

in the museums of several of the cities in Italy. The old story of the table cloth of Charlemagne is doubtless familiar to many of you, in which it is stated that he used to draw this cloth from the table, all soiled with the *debris* of his feasts, and in the presence of his guests throw it upon the blazing fire, from which it was soon taken, cleansed from all impurity. This peculiarity, however, probably applies to a cloth made from the true abestus and not from the chrysotile, the difference in which will be pointed out as we proceed, but which varies from the other somewhat in composition. To the former variety, also, probably belongs the garment described in the story so quaintly given in the book by Montpetit, concerning the French *habitant*, in which he relates that at a certain lumber camp in one of our great northern forests, one of the men, newly engaged, upon his return from his day's work in the soft melting snow, when the rest of the crew were gathered about the stove, coolly proceeded to remove his boots, and then his socks which he dashed into the open fire. He, however, speedily extricated his foot gear, now cleansed to immaculate whiteness, and proceeded to dress his feet as if nothing unusual had occurred, a proceeding which, it is needless to say, among a group of people unaccustomed to witness such marvels, resulted in something stronger even than amazement, and with a sudden accession of terror at the presence of a man who could thus perform such miracles with apparently flaming garments, they incontinently fled and left the uncanny stranger undisputed master of the situation, under the impression that he could be no other than the evil one himself. Explanation was of no avail, and the men refused to return to work until the foreman had discharged absolutely the unfortunate wearer of asbestus socks.

Somewhat analogous to this is the story related to me by one of the local managers of an asbestus mine in Coleraine township. This gentleman, also, was the fortunate possessor of a pair of asbestus mittens and under the impression that these were indestructible by fire, and desirous of astonishing the crowd which was gathered around the stove in a county store proceeded to throw one of them into the flames within. The success of the wished for miracle was not, however, equal to his expectation, since upon withdrawing his mitten from the flames, after a short interval, it was found