sphere to become visible as condensed steam, showing the super-heating it had attained to under confinement, and in fact the whole contents of the boiler, water and all, were in some 20 seconds thoroughly cleaned out.

Now, sir, any ordinary sized boiler of say 4 to 6 or more feet in diameter would certainly have burst under the circumstances, and so would this but for the fact that it being but 2 feet in diameter or less and 2½ to 3 feet long, and built of 1-inch boiler plate, it was of course many times stronger than a larger boiler with same thickness of metal.

I have said that when steam forms so quickly—and this it will every now and then do, owing to the sleepiness or forgetfulness of our human nature—yes, when it forms so quick, and even if it overcome the pressure on the so-called safety valve and blow it open, it may, nevertheless, burst the boiler when forming faster than it can flow away by the comparatively tiny opening of the blow-off.

Hence the suggestion I made years ago, and which I now reiterate, of such an enlargement of the valve as shall remove the steam as fast it can possibly be formed under the most favorable conditions for such formation.

I am not a mechanical engineer, or at least do not practice at it as a specialty; but would merely suggest that our "Canadian Society of Mechanical Engineers," or any other, do study up the question as to whether one very much larger escape valve should not be henceforth insisted on. May be, in long boilers of the Cornish type, two such valves or more than two would put a stop to these generally fatal accidents.

CEMENT TESTING.

BY CECIL B. SMITH, MA. E., A. M. CAN. SOC. C.E.

This subject has so often been written on, and is being so continually and persistently investigated, that it forms, as it were, an inexhaustible mine.

But this very feature shows how very important and yet how little understood it is, for, when investigators continue to disagree, the presumption is that there is either a lack of agreement as to the basis on which the investigations are made, or else a failure, up to the present, to solve all the intricate mazes of the problem, or indeed a combination of the two.

The variations in the standard tests in use in various countries are too great to be reconciled, and it is evidently difficult to compare results and a hopeless task to bring them to a uniform standard. What it behooves us, as Canadian engineers, to do is to take such sensible and immediate action on the subject as will commend itself to the good graces of all of us, if possible, or, if not, of a great majority of those who test the manufactured article.

However, before proposing a mode of conducting such tests as will be of practical utility to practical men, the following table is presented as embodying results which have been obtained during the last two sessions (McGill College) in making ordinary commercial, private and student tests (chiefly commercial and private).

Many results have been discarded as being inaccurate, and only those are recorded here which are believed to be very close to the truth, much closer than is ordinarily obtained.

These results have been classified according to country of manufacture, and somewhat on a scale of increasing tensile strength.

^{*}Condensed from a paper read before the Canadian Society of Civil Engineers.

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