

## 1928 Health Survey of New Haven, Connecticut

### Chapter XXII. INDUSTRIAL HYGIENE.

1. **Importance of the Problem.** The development of machinery for the promotion of the safety and health of the industrial worker is one of the most outstanding tendencies of the past quarter of a century. The significance of preventive medicine and surgery as a factor in industrial production was completely unrealized in the United States fifteen years ago. Accidents or disease brought on directly or indirectly by conditions of the factory environment, were treated individually as private cases and little or no attempt was made to formulate a plan for their relief or prevention. With the passage of the Workmen's Compensation Acts in various states, the heads of industrial concerns were brought face to face with the problem, and as in most cases where the issues of humanity are valued in dollars and cents, surgical risks began to receive attention and corrective action. Engineering and Medical Departments were organized in some of the larger plants with the idea of studying the problem from the point of view of prevention rather than cure - and, thus, gradually, the new science of industrial hygiene arose. Routine physical examinations on admission and at regular intervals, have been established, treatment of sickness, control of sanitation, general publicity on health matters, housing and food, are all part of the industrial physician's work.

2. **State Legislation and State Department Organization Relating to Industrial Hygiene.** The basic influence in industrial hygiene in America has been the passage of Workmen's Compensation Acts, which made it obvious that a certain amount of attention devoted to safety and health was essential to sound business in order to escape heavy burden of insurance costs.

The Connecticut Compensation Law went into force January 1, 1914 and is on the whole an excellent piece of legislation. It covers a larger proportion of persons than do the laws of many states. Its financial provisions are reasonably liberal, including medical and surgical aid and hospital service and the system under which it is administered is flexible and efficient.

It is a source of satisfaction that Connecticut is one of the five states which includes a broad coverage of occupational injuries under its compensation law. In addition to compensation acts which provide direct but powerful stimulus to employers to prevent accidents and diseases many states, such New York, Ohio and New Jersey, have effective direct legislative and administrative machinery for enforcing certain minimum essentials of health and safety in the factory.

**[http://info.med.yale.edu/newhavenhealth/documents/historical/1928\\_Survey/welcome.html](http://info.med.yale.edu/newhavenhealth/documents/historical/1928_Survey/welcome.html)**