

2b. Summary and Interpretation of Inhalation Experiment with King's Floate Dust.

The findings in the experiment with King's Floate dust can be summarized under three headings.

A. Effect of the inhaled dust on normal animals. The King's Floate

dust caused a characteristic peribronchiolar fibrosis in guinea pigs but not in rabbits or rats. The fibrosis did not progress after the dust exposure was discontinued and the guinea pigs transferred to normal air.

B. Effect of the inhaled dust on tuberculosis in guinea pigs. In guinea

pigs infected with attenuated tubercle bacilli and then placed in the dust room, the results were more variable than is usual in an experiment of this type. A few animals showed no sign of progression; in most of them there was evidence of temporary progression with subsequent healing; in one animal there was continuous progression to death. In contrast, when guinea pigs, after being infected, are exposed to quartz instead of asbestos dust, the infectious process continues to progress and eventually causes the death of the animals. On the other hand, exposure of infected animals to a harmless dust like calcite or gypsum does not lead to any progression of the infection. Guinea pigs infected with attenuated tubercle bacilli following the termination of about two years' exposure to asbestos dust did not develop progressive disease. The only modification of the infection was in its localization, a few bacilli being retained in the fibrous terminal bronchioles and forming tubercles there in addition to the usual foci beneath the pleura.

In view of this variability, the unusual nature of the response and the high proportion of deaths from intercurrent pneumonia it is felt that definite conclusions as to the influence of this dust on the course of tuberculous infection are not justified.