

has ever been 'put over' the innocent public," flat slab construction marks a notable step in the development of permanent, fire-safe, economical concrete buildings. It is true that the design of flat slab construction is based largely on empirical rules founded on the results of tests, but any reasonable analysis of a purely mathematical nature does not reveal anything in conflict with these empirical rules. Moreover, designs executed in accordance with them carry a large factor of safety, as is well-proven by the tests themselves. I hold no brief for any of the systems of arrangement of reinforcing in flat slab construction, but the evidence of the dependability and integrity of the general type of construction has been so completely proven that it is really astonishing to read a sweeping attack on it.

In closing I wish to call attention to references made in both Mr. Hagarty's and Mr. Mylrea's letter to failures of concrete buildings. I would like to ask both of these gentlemen, or anyone else who has read these letters, for definite information which they may have relative to the failure of any concrete structure under the load and conditions for which it was designed. It has been my pleasure to investigate some of these so-called failures with the uniform result that the facts indicated extraordinary conditions, or that the structure which failed could not be classed as a real reinforced concrete structure at all.

A. C. IRWIN,
Engineer, Structural Bureau,
Portland Cement Association.

Chicago, Ill., May 22nd, 1920.

PERSONALS

J. C. GWILLIM, Professor of Mining Engineering at Queen's University for many years, has been forced to resign on account of ill-health.

W. P. NEAR, city engineer of St. Catharines, was recently elected chairman of the Niagara Peninsula branch of the Engineering Institute of Canada.

MAJOR ROUNDELL PALMER, late of the Royal Engineers, who has recently been acting as manager of the public utilities of Brockville, Ont., is leaving to take charge of the installation of the Hydro-Electric Commission at Alexandria.

CHARLES J. DES BAILLETS, for the past three years manager and chief engineer of the Gas and Light Department of the corporation of Sherbrooke, Que., has been appointed by the Montreal Water Board as engineer in charge of aqueduct work.

J. W. DORSEY, assistant professor of electrical engineering at the University of Manitoba, has incorporated a company under the name of the Dorsey Electrical Laboratories, Ltd. Prof. Dorsey announced a few months ago that he had discovered a new and cheaper method of transmitting electrical power, but no details of his invention have yet been made public.

H. L. SEYMOUR, assistant to Thomas Adams, housing and town planning adviser to the Dominion government, will soon sever his connection with the government in order to accept an offer of partnership with Frank Barber and R. O. Wynne-Roberts, consulting engineers, Toronto. In his new connection Mr. Seymour intends to link town planning with the firm's other activities.

OBITUARIES

LEWIS BENNETT, for thirty-seven years a contractor in Hamilton, Ont., passed away on May 17th.

ROBERT MACFARLANE, of MacFarlane & Sons, contractors, in business for the past seventeen years in Calgary, Alta., died on May 8th.

DONALD PATTERSON, formerly engineer of Huron County, Ont., died recently at his home near Auburn, Ont., at the age of 70. Mr. Patterson retired as engineer of Huron

County nearly a year ago, after having held that position for 15 years. He was succeeded by his son, Roy Patterson. The late Mr. Patterson was very interested in municipal affairs, and for some years previous to his appointment was a member of the township council.

SOME SALARY!

EVIDENTLY the salary problem is not confined to this continent. A correspondent draws the attention of the editor of "The Electrician" (London), to a recent advertisement in this wise:—

"Mr. J. W. Hame, city electrical engineer of York, wants a mains superintendent, experienced not only in high-tension, alternating current and low-tension direct current cables, but also in the construction and maintenance of overhead transmission lines, and for this experience he is prepared to pay £90 per annum plus the E.P.E.A. Awards.

"Mr. Hame takes the trouble to point out that at the end of four years of presumably satisfactory service this sum would be increased by a further £42 per annum, and I am sure that what is of more interest to your readers is not what is to happen to the successful candidate in 1924, but whether the Corporation would bury his remains—there would not be much, just the bones and perhaps a little skin attached to it—or if the sorrowing widow would have to do that out of his savings. Further, I should like to know what happened to the previous occupant of that lucrative position, and how many men the job uses up in a twelvemonth. They must have a pretty short life, else Mr. Hame would not make such extravagant promises to those who survive a year (just fancy, another four pence a day extra); its worth is but little stimulant to try to keep alive for that.

"Mr. Hame as well as the Corporation of York are members of the I.M.E.A. Does that body approve of such starvation wages and if they do not approve, have they the courage to protest to their members who are bringing them into discredit, and point out that they are not only a danger to the industry, but a disgrace to their Association?

"What have the Associated Municipal Electrical Engineers to say to this? They are trying to get their own salaries put on a proper basis, as at present they are only being paid from two to three times the salaries of their deputies. Electrical engineers are not a superstitious race, but I would remind them of that legend of Ancient Greece which likens retribution to a bloodhound from which there can be no escape, and which sooner or later inevitably overtakes the culprit and those associated with him."

Water from the Assiniboine River is being sterilized by ultra-violet rays for use in the Brandon Hospital for the Insane.

The bill for the licensing of professional engineers and land surveyors in New York State was passed by the legislature April 24th, and signed by the governor May 4th, 1920.

An effective "safety-first" mechanical device that will instantly disengage a drive when the load exceeds a predetermined point, has been developed by the Link-Belt Co. It is known as the "Lettgo" Mechanical Overload Release. It is especially adaptable for elevating, conveying, and power transmission machinery. The "Lettgo" will automatically disengage the driving from the driven machinery if the load exceeds the fixed amount, thus allowing the driving motor or other source of power to run free and prevent damage due to the inertia of the motor armature or other high-speed moving parts. The construction of this device is such that it will release whether the load is gradually or suddenly applied, but it can be set so that it will not trip from jars or shocks. The "Lettgo" is symmetrical, and can be assembled to operate in either direction. It can be adjusted for tension, so that it will operate for any desired overload.