

ANKYLOSTOMIASIS

"Miner's Anemia."

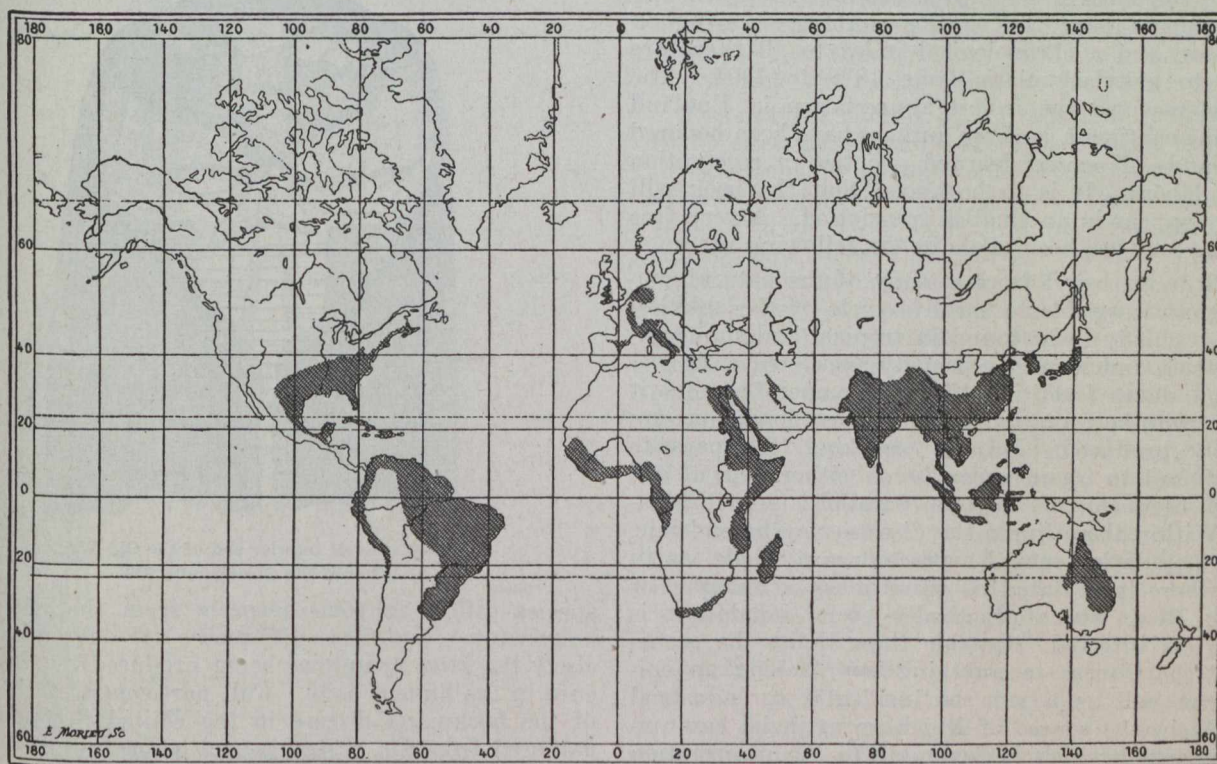
By F. W. GRAY.

The mining population of Europe, particularly that portion engaged in coal mining, has suffered considerable pecuniary and physical inconvenience from the prevalence in recent years of a disease variously known as ankylostomiasis, miners' anemia, hookworm disease, etc. Unfortunately, this disease has been given a name of portentous length that unfailingly excites the risibility of mining men who have never come into contact with the "unspeakable worm." The English miners named the disease "hanky-panky," and their bantering attitude has been reflected in other mining districts by men who should have known better, for in many places experience of the ankylostome has been dearly purchased, and could have been avoided had due regard been paid to the warnings of medical men, and had any regard at all been paid to sanitary conditions underground.

European coal districts may serve to put us on our guard against the introduction of ankylostomiasis infection into our coal and ore mines. This is not at all a far-fetched possibility, when we consider the steadily increasing tide of European immigration that is now setting towards our Dominion, and further that our mines are but in their infancy.

Recent literature on the subject of ankylostomiasis in the English language is not very extensive, as the subject has not yet been so forcibly brought to the attention of either England, Canada or the United States as it has been in France, Germany, Belgium, Italy and other European countries.

The principal English authority is Dr. J. S. Haldane, of the Home Office, who is so well known to mining circles by reason of his researches into carbon monoxide



Geographical Distribution of Ankylostomiasis

The following notes have been collated from various sources, chiefly European, as the result of somewhat extended reading on the subject. They are written purely from the standpoint of the mining engineer, and it is solely the fact that in the nature of things so few members of the medical profession have any intimate acquaintance with the technics of mining or actual physical conditions underground, that the writer has ventured on a subject so very largely medical, but which, from its intimate connection with and its dependence on local conditions and systems of coal extraction, and from its serious effects on the health and general prosperity of the miner, very largely appeals to the mining engineer, and should be of vital interest to the mining industry in general.

The subject is comparatively new in Canadian mining circles, and a recapitulation of what has happened in

poisoning and mine gases generally. Dr. Haldane published a Blue Book in 1902 on the outbreak of ankylostomiasis at the Dolcoath tin mine in Cornwall (1), and in 1903 published a further report detailing the results of his visit to the infected districts of the continent. (2)

Several papers on the subject will also be found in recent numbers of the Transaction of the Institution of Mining Engineers, Eng. (3)

An excellent handbook is published by *The Colliery Guardian* at a nominal cost, which has had an extended circulation.

In the United States much attention has been given to the study on the "hookworm disease" or "uncinariasis" (which is for all practical purposes identical with ankylostomiasis), by Dr. Ch. Wardell Stiles, of the Hygienic Laboratory at Washington, who in 1903 issued a report on "The Prevalence and Geographic