BOOK REVIEWS

published version, and there is virtually no reference to
the important subject of nuclear energy as a source of
power for industry, for transportation, or eventually
for the whole community. Nevertheless, this book
should be in the possession of industrial medical officers
directly concerned with radioactive substances, and could
well be seen by others wishing to keep abreast of modern
developments in industrial methods and attendant
occupational health problems.

E. F. Edson

Notes on the Diagnosis of Occupational Diseases
Prescribed under the National Insurance (Industrial
Injuries) Act, 1946. From the Ministry of National
Insurance. 1950. London: His Majesty’s Stationery
Office. Pp. 52. Price 1s. 6d.

This is an interesting and modest little book in which
every doctor will find much valuable information. It has
no pretensions to being exhaustive, but within its scope
of the scheduled occupational diseases it is unique. It
suffers from the evils and advantages of condensation,
and also unavoidably from the method of presentation
which, as it must discuss each individual disease separately,
does not allow of a grouping of these diseases. Nor
does it stress the relative importance of the diseases
described. In its original form it was designed to give
guidance to those medical practitioners who were asked
by the Ministry of National Insurance to examine and
report on claimants to benefit under the National Insurance
(Industrial Injuries) Act. Now that it has been made
available to a wider public it might have been more
successfully adapted. Such phrases, for example, as “a
claimant for benefit in respect of this disease will
be referred to an ophthalmologist for examination” could
easily have been omitted without impairing the
value of the book. Although there is evidence of
correction from the first edition, it is unfortunate that
certain misspellings have been perpetuated.

Apart from such criticisms, the book shows ample
evidence of an intimate knowledge of industry on the
part of the author or authors, and certain subjects—
notably those on “poisoning by a nitro or amido
derivative of benzene or of a homologue of benzene”
and “nitrous fumes”, are treated more efficiently than
in many textbooks. This book is undoubtedly worth
having.

R. Murray

Microdiffusion Analysis and Volumetric Error. By
Edward J. Conway. 1951. London: Crosby Lock-
wood and Sons, Ltd. 3rd edit., revised. 66 plates.

The number of publications dealing with analytical
problems, like the literature in other fields of science,
is increasing at a phenomenal rate. A considerable
proportion of journals, and particularly biochemical
journals, is devoted to a description of methods, many
which have not been adequately tried out. It is, there-
fore, most helpful and perhaps should be considered
essential that any textbook on analytical methods should
not only bring newer methods to the notice of the reader,
but should also carry the author’s guarantee that these
methods work. The book under review fulfils this
requirement admirably; the techniques have been well
tried out and are described with all the details necessary
for the successful use of the particular method. The
theoretical aspects of microdiffusion techniques are
thoroughly dealt with, thus enabling the research worker,
wishing to develop a method, to obtain the necessary
theoretical background. In a few instances one feels
the detail is rather overdone. For instance, on page 154,
it is not necessary to give in detail two methods for the
preparation of urease. On pages 105–6 two methods for
the determination of ammonia using the phenate-
hypochlorite reagent are given with little indication which
is the more reliable. The chapter on colorimetry might
well have been omitted; there are many books on this
subject.

An aspect of microdiffusion which does not appear
to have been sufficiently emphasized is the separation
of substances from complex biological material. The
reviewer was recently made aware of the possibilities
of this technique when it was found possible to deter-
dine dimethylamine in liver homogenate after four
hours incubation; this had proved almost impossible
when using conventional protein precipitation techniques.

The section on volumetric error is a model of the way
in which errors in analytical practice can and should
be sorted out.

This book should be available in every biochemical
laboratory; for the routine pathological laboratory,
methods are described which will allow a reliable and
rapid routine to be worked out; for the research worker,
microdiffusion is one more tool to help to solve his own
peculiar problems.

W. N. Aldridge

The Day Hospital—An Experiment in Social Psychiatry
and Syntho-Analytic Psychotherapy. By Joshua Bierer.

Many industrial medical officers must have felt the
need for some such unit as that described here, where
a patient could not only receive the benefits of expert
psychiatric consultation, but also many of the amenities
of a well-equipped mental hospital without the addi-
tional complications of segregation from the patient’s
domestic, working and social milieu. This whole field
is still relatively new and such an experiment must be
welcomed.

The “Social Psychotherapy Centre” is included in the
North West Metropolitan Region of the National
Health Service, and its aim is to provide an answer to
the limitations of the existing treatment centres for
psychiatry whether they are out-patient departments or
hospitals. The methods of treatment available include
individual and group psychotherapy; physical, occupa-
tional and recreational therapy; psychodrama, art and
social club therapy. Patients dealt with have been
psychotic (discharged from mental hospital, leucoto-
mised), neurotic (unable to work, acute forms of neurosis,
requiring re-adaptation and after-treatment), and
delinquent (on probation, discharged prisoners requiring
psychotherapy). Case histories illustrating all these
categories are given and make interesting reading.

Having dealt with practice, the author goes on to
propound rather speculative theories. He considers
the "day hospital" as "part, or the forerunner, of an era which may be called tentatively the era of social psychiatry and syntho-analytic psychotherapy". As if all psychiatry were not by its very nature "social", and psychotherapy not both analytic and synthetic in its techniques and objectives! Social psychiatry is defined as the science which aims at the prevention and treatment of the suffering and poorly integrated individual or group in its universal setting, the latter implying all causes, including those of environment and relationship on the one hand, and constitution and physiology on the other.

There is much to be gained from the rest of the pamphlet and, in particular, insight into some of the newer "social" techniques for the treatment and rehabilitation of persons suffering from psychological handicaps. The challenge of the problem is immense, and one must admire every new approach—conventional or otherwise.


This book is divided into two parts, "Principles" and "Practice", a division which does not improve it as the subject matter in part II has already been covered in many places in part I. The chapters on the various disabilities, however, are well done, and those on general considerations and physical restoration, by the editor, are both very good.

"Rehabilitation with Plastic Surgery" is well covered by James Barrett Brown and Minot Fryer. "Physical Therapy in Rehabilitation" by Richard Kovacs, covers the problem, but this chapter and that on "Physical Conditioning" by Donald A. Covant could have been under one heading. There is too much emphasis on passive therapy and not enough on active physical exercises in a well-graded programme. The description of a rehabilitation centre does not help the British medical officer who wants to know what these centres can accomplish in the way of restoring the disabled. The chapter on occupational therapy is good, but it does not explain the developments, which in this country have been pioneered by Austins, Vauxhall Motors Ltd., and the Luton and Dunstable Hospital, and embody the use of the machines of industry to produce the necessary remedial exercises for restoration of function.

The book is well produced and illustrated and will be read with interest by all those who are practising rehabilitation. It is full of information, but the repetitive style does not give a clear picture of the problem as a whole.

The medical rehabilitation centres and the industrial rehabilitation units of the Ministry of Labour and other organizations in this country, are more advanced in their concept of rehabilitation than any organization described in this symposium.

C. J. S. O'Malley