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MORTALITY FROM RESPIRATORY DISEASES IN DUSTY TRADES

(INORGANIC DUSTS)

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are very smooth, and thus have a tendency to slip by one anoth when twisted and subject to tension. An admixture of vegetable animal fiber was therefore often necessary, but, while these faci tated the manufacturing operations, they impaired the fire resistan of the fabric, and special machinery and ingenious devices had be invented to enable the successful spinning of a pure asbestos ya It is, however, now possible to make a single asbestos thread whic though weighing no more than 1 ounce per hundred yards, has a fa strength, and braided material can be made much more resistant torsion and tension, while asbestos ropes, chiefly used by the fi department, can be strengthened either by interwoven wires or l having a wire-rope core.

HEALTH-INJURIOUS OCCUPATIONAL CONDITIONS.

On account of the rather limited extent of the asbestos industi in the United States, at least in the large centers of population, th industrial insurance mortality experience data are insufficient fc definite conclusions. During the period 1907 to 1914 in the Prudenti experience there were only 13 deaths, of which 3, or 23.1 per cen were from pulmonary tuberculosis. At ages 25 to 44, there were deaths, of which 3, or 50 per cent, were from this disease. Asbestc dust is not described in the extensive consideration of Dust Hazard: by Hayhurst, nor by W. Gilman Thompson in his treatise on Th Occupational Diseases. In 1914 the production of asbestos in th United States was only 1,247 tons, or much less than in earlier years indicating a very limited available source of supply. Most of th asbestos used in the United States is mined in Canada, and an excel lent report on "Asbestos, its occurrence, exploitation, and use," ha been published by the mines branch of the Department of the Interio of the Dominion of Canada (Ottawa, 1905), which contains a de scriptive account of mining methods and of the dressing of asbesto: by hand or by mechanical treatment, including the final crushing by means of rollers, fiberizers, beaters, cyclones, and pulverizers. All o these processes unquestionably involve a considerable dust hazard, bu the hygienic aspects of the industry have not been reported upon. It may be said, in conclusion, that in the practice of American and Canadian life insurance companies asbestos workers are generally declined on account of the assumed health-injurious conditions of the industry.[1]

It is regrettable that there should be no further information available regarding the asbestos industry in its various branches, including the utilization of by-products of manufacture, on account of the self-evident injuriousness of asbestos dust as a predisposing cause of pulmonary tuberculosis. The subject is not referred to by Kober

[1] For a descriptive account of the Canadian asbestos district, see Engineering and Mining Journal, New York, Apr. 30, 1910.