News of the Week

Increase of Wages.

The Georgia Railway & Electric Company of Atlanta, Ga., has announced an increase in wages for its conductors and motormen, to take effect on September 1. The new scale is 16 cents an hour for the first six months of service, 17 cents an hour for the second six months, 18 cents an hour for the second year, 20 cents for the third year, 21 cents for the fourth, and 22 cents for the fifth year. Under the old scale the men received 16 cents an hour for the first year and 1 cent additional for each succeeding year, including the fifth.

The Consolidated Railway of New Haven, Conn., has announced a new schedule of wages for conductors and motormen as follows: Twenty-one cents an hour for the first year, 21½ cents for the second, 22 cents for the third, 23 cents for the fourth, 24 cents for the fifth, and 25 cents thereafter. Overtime will be paid for at the rate of 30 cents.

Belmont Tunnel Bore Inspected.

On August 14 St. John Clarke, chief engineer of the New York & Long Island Railroad, who for two years has directed the engineering work of the tunnel built by this company under the East river from Forty-second street, Manhattan, to Long Island City, led a party through the bore. He was accompanied by A. A. Robins, principal assistant engineer, and by Robert Shailey, engineer for the Degnon Construction Company, and these gentlemen piloted a party of three professors and 25 students of Columbia University and an equal number of newspaper reporters. The contracting company expects to turn the finished tunnel over to the railroad company in October. The interesting feature of this tunnel is that the third rail will be located overhead. The tunnel will be operated by the Interborough Rapid Transit Company.

Connecticut Electric Railways.

The recent session of the Connecticut legislature granted charters of incorporation to 13 street railway companies, which are authorized to issue capital stock to an aggregate amount of approximately $8,000,000. The capitalization ranges from a minimum of $50,000 to a maximum of $200,000. Nearly all the resolutions of incorporation were vetoed by Governor Woodruff, but the general assembly, with one or two exceptions, promptly passed the measures over the executive veto. The governor's vetoes were based upon the contention that the charters permitted stock watering and also that they contained no requirement that the capital stock should be sold for cash. The argument of the legislature, in overruling the vetoes, was that it would be impossible to secure the building of rural electric railways unless promoters were allowed to offer stock bonuses and that the state should not impose on new street railway companies restrictions that were not enacted on those chartered heretofore.

The principal companies which were chartered are the Bridgeport & Danbury, the Danbury & New Milford, the Danbury & Northern, the Meriden & Guilford, the Norwich Colchester & Hartford, the Orange Street Railway, the Putnam & Rhode Island, the Waterbury & Milldale, the Windsor Locks & Western Street and the Windsorville & East Hartford. These franchises are scattered throughout the state and they authorize the construction of several score of miles of additional rural lines.

Cleveland Traction Situation.

The Cleveland Electric Railway Company on August 13 sent a communication to City Solicitor Baker asking him to apply for an injunction against the execution of the contract which the Forest City Railway curative ordinance, passed by the city council on August 3, attempts to create between the city and the company. The curative ordinance, as described in last week's issue of the Electric Railway Review, re-enacts and regrants to the Forest City Railway all the franchises previously granted, whose validity has been attacked because of Mayor Johnson's financial interest in the company. In securing the passage of the ordinance the company stated that the mayor's obligations had been entirely canceled. The Cleveland Electric Railway, in its communication to the city solicitor, charges that the passage of the ordinance was an abuse of corporate power and that the contract thereby created was made in contravention of the laws of the city and was procured by fraud. Eleven reasons are given to show that the ordinance is illegal, chief of which are that the ordinance was passed in an irregular manner and was not properly published; that the ordinances which it seeks to amend are void because of the mayor's financial interest in the company, and consequently its passage was an attempt to ratify previous void action of the council; that its passage was procured by Mayor Johnson; and that the consents of property owners were not secured.

The Cleveland Electric Railway has been active in securing consents on the streets in question while the Forest City attorneys have gone on the assumption that they were unnecessary. The ordinance went into effect on August 15, and it was expected that the controversy between the companies would come to a head at that time if the Forest City attempted to operate its cars on any of the streets occupied by the Cleveland Electric.

Will Not Use Storage Batteries for Lighting.—L. W. Jacques, master mechanic of the Ft. Wayne & Wabash Valley Traction Company, Ft. Wayne, Ind., advises us that there is no truth in the recent reports that this company was planning to install storage batteries on its cars for lighting.

Interurban Lines to Report.—The Indiana railroad commission is preparing a blank upon which the interurban lines of the state will be asked to make their annual report to the commission. The system of accounting formulated by the American Street and Interurban Railway Accountants' Association will be used.

Eight-Car Trains for Boston Elevated.—The Boston Elevated Railway Company has filed with the Massachusetts railroad commission a petition asking for permission to run eight-car trains when the new Washington street tunnel is completed. The company is now running five-car trains. The change will necessitate the lengthening of every station platform along the line.

Electricity for the St. Paul Road.—It is reported from Spokane, Wash., that the Chicago Milwaukee & St. Paul Railway is planning to develop hydro-electric plants along the St. Joe river in northern Idaho for the operation of its trains across the Bitter Root mountains and possibly on the entire line between Missoula, Mont., and the coast. It is stated that several sites have been acquired and that three dams will be built at once, one with a height of 86 feet.

False Representations of Employes Cause Arrest.—Harry Stuckey and Harry H. Hill, employes of the Rochester (N. Y.) Railway Company, have been arrested on the charge of obtaining employment by false representations. The arrest is the outcome of an investigation made by W. C. Callaghan, superintendent of transportation, which disclosed that the men had been employed in Altoona, Pa., and in Baltimore, where they were discharged. They made sworn statements to the Rochester company that they had never before been employed by a railway. The case has been adjourned until August 21.

New York Commission Inspects Electric Zone.—The members of the New York public service commission of the second district on August 6 made a trip of inspection over the electrically equipped division of the New York Central & Hudson River Railroad. Under the law the second district commission has authority over through lines and matter pertaining to through traffic, even within the limits of the first district or Greater New York. The commissioners traveled over the electric zone in a special train, accompanied by W. J. Wilgus, vice-president; A. H. Smith, general manager; G. Van Tassel, trainmaster of the Harlem division; and A. R. Whaley, general superintendent of the electric division.

Complaint Against New York Central Suburban Service.—The Bronx Civic League has sent a communication to the New York public service commission complaining of the small number of local trains operated and and the high rate of fare charged by the New York Central, the New York & Harlem and the New York & Putnam railroads, and asking the commission to compel the roads to increase their service and reduce the rate of fare. It is asserted that the New York Central operates only 52 local trains each way during 24 hours, the New York & Harlem Railroad, 49 local trains, and the New York & Putnam Railroad, 41. It is stated that the needs of the local patrons have been sacrificed to the through traffic and it is claimed that if they were "properly operated" they would add largely to the transit facilities of the Bronx and practically solve its transportation problem.

Louisville Railway Franchises Attacked.—Robert F. Weimer of Louisville, Ky., on August 7 filed a suit in the circuit court against the Louisville Railway Company attacking the validity of the company's franchises to operate in Market, Eighteenth, Preston and Shelby streets, and seeking to enjoin the company from operating lines over those streets or allowing its tracks to be used by the Louisville & Interurban Railroad. The plaintiff holds that these franchises expired in 1896 and that the streets are consequently wrongly held by the company; that the rights are worth $1,500,000 and