

## THE PUBLIC FORUM

**PASSENGER RATES.**—There are so many crooks, favorites, preachers, priests, doctors and politicians who pay no fares on our railroads that we have the same identical proposition here that we have with taxing personal property. I propose abolishing entirely passenger fares and let all ride free, so that there will be no favoritism. Then charge all to freight rates by doubling or even trebling the rates. This will cheat all legislators out of political thunder of dictating passenger rates, and compel everybody to be honest, whether they want to be or not, because freight is like real estate and can always be located without graft to conductors. Personal property leaves a fine graft to assessors, which everyone understands.

People are virtually forced to be dishonest. If our freight rates are forced to furnish all the profits the railroads could simplify operations and reduce expenses about 25 per cent. A poor man could then ride from one end of the country to the other for nothing and obtain work. This would solve the employment problem and freight rates would only raise a ten-cent article about one cent to consumer. A 10-cent Quaker Oats would retail for 11 cents, and so on. If the idle rich wanted to still ride on fancy trains they might, by paying for it and thus lowering the new freight rates somewhat. This system would throw the burden on the rich and middle classes, where it belongs.—Allen Steven.

**CHILDREN'S PLAYGROUNDS.** — Two recent experiences have proven to me that William Hale Thompson's idea, "public playgrounds for the children of our city," is a necessity, not only for the physical welfare of the child but for the safety of the pedestrians of our streets as well.

Only yesterday, while walking on Calumet av. near 47th st. (south

side) I came to a sudden realization that I was being rudely attacked from the rear and simultaneously found myself in close contact with the dusty cement sidewalk.

Upon arising to my feet I found myself in company with three small boys who were seated in a vehicle known as an "Irish Mail." The little fellows were frightened, but were little gentlemen and were most profuse with apologies. The one who operated the machine stated that he "tried to stop it but was a little late." As for myself, I received a bad shaking up and a torn dress. However, I consider I came through very fortunate.

Another instance, during the past week I witnessed a girl on roller skates, of probably ten years of age, apparently with deliberation, roll onto a small child of about six years of age. The skater continued on, never turning her head to ascertain if she had done an injury. I assisted the little victim to her feet and she proceeded on her way tearfully, with a bruised face and a bloody nose. So a playground for each locality seems a wise provision, and to strictly reserve the sidewalk as public thoroughfares only and thereby avert tragedies.

Will you kindly find space in your valuable Day Book for the above, as I believe, judging from my experience of yesterday, that children making a playground of our city sidewalks menaces life.—G. K.

**BILLY SUNDAY.**—I do not see why The Day Book should be criticized for having Billy Sunday preaching his sermons in it. As for my part, I regard such a department no more nor less than a fair play, although I am a rationalist. If Billy Sunday's sermons appear to some of us futile, are we not at liberty to let our opinions be known?

Right here I am going to nail Billy's preaching. At the midst of his revivals, in the name of same God,