

time to come. In the meantime Dr. Ekwall's admirable "Concise Oxford Dictionary of English Place-Names" is available as a source of information and instruction, both for those counties with which the Society has still to deal, and to meet the needs of those who are interested in the subject without being specifically students in this or related branches of research. Here the place-names are set out in alphabetical order, each with an indication of its component elements and

derivation. Although the list is not complete, it is sufficiently full to meet all but an exceptional test. As a corrective of the uninstructed enthusiasm of the place-name mythologist, Dr. Ekwall provides a preface in which he has set out the main principles to be followed in the study of place-names, and indicates the principal provinces of study—archæology, local and national, and social and racial history—in which it has proved an invaluable aid to research.

Accidents

Accidents and their Prevention

By Dr. H. M. Vernon. Pp. ix+336. (Cambridge: At the University Press, 1936.) 15s. net.

INCREASING attention is being paid to industrial accidents and their prevention throughout the world; the question has indeed become one of scientific study and inquiry into the proneness and incidence of accidents in relation to personal qualities and environmental conditions.

In Britain, in all good factories, the immediate treatment of minor injuries is being encouraged so as to minimize the time lost by absence from work. Systematic inquiry is being made into the cause of all accidents, and it is customary to hold a regular 'court-martial' into the more serious ones. Careful statistics are kept and exchanged with other firms, and trade associations give special attention to problems which are common to their industry. The Home Office is at all times helpful in a variety of ways.

Accidents are in the main due to human error, but it is the duty of the employer to remove so far as possible all temptations to err. The subject in some of its aspects occupied a session at last year's Chemical Engineering Congress, when the interesting fact was brought out that in Germany the after-care of the injured falls on the firm, whereas in Great Britain it falls largely on the insurance company.

In the main, in large establishments a great deal is being done, though this must be regarded only as a step towards even better conditions: in small factories and working establishments, there is doubtless still much to do, and it is these which require legislative stimulus to make them realize their responsibilities. The slogan "Safety First" is widely preached and the nation is slowly being educated to develop a safety habit of mind, though it would be obviously bad if all of us

in consequence became over-cautious and were unprepared to take justifiable risks.

Enough is known about the generalities of the subject to make it possible to write about them in text-book form, and we know of no one more capable (both from his past experience and sympathetic attitude) to do this than Dr. H. M. Vernon. His book should be widely read, and will prove of particular value to safety officers and those others who are concerned in protecting their operatives. It deals, however, with much more than factory accidents, which are, as we know, only a small proportion of the total—there are accidents in the home, on the railways and most of all on the roads. Whereas the factories can be reached by legislation, the prevention of accidents elsewhere depends on a number of factors.

The question of the causes of the terrible loss of life and limb on the roads is far too thorny a one to be discussed in a review. It is a world problem and so serious as to constitute a major problem: it is known that it is receiving careful study on the lines discussed by Dr. Vernon in three of his chapters. The public at large is so obsessed with the desire for speed as to be unmoved by a casualty list which would spread horror in war time.

As against the danger of the roads, the railways have been rendered entirely safe by attention to the elimination of the risks. The air is relatively safe as the result of stringent regulations based on scientific study. The loss of life on an ill-found ship is followed by a searching inquiry and the fixing of responsibility.

There is very definitely a science of accident prevention, and it is to be hoped that this informative and valuable book will come into the hands of the largest possible number of readers.

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