

POWER NEWS

BUSINESS ITEMS • APPOINTMENTS • FOREIGN FIELDS
WASHINGTON NOTES • NEW DEVELOPMENTS • CONVENTIONS

Progress in Underground Gasification of Coal

► APPROVAL OF A CONTRACT between Bureau of Mines and Alabama Power Co for a second and larger cooperative experiment in underground coal gasification at Gorgas, Ala., was announced recently by James Boyd, director of the bureau. (See POWER, Aug. 1947, p 138, for announcement of first experiment).

The initial joint experiment last summer showed that gases produced by burning unmined coal offer a potential source of fuel for power and raw materials for synthetic liquid fuels. If proven feasible, underground gasification offers possibilities for minimizing expensive mining and for utilizing coal veins difficult or uneconomical to mine.

FIELD TEST COST

Cost of the large-scale field test, including bureau expenditures and those of the company that are reimbursable, is estimated at \$411,000 for a one-year period. Under the contract, the company will provide engineering and operating services on an actual cost basis and will contribute as a site for the experiment some 300 acres of Pratt seam coal, averaging 40 in. in thickness.

Director Boyd estimated the site-preparation work would be completed this fall. At that time, he added, interested persons will be invited to inspect the underground workings before the coal bed is fired for the first experimental run.

Objectives of the experiment are: (1) to determine quantity of coal that can be gasified from a given combustion zone and shape and extent of burned-out area formed (2) to determine whether fixed outlets for product gas are practicable, either at the outcrop of the coal bed or at vertical bore holes. Various designs of inlets, outlets and seals will be tested (3) to determine operating characteristics of the installation under a variety of conditions (4) to determine quality and quantity of product gas generated with an air blast under experimental conditions and,



Construction at British Atomic Research Plant

This effluent farm is being built outside British Ministry of Supply's atomic energy research establishment at Harwell, Berkshire, England. This installation will take care of a million gallons of radio-active water from the research station. The water will be rendered harmless before being returned to the Thames River.

secondly, the quantity of tar and related products obtained (5) to obtain information on effect of heat on overlying strata (6) to obtain fundamental technical and economic information concerning plant sites, installations and operating processes.

EUROPEAN DEVELOPMENTS

Moscow (McGraw-Hill World News): Soviet fuel engineers have "in the main solved the problem of underground gasification of coal," S I Vavilov, president of U.S.S.R. Academy of Sciences, recently stated, adding that "a method for underground gasification of shale is being worked out."

Meanwhile, industrial power experts

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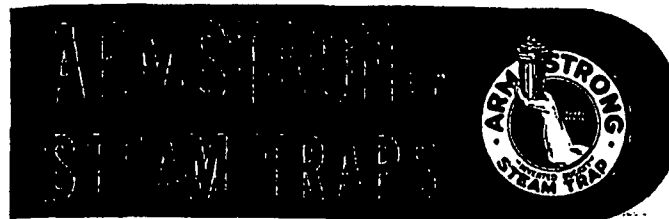
COMING EVENTS

Sept 7-9—American Society of Mechanical Engineers, fall meeting, Reed College, Portland, Ore. Ernest Hardest executive assistant secretary, 29 W 39th St, New York 18, N. Y.

Sept 14-17—New England Water Works Assn, exhibits and technical meetings, Hotel Pennsylvania, New York, N. Y. Arthur T Clark, secretary-manager, Water and Sewage Works Mfrs Assn, 170 Broadway, New York 7, N. Y.

Oct 5-7—American Institute of Electrical Engineers, Middle Eastern district meeting, Hotel Statler, Washington, D. C. H H Henline, secretary, 33 W 39th St, New York 18, N. Y.

Oct 5-7—New England Materials Building Exposition, Mechanics Hall, Boston, Mass. (Continued on page 158)



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