14th May, 1943

Mr. W.W.F. Shepherd,
Turner & Newall Ltd.

Dr. Leroy U. Gardner's Asbestos Dust Experiments.

Referring to my note of 6th May, I think that T.B.A. Co.'s comments can be taken as all included in the attached extract from some notes made by Dr. Francis after reading the outline of the proposed monograph by Dr. Gardner. I would draw your attention particularly to the fact that there appears to be a definite misstatement in regard to the characteristics of Bolivian Blue compared with those of South African Blue.

If you happen to have a spare copy of the letter and outline we should be very glad of it, but otherwise I will send my copy to our Research Department file.

R. G. Soothill.

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Notes made by Dr. Francis after perusal of the outline of the proposed monograph by Dr. Gardner.

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"I am afraid I cannot comment adequately on this outline at the present time, but there are many interesting points in it that will perhaps receive further treatment in the actual monograph and so resolve doubts I have regarding the accuracy of certain statements. On the whole it certainly seems to be a very comprehensive summary of the work that has been done in America on asbestosis but the conclusions are not very helpful.

It is rather puzzling to see that Bolivian Blue is stated to be a stiff and elastic fibre and South African Blue soft and flexible. I should have thought that the reverse was the case. I note also that the high incidence of tuberculosis associated with asbestosis in English experience is not duplicated in America. This seems to be an important difference and must be ascribed either to differences in the climatic conditions in the two countries or to differences in the effects of the different types of fibre mainly used. In either case it seems to suggest that one must consider results obtained in America or Canada with American or Canadian types of asbestos with caution when applying these to English practice.

The reference to the possibility of producing cancer of the lung by inhalation of asbestos fibres is disconcerting but Gardner may be right in this since I understand that there have been one or two cases of deaths due to cancer accelerated by asbestosis, or vice versa.

There seems to be some confusion in the reference to the use of aluminium, since, as far as I can see from the outline, colloidal alumina only has been used in Gardner's experiments. The effect of aluminium in silicosis is very much more pronounced than that of alumina, and it is aluminium that has been used in the recent experiments on men in the Canadian mines. In this connection it seems that Gardner is in favour of investigating further the action of "aluminium", but whether he means by this alumina or aluminium I do not know".

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