

SYMPOSIUM ON METHODS OF TESTING BUILDING CONSTRUCTIONS

INTRODUCTION

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Impetus for the Symposium on Methods of Testing Building Constructions stems from an ever-widening interest in the evaluation or measurement of the performance of building construction and from the complexities which confront the would-be assessors of this quantity. On the one hand, different interest groups need and are using evaluation methods: materials suppliers, for research on the improvement of old materials or the development of new; builders, for economies in material and labor; innovators, for research on new systems; designers, for the substantiation of calculations; and building officials, for code compliance. On the other hand, each may be confronted with one or more conflicting problems: cost *versus* size and number of specimens; size and number of specimens *versus* adequacy of representation; laboratory *versus* field performance; and measured performance *versus* realistic service requirements.

The purpose of this Symposium is to

contribute towards the ultimate resolution of these conflicts by:

1. Examining some philosophical aspects pertinent to measurement and evaluation.

2. Illustrating in some detail a few of the problems attendant to meaningful interpretation of evaluation tests.

3. Pointing out some specific current uses for, and a few limitations of, data from evaluation tests.

4. Publicizing data on field *versus* laboratory or scale testing.

It is hoped that these efforts will serve to stimulate research in many areas:

1. Delinquent areas related to the selection of test specimens and test parameters for evaluation programs.

2. Delinquent areas related to interpretation of test results in terms of realistic design or performance information.

3. The general field of materials utilization and structural systems in building construction.

4. The relation between initial test performance and ultimate maintenance cost.

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