enhanced by the author’s use of his own line drawings to illustrate the procedures he describes.

Whilst the author admits that it is impracticable to give tetanus antitoxin to every minor abrasion, not all British surgeons would agree with the very extensive use of tetanus antiserum which he advocates. His view is that passive immunization in the absence of sensitivity is preferable to the use of antibiotics, as incubation of the tetanus bacillus is likely in areas of relative ischaemia where the access to antibiotics is limited.

Many of the procedures described are beyond the resources of most industrial medical units. Anyone with responsibility for the treatment of minor soft tissue injuries will find the instruction in this book to be of great practical help. Industrial doctors and nurses responsible for the management of even the simple scalp laceration or the minor cut finger will find much of interest here.

J. D. CAMERON