

NOISE IN INDUSTRY

Report of a Conference Held During the Tenth Annual Congress on Industrial Health,
of the American Medical Association, in New York, Feb. 20, 1950

The conference was conducted by (1) the Committee on Physical Agents of a Hazardous Nature, which was established at the Ninth Annual Congress on Industrial Health, and (2) the Subcommittee on Noise in Industry, American Academy of Ophthalmology and Otolaryngology.

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THE IMPORTANCE of noise as a hazard to the health of industrial workers is not generally appreciated. The Conference on Noise in Industry at the Tenth Annual Congress on Industrial Health was planned to bring together the groups interested in the auditory hygiene of the nation's industrial population.

A continuing program for the investigation of the effects of noise on hearing is being conducted by the American Academy of Ophthalmology and Otolaryngology (a co-sponsor of this conference), through its standing Committee on the Conservation of Hearing and the Subcommittee on Noise in Industry. The activities of this committee, extending over a period of years, recently have been amplified by the employment of a qualified full-time investigator and the initiation of a program of research in industrial plants. This organization is interested in obtaining all the pertinent information on the relation of noise to hearing, and has sponsored publication of a number of papers in this field, including a "Manual of Operation for an Industrial Hearing Conservation Program."

The co-sponsor of the conference was the American Medical Association, through its Committee on Physical Agents of a Hazardous Nature, an agency of the Council on Industrial Health. This committee, which was formed at the Ninth Annual Congress on Industrial Health, is particularly interested in enlisting the active cooperation and participation of a broad segment of industry in the study of the noise hazard.

Both of the sponsoring groups recognize that the combined efforts of specialists in the fields of hearing, of the physics of sound, of industrial hygiene and of industrial health administration will be needed to provide the necessary information and support for evaluating properly and controlling adequately the hazard of noise in our industrial plants. Both groups, furthermore, believe that emphasis on the importance of the problem is particularly needed at the present time because:

- (1) The use of equipment that generates noise of high level intensity is increasing in industry, with the consequence that more workmen are being exposed to definitely injurious sounds;