bed and more frequent cleanings to keep its resistance down. Insufficient draft also restricts the control by adjustment of the dampers.

The quantity of excess air present has a marked effect on the draft required to produce a given rate of burning, and it is often possible to produce a higher rate by increasing the thickness of the fuel bed.

Combustion of Anthracite Coal

An anthracite coal fire should never be poked, as this serves to bring ash to the surface of the fuel bed where it melts into clinker.

Grate size anthracite coal is suitable for large grates and for a fuel depth of 20 in. or more. The air spaces are large; the amount of surface in contact with the air is small, and consequently combustion is slow. Lumps of rock or slate, being large, may cause trouble in shaking the grate. On grates 25 in. and under, the fire is likely to go out easily with this fuel, unless mixed with small size coal for reducing the air spaces.

Egg size is suitable for large firepots (grates 25 in. and over) if the fuel can be fired at least 20 in. deep. The air spaces between the pieces of coal are large and normal combustion is slower than with the next smaller size coal. Pieces of rock and slate sometimes may be large enough to cause some trouble in shaking the grate. For best results this coal should be fired deep.

Stove size coal is the popular size of anthracite fuel for most boilers and furnaces used for heating buildings. It is small enough to burn well on 17 in. grates, but large enough so that the draft loss through the fuel bed is not too great. The only instructions needed for burning this type of fuel are that the grate should be shaken before each firing, the fire should never be poked from the top, and the fuel should be fired deeply and uniformly.

Chestnut size coal is in demand for firepots up to 20 in. in diameter, especially those in which the fuel cannot be fired over 15 in. deep. The percentage of ash is usually higher than in stove coal, but the pieces of rock and slate are small and do not interfere with the shaking of the grates.

Pea size coal is often an economical fuel to burn. It is relatively low in price. When fired carefully, pea coal can be burned on standard grates. It is well to have a small amount of a larger fuel on hand when building new fires, or when filling holes in the fuel bed. Care should be taken to shake the grates only until the first bright coals begin to fall through the grates. The fuel bed, after a new fire has been built, should be increased in thickness by the addition of small charges until it is at least level with the sill of the fire door. This keeps a bed of ignited coal in readiness against the time when a sudden demand for heat shall be made on the heater. When firing, the bright fuel should either be pulled forward or pushed to the back of the firepot, leaving a hollow in which to throw the fresh fuel and leaving a portion of the glowing coal exposed to ignite the gases rising from the fuel; otherwise a gas explosion may occur.

Pea size coal requires a strong draft and therefore the best results generally will be obtained by keeping the choke damper open, the cold-air check closed, and by controlling the fire with the air-inlet damper only. Pea size can also be fired in layers with stove or egg size anthracite and its use in this manner will reduce the fuel costs and attention required.

Buckwheat size coal requires much the same attention as pea size coal, except that the smaller size of the fuel makes it more difficult to burn on ordinary grates. Even greater care must be taken in shaking the grates than with pea coal on account of the danger of the fuel falling through the grate. A good draft is required and consequently the fire is best controlled by the air-inlet damper only. Where frequent attention can be given and where there is not a big heat demand, this fuel is frequently burned without the aid of any special equipment.

In general it will be found more satisfactory with buckwheat coal to maintain a uniform heat output and consequently to keep the system warm all the time, rather than to allow the system to cool off at times and then to attempt to burn the fuel at a high rate while warming up. A uniform low fire will minimize the clinker formation and keep the clinker in an easily broken up condition so that it readily can be shaken through the grate.

Forced draft and special grates or retorts frequently are used with this fuel for best results.

No. 2 buckwheat anthracite, or rice size, is used only with forced draft equipment on mechanical stokers. No. 3 buckwheat anthracite, or barley, has no application in domestic heating.

Firing Bituminous Coal

Bituminous coal should never be fired over the entire fuel bed at one time. A portion of the glowing fuel should always be left exposed to ignite the gases leaving the fresh charge.

Air should be admitted over the fire through a special secondary air device, or through a slide in the fire door or by opening the fire door slightly. If the quantity of air admitted is too great the gases will be cooled below the ignition temperature and will fail to burn. The fireman can judge the quantity of air to admit by noting when the air supplied is just sufficient to make the gases burn rapidly and smokelessly above the fuel bed.

The red fuel in the firebox, before firing, excepting only a shallow layer of coke on the grate, should be pushed to one side or forward or backward to form a hollow in which to throw the fresh fuel. (Some manufacturers recommend that all red fuel be pushed to the rear of the firebox and that the fresh fuel be fired directly on the grate and allowed to ignite from the top. The object of this is to reduce the early rapid distillation of gases and to reduce the quantity of secondary air required for smokeless combustion).

It is well to have the bright fuel in the firebox so placed that the gases from the freshly fired fuel, mixed with the air over the fuel bed, pass over the bed of bright fuel on the way to the flues. The bed of bright fuel then supplies the heat to raise the mixture of air and gas to the ignition temperature, thereby causing the gaseous matter to burn and preventing the formation of smoke.

The fuel bed should be carried as deep as the size of fuel and the available draft permit, in order to have as much coked fuel as possible for pushing to the rear of the firebox at the time of firing. A deep fuel bed obtains the longest firing intervals.