

Mr. Shoemaker confirmed the above statements. He felt that the best interests of the industry would be served by the development and maintenance of a balanced demand for all grades, as such a condition would yield the maximum returns over a long period. Experience had shown definitely that the relative demand for the various grades fluctuates, and potential markets for all grades should be explored. At the present time he thought the market for textile grades needed expansion, though the particular grade needing stimulation may vary from one producer to another. Experience had also shown that there had been demands for asbestos which became vigorous for a time, without warning, and then as suddenly became weak and even disappeared. A more intimate knowledge of uses and their trends by the producers would have in many instances been of concrete benefit. He felt that uses for asbestos which are reflected in the purchase of asbestos products by a large number of small users (for example, domestic users) have a stabilizing effect not possessed by uses which are reflected only in purchases by large manufacturers.

Mr. Shoemaker therefore suggested that a thorough survey be made of the industrial applications of all grades of asbestos fibre. This survey should be conducted with a long range point of view, for it was not to be taken for granted that the demand would always be heavy. In this survey all competing commodities should be noted and their nature studied with the object of determining what were the natural outlets for each of these and for asbestos. The results of such a survey could very well serve as a sound basis for future research. It would also provide the industry with knowledge in advance as to likely directions in which new uses for asbestos could be developed if and when the present demand falls off.

It was important not merely to ascertain the past and present uses of asbestos, but to disclose trends, showing the uses which are tending to grow and those which are tending to diminish. From the point of view of future the most important uses are presumably those connected with staple and growing industries, especially when asbestos, because of its special qualities, is naturally in a strong position in comparison with competitive materials.

As an aid to the conduct of the suggested survey it was recommended that a bibliography on asbestos, as complete as possible and kept up to date, should be prepared.