

## ELEMENTARY SCIENCE SECTION

### A REMARKABLE MINERAL

ONE of the most remarkable of minerals is asbestos which is valuable in many ways. The fibers of this mineral can be separated and woven into a fabric which cannot be burned.

In manufacturing asbestos goods, the fibers are separated and are then combed, carded, and spun in much the same way as wool. From these threads are woven fireproof curtains for theaters, indestructible carpets that grow tougher with age, and fireproof cloth which is used for many purposes. Its uses are constantly increasing.

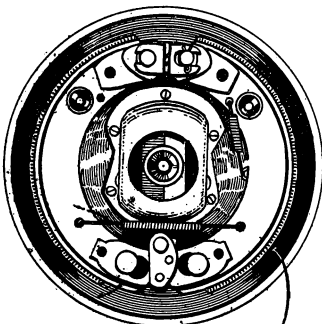
The coarser fibers of asbestos are made into bands for lining the brakes of automobiles. (See the illustration on this page.) The coarse fibers are also made into fireproof jackets and tubes for electric devices.

The ancient Greeks knew the peculiar qualities of this strange mineral, and gave

it the name *asbestos* which means "unburnable." It was occasionally woven by the ancients into handkerchiefs.

Charlemagne, ruler of western Europe, who lived from A. D. 742 to 814, is said to have had a tablecloth of asbestos. When the tablecloth was soiled, it was cleaned by simply throwing it into the fire.

This mineral is obtained from mines in the United States, Canada, and Italy. As more uses are found for asbestos, its value is constantly increasing.



*The brake lining is asbestos.*

#### REVIEW

1. Why is asbestos remarkable?
2. Name some uses of asbestos.
3. Did the ancient peoples know of asbestos?
4. Tell of Charlemagne's tablecloth.
5. Where are asbestos mines found?
6. Have you used anything made of asbestos? If so, what is it?

### THE WORLD'S MOST USEFUL ROCK

ONE of the commonest and most useful rocks is limestone, which is used for building, for road-making, as an ingredient in cement, and for making lime.

Limestone is an aqueous or water-formed rock, formed from the remains of water creatures such as shells of mol-

lusks, coral skeletons, etc.

Chalk is a white soft limestone composed chiefly of the shells of very small animals.

Marble, which is found in the Philippines, is a limestone which has been crystallized under pressure and probably heat.