coal you would not consider it. Yet there are thousands of tons of it being burned, and the manufacturer seems to be willing to pay the price.

In the preceding table the equivalent evaporation in pounds of water from and at 212 degrees Fehrenheit is given as determined in carefully conducted boiler tests on the same boiler. They represent the average of two or more tests under as nearly identical conditions as it is possible to maintain, thus accounting for the closeness of their comparison with the B. t. u. determination. Duplicate boiler tests on the same coal frequently vary five to ten per cent., even though the method of firing and the rate of combustion have changed as little as possible. The chemical analysis and calorimetric determination will represent the value of coal within one per cent., providing the samples are properly taken. The plea for evaporative tests because they are practical is counterbalanced by their failure to burn the coal under equally comparable conditions in two or more cases. A fireman must become accustomed to different coals and find wherein they must be handled differently in the firebox in order to obtain the best evaporation from each. The laboratory tests are generally considered as theoretical and unreliable. But theory and practice always agree when they both represent the facts.

After the most economical coal has been selected, it remains for the manufacturer to see that such coal is delivered. Throughout the year the coal company may send coal of different quality from other mines, or the quality of the coal from the same mine may change, due to impurities encountered in the seam or lack of preparation at the mine. The coal operator may know the change in quality, as many of them follow up their product by chemical analysis and inspection, much more closely than does the purchaser, but it is the manufacturer's place to know what he is getting and prove to the coal company that the coal has changed and that he is not receiving the coal he is entitled to by the contract. The results of an evaporative test mean but little to anyone except the man who conducts them, and apply only to the one plant and set of conditions under which they were made, while the analysis of coal is now on such a standard basis that the results are comparable whether the sample is taken at the mines, en route, or at the destination. There are many analyses published and given out by a large number of coal companies that represent selected samples of the coal from certain parts of the seam that are absolutely valueless as representing the quality of coal actually loaded at their tipple. Such a policy is shortsighted, and is fortunately disappearing, for the consumer is going to find out for himself when the coal reaches his plant, and the comparison of results is generally to the discredit of the coal company. But the person who has suffered the most from this practice is the coal man who does give representative figures, for he is judged by the consumer as also giving fancy results, and allowance is wrongly made for shrinkage. The present day tendency is to buy coal on a B. t. u. basis, adjusting the price for the coal delivered in accordance with its quality. The advisability of carrying this into effect depends upon the tonnage, method of delivery, and difficulty in otherwise obtaining a uniform product. The fact that a coal company knows their coal is being systematically analyzed is generally sufficient to ensure the delivery of coal of uniform quality.

In addition to knowing what is the most economical coal to buy, the manufacturer must know:—

(d) How to convert a large percentage of the heat energy of the coal into useful work. The efficiency of a boiler plant depends primarily upon the completeness of combustion of the fuel and completeness of absorption of the generated heat by the water or steam in the economizer, boiler or superheater. It is impossible to generate into available form all of the heat energy of the coal. Some coal and carbon are lost with the ashes, while combustible gases and carbon in the form of smoke usually escape unburned to a greater or less extent. The loss due to incomplete combustion depends largely upon the design of the grate, furnace, and combustion chamber, as well as the proportionate rate and method of supplying coal and air to the furnace.

There are so many kinds of mechanical stokers, special furnace designs, fuel-saving devices and smoke preventers on the market that the manufacturer is at a loss to know which one would give the best results in his plant or whether it would pay at all to change from the old hand-fired stationary grate. Many people install a certain appliance because it has given satisfaction in some plant known to them. They do not stop to consider that their conditions may be different, they may have a more fluctuating load, it may not do equally well with the coal they want to burn, or they may not have men of the necessary intelligence or experience in their boiler-room to successfully operate the appliance. A mechanical stoker that does very satisfactory work when one kind of coal is being burned may fail when fed with another coal. The fault does not lie in the stoker, but in the judgment of the man who tried to burn a certain coal on it under certain conditions. A man, hand-firing a stationary grate also frequently fails to keep steam with one coal when he could with another. It may or may not be the fault of the fireman, but such difficulty is usually due to his unfamiliarity with the coal, and he tries to fire it in the same manner he has been accustomed to firing the coal he has previously used. If two firemen, one having always burned a good coal that formed practically no clinker, and the other a coal which clinkered badly, should both receive the same kind of coal of medium quality, one might fail to keep steam, and the other would consider that it was of very good quality. In many cases it would pay to make changes in the boiler plant or add more boilers so that the most economical coal could be burned regardless of its quality, as well as to secure as nearly complete combustion as possible.

The question of smoke prevention must receive more consideration from the manufacturer in the future than it has in the past. While it may not be possible or economical to prevent the last traces of smoke, yet there are many stacks in different parts of the country that issue so little smoke that they are not at all objectionable. In most cases where other than anthracite coal is being burned the prevention of smoke has been accomplished by means of furnace design and the method of firing.

After combustion has taken place the heat of the coal appears in the form of sensible heat in the gases leaving the furnace or combustion chamber. The important problem is to cool the gases as much as possible with a minimum of boiler heating surface. In order to accomplish this the heating surface should be kept clean, inside and out. Too much emphasis cannot be put on this point. Combustion is more complete with considerable excess air, but this excess air passing through the furnace reduces the temperature of the gases approaching the boiler and the temperature of the escaping gases remains about the same, so that a larger percentage of the developed heat is lost up the stack. This condition might be compared with a steam engine running with low initial pressure and exhausting against a high back pressure. The amount of air excess is regulated by the intensity of draft and condition of the bed of fuel. Few firemen have ever had the opportunity of learning what was the best thickness of fire or intensity of draft under the conditions existing in their boiler plant when burning a certain kind of coal. Many people think the stronger the draft the better, but there is opportunity to save thousands of dollars every year in many plants by merely reducing the draft or better regulation of it. The installation of a damper regulator is not always the remedy, for they often cause more loss than occurred when hand-regulated dampers were used.

The analysis of the flue gases is the best criterion for regulating the conditions of a furnace so as to obtain nearly complete combustion with a minimum of air excess. The perfecting of automatic gas indicators and recorders will do very much toward increasing the boiler-room efficiency.

No one kind of boilers or heat-absorbing apparatus will give equal satisfaction in all plants. This depends upon location of plant, kind of water, uniformity of load, kind of coal, etc., and must be determined in each individual case.