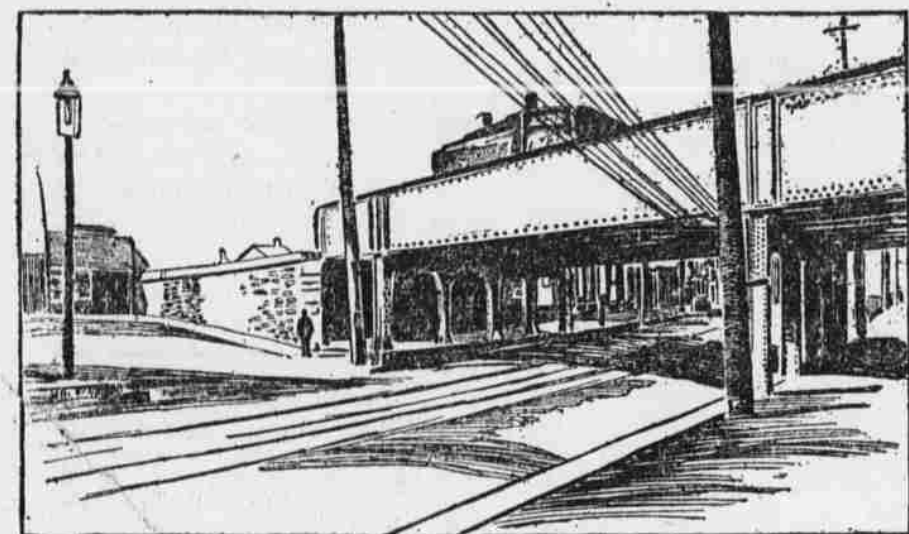


ABOLISHING THE GRADE CROSSING

THIS is the story of how Chicago dealt with grade crossings, mainly condensed from the Chronicle: Fifteen years ago Chicago was intersected in every direction and at all possible angles with railroad tracks. Every track was laid at the grade of the streets or alleys it crossed. Accidents—generally fatalities, for grade crossing accidents rarely stop short of the death of the victim—were of daily, almost hourly, occurrence. Chicago began to murmur and rebel against the grade crossing—it was determined to abolish them once for all.

The railroad companies were willing to elevate or depress the numerous tracks, but were not willing to undergo the hardship and expense of the im-

provement. Guards and watchmen were maintained at the crossings, time tables were public property, and the roads saw no reason why they should be called upon to bear millions of dollars extra expense to remedy the difficulty.



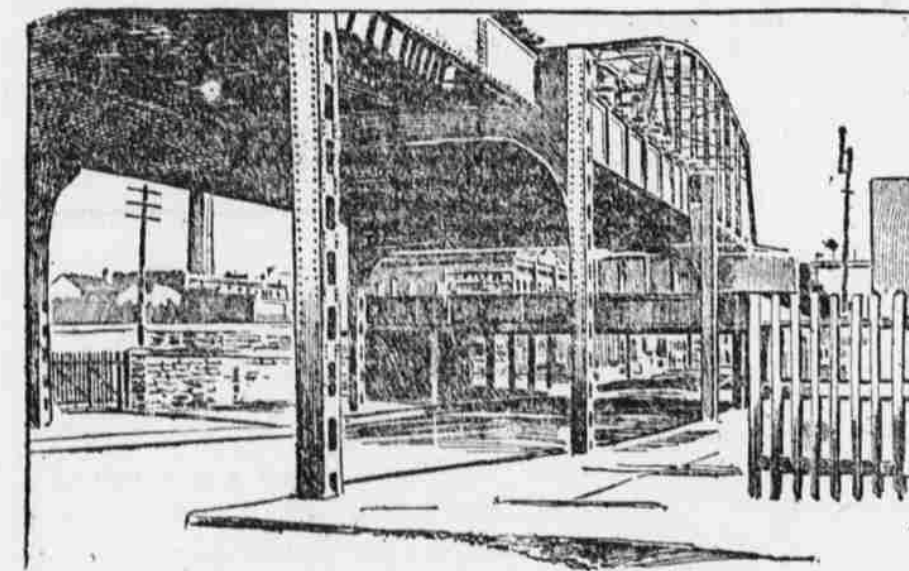
ENGLWOOD AND WENTWORTH AVENUES.

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The grade status in Chicago to-day is an excellent exemplar of what Chicagoans can do when they will it. Hundreds of miles of tracks have been elevated or depressed, hundreds of crossings abolished, either subways or viaducts containing the offending tracks, and the roads have paid out nearly \$17,000,000. The city has not been at any expense at all in accomplishing this feat. Ninety per cent. of the tracks no longer menace the public on foot or horseback or in carriages. Every spadeful of earth, every block of masonry, every bolt in every piece of iron provided for by ordinance has been put in place.

Chicago won the fight as she generally wins whatever she seeks. But it was a long, hotly contested and interesting contest just the same, for the big lines are no mean antagonists, and had many fairly sound arguments to advance to show they should not bear all the expense, interruption to traffic and worry incidental to such a colossal

undertaking. But in the end they had this to do just the same. First it was held by the lines that they could not be compelled to elevate their tracks or in any other manner alter the grades. This point was argued laboriously after months and even years of skillful research in the law books; it took the highest court in the State but a few minutes to destroy the illusion.



WEST LAKE AND ROCKWELL STREETS.

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Ten years ago the question of elevating the tracks was a political issue in this city. Parties battled over the question, one side being inclined to the belief that the city lacked the power to force the roads to act and the other certain the power existed. But by the beginning of 1890 it was no longer a dividing question. No candidate for Mayor could hope to win unless outspoken in favor of sending up all the tracks and making the roads pay the bills. To-day no administration looks

upon the question as anything more than a mere matter of detail. Ordinances must be drawn and accepted by the roads and work done under them as regularly as streets are paved or cleaned—in fact, more regularly than can be said of the cleaning process.

Under the administration of the elder Harrison a determined effort was made to get at the matter in a business-like manner. The roads at first merely laughed at the idea as a visionary plan utterly impossible of accomplishment. They held that neither they nor the city could afford the expense even if they could stand the interruption to their ordinary business while their tracks were being elevated.

The first objection raised was that the roads would practically be forced

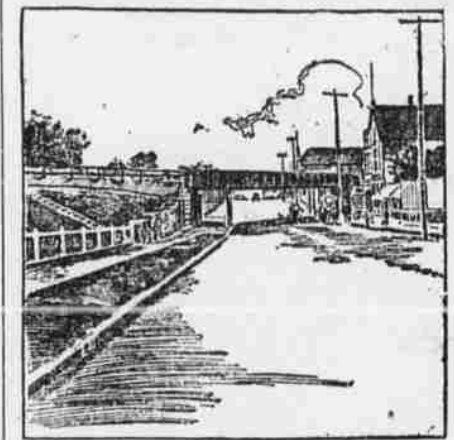
furnished by the city engineer as a basis for the work. The roads might do it any way which seemed best to them, provided they did it. But with masterly inactivity they did nothing. The city sent warning after warning and even threatened to begin the work itself. Then the last legal act of the fight was commenced; injunctions were applied for. These failed.

Meanwhile the general managers had formed an association for mutual protection. This was held out to be an association to protect business, prevent rate-slashing, and by concert of action get all roads into line on a general policy. It was really designed to fight the elevation scheme. But even injunction-made laws failed them, for the courts held that the city had the power to act. It looked along in the years just before the World's Fair as if a direct conflict would take place between the city officers on one hand and road employees on the other.

Expert engineers declared that it would cost as much or more to elevate or depress the tracks as it had cost in the original construction of the roads. Road attorneys, using this as a basis, argued that the hardship on the roads was so great that even conceding the power of the city to force action no court would force such an extremity of hardship. The lawyers also argued that this expense, heavy as it would be, would be a trifle when compared with the loss entailed by the interruption of traffic. The contention of the experts regarding the cost has been proved to be under rather than over the actual expenditure. It has cost the roads about \$59,000 a mile to do the work. But the alleged loss due to interrupted traffic has been proved to be but a dream. The roads suffered inconvenience, to be sure, but no line lost a

had passed. There is no diminution of this speed to-day. It is rather increased, for the trains can run at sixty miles an hour without running the slightest risk of killing a citizen at any grade crossing.

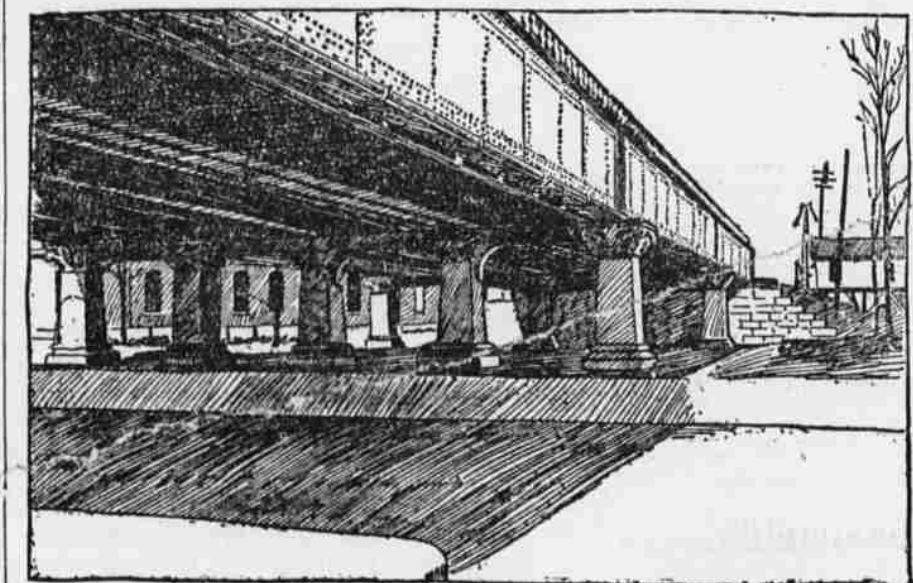
With the World's Fair coming on, one road saw the advantage of elevated tracks to hurry visitors down to the grounds. By the time the ceremonies of dedication in October, 1892, were all arranged for the Illinois Central had



DIVERSEY AVENUE AND C. & N. W. TRACKS.

elevated its tracks as far south as 63d street. Like all others, this road fought the whole thing bitterly, but, seeing no escape, the road accepted the ordinances passed to provide for the work on its lines. These ordinances are really plans carefully prepared to obviate engineering difficulties and enable the line to elevate or depress the tracks at the smallest estimated cost. The city pays nothing, but has enforced its demands until few roads wish to make the fight any longer.

This beginning inspired the people and authorities with reason to feel that

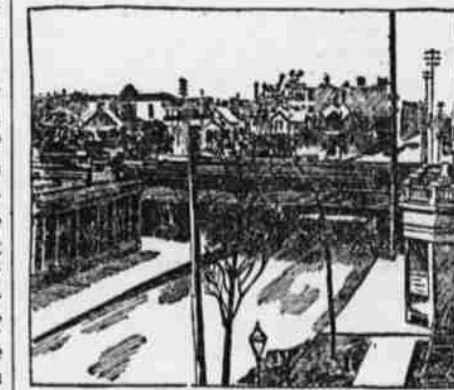


SUBWAY, 55TH ST. BOUL. UNDER P. F. W. & C. RAILWAY.

the grade crossing would have to go. It also taught the railroad companies that all they could do would be to fight for time; they must all get in the bandwagon in the end. So when the World's Fair Mayor was elected it was believed that considerable progress would be made. One thing had militated against progress, and that was that the city was trying to do too much at once. The city had been trying to battle the combined roads as a combination. Ordinances were being prepared which were blankets covering the entire system in the city. These necessarily failed from too great complication.

In 1893 a change in plan was inaugurated. It was decided to go at the

roads in detail, taking one or two at a time, drawing up ordinances on engineering schemes agreed upon between the city engineer and the experts of the roads. All other roads would be left alone for the time being, the city determining to fight the enemy in detail instead of in bulk. The result was at once apparent, for the roads were tangled up, and each had its own particular fight on its hands. The Northwestern was the second to get to work, for in 1893 plans were submitted for the elevation of the Galena division, which, with some unimportant modifications, were decided upon as good working plans.



ILLINOIS CENTRAL AT 55TH STREET.

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SOLDIERS' WILLS.

How the English Private Disposes of His Belongings.

How does the soldier killed in battle or fatally wounded, dispose of his property, providing he has any to leave behind him? The list of casualties reported regularly from South Africa and the Philippines lend pertinence to the inquiry. Every English soldier has served out to him when he enlists a little volume which contains, among other things, three blank forms of will.



WILL IN A HELMET, which he is at liberty to fill out at his leisure. In a majority of cases, however, he pays no attention to this pocketbook and goes into battle with his will still unmade. After he has been hit by a bullet and begins to realize that his chances of getting home are small, the soldier begins to think more carefully of the loved ones left behind him and of the provisions he has made for their com-



TWO SOLDIERS' WILLS.

fort. As a result many queer and pathetic wills have been found upon the bodies of dead soldiers, and in every case the wishes of the testator have been respected. During the Soudan campaign of 1884 the body of one soldier was found on the battlefield of El Teh, who, before death had scrawled with the end of a lead bullet on the inside of his helmet, the words "All to my wife." When an English army invaded Afghanistan one soldier was caught while doing scout duty and shot down when none of his comrades were in sight. Weeks afterward his body was found lying before a tall rock on which he had written in letters of blood, "I want all to go to mother." In both cases the war department held the wills to be valid, and saw that the proper distribution of the property was made.

A Prince's Prank.

The Prince de Ligne, a resplendent figure among the brilliant courtiers and adventurers of the time of Louis XVI., told many amusing anecdotes in his "Memoirs," one of which shows him, sword in hand, at a duel which called for gallantry rather than courage.

The Comte de Segur and the Prince de Ligne were coming out one very rainy night, after supping with Madame de Polignac in the Rue de Bourbon. No coach was to be seen, and no person there to fetch one.

"Let us pretend to fight," the prince said to Comte de Segur, "and that will bring the watch. They'll arrest us, and we'll make them get a carriage to take us to the commissary."

On which they took their swords in hand with a fearful scuffle, and cries of "Oh! Ah! Are you dead? Are you wounded?"

The watch passed and repassed quite near them on the Port Royal, but apparently frightened, they did not arrest the duellists, and they, half-dead with laughter and the fatigue of the battle, had to go home on foot in the rain, after all!

Appleville.

Leavenworth, Kan., stands at the head of American cities in the shipment of apples. Indeed more apples are shipped from Leavenworth than from any other point on either side of the Atlantic ocean. In addition to the large number of local packers engaged in the business hundreds of packers flock to Leavenworth annually from other parts of the country for the purpose of shipping away fruit. There are two immense cold storage plants in Leavenworth, one of which is built to accommodate 75,000 bushels of apples. Leavenworth county has the largest apple orchard in the world, that of F. W. Wellhouse, which contains 1,400 acres of healthy trees. There are any number of orchards ranging in extent from ten to a thousand acres. The returns from township assessors show that Leavenworth county has 203,000 apple-bearing trees. During any good apple season at least 125,000 barrels of apples are packed and shipped away from this point.

Shirts of Bark.

The Indians of the Interior of Bolivia wear shirts and hats made of the bark of a tree, which is soaked in water to soften the fiber and then beaten to make it pliable.

The Sun's Age.

Lord Kelvin puts the age of the sun at 100,000,000 years. At its present rate of combustion the sun will live from seven to fifteen millions of years before burning itself out.