Section three considers clinical evaluation and treatment and is presented systematically by organ, apart from the last chapter which is on cancer. Each of the chapters is comprehensive and systematic. The coverage of each subject ranges from basic principles to quite advanced topics and although this will satisfy the needs of readers that include the trainee and the experienced clinician, there is a danger of overload for the student.

The final section, which deals with specific hazards in the workplace and the environment, is a bit of a hotch-potch of subjects. It was, however, useful that the issues covered included the problems of low level environmental exposures, psycho-physiological stress, and the organisation of work. "The chapter on metals and related compounds does resemble a shopping list but the necessary information is there in a very readable form. The hazards of exposure to indoor air are well described.

Overall, this is an excellent textbook for the practising occupational physician and clinicians wishing to become more familiar with the subject of environmental medicine, as well as occupational medicine, and certainly as practised in North America. The book is accurate in detail and seems to be as up to date as any textbook can be. The main competitors are also from North America but this book is more comprehensive. Unfortunately, it is not appropriate for the legal aspects of occupational medicine in the United Kingdom. The book would be valuable to candidates for membership of the Faculty of Occupational Medicine, as a reference text for students and as an update for experienced clinicians. It is not too expensive and I would recommend physicians practising in clinical occupational medicine to seriously consider buying their own copy. My hope is that the book stimu-

lates further development of environmental medicine in this country, but alongside occupational medicine.

P G BLAIN

Wilderness Medicine: Management of Wilderness and Environmental Emergencies. Edited by PAUL S AUERBACH. (Pp 1506; price £121) 1995. St Louis, Missouri: Mosby. ISBN 0-8016-7044-6.

This book, as the title indicates, is about how nature, specifically sun, sea, terrain, weather, animals and plants, can harm homo sapiens. No space has been spared by the 93 contributors to give a diverse volume ranging from, as stated in the preface, "first hand observation of grizzly bear behaviour in the wild to laboratory elucidation of the fundamental molecular changes associated with heatstroke". Fifty six chapters range from high altitude medicine to scuba diving and dysbarism, illnesses related to extremes of temperature including thermoregulation and protective clothing, survival and medical problems in tropical jungles and deserts to wastelands and deserts of higher latitudes and to the areas around both Poles. The dangers to man posed by fish, reptiles, arthropods and mammals are extensively covered with up to date lines of management and limited resources when struck down by these. The contrast of the sophisticated traveller in the wilderness when things go wrong is highlighted in a chapter on medical liability and another on ethics gives some useful hints on the rights and wrongs of life and death decisions in unusual places and difficult circumstances.

The Editor included physicians, paramedical personnel, and medical students to contribute to wilderness medicine. This

book need not be restricted to these groups as there is a vast amount of geographical, ecological, and climatological information not to mention survival, transport, hygiene, search and rescue, and even natural disaster management. Its aim is not easy to define although it gives a more than thorough grounding on how to deal with emergencies in men, women, and children who become ill by trauma or acquired causes (often area specific) in isolated parts of the world where medical facilities are not available. There are over seven and a half thousand references and several recommended reading lists. It will be especially valuable to expedition medical officers although at just over 4 kg it is unlikely to be welcomed in a backpack nor on the other hand will it be easily lost. Although the book lends itself well to specific chapter selection, there can only be a few who would read the 1500 pages in sequence.

At £121 it is good value, beautifully bound and illustrated with a pleasing typeset. There is immaculate spelling accuracy albeit North American. Had editorial privilege been exercised with the statutory 30% trim on the number of words, the content need not have diminished and repetition between chapters could have been reduced. Some statements are a little bewildering. An example still puzzles me: "in no other conceptual area of medicine is there such an obvious integration of wellness with disease and surgical illness". These would have been better recast or left out altogether.

Nevertheless Auerbach has upgraded his previous edition and provides an important textbook that embraces introductory science and medical techniques. In this book there is something for everyone in an itinerant readership who by self selection venture to faraway places.

IAIN LEVACK