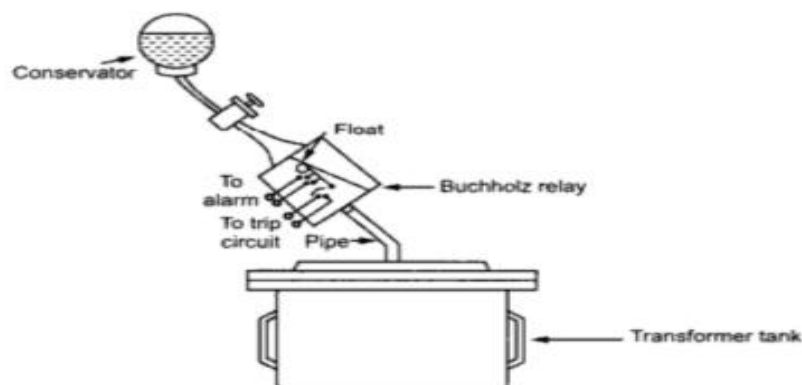

UNIT -2
BUCHHOLZ RELAY

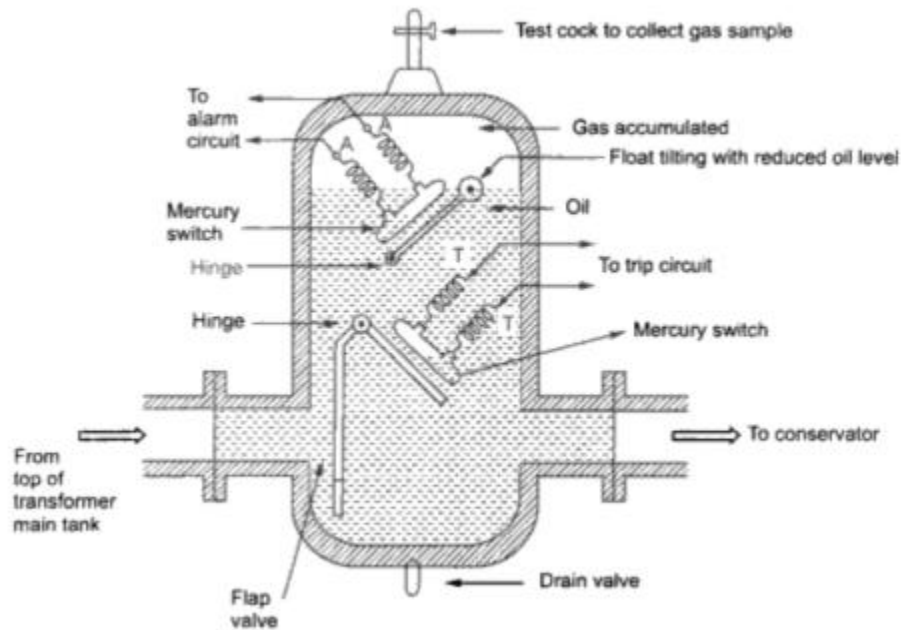
2.8 Buchholz relay

All faults below the oil in transformer result in the localized heating & breakdown of the oil, some degree of arcing will always take place in a winding fault & the resulting decomposition of it will release gases such as hydrogen, carbon monoxide & hydrocarbons.

- When the fault is of a very minor type, such as hot joints gas is released slowly, but a major fault involving severe arcing causes rapid release of large volumes of gas as well as oil vapour.
- Such incipient faults of smaller or larger magnitudes can be detected by a gas actuated relay known as Buchholtz Relay.

The Buchholtz Relay is contained in a cast housing which is connected as shown below between the conservator tank and main tank of the transformer.





Under normal conditions, the Buchholz relay is full of oil. It consists of a cast housing containing a hinged hollow float. A mercury switch is attached to a float. The float being rotated in the upper part of the housing. Another hinged flap valve is located in the lower part which is directly in the path of the oil between tank and the conservator. Another mercury switch is attached to a flap valve. The float closes the alarm circuit while the lower flap valve closes the trip circuit in case of internal faults.

2.8.1 Operation

There are many types of internal faults such as insulation fault, core heating, bad switch contacts, faulty joints etc. which can occur. When the fault occurs the decomposition of oil in the main tank starts due to which the gases are generated. As mentioned earlier, major component of such gases is hydrogen. The hydrogen tries to rise up towards conservator but in its path it gets accumulated in the upper part of the Buchholz relay. Through passage of the gas is prevented by the flap valve.

When gas gets accumulated in the upper part of housing, the oil level inside the housing falls. Due to which the hollow float tilts and closes the contacts of the mercury switch attached to it. This completes the alarm circuit to sound an alarm. Due to this operator knows that there is some incipient fault in the transformer. The transformer is disconnected and the gas sample is tested. The testing results give the indication, what type of fault is started developing in the

transformer. Hence transformer can be disconnected before grows into a serious one. The alarm circuit does not immediately disconnect the transformer but gives only an indication to the operator. This is because sometimes bubbles in the oil circulating system may operate the alarm circuit even though actually there is no fault.

However if a serious fault such as internal short circuit between phases, earth fault inside the tank etc. occurs then the considerable amount of gas gets generated. In that case, due to a fast reduction in the level of oil, the pressure in the tank increases. Due to this the oil rushes towards the conservator. While doing so it passes through the relay where flap valve is present. The flap valve gets deflected due to the rushing oil and operates the mercury switch, thereby energizing the trip circuit which opens the circuit breaker of transformer is totally disconnected from the supply.

The connecting pipe between the tank and the conservator should be as straight as possible and should slope upwards conservator at a small angle from the horizontal. This angle should be around 10° .

For the economic considerations, Buchholz relays are not provided for the transformer having rating below 500 KVA.

2.8.2 Advantages

The various advantages of the Buchholz relay are,

1. Normally a protective relay does not indicate the appearance of the fault. It operates when fault occurs. But Buchholz relay gives an indication of the fault at very early stage, by anticipating the fault and operating the alarm circuit. Thus the transformer can be taken out of service before any type of serious damage occurs.
2. It is the simplest protection in case of transformers.

2.8.3 Limitations

The various limitation of the Buchholz relay are,

1. Can be used only for oil immersed transformers having conservator tanks.
2. Only faults below oil level are detected.
3. Setting of the mercury switches cannot be kept too sensitive otherwise the relay can operate due to bubbles, vibration, earthquakes mechanical shocks etc.
4. The relay is slow to operate having minimum operating time of 0.1 seconds and average time of 0.2 seconds.

2.8.4 Applications

The following types of transformer faults can be protected by the Buchholz relay and are indicated by alarm:

1. Local overheating
2. Entrance of air bubbles in oil
3. Core bolt insulation failure
4. Short circuited laminations
5. Loss of oil and reduction in oil level due to leakage
6. Bad and loose electrical contacts
7. Short circuit between phases
8. Winding short circuit
9. Bushing puncture
10. Winding earth fault.

BUSBAR PROTECTION

The protection scheme for a power system should cover the whole system against all probable types of faults. Unrestricted forms of line protection such as over current and distance systems, meet this requirement, although faults in the Bus bar zone are cleared only after some time delay. If unit protection is applied to feeder and plant the bus bars are not inherently protected. Bus bars have been left without specific protection. Different bus bar faults are as follows.

BUSBAR FAULTS

- Majority of bus faults involve one phase and earth, but faults arise from many causes and a significant number are inter-phase clear of earth.
- With fully phase-segregated metal clad gear, only earth faults are possible ,and a protective scheme need have earth fault sensitivity only.
- For outdoor busbars , protection schemes ability to respond to inter-phase faults clear of earth is an advantage

TYPES OF PROTECTION SCHEMES