

**TESTS OF BUILDING COLUMNS.**

Fire tests of building columns, being jointly conducted by the Associated Factory Mutual Fire Insurance Companies, the National Board of Fire Underwriters and the Federal Bureau of Standards, at Underwriters' Laboratories, are progressing according to schedule, two columns being tested each week. The work of testing began last summer and will require a year for the completion of the full series of 100 tests. This was preceded by several years' work in designing and erecting the testing apparatus and in preparing and covering the test specimens by the different methods and with the various materials required for a full investigation.

The apparatus used in the tests consists briefly of a gas furnace capable of being controlled according to a specified standard temperature curve, reaching a maximum of 2,300 degrees Fahr. (1,260 degrees Cent.), at the end of an eight-hour test. The load on the columns while being subjected to fire test is supplied by means of a hydraulic ram, an average load of 100,000 pounds being maintained during the test, this being calculated for the various sections according to accepted formulas for working load.

This is the first work of this character ever undertaken employing modern forms of columns and methods of protection, and it is expected that it will develop data of great interest to city governments, underwriters, manufacturers, architects and engineers.

Specifications for columns and column coverings have necessarily been made ever since the advent of modern fire resistive construction, but there has been little or no experimental data as a basis for the various requirements promulgated, which, in point of amount of protection required, differ by more than 100 per cent. as between various city building codes.

It is also thought that the tests will give much information of the general fire-resistive qualities of the covering materials employed. Differences in point of effectiveness of over one hundred per cent. have already been found as between concretes made

from different aggregates, some showing up unexpectedly well and others indicating decided unsuitability for use where the fire-resistive feature is a point of importance.

**FIRES CAUSED BY AIRCRAFT.**

The English courts have recently decided, in a case where it was sought to recover possession of premises on the ground of a breach of covenant by the lessees, that where a lease requires fire insurance to be kept in force in a specified office to a specified amount, that lessees are not under an obligation to insure against fire caused by hostile aircraft. The ordinary fire policy does not, of course, cover this risk, which can be insured against under a Government scheme, as well as with some of the British offices and Lloyds.

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