

TRANSMITTING POWER BY ELECTRICITY TO SHOP TOOLS.

A committee of one, and a very strong one, has been appointed by the Railway Master Mechanics' Association to investigate and report upon the subject of transmitting power by electricity in railway shops. This is a very reasonable subject, for while a few of our more enterprising superintendents of machinery are applying electric motors to their principal shop tools and thereby effecting a decided saving of expense, the majority are holding off for the purpose of obtaining more information concerning the value of electrical motors. We are no doubt, says Railway and Locomotive Engineering, but the report of the committee referred to will have the effect of convincing many of the doubting Thomases that electrical motors are perfectly reliable.

Meanwhile we would advise those who are anxious to adopt electric motors and are hanging off on the edges of two opinions to read a paper on the "Influence of Electric Transmission Upon Workshop Expansion" read at the last meeting of the American Society of Mechanical Engineers.

This paper states briefly and comprehensively a number of the most important advantages of electricity as motive power, not only where the future of the installation cannot be foretold, but where the gradual development of a plant or system of workshops may be in contemplation.

Future areas of power may be planned and arranged with the utmost freedom and entirely irrespective of power considerations. They can be located as desired, on separate floors, in various departments or in detached buildings. Original provision for prospective development is not necessary in the electric system, but is required by shafting transmission. There is no expense for contemplated additions till they are actually installed as required.

Permanent additions to the electric generating plant and the distributing system are made with a gradual and pro rata outlay of capital, instead of in disproportionate blocks of new equipment, as required by mechanical transmission.

Extensions of electric transmission and new centers of power distribution may be established at any time and of reasonable capacity, anywhere and at any distance, at minimum cost for labor and material. There is no crowding, overloading, or interference with existing conditions, or with the daily progress of routine work. Temporary extensions to meet sudden demands for power at any point are quickly made by running to the desired location electric wires or cables. These are easily removed when no longer required and as readily used elsewhere for similar purposes. The shifts are made with the least expense of time and labor in handling, and with no accompanying waste of material to suit different conditions.

Auxiliary power is always at hand for emergencies and to almost any reasonable extent, on account of the reserve nature of the electric supply.

On a number of creosoted beech railway sleepers laid on two railways in Elsass-Lothringen in 1868-69, about 86 per cent. were in use as late as 1897. In the Eberfeld district only 13 per cent. had to be renewed after thirty years' service; these were impregnated with a mixture of creosote and zinc chloride. On the Eastern of France Railway, after twenty-one years' service only 6.4 per cent. of beech-creosoted sleepers required renewal, as against 26.7 per cent. creosoted oak sleepers and 52 per cent. untreated oak sleepers.

LUMBERMEN AT THE FAIR.

The employees of the W. C. Edwards' saw mills at Rockland, accompanied by their wives, again this year visited the Central Canada Fair at Ottawa. The visitors, numbering about 800, were taken to the Capital on a special train at the expense of the Company. The latter also stood the cost of admission to the fair grounds. A general holiday was proclaimed at the mills, and all took advantage of this fact to take in the fair. This is the third year Mr. Edwards has provided this treat.

The St. John Ship Laborers' Society have decided to accept an offer made by William Thompson & Company to give them employment on three lines of steamers at the same rate of wages and conditions as last season, namely, 30 cents an hour.

The shingle mill burned at Marble Cove, N.B., last month was built in 1890 by the late Robert Roberts, and is now controlled by the sons of deceased, who, during the winter, carry on a general contracting business.

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