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## [Medicine in the mining industries.](#)

Author(s) : [ROGAN, J. M.](#)

Editors : [ROGAN, J. M.](#)

Book : [Medicine in the mining industries.](#) 1972 pp.x + 397 pp.

Abstract : This is a most comprehensive account of recent research work : a review of the clinical aspects of medicine in the mines industries; preventive medicine including some engineering techniques are also considered.

The text comprises a series of essays by a distinguished company of international known authors. It is not limited to problems arising in the coal mining industry in addition with the extraction of other minerals both at home and abroad, including uranium ore with its accompanying hazards of radioactivity. The scope is wide, ranging from esoteric appreciations of studies of the pathology of coal pneumoconiosis, to

asbestosis, to practical problems occurring as a result of the physiological effects of dust and its elimination. Recent advances in the estimation of noise hazard reference to mining, and assessment of the effects of noise on workers by surveys are well summarized and discussed.

The clinician is not neglected and diseases prevalent among miners are fully covered. Separate chapters deal with the clinical features of respiratory diseases due to occupational dermatitis in the miner, heat diseases (which are widely interpreted as problems which result from exposure to extremes of temperature, exposure to gases, accidents and emergency surgery.

There are also excellent essays on personal protective equipment which play a large part today in guarding the miner against mishap and which requires his intelligent co-operation for its efficient use. Mines rescue, mines rescue breathing apparatus, the ergonomics of mining operations, hygiene in underground work, a difficult matter to cope with successfully-are all dealt with fully from the medical point of view. The many and diverse facets which have to be considered concerning absenteeism and absence from work, often far from medical in context, are considered with regard to safety and humanity. Rehabilitation of the miner handicapped in the course of his work, an accident or disease is rightly held by the author of the essay on this topic to be the best primary treatment. Physical and psychological treatment may have to be given in a special rehabilitation centre; it is flattering to learn from the author of this section that the centre set up by Charbonnages de France was based on an exhaustive survey of the layout and organization of various British centres. The concept of epidemiology, which is defined as embodying "the notion of various physical and behavioural factors interacting to produce health or disease," has a clarity of its own. The limitations of epidemiological studies are recognized, however, but they are rarely able to prove the existence of a causal relationship between work and disease but they usually provide sufficient evidence to serve as the basis for action. The final essay is concerned with the many tasks which fall to the lot of the mining administrator, and the difficulties he has in reconciling the interests of top management, the personnel, production and safety departments are not minimized.

As is inevitable in a work written by many hands, differences in emphasis mark themselves from one author to another. Professor Lynne REID, for instance, states that "tuberculous infection is likely to be a late sequel to massive fibrosis rather than its cause, not least because of its failure to respond to tuberculosis chemotherapy." STEELE, on the other hand, tells us that "The association between silicosis and tuberculosis is too frequent to be coincidental."

Nevertheless, Dr. Rogan and his team of learned contributors are to be congratulated for an authoritative account of the state of knowledge in 1972 in the many fields

and allied topics dealt with. All those working in the mining industries, and thousands of many people other than doctors, should have a copy of this book on their shelves. It is a pity that this type of textbook gets out of date so quickly. Perhaps Dr. Rogar should edit another edition in, say, five years time.

*G. F. Keatinge.*

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