

passage of steam. In addition to these functions, traps are frequently required to allow the passage of air as well as condensate. Traps are also required to allow the passage of air and to prevent the passage of either water or steam, or both.

In addition, traps are used for returning condensate either by gravity, by steam pressure, or by both, to a boiler or other point of disposal, and for lifting condensate from a lower to a higher elevation, or for handling condensate from a lower to a higher pressure.

The fundamental principle upon which the operation of practically all traps depends is that the pressure within the trap at the time of discharge shall be equal to, or slightly in excess of, the pressure against which the trap must discharge, including the friction head, velocity head and static head on the discharge side of the trap. If the static head is in favor of the trap discharge it is a minus quantity and may be deducted from the other factors of the discharge head.

Traps may be classified as to function as *separating* and *return* or *lifting* traps. Traps may be classified according to the principle of operation as (1) float, (2) bucket, (3) thermostatic, (4) tilting, or (5) float and thermostatic traps.

Float Traps. A discharge valve is operated by the rise and fall of a float due to the change of water level in the trap. When the trap is empty the float is in its lowest position, and the discharge valve is closed. A gage glass indicates the height of water in the chamber.

Unless float traps are well made and proportioned there is danger of considerable steam leakage through the discharge valve due to unequal expansion of the valve and seat and the sticking of moving parts. The discharge from a float trap is usually continuous since the height of the float, and consequently the area of the outlet, is proportional to the amount of water present.

Float and thermostatic traps have both a thermostatic element to release air and a float element to release the water.

Bucket Traps. Bucket traps are of two types, the upright and inverted, and although they are both of the open float construction, their operating principle is entirely different. In the *upright bucket* trap, the water of condensation enters the trap and fills the space between the bucket and the walls of the trap. This causes the bucket to float and forces the valve against its seat, the valve and its stem usually being fastened to the bucket. When the water rises above the edges of the bucket it flows into it and causes it to sink, thereby withdrawing the valve from its seat. This permits the steam pressure acting on the surface of the water in the bucket to force the water to a discharge opening. When the bucket is emptied it rises and closes the valve and another cycle begins. The discharge from this type of trap is intermittent.

In the *inverted bucket* trap, steam floats the inverted submerged bucket and closes the valve. Water entering the trap fills the bucket which sinks and through compound leverage opens the valve, and the trap discharges. It is impossible to install a water gage glass on an inverted bucket trap, but if visual inspection is necessary, a gage glass can be placed on the line leading to the trap. No air relief cocks can be used, but this is unnecessary, as the elimination of air is automatically taken care of by air passing through the vent in the top of the inverted bucket regardless of temperature.

Thermostatic Traps. Thermostatic traps are of two types, those in which the discharge valve is operated by the relative expansion of metals, and those in which the action of a volatile liquid is utilized for this purpose. Thermostatic traps of large capacity for draining blast coils or very large radiators are called *blast* traps.

Tilting Traps. With this type of trap, water enters a bowl and rises until its weight overbalances that of a counter-weight, and the bowl sinks to the bottom. As the bowl sinks, a valve is opened thus admitting live steam pressure on the surface of the water and the trap then discharges. After the water is discharged, the counter-weight sinks and raises the bowl, which in turn closes the valve and the cycle begins again. Tilting

traps are necessarily intermittent in operation. They are not ordinarily equipped with glass water gages, as the action of the trap shows when it is filling or emptying. The air relief of tilting traps is taken care of by the valves of the trap.

Thermostatic traps are generally used for draining radiators and heaters, except for very large capacities where bucket, float or blast-type thermostatic traps are used. Thermostatic traps for this service usually pass both condensate and air and in the case of float and upright bucket traps the air is usually relieved through an auxiliary thermostatic trap in a by-pass around the main trap. Sometimes this auxiliary air trap is an integral part of the trap. Such traps are termed float and thermostatic traps.

Blast-type thermostatic traps are sometimes used on vacuum heating systems for connecting old one- or two-pipe gravity systems in parallel with vacuum return line systems, in which case the blast-type thermostatic traps should not be provided with auxiliary air by-pass, as the

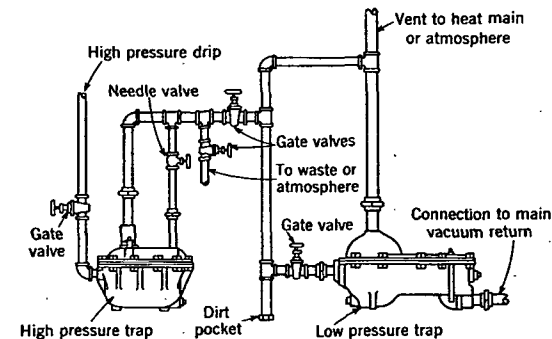


FIG. 21. METHOD OF DISCHARGING HIGH-PRESSURE APPARATUS INTO LOW-PRESSURE HEATING MAINS AND VACUUM RETURN MAINS THROUGH A LOW-PRESSURE TRAP

action of this will allow the vacuum to draw air into the old system through its air valves, especially when the steam is wholly or partially cut off. The air from the returns of such old systems should be relieved just ahead of the traps by means of quick-venting automatic air valves, preferably of the non-return type, especially if the other air valves on the old system are non-return valves.

Return traps used for discharging to a higher or a lower pressure are provided with two or three valves operated by the action of the trap. In the case of the two-valve return traps, one valve closes a steam inlet and the other valve opens a vent outlet while the trap is filling, and as soon as the trap dumps, the first valve opens the steam inlet and the second valve closes the vent outlet, while the trap discharges. In this type of trap there must be a swinging check-valve on each side of the trap, in addition to the usual by-pass, to prevent the pressure in the trap, while discharging, from backing up through the inlet and the pressure in the discharge line from backing up into the trap while it is filling. This