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Asbestos

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House of Commons

Asbestosis and Silicosis

On February 19th Mr. CLYNES stated that he had received a report from the senior medical inspector of factories concerning the death of a woman from heart failure following bronchial pneumonia accelerated by asbestosis. A draft scheme of compensation for this disease was issued last month, with a draft of the proposed medical scheme by which a medical board would be set up to deal with all cases of silicosis and asbestosis throughout the country. These draft schemes were now under consideration by employers' and workers' associations. He was impressed by the urgency of the question, and hoped to reach a final settlement by the end of next month.

Replying to Mr. Morley on February 19th, Mr. CLYNES said that the effects on the lungs of various dusts, including coal dust, were being investigated by an expert committee of the Medical Research Council. This committee was pursuing various lines of research, but the problems were complicated, and considerable time must elapse before definite conclusions could be reached. In reply to another question, Mr. Clynes said that the Various Industries (Silicosis) Amendment Scheme, which amended the definition of "silica rock," came into force on February 1st.

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