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SAFETY ENGINEERING

THE MAGAZINE OF SAFETY

(*with which has been combined* Protection Engineering, Conservation *and* Fire Prevention.)

ARTHUR C. CARRUTHERS, Editor HENRY W. ALEXANDER, Associate Editor

HARRY deG. ARMAND, Business Manager

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THIRTY-FOURTH YEAR : THE PIONEER PUBLICATION IN ITS FIELD

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NRA MEMBER U.S. WE DO OUR PART

Previous issues of SAFETY ENGINEERING can be found in the Industrial Arts Index in your library. Entered as second class matter January 7, 1930, at the East Stroudsburg, Pa., Post Office, under the Act of March 3, 1879. **Subscriptions: $3.00 a year; Canada, $4.00; foreign, $4.50. Single Copies, 25c.**

It is right that each industry prepare its own standards, because no general set could apply, owing to the different hazards which are present in different industries. Progressive employers and employes alike now know from experience that working conditions are very important for both management and employe efficiency. Remarkable reductions of losses of time and money have been secured through giving strict attention to safety and health conservation.

Each particular industry, when necessary, should obtain expert guidance and advice in drafting its standards for safety and health, especially when occupational disease hazards are present.

The Legal Status of Silicosis

A BILL has been introduced in the New York State Legislature by Assemblyman Anthony Canney of Buffalo and Senator H. L. O'Brien of Brooklyn, bringing silicosis under the terms of the state's Workmen's Compensation Law. It has the approval of the New York State Department of Labor, by which, as a matter of fact, it was drafted.

The matter of including silicosis in the list of compensable occupational diseases covered by the Workmen's Compensation Law has been a matter for discussion for many years, not only in New York but in other industrial states where this dread lung disease makes its appearance in mines and factories. The sudden growth in the number of lawsuits for damages for silicosis, totalling in New York alone some $50,000,000, has brought to the attention of employers and insurance companies the need for legislation of one kind or another that will define this disease and limit the liability therefor.

The present bill represents a compromise, but it is by no means completely satisfactory to all parties concerned. It provides for the recognition of two stages of silicosis. The first stage is defined as "characterized by definite and specific signs of the disease but not to the extent of causing total disability", and provides for occupational disability compensation up to $1,000, while the claimant is finding other employment outside the dust hazard field. If he elects to remain in employment offering this hazard, he may receive up to $2,000 compensation upon signing a waiver. The second stage of silicosis, "characterized by definite fibrosis of the lungs causing total disability", is compensable to the extent of twenty-five dollars per week and a maximum award of $6,500. These are the general limits of liability which the bill establishes.

This is all very well, but there are certain points that demand attention. Who is to establish the presence of these first and second stages? Three physicians are provided by the bill, to be appointed by the Industrial Commissioner, who shall examine all persons claiming compensation. That sounds logical enough, but the evidence, presented in SAFETY ENGINEERING last month by Drs. Gardner and Smith, tends to demonstrate that even physicians who have specialized in the study of the pathology and diagnosis of silicosis are often at a loss in attempting to make positive diagnoses and prognoses in cases of this kind. Very few people die from silicosis itself (the writer knows of no verifiable cases of this at all) but many have been known to die from tuberculosis which there is a strong probability that the silicotic condition either brought about, accelerated or paved the way for. What provision shall we make for compensation when silicotics die of tuberculosis?

There is undoubtedly a need for some such bill as the Canney-O'Brien measure, to make silicosis a compensable disease, to define its stages and to limit the liability, but the greater need is for intensive research into this and allied diseases—the establishment of a foundation, which shall operate a clinic devoted exclusively to these disorders, so that by dint of medical science and persevering investigation, we shall be provided with definite and unassailable material upon which we may base a sane, reasoned and equitable adjudication of the legal status of silicosis.

Entering the Thirty-Fourth Year

WITH this issue, SAFETY ENGINEERING celebrates its thirty-third birthday. Ever since the first copy was issued by the Insurance Press in April, 1901, under the name of *Insurance Engineering*, this magazine has been a focus for all information and news of progress in the fields of accident and fire prevention, and, more recently, health conservation. A great deal has happened in these fields in the last thirty-three years. American industry, giant though it was even then, has grown to towering proportions, and with this growth has been intensified, of necessity, the fight for the preservation of life, limb and property—the fight for safety against danger.

Birthdays are nothing new to a thirty-three-year-old, but this year, when the safety field, as well as many others, is getting on its feet again after the dumps of the depression, may be regarded as especially significant. The general revival may be slow, but it is certain. It gives fresh courage to SAFETY ENGINEERING to carry on in contributing its mite to the steady progress of American industry and business.

A. C. Cawthorn