Further information can be obtained from Mortality Surveillance, Statistics Servicing I, OPCS, 189-199 West Street, Fareham, Hampshire PO16 0HB.

ANN PETRIE

Hazards in the Chemical Laboratory, 2nd edition. Edited by G. D. Muir. (Pp. 473; £7.00). The Chemical Society, Burlington House, London W1V 0BN. 1977.

Hazards in the Chemical Laboratory, a lineal descendant of a number of Royal Institute of Chemistry Publications, is the second of this title by Dr. Muir and a marked improvement on its predecessors.

It is written for chemists and, having bound it in a waterproof cover, the publishers may be assumed to regard it as a laboratory reference work. The practitioner of occupational medicine should not be put off by this.

Chapter 8 (327 of the 473 pages) printed on yellow paper, is an alphabetic list of hazardous chemicals giving briefly their physical properties, physiological responses to them, toxic effects, hazardous reactions, first aid, fire hazard and spillage disposal. This edition is greatly improved by being cross-referenced to Bretherick's *Handbook of Reactive Chemicals* and by the inclusion of a chapter on Reactive Chemical Hazards by that author.

The remaining chapters are on the *Health and Safety at Work etc. Act, 1974*, Planning for Safety, Fire Protection, Chemical Hazards and Toxicology, Medical Services and First Aid, Safety in Hospital Biochemistry Laboratories and Precautions Against Radiations. These chapters each contain a lot of very useful information but a few of them are inadequately referenced and some references are woefully out of date. On the credit side there is a good index.

Inevitably the question will be asked, 'How does it compare with Sax's *Dangerous Properties of Industrial Materials*?' Physically it is smaller and handier, it is written for the reader in the United Kingdom and is only a quarter the cost. Chapter 8 lists fewer chemicals but the loss is not serious. Altogether this edition is a much better buy.

Most people, one fears, will buy it merely to refer to chapter 8. A more liberal use of paragraph headings, more line drawings and perhaps a few cartoons might produce a more attractive format. As it is, many people who ought to read the chapters printed on white paper may not, which is a pity. Their contents ought

to be that part of the subject known by all who are concerned with chemistry and chemicals.

The editor and publishers are to be sympathised with, a reorganisation of the Health and Safety Executive having made their list of Employment Medical Advisory Service offices out of date. Readers should note two changes:

<i>N.E. Region</i>	<i>Scotland</i>
EMAS	EMAS
8, St. Pauls Street	Meadowbank House
Leeds	London Road
LS1 2LE	Edinburgh

K. EVERETT

Asthma. Edited by T. J. H. Clark and S. Godfrey. (Pp. 409; £10.75). Chapman and Hall: London. 1977.

There are thirteen distinguished contributors to this comprehensive volume which presents up-to-date views on the physiology, pathology, causation and treatment of asthma. The text is unusually well-written and easy to read. The elimination of all references from the text undoubtedly contributes to this, but at times may leave the reader wondering whether the author has failed to consider a recent report, or has even more recent information which contradicts it. References for further reading are given at the end of each chapter.

There is a very useful chapter on Occupational Asthma, but the occupational physician may consider that the influence of non-specific industrial irritants on the asthmatic subject does not receive sufficient attention. Challenge tests may sometimes help to solve problems in industry, but the authors stress that these should be carried out only in hospital under careful medical supervision. This warning comes on page 147 and is not repeated in the subsequent chapter on Occupational Asthma. If it is intended to apply to the investigation of occupational asthma it is clear that there is still no easy test that the occupational physician can carry out for himself, other than observing the effect of suspension from work and subsequent re-employment. There is hope that serum tests for specific IgE may eventually become available.

The chapters on treatment of asthma in children and adults are particularly helpful, and this book will be of great value to anyone who is interested in increasing his knowledge of this common, and often baffling, condition.

G. L. LEATHART

Notices

International Section of the ISSA for the Prevention of Occupational Risks due to Electricity

The Fifth International Colloquium on the Prevention of Occupational Risks due to Electricity, entitled *Safety for the Electrical Expert—his Basic and Advanced Training*, will be held in the Kongresshaus, Lucerne, Switzerland, from 17-19 May 1978. The agenda will include items on basic training of the electrical expert in matters of accident prevention; procedure and methods used for theoretical and practical training; technical and didactic educational aids; instruction given to the electrical expert to qualify him for work in particularly dangerous areas; advanced training and refresher courses; and the possibility of effectively influencing procedure by means of publicity. The registration fee is DM 300, and application should be made, if possible, by December 31st 1977, or by February 28th 1978 at the latest. Further information may be obtained from the Secretariat of the ISSA Section, Berufsgenossenschaft der Feinmechanik und Elektrotechnik, Oberländer Ufer 130, D-5000 Köln 51, Bundesrepublik Deutschland.

International Symposium on Occupational and Toxicological Aspects of Styrene

The Institute of Occupational Health, Helsinki, Finland, will hold a scientific symposium entitled *Styrene: Occupational and Toxicological Aspects*, from 17-19 April 1978. The aims of the symposium are to review current knowledge regarding hazards associated with the production and use of styrene, for example in the reinforced plastic industry. The symposium is open to scientists from universities and other research institutes, government organisations and industry. The registration fee (\$50) will be collected on April 17th, but the closing date for registration is February 28th 1978. For further information, please contact Dr Jorma Järvisalo, Institute of Occupational Health, Haartmaninkatu 1, SF-00290 Helsinki 29, Finland.