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Alan Paine

COLOUR•MATES

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NO COD'S

Redwood & Ross

ings—are found in cars, trucks, tors, power shovels, hoists, and industrial machines, as are asbestos cloth packings, seals, and gaskets. Bestos papers and felts are used for roofing, for piano padding, for stoves, heaters, filing cabinets, helmets, and the mufflers and of automobiles, and they also are in armored cars, carpets, and bridges, and as boiler jackets and motor covers. Asbestos millboard, is a heavier version of asbestos, is used for acoustical ceilings, as interboard and fireproof wallboard, in electric switch boxes, safes, pads, stove mats, ovens, and dry. Vinyl and asphalt floor tiles contain anywhere from thirty to fifty per cent by weight, of short asbestos fibres. The floor-tile industry has become the second-largest user of the mineral. Since the development of phenol-formaldehyde resins in 1909, asbestos has been used in large quantities as a reinforcement and filler by the plastics industry, and today there are countless plastic products that contain asbestos, ranging from frying-pan handles to rocket nose cones. Asbestos is also an ingredient of many paints and sealants, of compounds used for road coating and road building, of putty, caulking, and other crack fillers, of clays used for pottery and sculpture, of artificial snow, of plaster and stucco, of fireproof insulation sprayed on structural steel, and of undercoating spray on automobile bodies.

As a result of these multiple and miscellaneous applications, asbestos has become practically ubiquitous in modern society. There is not an automobile, airplane, train, ship, missile, or engine of any sort that does not contain asbestos in some form or other, and it has found its way into literally every building, factory, home, and far across the land. And, because its minuscule fibres are eminently respirable, asbestos has also found its way into the lungs of man, where, by remaining indestructible as it does in nature, it wreaks terrible havoc.

THE adverse biological effects of asbestos were observed as early as the first century by the Greek geographer Strabo and by the Roman naturalist Pliny the Elder, both of whom mentioned in passing a sickness of the lungs in slaves whose occupation it was to weave asbestos into cloth. Strabo and Pliny were calling attention for the first time in history to a disease that would one day be known as asbestosis—a form of pneumoconiosis (