

NEWS of the ...MONTH



Crossing Accidents Analyzed

The Erie Railroad during 1934 recorded 213 grade-crossing accidents, presumably all of them involving automobiles; and this total is 18 per cent greater than the total for 1933. Cases of drivers on the highway crashing into the side of a railroad train continue numerous, and in this last year's record, they constitute 26 per cent of the total; and another 24 per cent (which, being added, makes half of the total) is recorded as cases of cars being stalled on the railroad track before the arrival of any train. A further classification reveals that about two-thirds of these 213 mishaps occurred at crossings where red lights or bells or gates or watchmen furnished special warning to drivers. There were 66 cases where the evidence tended to show that drivers disregarded the signals of watchmen.

Pelley Says Railroads Do Not Need Co-Ordinator

"Since the railroads have established an authoritative organization to manage their own affairs within the industry the office of federal co-ordinator is no longer needed," said J. J. Pelley, president of the Association of American Railroads in a radio address on March 7. Furthermore, he said, "the railroads object to the idea of a federal co-ordinator with power to exercise authority without responsibility in the domain of management."

"All we ask," he continued, "is that Congress and the state legislature give us equality of opportunity in the field of competition with other forms of transportation and also prevent the enactment of burdensome legislation. Given these things, the rising tide of prosperity will find the railroads again on a sure foundation and contributing to increased prosperity through a volume of purchases probably unequalled by any other single industry."

In discussing government regulation of transportation Mr. Pelley contrasted the state of the railways with that of transportation by highway and waterway. Railway rates, he said, are fixed by the Interstate Commerce Commission and subject to change only after 30 days' notice, while highway carriers are free to bargain for traffic by changing their rates without notice. He also pointed out the inequalities

in the taxation of the various transport agencies.

Few Large Systems Favored by Ralph Budd

Consolidation of our railroads into a limited number of systems was advocated as one means of solving the railway problem by Ralph Budd, president of the Chicago, Burlington & Quincy in a recent address at the University of Cincinnati. Since it appears that little can be expected in the way of corporate amalgamations, Mr. Budd advocated the setting up of a small number of railway operating companies, each of which would take over several existing railway properties for operation. Under such a system the owning corporations would be perpetuated but their physical properties would be leased to the operating companies.

Mr. Budd also stressed the need for the regulation of highway carriers and said that the added cost of constructing highways in order to permit them to carry heavy buses and trucks should be assessed so far as possible against the users on whose account it is incurred. In answering railway critics who contend that the railways and their managements are decadent, Mr. Budd cited the tremendous improvements that have been made in the design and construction of motive power and rolling stock and pointed to scientific research along various lines that has been carried out by the railways.

Pennsylvania Increases Signal Maintenance Expenditures

Increased labor and materials to the value of nearly \$7,200,000 were "plowed back" into the upkeep of the roadbed, bridges, buildings, cars and locomotives of the Pennsylvania during 1934 as compared with the previous year. The additional expenditures consisted of \$4,000,000 for maintenance of way and structures, and \$3,200,000 for maintenance of equipment. The increase in the total was 8 per cent, and brought the aggregate maintenance outlay of the year to \$96,600,000. Expenditures for maintenance of way and structures alone increased 15 per cent.

Some of the items upon which the largest additional maintenance expenditures were made during 1934 included in-

creases of \$579,000 for signals and interlockings; \$672,000 for bridges, trestles and culverts; \$279,000 for ties; \$396,000 for rails, other track material and ballast; \$673,000 for track laying and surfacing; \$641,000 for station and office buildings; \$493,000 for shop machinery; \$1,495,000 for steam locomotive repairs; and \$801,000 for passenger train car repairs.

The "400" to Run on 6½-Hr. Schedule

The Chicago & North Western will reduce the running time of its "400" express train between Chicago and the Twin Cities from 7 hr. to 6½ hr. on April 28. Under the new schedule, 5 min. of the cut will be absorbed in the run from Chicago to Milwaukee, where the 85 miles will be covered in 75 min., or at the rate of 68 miles an hour, compared with the present average of 63.8 miles. The remaining 25 min. will be absorbed in the schedule between Milwaukee and St. Paul, where the new schedule will call for an average speed of 63 m.p.h., as compared with the present 57. The trains will continue to leave at 3:30 p.m. but will arrive at 10 instead of 10:30 p.m. This decision to reduce running time is based upon the success of the train in meeting its schedule since its inauguration on January 2. On numerous occasions, the train has had no difficulty in making up delays. An outstanding example occurred during the first part of March when the southbound train covered the 8 miles between Highland Park, Ill., and Indian Hill in 5 min., or at an average of 96 miles an hour.

New "Flying Yankee" in Service April 1

The new streamlined "Flying Yankee," which will be placed in regular service on April 1 by the Boston & Maine and the Maine Central, will be christened on that day by Miss Norma Finnigan of Bangor, Me., 18-year-old granddaughter of Irving H. Turner, veteran Maine Central engineer, who for many years handled the throttle of the steam-propelled "Flying Yankee" on the Portland-Bangor section of its run over the Maine Central. The christening will take place at Portland Union station and Miss Finnigan will fly

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