

being the contact source and diverted our attention to other possible sources of irritant material. It developed that nearly all cases were on the day shift. The electrician's case had been diagnosed "cable rash," but, since the characteristics of his lesions were similar to those of the other workmen, we did not waste time examining the cables with which he had been working. Instead, we investigated all the possible exposure sources where the men spent their time when they were off the ship: where they ate their lunch, where they loafed, and the route they took to and from work. We found what appeared to be some damaged oil drums in a pile on a sand lot where several men had spent their lunch hour within the shipyard grounds, but about a block away from the dock to which the boat was tied. The drums were punctured or otherwise damaged and, for the most part, were empty, but three or four contained some dark oily liquid. Close examination of these drums revealed lettering still visible on one which read *Cashew Shell Liquid*!

The cause of the epidemic had been found.

At the shipyard, management quickly announced the facts over a public address system to the workmen so that their fears would be allayed. A strike was averted, and the ship was completed ahead of schedule. Further investigation revealed that cashew shell liquid had been spilled on the dock to some extent, in the street to a considerable amount, and extensively scattered over the sand lot in question. Many of the men working at refinishing and repairing this ship had sat on the sand, or the drums themselves, during the noon hour while they ate their lunches. Others had stretched out in the sun, bare-backed, on the contaminated sand. A check into the source of the drums revealed that a cargo of 1000 drums of the liquid had arrived and been unloaded on the opposite side of this same dock about one month previously. This work had been done by an outside contractor who had dumped the damaged drums onto the unused lot.

At our suggestion, all suspicious-looking spots were covered with chlorinated lime, the dock was cleaned and scrubbed, the drums disposed of, and dirt filled in on the sand lot. The dermatitis, which by now was starting to appear in the homes of workmen, from contact with soiled clothing, quickly disappeared. My colleague, the shipyard's chemist, however, in a sincere effort to convince himself and others of the potency of the cashew liquid, became impatient at negative results obtained in 24 hours with one tiny patch test and tried four more generous patches with samples from different drums. A few days later he joined those who had been hospitalized.

This is not a medical book nor is it intended for legal reference. Its primary purpose is not to aid in the diagnosis and treatment of disease, the winning of compensation, or the refutation of false claims. If it should prove of use in such instances by making some facts more widely available, it may be presumed that the more light that can be thrown upon these phases of industrial medicine and industrial relations the better. It is hoped that much information of use in preventive medicine is included. Diagnostic signs of absorption or of early effects, in advance of injury, are eagerly sought by the progressive industrial physician, and, although time-proved and recognized tests are disappointingly few, the research-minded industrial physician will find opportunities for increasing this field of knowledge. The object of this book is to present industrial hygiene and toxicology in simple, understandable terms in sufficient detail to be of some use to all persons interested in safeguarding the health and welfare of working people and in improving the working environment. Essential requisites for the completely successful advancement of the health and safety of the breadwinning population include: (1) competent persons in health and safety maintenance de-

partments; (2) managerial interest and appreciation of the benefits to be derived from health and safety work; and (3) teamwork—camaraderie, and cooperative efforts among industrial hygiene, medical, and safety personnel.

The welfare of an individual workman involves not only a working environment that gives reasonable assurance of freedom from accidental injury or occupational disease, but also his mental, temperamental, and physical fitness for the work to be done. Incentive, whether in the form of tangible assets to supply the necessities and some of the pleasures of life, or some expression of interest or recognition of accomplishments, ability, and efforts may be involved indirectly, but are somewhat outside the field of industrial hygiene.

It is not possible to maintain a uniform style in a collaboration, but the collective viewpoints compensate for some variations in style. The book is liberally supplied with references for the benefit of those whose wish to pursue the subjects in greater detail.

FRANK A. PATTY

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