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KE 0013503

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Dear Doctor Schiaffino:

I had your letter some time ago with its questions and also the information on the men at the refinery. In replying has been occasioned in large part by the fact that my associate Dr. Machle has been engaged for some time in the collection of data and in the preparation of a paper on gas poisoning. I felt that this paper would be of more use to you than any discussion which I could include in a letter, and accordingly I am herewith a copy of this paper, together with the recommended regulations for the safe handling of gasoline.

In sending you this information I realize fully that it will not answer all the questions raised in your letter. However, it will give you a clear idea of what to expect in connection with gasoline exposure, and will be of some benefit in the control of the symptoms described in your letter. Do not let you to think that I have considered too lightly the conditions which you have described. On the other hand, I am less than frank if I did not say that I am sure that in the main incidental and largely unintentional hazards and toxic exposures. Most of the conditions which you describe are not exceptional in men who work in industrial plants. I consider the normal physical status of what is called an average industrial worker, he is not to be something very different from that described in text books as the normal for young healthy men. There are rather extensive variations in hemoglobin count, much more extensive variations in red blood cell count, and differential leucocyte counts, and in many of the physical constants whether derived from observation or laboratory procedure will show rather wide deviations from what we are used to as the normal physiological picture. All of

senting the status of average men living environmental conditions. Most of the have described in the way of symptoms many of us have at times, and which very commonly we ignore. It often happens that not been working as industrial workers many slight difficulties as a consequence changed life when under industrial employment in addition to these difficulties, such to believe they are exposed to poisonous tend to become highly introspective and which they would ordinarily ignore. I doubt that this provides some portion of the conditions described in your letter presumptuous and impertinent for me to portion of the circumstances were of the other hand I think I have a certain just doubting if there is much here in the way intoxication. It is fair to say in general handling of petroleum products and the gasoline refinery do not represent especially exposures to toxic materials. There is of fire and explosion, and there is also of being overcome by gasoline vapors in Other associated toxic substances can be On the other hand our experience with gas in refineries leads us to believe that their occupation are certainly small from view of dangerous intoxication. It is and this point of view which makes me see of the significance of many of the symptoms mentioned. Most of us, as doctors, have of having people come to us when they are population, or the portion of it which do not come to us and consequently we are of thinking of them as free of symptoms kind. This is distinctly not the case, by anyone who for any reason undertakes nation of a large number of people who their day's work regardless of its nature that laboratory workers in general tend to be introspective and tend also to have more symptoms themselves consider indicative of some we believe, is true to a lesser degree are under examination where any suspicion to the conditions under which they work

one comment, and that in particular regarding findings in the blood. Extensive variations in white blood cell count are very common among people who have been exposed to radiation. This is essentially true of the lymphocyte count in the blood. I think it is fair to say that a very large proportion of industrial workers have a polymorphonuclear neutrophil count with a percentage running between 40 and 50 percent. These counts also vary rather extensively and in the same way as with low grade infections, parasitic infections, allergic reactions, extensive variations in white blood cell count without medical significance but without any known relationship to occupational conditions. From all this that I am exceedingly skeptical of the significance of the observations made but I have no doubt that these conditions exist but I doubt very greatly that they have any relationship to any occupational hazards whatsoever.

I shall be interested in your reaction both to these comments and to the letter which I am sending you. It is indeed a pleasure to hear from you again, and I trust that this will lead to many exchanges of communications between us.

With kindest regards,

I am

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