

THE ELEVATED NEWS

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Reliability of Service on the "L"

RELIABILITY is one of the outstanding features of "L" service. This fact is well known to, and appreciated by large employers of labor, who have learned through experience that their workers rarely are late, due to delay in the transportation service of the Elevated Railroads.

One large employer of labor writes as follows:

"After a careful analysis of the attendance reports of our employes for the year 1921, we do not find a single instance of tardiness due to elevated service.

As an aid to punctuality, we regard the Elevated Railroads as 100 per cent efficient.

Very truly yours,

THOS. CUSACK CO.

By Harold Cusack, Manager.

Another unsolicited testimonial, sent in the form of a New Year greeting, is as follows:

I want you to know that we appreciate the many courtesies that you have shown in arranging elevated service for our employes this past year. I realize the adverse conditions that prevail at times and congratulate you on the excellent schedules maintained.

Wishing you a very happy and prosperous New Year, I remain,

Sincerely yours,

A. B. Schmidt,

General Traffic Manager,

SEARS, ROEBUCK & CO.

Many other large concerns located near the "L" are ready to give similar testimony of the reliability of the transportation service furnished their employees by the Elevated Railroads.

As a further proof of the reliable character of "L" service, one day's records were selected at random and an analysis made of that data on the train sheets. The particular day selected happened to be February 2, 1922, which can be taken as an average day. On that day the train sheets showed that 2,468 trains entered the Loop in the 24-hour period. Of that number 2,347 trains were on time, including both morning and evening rush hour periods, when the service is put to the most severe test. That was 95 per cent of the total number of trains on time.

Of the 121 trains which are marked late, the maximum time that any of them, with one single exception, was behind schedule was less than 3 minutes. The one exception was a train on which there was some slight motor trouble, so that it was 5 minutes late. In railroad operation record is made of trains that are one-half minute late, but so far as the public is concerned a delay of two or three minutes is not noticeable. If the short space of three minutes is allowed, which the average passenger would never notice, it will be seen that only one train out of a total of 2,468 was late, and that train was only 5 minutes behind time. Could any service be more reliable than that?

This remarkable record of reliable service is further enhanced if the number of trains is considered. The 2,468 trains entering the Loop that day means an average of a train every 1 minute, 42 seconds, throughout the twenty-four hours. It would be difficult, if not impossible, to find a record surpassing that for efficient railroad operation.

Comparisons May Be Odious, But—

IN a previous issue of THE ELEVATED NEWS, some comparisons were made of the number of passengers per car mile operated on the Elevated roads with local transportation lines in other cities. In that comparison it was shown that the passengers per car mile on the Chicago Elevated lines numbered 3.68 as against 6.09 in the New York subway and 8.20 on the Cleveland street cars.

The following letter in reply to that statement throws further light on the Cleveland situation:

I read your monthly publication, THE ELEVATED NEWS, with much interest, and in the January issue have just noted your comparison of the Chicago "L" service with transportation in other cities.

Having been a resident of Cleveland for four or five years,

I have a very tangible and vivid appreciation of the situation there as compared with Chicago, and I do not think you have brought out as plainly as might have been done just what the situation is.

The excessive number of passengers per car mile in that city is not so much due to any inherent congestion of traffic, or stimulation of short haul business as it is to the action of politics in local traction matters. This works out about as follows:

As you may know, the Taylor grant, under which the Cleveland City Railway operates, provides for a City Commissioner of Traction, who is appointed by the administration in power and who has complete control over the amount and character of service given on every line in the city. This control is exercised to the point of cutting off sufficient cars at all hours of the day and night on all lines as to produce a certain proportion of standing load at all times; in other words, it is not planned to provide seats for all passengers on the average, even during the non-rush hours of the day and night. This was worked out to such an extent a few years ago that the Company had great difficulty in obtaining a sufficient number of platform men on account of the excessively large proportion of swing runs thus produced. A number of traffic surveys made in Cleveland showed that the ratio of cars operated during the rush hour to the number during the non-rush periods was very much greater than in any other large city in the country.

Strange to say, however, the excessive crowding has produced very little complaint on the part of the car riders, due probably to the argument constantly held out to them that the administration was doing everything possible to hold down the fare.

Very truly yours,

E. F. GOULD.

That letter does not need any comment. The Elevated Railroads make no claim of furnishing seats for every passenger during the rush hours, because that is a physical impossibility, but they do run sufficient cars to give seats at all other hours of the day and night on the average. According to the foregoing letter that is not done in Cleveland, where it is planned to have a certain proportion of passengers standing at all times. The same probably is true of the municipally-owned lines in San Francisco, where the number of passengers per car mile is 7.40, or more than twice what it is on the Chicago "L" lines.

The Unseen Army Behind "L" Service

PASSENGERS on the Elevated Railroads, who come in direct contact with ticket agents and trainmen only, have little conception of the vast unseen army of workers necessary to produce transportation service. The men in the shops who keep the cars in repair, the men in the sub-stations who keep the power lines in working order, the men who maintain the tracks and roadbed, are all as necessary in the production of transportation service as are the men who operate the trains, or the agents who collect fares.

This unseen army of workers constitute 40 per cent of the total working force on the "L" lines. A census of employes taken in January last showed on the payroll 4,847 men and 538 women, a total of 5,385. Less than half that number, or 2,486, were employed as trainmen. There were 780 men and women ticket agents and, with the exception of a few platform men, these classes of employes are all who come in contact with the public.

Few passengers would think, for instance, that 683 men are employed in the shops of the Elevated Railroads, keeping the cars in running order. A private manufacturing concern, giving employment to that number of mechanics and helpers would be regarded as quite a large company.

To maintain the tracks and roadbed in a safe condition, 634 men are employed and it requires 101 in the electrical department. To guard the public from accidents at grade crossings in the outlying sections of the city where trains operate on the surface, gatemen are employed day and night. Porters are employed to keep the stations, stairways and platforms clean. These gatemen and porters number 376 men.

To perform the clerical work necessary in the general offices the services of 189 men and women are required, while 136 men and women are engaged in miscellaneous capacities. This "unseen" army is at the service of the public at all hours of the day and night and is as essential as the visible army which operates the trains and collects fares.

Daily Fluctuations in "L" Traffic

ONE of the perplexing problems which confront the officials in charge of the operation of trains on the elevated is the daily fluctuations in the number of passengers carried. These daily fluctuations run up into the thousands without any apparent cause

and make the problem of furnishing the required service a very difficult one.

Careful checks of the traffic are made at designated points on the lines. Checkers are on duty at all hours of the day and night, who note the number of passengers on each car and from these checks the amount of service is regulated. The aim is to have the number of seats as nearly as possible equal the number of passengers at all times outside of the rush hours, and at all places along the lines. If the traffic was about the same every day that would be a comparatively easy matter to regulate, but the large fluctuations make it a difficult problem.

As an example of how the traffic fluctuates, the elevated lines carried 76,121 more passengers on January 3 than they did on January 4. There was no difference in the weather conditions on the two days. That difference is unusually large, but fluctuations between 25,000 and 50,000 are of almost daily occurrence. If it is considered that these daily fluctuations exceed in number the entire population of any city in Illinois, except Chicago, it will be understood how hard it is to have the right number of cars at the right place at the precise minute they are needed, and that is what most people expect the railroads to do.

Complaint occasionally is made that trains are filled beyond their seating capacity in non-rush hours. When a train is crowded during the non-rush hours it is due to an uneven distribution of passengers, caused by some unforeseen condition. A dance or some other entertainment may be given in a hall adjacent to an elevated line. The operating officials have no knowledge of such an entertainment until a crowd of two or three hundred passengers enter a station in the space of five minutes. They all wish to get on the first train that comes along, so that it naturally will be crowded. Such conditions are unavoidable. The operating officials know approximately the time that the crowds leave the downtown theatres, and provision is made to take care of them, as that is a condition which is more or less constant. Provision cannot be made in unexpected and isolated circumstances, which accounts for some trains being over-crowded.

There is another operating condition which causes some trains to have more than seated loads at times. All elevated roads operate across city bridges in entering or leaving the loop. If a bridge is opened for three or four minutes it causes delay to trains. As a result the first train that goes through will get more than its usual load, for it seems inherent in human nature for everyone to wish to get on the first train. The excess load on that train accumulates at each station while the one following it will be almost empty. This situation is relieved at times by having the first train run past certain

stations, but waiting passengers who do not understand the reason for that are inclined to grumble.

As has been said, the Elevated Railroads operate a sufficient number of trains under average conditions to give every passenger a seat outside of the rush hours. If one train is crowded wait for the next one and get a seat.

OUR COURTESY COLUMN

LETTERS of commendation have been received in the last month commending the following employees:

Metropolitan Trainman L. Leclercq, badge 4999, is commended for his distinct enunciation of station names.

Northwestern Trainman D. C. Ronan, badge 666, is commended for finding and turning in a package that was left on his train.

Metropolitan Trainman Gustav Lutz, badge 4293, is commended for assisting in the recovery of a parcel left on his train.

South Side Trainman Lucius L. Hammonds, badge 2439, is commended for stepping up in the car and informing several passengers that there were seats in the next car.

Northwestern Trainman E. C. Wessling, badge 1358, and D. M. Farrell, badge 1355, are commended for the assistance they gave to a woman passenger when she fainted on the train.

Metropolitan Trainman Charles Whiting, badge 4521, is commended for offering a newspaper to a passenger who had none.

Northwestern Conductor W. A. Kingsbury, badge 878, is commended for the attention he gave to lost property that he found on his train. The passenger who left the packages left the train at Fullerton and Conductor Kingsbury shouted to him to

take the next train to Chicago Avenue. The conductor left the packages with the agent where they were recovered by the passenger.

South Side Trainman Manuel Newman, badge 2752, is commended for giving information to a passenger.

Northwestern Conductor C. W. Hooker, badge 556, is commended for his courtesy in finding seats for women passengers.

South Side Trainman Chas. C. Gross, badge 2172, is commended for distinct calling of stations and for the courteous attention he gave to an elderly lady who wished to leave his train.

Metropolitan Conductor James E. Craig, badge 4266, is commended for subduing a number of rowdy youngsters who were on his train.

Northwestern Trainman George W. Irey, badge 1171, is commended for his distinct enunciation and for his attention in looking after the welfare of his passengers.

Loop Platform Man W. Willis, badge 94, is commended for the effort he made to secure a glove which had been left on a train.

Northwestern Station Agent M. Didier at Bryn Mawr Station is commended for enforcing the anti-spitting ordinance.

Oak Park Conductor J. Cheme-llick, badge 6144, is commended for his gentlemanly conduct when he was being unjustly abused by a passenger.

South Side Conductor Charles Noble, badge 2758, is commended

for requesting seated passengers to move over and make room for standing passenger, and also for his courtesy.

Mr. H. Ockenga, Despatcher at Randolph and Wells, and Platform Man J. P. Gatjens, badge 91, are thanked and commended for helping to recover a purse that a young woman had left on a train.

South Side Trainman John E. Kester, badge 2608, is commended for holding his train for a few seconds in order to allow two ladies with small children in their arms to board the train.

South Side Conductor John J. Stanek, badge 2799, is commended by a lady passenger for enforcing the rule against smoking on the Stockyards division.

LONG RIDES; FAST TIME

HOW many miles do you travel on the "L"?

How many minutes do you spend on the way?

Probably you never thought of it in just that way. The average of all passengers on the Elevated travels about 7 miles on each trip, and it takes him 26 minutes to do it.

If he travels on a fast express train he will make the distance in less time and if he travels on a local, which makes stops at every station, it will take him a little longer. The time of 26 minutes for 7 miles is based on the average speed of all "L" trains, local and express.

One thing the passenger can depend upon whether he travels local or express, and that is that he will get to his destination safely and without delay. Service on the "L" is dependable.

NEW LOYOLA EXPRESS

THE new 8-car trains which were put into service on the Northwestern on February 13, in the evening rush hour, have done

a great deal to improve the service. While the 8-car trains run from Chicago avenue to Loyola without any stops and are intended for people living in Rogers Park and Evanston, they improve the service for those living south of Loyola by taking the load off the regular Chicago avenue to Argyle express trains. The people who live in Edgewater from Argyle north to Loyola get as much benefit from the new service as do those living north of Loyola, although they do not ride on the 8-car trains. They now have the regular Argyle express service to themselves, instead of having to share it with those who lived north of Loyola.

Courtesy is required of all employees of the elevated lines. Passengers in return should treat employees courteously. It works both ways.

Save your own time by moving away from the door on entering a car. Standing near the door causes delay to yourself and inconvenience to fellow passengers. Step forward in the car, please.

Give passengers leaving a car the right of way. Much confusion may be avoided if you observe that rule. Please do not attempt to board a car until all the passengers leaving are off.

The hardest work in the rush hours is to get trains away from stations. Trains would get away sooner if twenty passengers did not fight to get on at the same instant.

The average speed of all trains on the elevated, local and express, is 60 per cent higher than the average speed on the surface lines.

Woodlawn to Milwaukee

Without Change of Cars on the
Clean, Fast and Comfortable

North Shore Line

North Shore Limited trains now operate to Dorchester Avenue and 63rd Street, stopping to receive and discharge passengers at University Avenue, 43d Street and Roosevelt Road, on the South Side Elevated.

Five trains daily in each direction.

**For full information about time of trains, ask any
South Side Elevated Ticket Agent.**

Chicago North Shore & Milwaukee Railroad