

# The News of the Month

**The Wisconsin & Michigan**, a 98-mile road located in northern Michigan, has decided to discontinue operation and is now trying to locate its freight cars now scattered all over the country; 26 box, nine refrigerator, 12 gondola and 214 flat cars.

**The principal railroads of France** on October 25 were authorized to suspend day express trains for 10 days thereafter. This step was made necessary because, in addition to other difficulties of operation, 30 per cent of the engine-men and firemen were suffering from grip.

**The Short Line railroads** have come to an understanding with the Railroad Administration. An informal agreement has practically been reached, between the representatives of the Short Lines and Mr. McAdoo, on a form of contract by which the road would be taken under government control, without compensation. The proposed contract is, however, to be discussed by Mr. McAdoo with President Wilson.

**Indictments have been returned** by the federal grand jury at Chicago, at the instance of the Railroad Administration, against an employee of the Chicago & North Western, who, having in his possession annual passes over about 25 different railroads, had rented their use to a number of business men for extended trips throughout the West. Indictments were also returned against five men who had used the free transportation.

**The Grand Trunk pensioners** retired from service by this railway company of Canada during the past ten years have numbered 1,277, and the company's expenditure in pension payments during that time have amounted to \$2,000,000. On the Grand Trunk, all officers and employees are retired at 65 years, though in special cases, under certain conditions, after 20 years' service, at the age of 60. The minimum pension is \$200 yearly. The basis of the pension, one per cent for each year of continuous service, is calculated on the highest average rate of earnings during any ten consecutive years.

**At the annual meeting** of the Railway Equipment Manufacturers' Association, which was held during the Traveling Engineers' Convention, \$100 was contributed to the Railway Regiments' Tobacco Fund and \$200 to the American Red Cross. During the first day of the convention of the Traveling Engineers' Association, W. E. Brumble, president of the Railway Equipment Manufacturers' Association, presented the Traveling Engineers' Association with a service flag having 20 stars. This flag bears one gold star for Lieut. J. Boyden Russell, who was killed in an aerial bombing expedition on the Italian front.

**The Missouri Supreme Court** holds that a contract wherein a railroad agrees to defray the expenses of construction and operation of "crossing signals and gates" at a crossing of its tracks with those of another railroad does not obligate the former to pay the cost of an interlocking plant. It also holds that where intersecting railroads were ordered by the Public Service Commission to install an interlocking plant, one road having a daily average of 16 trains over the crossing and the other six trains, an apportionment against the latter of 28.6 per cent of the cost of construction and maintenance was reasonable.—State ex rel. Chicago & Alton v. Commission (Mo.), 204 S. W., 531. Decided June 13, 1918.

**The Pennsylvania Railroad** has for many years given careful attention and thought to the question of fitting foreign born employees to become loyal and useful citizens of the United States. Correspondence schools in various towns have been established with the idea of teaching the foreign born employees to think and talk in English. There are now on the Pennsylvania Lines east and west over 33,000 men of foreign birth, which number, however, is much smaller than before the war. Many of these men have taken advantage of the courses offered and have accomplished the results desired. At the present time there are several thousand students enrolled in the various

courses, and in addition to the language courses, instruction is provided in electricity (including elementary mathematics) and in stenography. Numerous safety lectures are conducted solely for the benefit of alien employees and moving pictures are used effectively.

**The London and North-Western** recently presented a check to Signalman W. H. Wright of Colwich, England, in recognition of valuable services rendered on July 17 when a storm damaged the main line of that road at the south end of Shugborough tunnel, between Colwich, Milford and Brockton. An employee of Lord Litchfield noted that considerable damage had been done, whereupon he sent his son to Milford and Brockton station and from there he ran toward Colwich. Before he reached that point, however, Signalman Wright noticed that some was wrong and immediately placed the signals under his control in the danger position, thus bringing to stop an approaching train, which if allowed to proceed would have met with a serious accident. The employees of Lord Litchfield and the son also received rewards for their services. An interesting feature in connection with this instance is that the same man gave warning of similar damage done by a flood in May, 1908, on which occasion he was also rewarded.

**The safety committees** on the Southern Pacific, the Western Pacific, the Tidewater Southern and the Deep Creek have been reorganized by J. H. Dyer, general manager, in accordance with instructions from the director general. The plan of organization calls for 33 safety committees: One general committee composed of general officers at San Francisco, Cal., 12 divisional, four general shop, three local shop, six terminal, five local and one marine committee. Nine of the 12 divisional committees will be on the nine operating divisions of the Southern Pacific, two on the Western Pacific and one on the Tidewater Southern. R. J. Clancy, assistant to the general manager, has been placed in general charge of all committees. In commenting on the safety record of the Southern Pacific during the past 10 years, Mr. Clancy stated that 425,000,000 revenue passengers have been carried 18,000,000,000 passenger miles with a degree of safety equivalent to carrying a passenger a distance equal to 640,000 times around the world without danger of loss of life in train accidents. This, he believes, is the greatest record ever made by any railroad and it is the purpose of the new organization to maintain it.

**The hands of the clocks** throughout the United States were turned back one hour on the morning of October 27, at 2 o'clock, in accordance with the law. The bill which was introduced in Congress by Senator Calder to amend the law and to continue keeping all clocks and watches an hour ahead of time, was passed by the Senate; but in consequence of the numerous objections presented before the House Committee, no action was taken in that body, and the law remains in force. Three different methods were employed by the railroads to rearrange their trains when the clocks were changed. The plan of the New York Central was to start its principal through trains on the evening of the 26th one hour behind time. The Erie and the Lehigh Valley pursued a similar course. The Pennsylvania made no change in trains until 2 o'clock. All regular trains on the road at that hour stopped at the first open telegraph or telephone office and there compared time with the train despatcher; then continued their journey as extras, arriving at subsequent stations one hour ahead of time. On single track lines of the Pennsylvania, all trains were brought to a standstill at 2 o'clock and the men changed their watches; they then proceeded only on a regular order from the train despatcher. The New York, New Haven & Hartford, like the Pennsylvania, ran its through night trains, after 2 o'clock, as extras. The Delaware, Lackawanna & Western proposed to start its trains on time and to hold them one hour at some convenient station about 2 o'clock.