
Week's Events

Commonwealth Edison to Tie-In With Hydroelectric System—General Electric Wage Dispute Settled—Other News

COMMONWEALTH EDISON SYSTEM TO TIE-IN WITH HYDROELECTRIC SYSTEM.

Sanitary District to Operate in Parallel With Fisk, Quarry and Northwest Stations as War Measure.

What is perhaps one of the most interesting instances of interconnection of electricity supply systems is that now in the embryo stage in Chicago. The Commonwealth Edison Company and the Sanitary District are about to ratify an agreement by which the two systems are paralleled for interchange of energy. The contract has been drawn up and accepted by the Sanitary District and it now remains for the Commonwealth Edison Company to accept the terms.

Under the contract, which is binding only for the duration of the war, the unused hydroelectric power of the Sanitary District's 32,000-kilowatt hydroelectric plant at Lockport is to be made available for use by the Commonwealth Edison's system. This means that the Commonwealth Edison Company will be able to bank fires a little earlier and keep them banked a little later in some instances, allowing the hydroelectric plant at Lockport to carry load otherwise carried by the Commonwealth Edison Company's generating plants. The times when this will occur will be during the noon-hour slump, in the early morning hours, on Saturday afternoons possibly and during parts of Sundays. The service will be what the English have come to call "week-end" service, since the war. The intention is to enable the Sanitary District to supply hydroelectric energy when it has it to spare, thereby saving coal.

It is estimated that the coal saved will approximate 150 tons per diem, equivalent to about 55,000 tons of coal saved per annum, a comparatively small amount compared with the Commonwealth Edison's total annual coal consumption, but a goodly saving when placed upon a car-load basis. The price to be paid for energy by the Commonwealth Edison Company to the Sanitary District will be that equivalent to the cost of coal required were the energy obtained from the company's steam stations. With this arrangement the Sanitary District expects to obtain a revenue of about \$450 per day, representing an income otherwise unobtainable with its existing load-factor and connected load. Physical interconnection is thus seen to be quite beneficial to the hydroelectric system. As concerns the Commonwealth Edison Company, the interconnection is of small if any benefit financially, but the moral is important, and the company has realized the necessity of doing everything in its power to save the nation's coal. The present instance is a good one of where two electricity supply systems, rivals and yet not exactly competitors, have connected their systems together, to good advantage of the one, of small if any gain to the other, as an act of patriotism and to help win the war. The cost of the physical connection of the two systems, to be borne by the Sanitary District, is estimated to be in the neighborhood of \$7500.

ELECTRIFICATION PROGRESSES RAPIDLY ON MILWAUKEE & ST. PAUL RAILWAY.

Work Being Pushed on 200 Miles of Electrified Line in State of Washington.

Electrification of the Chicago, Milwaukee & St. Paul Railway's lines through the Cascade Mountains from Othello in Eastern Washington to Seattle and Tacoma, a little more than 200 miles, has progressed in such a satisfactory manner that service may be expected in less than one year. The eight substations are almost completed and by the end of August will be in a position for installation of electrical apparatus. These substations, each with three bungalows for housing the operating employes, will cost completed about \$200,000 apiece. The trolley, transmission and other copper wires are to be drawn at a new wire mill, constructed by the Anaconda Copper Company at Great Falls, Mont. Delivery of electric locomotives will be made in the spring of 1919 and these will be given trial in the present electrified zone in Montana. They will cost about \$200,000 each. The entire cost of the more than 200 miles between Othello and Seattle and Tacoma will be about \$9,500,000. With the present stretch of 441 miles in Montana and Idaho, this will complete close to 650 miles of electrical operation of this railway's system.

COST DATA COMPILED THROUGH LABOR COST COMMITTEE.

Report Presented at Cleveland Convention of National Association of Electrical Contractors and Dealers Arouses Much Interest—Credit Due to Labor Cost Committee.

At the recent convention held in Cleveland by the National Association of Electrical Contractors and Dealers, as was reported in our issue of July 27, the paper that aroused probably the greatest interest and discussion was that giving a report on labor costs. This paper, which was reprinted substantially in full in our issue of July 27, pages 125-131, was read by John R. Smith, secretary of the Electrical Estimators' Association, which had compiled the data at the suggestion of the Labor Cost Committee of the National Association.

Directly after the New Orleans convention held last October, J. N. Pierce, of Chicago, was appointed chairman of the Labor Cost Committee. In considering what the report of the committee should be at this year's annual convention, Mr. Pierce brought to the attention of the committee the work being done by the recently organized Electrical Estimators' Association and he convinced the committee that the data being gathered by the estimators, which were based on the actual experience of leading contracting firms, were probably of more value than any that had heretofore been presented to the national body. Consequently, he