

THE ELEVATED NEWS

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Reasons for Certain Operating Details

A PATRON of the Elevated Lines writes that he reads with keen interest the explanation of some operating details which appear in THE ELEVATED NEWS. In his letter, he says:

I was interested in your explanation of why the lights flash on and off. I had often wondered why the trolley was continued north of Wilson avenue after the tracks were elevated and the only reason I could assign—now laugh—was that wire was cheaper than rails. I have often wondered about other things and others may have. Maybe you will tell readers of THE ELEVATED NEWS why:

They always use the all-steel cars and no others on the Kenwood-Ravenswood line.

And the South Side cars and no others on the Wilson-Englewood line.

Why, if it is all one organization, do they still label the cars "South Side," "Northwestern," "Metropolitan," and "Oak Park?"

As in all other details of operation there is a good reason for each of the practices which this correspondent asks about and we are glad to explain them.

The steel cars used on the Kenwood-Ravenswood line are not equipped for overhead operation, as the patron may observe by noting the absence of trolley poles. For that reason the cars must be used on a branch on which there is a third rail all the way. It is true that all the steel cars are not motor cars and the trailers might be used between the ordinary wooden coaches on some of the other lines, but were that done, wooden cars would have to be used in the Kenwood-Ravenswood service, and there would be no advantage

gained. It so happens that the number of steel cars coincides with the number of cars needed on that particular line, so it was considered advisable to keep them all together and give greater uniformity.

The answer to the first inquiry largely answers the second. When through-routing of trains between the Northwestern and South Side lines was inaugurated in 1913, it was found that all the Northwestern cars were equipped for both overhead trolley and third rail operation, while none of the South Side cars were so equipped. Therefore, all the Northwestern motor cars were needed for the Jackson Park-Wilmette service and the South Side cars were put into service on the Wilson-Englewood and Jackson Park-Wilson avenue local service, where no overhead trolley equipment is required.

As to the third question, the original names remain on the cars to indicate the legal owners. As Metropolitan cars operate only on the lines of that company and Oak Park cars operate only on that line, no advantage would be gained in changing the names. On the Northwestern-South Side lines where cars are interchanged to give the public the benefit of through operation, the particular route and character of service is plainly marked on each train and that is all the passengers are interested in. The roads are known to patrons by their distinctive names and to change them would probably be confusing to some, while it would not benefit anyone.

Overlooking the implied sarcasm about trolley wire being cheaper than third rail, we might say that computed over a number of years, equal to the life of a third rail, the overhead trolley is the more expensive form of construction. The initial cost of installation of trolley is less, but the saving is more than absorbed by the higher cost of maintenance, when carried over a period of years. Another, and more important factor is, that third rail operation is more reliable. In spite of the most careful supervision, trolley poles will sometimes leave the wire and tear down cross wires, thus causing delay. No such trouble is experienced with the third rail, so that is preferable from the standpoint of giving the public safe, reliable service.

Elevated Employes As Public Spirited Citizens

PATRONS of the Elevated Railroads know that the trainmen are courteous and obliging to passengers, but many times they perform other public services which never become known outside the superintendent's office.

It is a rule on the Elevated that an employe observing some unusual occurrence along the road should make a report of it. If it causes a slight delay, a report is positively required. These reports turned in as a part of the day's work, frequently contain little stories of great human interest. For instance, here is a verbatim report made

by a motorman: "On my 2:51 a. m. trip out of Jackson Park I noticed a fire in a building close to the structure at 35th street station. There didn't seem to be any one around, so I told the conductor to call the fire department, which he did. I blew my whistle to wake anyone who might be in danger. A work train that was working between 33rd and 31st streets came up later also blowing a whistle. As the firemen arrived about the same time, I proceeded after a delay of about five minutes."

That is the whole report. The motorman turned it in at the end of his run, to explain the slight delay and never gave it another thought. But doesn't it contain a fine human interest story? It happened around 3 o'clock in the morning when the big city was asleep. That fire endangered human lives. There is no written rule which required that motorman to stop his train and give the alarm. But in his heart he felt the urge to do a good act and be of some service to his fellows. The fact that they were strangers to him made no difference. They were human beings and they were in danger. He did what he could for them.

The crew on the work train some distance away heard the motorman blowing his whistle and at once proceeded to the scene to render assistance if it were needed.

Reports of a similar nature are turned in almost daily. They show the character of the men employed on the elevated roads. The employees not only look after the welfare and comfort of the passengers on their trains, for whose safety they are responsible, but their watchful eyes guard the city when it is asleep. They are deserving of the good wishes of the public.

Has Chicago Less "Pep" Than New York?

IN the July issue of THE ELEVATED NEWS there appeared an editorial giving the views of a transportation engineer on the relative speed with which passengers get on and off cars in New York and in Chicago. The evidence seemed to indicate that Chicago passengers lacked the "pep" of New Yorkers.

One Chicago observer appears to agree with the transportation engineer as the following letter shows:

I read your editorial in the July number of THE ELEVATED NEWS on the subject "Has Chicago Less Pep Than New York?"

Just how things move in New York at the present time on the elevated, I do not know, but the people can hardly move any slower than they do here. I ride often on the elevated trains and from observation it seems to me the people who use the elevated lines in Chicago move very slowly in getting on and off trains. Some people move so slowly, one almost feels like giving them a push to hurry them up.

People get their minds trained for slow action, so their bodies move the same way and their legs also. There is no reason why

this should be the case in a stirring city like Chicago. People will not hurry up unless you make them, because they have got accustomed to moving slow.

It takes some people a long time to find out where they want to sit when they get on an elevated train, so that those behind have to wait until they have made up their minds. You would think some of the people were going on a long journey and should have some special seat to sit in.

Such people are a nuisance because the way some of them act you would think they had all day to decide where they want to sit in a car and they need to be pushed along. I am speaking of cases where there is no crowd getting on the trains but only a few people and in such cases they move slowly and think only of themselves and not of how they should get on a train, nor how long the train has to wait. Sometimes the conductor asks the people to move quickly but that does not seem to hurry them up any.

—J. C. Warbrick, M. D.

Perhaps Dr. Warbrick might be able to give a scientific explanation to prove the truth of his observations. Why do Chicago people move slower than the people in New York? It cannot be due to the climate, for Chicago has the finest climate in the country, California real estate boosters to the contrary notwithstanding. It must be that Dr. Warbrick refers particularly to women passengers. Our own observation is that during the rush hours, the men—especially young men—move pretty fast. You see the young men have to push a lot of women out of the way so they can beat them to the empty seats. After they are comfortably seated and the women passengers have taken straps, the young men seem to lose a lot of the “pep” displayed in entering the car. In fact many of them appear so overcome with the exertion that they promptly go to sleep, or pretend to. That saves them from having to look at the standing women. A check made on an elevated train during the rush hours will show invariably about six times as many men seated as women. Yes, Chicago men show considerable “pep” in boarding trains and getting to the seats ahead of the women.

IT HAPPENED ON THE “L”

AT Marshfield Junction a dignified looking gentleman paced the station platform excitedly, gazing on the tracks and calling loudly for help. Train-master Bob Parkinson was attracted by the man's distress signals, but could not see anything on the tracks to cause excitement.

A train came out of the station and the man's uneasiness increased. He appeared to be in a fainting condition and Parkinson hurried to his side. The man

pointed to what seemed to be a brief case lying on the tracks. Parkinson recovered the case and handed it to the gentleman who fervently ejaculated, “Thank the Lord for that.”

Supervisor Hanson who witnessed the incident said to the man: “You seemed so excited, you must have dynamite or T. N. T. in that case.”

“No,” replied the gentleman, “Good Old Taylor,” and he smiled contentedly as he hugged the brief case to his side.

SEMI-CENTENNIAL OF CHICAGO FIRE

The semi-centennial of the great Chicago Fire, which occurs on October 9 of this year, will be celebrated in Chicago by an extensive program being arranged under the direction of the Association of Commerce, in which all organizations of the city are being invited to join.

The chief feature of the observance will be a festival play relating Chicago's history from the days of the French missionaries and explorers, Marquette and Joliet, in 1673, down to the present, and presenting in its last scene a vision of what Chicago may be fifty years hence.

Other incidents in the city's history which are shown in the play are Fort Dearborn in 1803 and the massacre in 1812; the last Indian treaty in 1833 and a Potawatomie war dance in South Water street in 1835; the Civil War Days and the troops leaving for the front, with the crowds in the streets celebrating the Union victory at Fort Donelson; the great fire itself, in 1871; the World's Fair in 1893; the days of the World War and the return of the victorious legions of America.

More than 2,500 actors will take part in the play, with a chorus of from 500 to 1,000, and an orchestra of sixty pieces. The scenario and book of the play were written by Wallace Rice, the music by Edward Moore, musical critic of the *Chicago Tribune*, and the play will be directed by Donald Robertson. It is to be given in a great stadium to be built in Grant Park, and admission will be free to school children for at least three days. An admission charge of from fifty cents up will be made to the general public on other days. The play will be presented from Oct. 3 to 15.

The Association of Commerce is planning several other features for the two weeks of the celebra-

tion. It is hoped to make the period a "Home-Coming Time," when former residents of Chicago will come back for visits. It has been suggested that residents of the city who have friends or relatives who are former Chicagoans write them to come back during these two weeks.

Neighborhood organizations, such as community clubs, women's clubs, merchants' associations and others are planning special programs, and there will be special exercises in all the schools, as well as services in the churches.

A "better citizenship" campaign is another feature which the association is conducting. Pledge cards on which the signer agrees to take a more active part in the affairs of the city by voting at all elections have been distributed through clubs, business houses, churches and other organizations, and the association is trying to get 500,000 signatures to these cards before the semi-centennial celebration comes to an end.

The gospel of public safety, particularly fire prevention, will also be preached during these two weeks in various ways. The Chicago Fire was the greatest object lesson in the danger of carelessness that the world has ever known, and the anniversary of the fire, Oct. 9, has come to be generally known in practically every state of the Union as "Fire Prevention Day."

HOW TO SAVE TIME

By L. E. Vated

IT was a delightfully cool September morning: The sun was already high up in the cloudless eastern sky. People were hurrying toward street corners and "L" stations with happy, smiling faces. A good night's rest had refreshed the toilers and prepared them with lightened hearts to face another day in the crowded skyscrapers of the world-famous

loop. That square mile of boom and business, rush and roar, panic and profit, which makes the lariat king of Arizona nervous, and fills his heart with a burning desire to get back to the square miles of breathing space so dear to his soul!

Among the hastening throng of the north end, you could have seen a well-groomed business man, who seemed to be in greater haste this morning than the average patron of the car lines. He glanced at his watch three times during his two-block journey to the "L" station, and you could have heard him utter to himself, "Wonder if I can make it by forty-five?" Up on the platform his anxious eye noted that he had just missed a train by half a minute. Hard luck! The watch came out again. "Here's another train! Maybe I'll make it yet." ALL ABOARD!

The train sped by Thorndale, Bryn Mawr and Edgewater at a good rate of speed, but to the "man in a hurry" it seemed to crawl and to stop too often and too long altogether. Then—"Hello, Hank!" "Good morning, Fred." A friend had boarded the train at Edgewater. A few words passed between the two thus met, when Fred's business eye fell on the Loyola to Argyle express which was rolling into Argyle abreast of his "slow train." "I'm late this morning, Hank. I'll see you downtown," was all he had time to say; then he was gone.

He pushed and jostled, stepped on corns, and poked his elbows in the ribs of all concerned, who were not aware that he was running the gauntlet—then, like an archer's arrow he shot across the platform and landed safe at last on board the "fast express." He was just in time, for the conductor already had his hand on the bell cord, and almost closed the gate too soon for Fred to make it.

"Well, that's luck," thought Fred, breathing fast, "I'll make it by forty-five now alright." He

took a comfortable seat, and poked his nose into the morning newspaper, when suddenly the conductor bawled out—"d-o-l-p-h 'n W-e-l-l-s, change for the west s-i-d-e." Down went the paper and out came the old Waltham again. Luck, luck, LUCK. It was just forty-four and a half! "That's what I call close, but successful figuring," thought Fred, as he hunched his belt two degrees toward the equator, and set himself beside the gate for a quick, triumphal get-away to the office across the avenue.

The train flashed down to the south end of the platform. The brakes gripped and brought Fred's journey to a sudden end, and away he went toward the stairway. Almost at the same moment, another train slid to a grinding stop at the north end of the platform and people swarmed off so that passengers from both trains were intermingled on the stairways leading to the street. And then the ordinary thing happened. A man dressed in brown suit and fedora hat turned his head just a little until he caught sight of another man who was squeezing along a step or two behind him, and the other passengers filing down the exit overheard the very insignificant, meaningless salutation: "lo Fred," "lo Hank."

Probably a Boxing Match

She (just back from Paris): "I can't go to this dance tonight, my trunks haven't arrived."

He: "Good Lord, what kind of a dance do you think this is going to be?"

"They sure did use funny instruments in early engineering."

"Yeh?"

"Here it says the foreman surveyed the ground with a grunt of dissatisfaction."

Sponge—I think that a street car hash just passed.

Wet—How yuh know?

Sponge—I can see its tracks.

Fast—Clean—Comfortable

The best, cleanest, most comfortable and most economical way to travel between Chicago and Milwaukee and all intermediate points is over the

North Shore Line

Trains leave from the Elevated Station at Adams and Wabash every hour, on the even hour, from 5 o'clock until midnight.

Express trains for Waukegan and intermediate points every thirty minutes.

Chicago North Shore & Milwaukee Railroad

OUR COURTESY COLUMN

THE honesty of employees of the Elevated Railroads is often commented upon by patrons who have left pocketbooks on cars. Each month letters come from patrons who have had articles restored with a promptness which surprised them. One patron writes that he lost a \$10 check and \$16 in currency on a train between Wilson avenue and the loop. He did not discover his loss until some time after he reached his office. He immediately telephoned the Lost and Found Department and was informed that his check and currency had been turned in and were awaiting his call. He said it was a pleasant surprise to have his currency restored and that it strengthened his faith in humanity.

Letters commending employees have been received in the last month as follows:

South Side Trainman J. W. Nessinger, badge 2839, is commended for courtesy shown to a stranger in the city.

Oak Park Trainman W. Garbe, badge 6178, is commended for his courtesy in giving directions to a passenger.

South Side Trainman L. M. Hammonds, badge 2439, is commended for his courtesy and for finding seats for standing passengers.

Northwestern Trainman C. Leverence, badge 1155, is commended for his courtesy and careful consideration of passengers and for answering all questions with a smile.

South Side Trainman Mattie Olson, badge 2905, is commended for finding seats for passengers.

Oak Park Trainman W. Boelard, badge 6063, is thanked and rewarded for finding and turning

in a brief case containing important government records.

South Side Conductor John Murtaugh, badge 2097, is commended and rewarded for restoring to its owner a pocketbook containing a sum of money.

Metropolitan Trainman Martin Ratigan, badge 2492, is commended for the manner in which he calls stations.

Northwestern Trainman J. Carlson, badge 1669, is commended for assisting a lady carrying a small child.

South Side Trainman Harry J. Baumeister, badge 2813, is commended for finding and returning a purse containing money.

Northwestern Trainman C. H. Weichmann, badge 544, is thanked for finding and turning in a bag which contained a sum of money and valuable articles.

CHICAGO'S ELECTRICITY

In 1893 there were 4,452 customers of the Commonwealth Edison Co. which serves Chicago with electricity. Today there are over 485,000 customers being served. It takes over 2,300,000 tons of coal annually to keep the generating plants operating. This is one-third of the amount of fuel that would be necessary were the power being produced by private plants.

GAS PRICES

The first gas company in Chicago was authorized by its charter to charge \$3 per thousand cubic feet for gas, a much higher price than now charged anywhere in the state. During the Civil War and after the price of gas in Chicago, including war tax, was as high as \$4.50 per thousand.

The first telephone in Illinois was installed in Chicago in 1877, a year after Alexander Graham Bell exhibited his model at the Centennial Exposition. There are over 590,000 telephones in service in Chicago today.