

THE ELEVATED NEWS

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Operating Expenses and Rates of Fare on Elevated

THERE is a good deal of agitation going on at the present time for a reduction of rates on the local transportation lines regardless of whether the companies are making any profits under the existing rates.

It is perfectly natural for the average citizen to wish for a 5-cent fare, instead of 8 or 10 cents which he pays. Probably he wishes also for the 1-cent newspaper of pre-war days, rather than the 2-cent, or 3-cent paper he gets today, although that is another story.

But the price of transportation service, like the price of newspapers, must be based on the cost of production. So far as the Elevated Railroads are concerned there has been no material reduction in the cost of operation, so that the "profits" are today smaller than they were in 1915 when the 5-cent fare prevailed.

In answer to a citation from the Illinois Commerce Commission to show cause why the present rates of fares should not be reduced, the Elevated Railroads on September 27, submitted a statement of their income and expenditures for the first eight months of the present year, up to August 31. That statement summarized is as follows:

Gross revenue	\$11,660,809.12
Total Expenses	10,049,740.89

Net earnings	1,611,068.23
Interest charges	1,658,070.35

Deficit for 8 months	\$ 47,002.12
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After months of investigation the Public Utilities Commission—the predecessor of the present Illinois Commerce Commission—placed

a valuation for rate-making purposes of \$86,250,000 on the properties of the Elevated Railroads, usable and being used in the public service. That commission ruled that the roads were entitled to earn 7 1/2 per cent per annum, on that valuation. It requires only a moment's calculation to show from the foregoing figures that the rate of return only 2.8 per cent per annum on the valuation allowed, which the Elevated Railroads contend is less than the actual value of the properties.

More detailed analysis of the figures for 1921 shows that it cost in wages alone 5.22 cents for every passenger carried on the Elevated Railroads. Although wages constitute by far the heaviest item of expense, they are not the only necessary item. Anyone can understand that it requires cars to transport passengers, that the cars and roadbed must be maintained, that it requires power to move the cars, that the companies must pay taxes and rentals for leased lines and that all of these things are just as necessary in conducting transportation as is the payment of wages.

If these necessary expenses are included they bring the cost per passenger up to 8.34 cents. As the average fare paid amounted to 9.28 cents per passenger, it leaves a margin of .94 of a cent per passenger as a return on the investment.

Carrying the analysis still further, labor receives 56 per cent of the entire passenger receipts on the Elevated Railroads. The item of wages constitutes 69 per cent of the total operating expenses, exclusive of taxes and rentals.

The passenger who feels that fares should be reduced, or who thinks that the Elevated Railroads are making large profits under existing rates, should study the figures and facts. Such a study might give him a different idea of the entire situation.

Why Delay Checks Are Issued on the Elevated

A PATRON of the Elevated Railroads writes that he has been a constant user of the lines for the last three years and never had a complaint to make until the night of September 9, when he, with others, was obliged to leave a north-bound train at Fullerton avenue and was given a "delay check." He thinks the company owes an explanation and an apology to the passengers who, like himself, are not in the habit of carrying any money except carfare and who had to walk home in the early hours of the morning. The incident in question occurred about 1:30 o'clock in the morning.

The records of the company show that on the morning in question a car was derailed at the Clark street junction, causing a considerable delay. Passengers were informed at Fullerton of the delay and those

who did not wish to wait were given "delay checks," which are good for a ride at any time. Now for the explanation and apology:

Delays of any kind are rare on the elevated lines, but they do occur occasionally. The company regrets such interruptions quite as much as do the passengers and it does the only thing that is practicable, that is, it gives all passengers who wish a "delay check," which is equivalent to refunding their fares, because the "delay checks" will be accepted at any station on the lines for fares.

The reason why fares are not refunded should be apparent to the patron who will give the subject a moment's thought. Delays of that kind are unforeseen and if a great number of passengers were unexpectedly discharged at a particular station and asked to have their fares refunded, the agent would not have the amount of change available and it would cause trouble and confusion. By issuing a "delay check" the company acknowledges its temporary inability to carry the passengers to their destination and it gives them a ticket, good for a complete journey, as soon as the obstruction, whatever it may be, has been removed.

Could anything be fairer than that? If the delay occurred on the surface lines and cars were unable to proceed, the passenger would not get a "delay check." He would be obliged to wait until the line was clear to resume his journey. The reason why "delay checks" are issued on the elevated lines, is to give the delayed passengers an opportunity to get to their destination by some other method of transportation.

The fact that the writer of this letter of complaint admits that he used the elevated lines constantly for three years and never before had any cause to complain, is in itself the best evidence that such delays are of rare occurrence. The management of the elevated lines tries to please and satisfy all patrons by giving the best service possible under existing conditions, but it cannot always insure them against delay. Sometimes delays are caused by influences entirely removed from the management and operation of the lines. Occasionally a fire breaks out in a building close to the lines and in such cases the city firemen may take temporary possession of the structure, from which they fight the fire. Traffic is interrupted and in such cases the delayed passengers are given "delay checks" although the company is not in any way responsible for such delays.

Many letters come to THE ELEVATED NEWS commending a particular trainman or a ticket agent for lending a passenger carfare when he finds himself in the predicament which the writer of the letter was, that is without the necessary fare. Employes do that on their own responsibility in a desire to be accommodating.

In the rare instances in which delays occur on the elevated the "delay checks" seem to be the fairest method that can be devised for the accommodation of delayed passengers.

Has Chicago Less "Pep" Than New York?

IN THE discussion in THE ELEVATED NEWS relative to the speed with which passengers get on and off cars in New York and in Chicago, one patron writes what he terms "the plain, unvarnished truth" and says he does not expect to see it printed. He says the reason why New Yorkers seem to get on and off cars much faster than do people in Chicago, is due to the center doors in use in New York.

That probably is the "plain, unvarnished truth," as our correspondent states, but it is not all the truth, because the cars on the elevated lines in New York are not equipped with center doors, nor are the end doors as a rule as wide as are the doors on the elevated cars here. The subway cars in New York are equipped with center doors, but the comparisons applied to the elevated rather than the subway.

It has been explained before in THE ELEVATED NEWS that when it becomes necessary to remodel any of the elevated cars, wide air-doors are installed. The management of the Elevated Railroads would like to see all the cars equipped with wide doors, but as it costs about \$2,000 to remodel a car and as the roads are not earning their fixed interest charges, as shown by the statement filed with the Illinois Commerce Commission, appearing on another page, it has not been possible to make that, or other desirable improvements.

That, however, does not alter the fact that on the elevated lines in New York, where the equipment in use is similar to the old-type cars in service on the elevated lines here, the passengers move faster than in Chicago. If they did not the doors would be closed and they would be left standing on the platforms. Wide doors make it possible for passengers to get on and off faster if they are in the habit of "stepping lively," but when, as frequently happens on the elevated, they stand on the car platform and block the entrance, wide doors will not solve the problem.

The writer of the letter says: "The answer is that in New York, in spite of the fact that the companies are getting only half the fares we pay in Chicago, have more modern equipment—or at least more serviceable and better equipped on the point of loading and unloading passengers, as they empty and load from the center of the car as well as the ends, the conductors or guards operating the center doors as well as those at their particular ends of the cars.

"I don't expect to see this letter published, as it tells the plain, unvarnished truth and it should cause the 'vox populi' to *think*, and that's the last thing in the world the moneyed interests want."

Evidently the writer puts the Elevated Railroads among the "moneyed interests" when their financial statements indicate that "moneyless interests" would be more fitting, but anyway they wish their patrons to *think*. In fact, if the patrons of transportation lines did *think* and insist on getting the truth, they would be willing to pay for local

transportation what it is worth and fewer companies throughout the country would be in the hands of receivers.

As to the lower fare in New York, that is a situation about which the "vox populi" should think. The city of New York has some two hundred millions of dollars invested in subways, on which it receives no return. In spite of that subsidy the deficit from operation last year was nearly four million dollars, several companies are in the hands of receivers and transfers have been abolished. The New York situation is a shining example of what should be avoided by other cities.

OUR COURTESY COLUMN

IN the course of a month a good many letters come to the editor of THE ELEVATED NEWS commending employes for small favors and courtesies extended passengers. As a rule such letters are condensed by the editor, the name and badge number of the employe and special act of courtesy only being given.

One letter received this month is worthy of publication in full. It reads:

"Dear Ser

The L. R. R. Co. Has a fine men. He is very kind to cheldren. I jist tred to tell you that he is so good to women with cheldren to help them out and in. his Nombe is 2285. Hi No. is 2285 be shure to put this in the next monts The ELEVATED NEWS.

written by.

Lone Scout of A."

As the envelope which bore the above missive was marked "IMPORTANTS" we are treating it as such. The employe commended is South Side Trainman Thomas J. Stewart.

Another interesting letter came from a patron of the Metropolitan who observed the actions of a conductor towards an intoxicated passenger. The conductor asked his passenger where he wished to

get off and gathered from the mumbled response that his destination was Marshfield. The conductor had a man waiting when the train reached Marshfield to pilot the intoxicated man to another train, but meanwhile he had changed his mind and thought he wished to go to Kenilworth. The conductor was plainly disconcerted and again questioned his passenger who produced from his pocket a ticket for a point on the Aurora and Elgin line. The conductor telephoned ahead to the Franklin station and had a man meet the train there to escort the passenger to the Wells street station of the Aurora and Elgin. The writer of the letter says that Trainman 4153 is a "brother in need and a gentleman." The employe commended is Metropolitan Conductor George F. Lewis, badge 4153.

South Side Trainman Frank Jackson, badge 2424, is commended for finding seats for passengers.

Charles Rumell, operator at Loomis street, is commended for his timely efforts in extinguishing a fire at the Parnell street station. His good work was noticed by a passenger, who says that he prevented what might have been a serious fire.

South Side Trainman Anton C. Robertson, badge 2950, is commended for finding seats for women.

South Side Trainman Merle Burnham, badge 2447, is commended and thanked for honesty

in promptly turning in a purse left by a lady on his train.

Oak Park Conductor Edward R. Kelmar, badge 6024, is thanked for returning a picture left by a passenger in his car.

South Side Motorman Patrick McHugh, badge 2013, is commended and thanked for assistance given in recovering a package left on another train earlier in the day.

Oak Park Trainman Edward Kouri, badge 6249, is commended for finding a seat for a woman passenger, by requesting "seat hogs" to sit closer.

South Side Trainman Joseph Dolph, badge 3000, is thanked for recovering a woman's pocketbook containing a considerable sum of money, which was restored to the owner.

Ticket Agent C. Halverson at Bryn Mawr station is thanked for lending a lady a nickel to use the telephone in the station.

Metropolitan Supervisor N. P. Hansen is commended for finding and restoring an order book dropped on the stairs at the Halsted street station.

Northwestern Trainman K. R. White, badge 1679 is commended for finding seats for standing passengers and for calling stations distinctly.

Oak Park Gateman S. A. Sylvester is commended for locating the owner of a purse which he found in the street near Long avenue crossing. The pocketbook contained a bank book as well as a considerable amount of currency and Mr. Sylvester promptly took it to the Austin State Bank, so that it was restored to the owner.

Metropolitan Conductor H. M. Gillette, badge 4166, is commended for distinct calling of stations.

The Lost and Found Department of the Oak Park is commended for locating the owner of a folding kodak left in a train and restoring it.

Northwestern Conductor P. M. Schmidt, badge 835 is commended for courtesy and politeness and distinct calling of stations.

Northwestern Trainman Thos. A. Hamrock, badge 1727, is commended for lending his cap to a passenger whose hat was blown off on a station platform.

Northwestern Conductor C. C. Rose, badge 687, is commended and thanked for finding a lady's coin purse and restoring it to its owner.

RED CROSS ANNUAL ROLL CALL

THE Annual Roll Call of the American Red Cross will be held November 11-24 when everyone will be urged to renew his membership for next year.

It probably will be of interest to members of the Red Cross to know what was done with the dollar they contributed last year in the way of annual dues, for this year's dollar will be devoted to similar purposes.

During the year more than a million and a half ex-service men were served by 2,397 Red Cross chapters.

The sum of \$450,000 was loaned to 32,495 men under the Federal Board for Vocational Education.

Claims for allotment, allowance, insurance and compensation to the number of 148,032 were handled by the Red Cross Headquarters in Washington.

Red Cross workers to the number of 448 were employed in government hospitals which care for disabled men and 1,335 public health nurses were employed by the various chapters.

Allotment checks to the number of 63,655 were delivered by Red Cross workers to men who had moved from the address furnished the War Risk Insurance Bureau.

(Continued on page 8)

BEST WAUKEGAN SERVICE

The most convenient way to travel between Chicago and Waukegan and intermediate points is over the

North Shore Line

Express Trains leave Adams and Wabash for Waukegan every thirty minutes, carrying passengers into the heart of the city without change of cars.

Limited trains for Milwaukee and all intermediate points every hour on the even hour.

Chicago North Shore & Milwaukee Railroad

Red Cross nurses during the year visited 1,144,692 patients, nursed 499,800 patients and examined 500,445 school children.

During the last eighteen months

women and girls were enrolled in home hygiene classes.

The Red Cross is doing a great work, as shown in the list of activities mentioned. Don't you



American Red Cross
 "In the service of those who suffer"

relief was given by the Red Cross to the victims of 70 disasters; 104,496 students were enrolled in First Aid classes and 258,710

wish to have your dollar help to continue that work? If so you must renew your membership during the annual roll call period.