

ELECTRIFICATION OF RAILROADS WOULD MAKE CHICAGO MUCH HEALTHIER

Chicago wanted the railroads to electrify; the people were tired of coughing up soot and dirt from their lungs; they were sore. So the council started hot after the smoking railroads—that was in 1913.

But big business, alas the Association of Commerce, stepped in and said: "Let us investigate and report on this electrification problem." And the railroads generously offered to pay a half million for expenses of the investigation. The council agreed to wait.

The association finally came through with the report a month or so ago. It was elegant, ponderous and said that although electrification was a good thing Chicago could wait for it. The railroads didn't cause much of the smoke nuisance, was its tip, and if they did they couldn't afford to electrify at present.

The railroad paid the half million and were satisfied; the Association of Commerce tendered the report first to the trust press, then to the council, and everything was serene.

Everything was beautiful until Smoke Inspector Reid broke loose with a review and opinion of the Ass'n of Commerce report yesterday.

He used figures which the report of big business, paid for by the railroads, used, and he got different results. He says the railroads can electrify — at least they can start something at a small cost.

He then says that:

The investigation of the Ass'n of Commerce proves the railroads contribute to the pollution of Chicago's air.

There are others belching smoke into Chicago's air, but that doesn't excuse the railroads.

Electrification will decrease the amount of soot in Chicago.

Either total or partial electrification is practicable by the railroads.

Railroads under electricity will be

cheaper to operate, will be more reliable and safe.

Electrification will add to cleanliness and healthfulness of the city.

Operation under electricity will make the city more beautiful and permit a freer growth of vegetation.

Then Reid goes on to show that during the ten years which it would take the railroads to electrify the cost will be less than 3 per cent of their income per year.

He shows that the City Railways Co., "although this company has to take care of a large over-capitalization," can still afford to donate to the city almost 8 per cent of its income.

Then he winds up with:

"Now will the railroads make this small annual expenditure in order to make the city cleaner, healthier, more attractive, and a more fitting place to live in for themselves, their children and others, as well as to reap the financial benefits of well-invested capital, or will they keep fostering dirt and filth and remain a nuisance until compelled to divest themselves from it?"

HEARST LIKES HIMSELF

Is William Randolph Hearst going to make his order abolishing whisky ads from his papers an annual affair, or have his advertising managers been disobeying his orders?

About a year ago William sent around a telegram to discontinue all whisky ads. This was done. A few days ago he repeated this performance and since that time his sheets have been crowded with interviews from notoriety-seeking "Drys" praising him for his action. This is the second time this has happened. "Hurrah for me!"

Highland Park city com'n to vote next meeting on abolishment of corporation counsel.