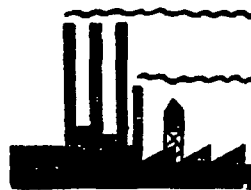


METROPOLITAN SERVICES IN INDUSTRIAL HEALTH AND SAFETY



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ARCHIVES
OF THE
METROPOLITAN
LIFE
INSURANCE CO

METROPOLITAN LIFE INSURANCE COMPANY

HOME OFFICE: NEW YORK

Pacific Coast Head Office: San Francisco

Canadian Head Office: Ottawa

METROPOLITAN SERVICES
IN
INDUSTRIAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

Edition of May 1947



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FOREWORD

THE BURDEN of industrial sickness, accidents, or death is one which weighs most heavily in suffering and economic loss upon the workers themselves. It is also one which imposes a serious economic loss upon industry. Sickness and physical incapacity among workers, whether causing absence from work or not, is a costly factor resulting in underproduction, spoiled goods, labor turnover, and low morale. Sick workers inevitably mean sick factories, sick stores, and sick offices. Employees susceptible to accidents mean wastage and inefficient operation.

The elimination or reduction of this wastage and of the burden of industrial sickness and accidents is of very real interest to the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company, which insures about one out of every five men, women, and children in the United States and Canada. Anything the Metropolitan can do toward improving the health and safety conditions in industry is bound to react favorably on these policyholders. Accordingly, the Company maintains, in the Health and Welfare Division, services on Industrial Hygiene and on Industrial Safety, whose functions are to cooperate systematically with industry and commerce to the end that the health and the safety of employees may be protected or improved.



*Metropolitan Group-insured firms are invited
to make use of the various services described
in this booklet.*

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Chemical Laboratory of the Industrial Health Section

METROPOLITAN SERVICES IN INDUSTRIAL HEALTH

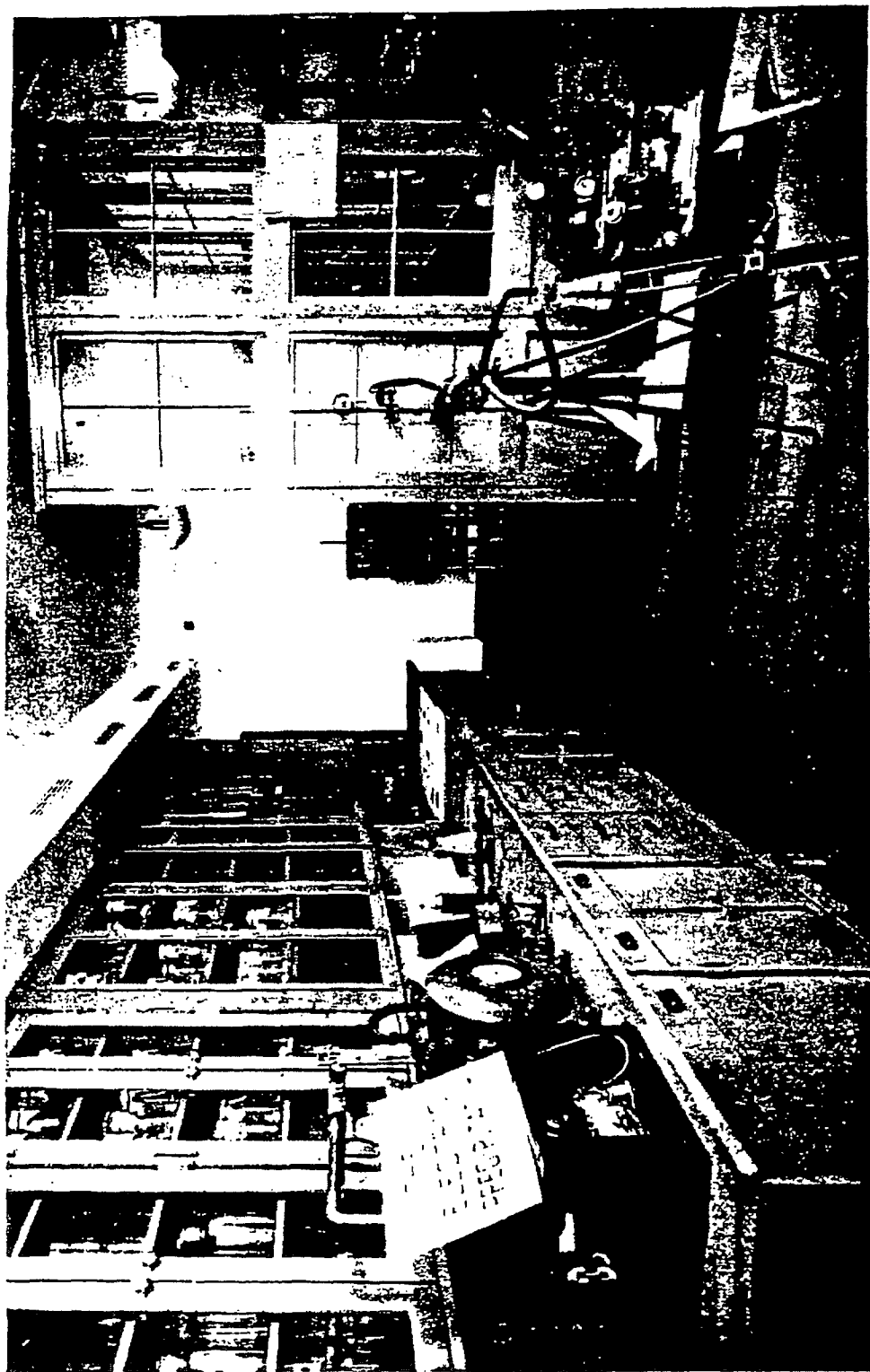
Industrial Hygiene

The term "industrial hygiene," like many other technical designations, is redefined and interpreted from time to time in the light of advancing knowledge. Not many years ago industrial hygiene was considered to be a portion of the field of medicine dealing almost exclusively with diseases due to occupation. Industrial hygiene is now defined as that branch of medical, chemical, and engineering sciences which is concerned with the study of the effects of environmental conditions in industry upon the health of industrial workers, and with the application of the principles of preventive and curative medicine and sanitary engineering in industrial establishments.

In 1939 the expectation of life for a white male wage-earning industrial worker, aged 20, was 45.7 years; for a man of the same age in the higher economic classes, 50 years—a very significant difference of 4.3 years in favor of the latter group. This curtailment of the expectation of life of the industrial worker is due to factors both industrial and economic, but it represents a need for intelligent action.

The burden of sickness is very heavy and varies with sex and age and occupation. Lost time from sickness and nonoccupational accidents averages about eight days per year among males and about 12 days among females. These are "across the board" averages and do not tell the story of individual cases of sickness. Metropolitan experience all over the country indicates that employees sick enough to file claims (that is, longer than seven days) lost on an average upward of 40 days each. Short absences due to minor ailments, aside from the economic losses upon workers, disrupt industrial production and lead to losses in both man power and money.

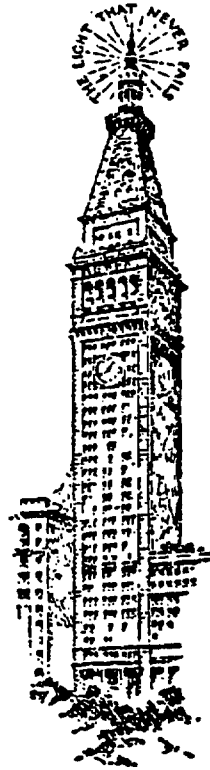
The Metropolitan's cooperation with industry in solving health problems affecting industrial workers began as early as 1916 through a health program of life conservation. The organ-



Physical Laboratory of the Industrial Health Section

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