

TWO EXPERIMENTS IN AFRICAN WELFARE

Two experiments in African welfare, carried out by the Rhodesian mines of the Anglo American Corporation Group, have proved remarkably successful, Dr. J. H. G. van Blommestein, group medical consultant, discloses in his annual report just issued.

The first was the establishment of health centres in the villages where the African workers and their families lived. These centres had been functioning for 3 years and had proved themselves a necessary and indispensable adjunct to African family life, he states. The second was the training scheme introduced for Native female nurses. Two training schools had been established—at **Wankie** and **Nchanga**—and the response from Native women

for training in these schools had been remarkable. It was now proposed to enlarge the school at **Nchanga**. In addition, feeding centres had also been established at which Native children of the lower age group were given fortified meals each day.

Dr. van Blommestein also states that malaria which, until recently, represented a major health problem among Native mine workers in Rhodesia, had been virtually eliminated by the use of residual insecticides. He warns, however, that only by constant maintenance of vigilance together with continued anti-mosquito control could the areas continue to enjoy the freedom from malaria which they did today.

Dr. van Blommestein also emphasizes the meticulous care which has to be devoted to the health of every individual Native employed on the mines. He states that large numbers of Natives are recruited from areas where life is extremely primitive and are thrust into an environment completely alien to them. Not only were their surroundings entirely different, but their whole mode of life was changed, and much time and effort, therefore, had to be expended in training them to meet the modern needs of mining practice; to inculcate into them the most simple rules of hygiene, while at the same time teaching them to become aware of the danger which could result from even minor injuries sustained in the course of their work.

All Native workers, before entering the mining industry, are required to undergo clinical, physical and X-ray examinations and are inoculated against enteric fever and tetanus and vaccinated against smallpox.

As a further prelude to starting work all new entrants to the industry are aptitude-tested, one of the chief purposes of which is to select potential Native supervisors, or boss boys, to serve as intermediaries between the European and Native workers. In certain circumstances Natives are put through an acclimatization procedure to accustom them to abnormal conditions they might encounter underground.

All through their mining career Native workers undergo periodic clinical and X-ray examinations to evaluate, constantly, the standard of their health. The X-ray examinations are in compliance with the regulations laid down by the South African Pneumoconiosis Act.

All the mine hospitals of the Anglo American Corporation are fully equipped to provide the most modern facilities for the treatment of both medical and surgical cases. Physiotherapy plays an important part in the post-operative treatment of injuries, while X-ray departments and laboratory facilities form an integral part of the hospital organization. In addition there are facilities for the treatment and rehabilitation of cases of industrial and non-industrial diseases and injuries.

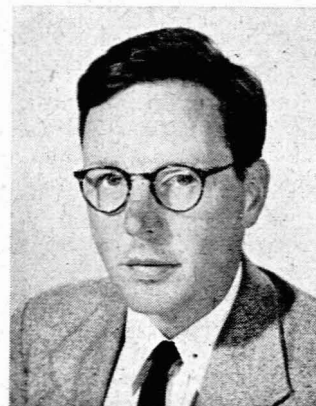
Dr. van Blommestein, referring to the important part played by first aid, states that the proportion of Natives qualified in first aid is about 15 per cent of the total employed on most mines. In 1957, 2,000 Natives took part in first aid competitions in the Orange Free State mines. Not only was the knowledge they acquired most valuable in the mines but it became even greater when they returned to their homes where medical aid is not easily obtainable, as a rule.

UNIVERSITY NEWS

PROFESSOR OF ANATOMY, UNIVERSITY OF NATAL

Dr. E. N. Keen, who has been selected to succeed his father, Prof. J. A. Keen, as head of the Department of Anatomy at the University of Natal, obtained his medical training partly at King's

College, London, and partly at the University of Cape Town, where he graduated M.B., Ch.B. in 1943. From 1944 to 1947 he was assistant government pathologist in Cape Town and lecturer in medical jurisprudence at the University of Cape Town. He was then for a period lecturer in anatomy, before going to Britain in 1949 for post-graduate study. He held a number of surgical posts in Manchester, and obtained the F.R.C.S. (Eng.) in 1951. In the following year he succeeded his father as senior lecturer in anatomy at the University of Cape Town, and has held this position until his new appointment. During this period he also obtained the M.D. degree of the University.



Dr. E. N. Keen

At Cape Town, Dr. Keen has established a reputation as a post-staking and stimulating teacher both of undergraduate and post-graduate students. As a research worker he has made notable contributions in the field of medico-legal anatomy and physical anthropology and also in that of the applied anatomy of the cardio-vascular system in man and animals.

As a member of the executive of the Lecturer's Association, Dr. Keen has taken an active part in University affairs, and he has been a valued member of several University clubs and societies.