

METHODS OF HANDLING TOOL AND MATERIAL SUPPLY TRAINS FOR RAILWAY MAINTENANCE WORK.*

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order and the arrival of the supply cars, so that this trip is not only to deliver material but is one of a monthly inspection by the officer in charge of the division with his assistants. The turning in of old tools and material for the new is carried out and followed rigidly, even in the case of material which is not further usable. Every third month the branch line, about eighty miles in extent, is gone over. Every pound of scrap is picked up and when the supply cars arrive at Yuma, the western terminus, the superintendent is satisfied that the division has been thoroughly cleaned of scrap and is in absolutely first-class working order as to tools and material necessary to do first-class work, and also that every man has been correctly paid.

When these supply cars were first instituted so many track tools were collected that scarcely a new track was ordered for nearly two years. Hand cars are also picked up on this trip and left at Tucson, the division headquarters on the trip west, unloaded and repaired. The car with the second-hand tools is also set out, all tools being immediately repaired and all shovels rehandled in the shops, so that with but very little addition of new tools the same tools picked up one month are repaired and given out the following month. Thus the only charge made against operating accounts for this class of material is that of labor and what material is required to repair such tools. With the derrick car all frogs in need of repair, as well as hand cars, are loaded, and almost every trip during the past four or five months there have been picked up wrecked cars, etc., which in each case means the saving of sending the 100-ton derrick and crew to the scene of the wrecked car. The trucks are previously separated by a couple of car men sent out for this purpose on passenger trains in advance. The saving in the operation of the supply cars cannot be correctly estimated, they being so diversified and so many. Following are some of the things they eliminate:

They have reduced O. S. and D. reports on damaged and company freight 95 per cent. They save local freight crews handling this class of supplies, which almost invariably means overtime to them. They save revenue trains handling this class of freight. They save local freight trains from being burdened with a lot of material sent in haphazard from sections and stations from month to month for repairs. They save the loss and leakage of oils on shipments made by local freight and consequent damage to commercial freight, which is often loaded along with company supplies. They pick up all the scrap and get it to the mills, instead of leaving it for the roadmaster to drift a car, which is handled by local trains, set out at station after station, and then the scrap is only half picked up. They reduce complaints from section men and others as to non-receipt of material, as their receipts for material delivered on their requirements are secured.

Before the advent of the supply cars the Southern Pacific Co. ran a scrap train with an extra crew over this division. Upon arrival at Yuma, the western terminus, there had been picked up forty-four carloads of scrap. This was the result of not running a supply and scrap train, but leaving it to drift cars. One may think this a rather bad condition of affairs, but it is safe to say that a great many railroad companies not operating supply cars can do this very thing right now. The Tucson division now averages about ten to twelve car loads of scrap per month, representing all

kinds of scrap and second-hand material, and it is surprising where it all comes from, as it often looks as though section men were digging up scrap buried years ago by their predecessors. The Los Angeles division, several years ago, ran a strictly scrap train once only. It took about three months to complete the division, including all branches, and the value of this train figured over \$40,000, the operating accounts being credited with that amount.

The tanks in the oil car in this supply car equipment are piped with air pressure drawn from the train line, so it is not necessary to have oil pumps. Oil for the next station deliveries is drawn into oil cans and receptacles between stations.

The division superintendent feels that only by accompanying the monthly supply cars and noting conditions, can an approving officer be qualified to correctly sign these monthly requisitions for material. There was considerable antagonism against the supply cars when they were first inaugurated, but section foremen and roadmasters would now be a unit in opposition against their discontinuance, and they were the ones who looked upon it with suspicion and distrust when first inaugurated. The inspection given by the superintendent and his assistants has had a wonderful effect on the general appearance and tidiness of tool houses, as there was a time when each section man had so much miscellaneous material in these tool houses that they had hardly room enough to get their hand cars inside, and they were still ordering material, which they had buried under sacks of spike hole plugs, etc. The inspection of section men's tool houses and their equipment, as one feature only, is a commendation to the supply cars.

In the interim between the monthly trips, a semi-monthly trip is made to the roundhouses and car shops, where the sub-stores are located. The supply car storekeeper takes their supplies with him on this trip. He goes over their stock where necessary, by checking up their stock books, helping them where necessary to get their stock in order, tag and properly mark it, take away surplus material and give them what they need. The supply car storekeeper is responsible for the general appearance of these outside stores. He sees that all bad order wheels are promptly shipped in to the division store, where they can be worked over; takes a check of baggage trucks and warehouse trucks at each station, and he also makes a trip over the branch every thirty days, though not at the time when the regular monthly main line trip is made.

All scrap is loaded at district terminals before the arrival of the supply cars by section yardmen, and it is only necessary at such points to switch the cars into the supply train. At Tucson all these cars of scrap are gone over carefully, good second-hand material picked out, the scrap being shipped on to the mills. This sorting over and shipping are also done at Yuma.

By Mr. C. H. Rost.†

On the road with which I am connected there are operated four cars, consisting of: 1. A car with necessary shelves for miscellaneous material and supplies for all departments. The car is arranged with ample space to provide sleeping accommodation for attendants. 2. A car with necessary racks and shelves in one end for roadway tools, in the other end floor space for spikes and track bolts. 3. A car with

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