

estimate the land value of that neighborhood. By applying this method to several of the more valuable neighborhoods of the business section, and confirming his estimate by reference to public records, private archives and market reports, he ascertained the different values at different times. He then obtained the opinions of 100 of the best posted real estate men in Chicago as to the most valuable quarter acre in the city. Preponderance of opinion settled upon the southwest corner of State and Madison street, part of the school fund property controlled by the Board of Education, the property to which the table relates. This had never been sold, but with the information he had already collected regarding the prices of neighboring property, Mr. Chandler was able to determine its value for each year from 1830 to 1894.

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Not only must the information of the foregoing table have been accessible to the school board of 1895, when it was about to make its improvident deal with the Tribune. A private ground-renting transaction had but recently taken place in the same neighborhood, which should have admonished the school trustees that they were about to be disloyal to their trust. The lot on the northeast corner of Adams and Dearborn, on which the Fair Building stands, had been but recently leased. This lot, 198 feet on the east side of Dearborn and 66 on the north side of Adams, is somewhat larger than the Tribune's lot, two blocks away, which is 72 on the east side of Dearborn and 120 on the south side of Madison, the latter being the second street north of Adams and parallel to it. The lease of this Fair Building lot was for 99 years; it required a first-class building to be erected and to come to the landlord for nothing at the end of the term—conditions that were not imposed by the school board upon the Tribune—and the rent was to be \$70,000 per year for the full term. As the rent for the Tribune lot was compromised at \$30,000 for ten years and \$31,500 for the remaining 80 years, we have an average per year of \$31,333 for the Tribune as against \$70,000 for the Fair. This, however, is not a fair comparison, for the Tribune lot is smaller than the Fair's. Then let us reduce both to a common basis and ascertain the rental per square foot. For the Fair it is \$5.35 per year; for the Tribune it is only \$3.60.

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Whether the evidently improvident, even if not fraudulent, action of a majority of the school trustees in making a present to the Tribune and

its associates in the combine of 1895 of a rich income at the expense of the public school children of Chicago, can be remedied in the courts remains to be seen.

Whether the present trustees or their successors will follow the example of their predecessors of 1895 in dealing with the revaluation clauses that are still in force, also remains to be seen.

Meanwhile, however, the land-grabbing interests are trying to protect themselves through the new charter which is in process of formulation. On pretense of giving greater protection to the school interests in this respect they are giving less. They are doing it by means of a trick too old and threadbare to fool any man when the fact is once called to his attention. What they propose is to make all long leases in the future, and all alterations in existing leases, subject to approval by the City Council. This seems like protection, since the assent of two bodies instead of one is necessary to final action. But if improvident or fraudulent action were taken, the approval of a legislative body like the City Council would make it almost if not quite impossible to undo the effect of the fraud in the courts; whereas, improvident or fraudulent action by the school trustees, like such action by any other trustees, is subject to inquiry and revocation by the courts. Even if the good faith of the Council could be inquired into by the courts, this "protective" clause would make it necessary to prove a case of violation of trust obligations against two sets of trustees instead of only one. There is apparently a real estate Sambo in this charter wood pile.

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## NEWS NARRATIVE

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To use the reference figures of this Department for obtaining continuous news narratives:

Observe the reference figures in any article; turn back to the page they indicate and find there the next preceding article on the same subject; observe the reference figures in that article, and turn back as before; continue until you come to the earliest article on the subject; then retrace your course through the indicated pages, reading each article in chronological order, and you will have a continuous news narrative of the subject from its historical beginnings to date.

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Week ending Wednesday, Jan. 2, 1907.

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### Chicago Charter Convention.

The convention for framing a charter for the city of Chicago (vol. viii, p. 784; vol. ix, p. 350) has completed its work, in so far as substance is concerned. This convention is a product of the amendment to the State constitution adopted at the election in 1904 (vol. vii, p. 505), which allows the legislature to legislate specifically for Chicago, such legislation to be subject, however, to approval by the people of Chicago on referendum. An effort was made in the legislature in 1905 to secure a call for

an elective convention of the city for the formulation of a charter, but the bill for that purpose was pigeon-holed. Thereafter the City Council of Chicago provided for a convention of 74 members to be selected as follows: By the Mayor of Chicago, 15 members; by the City Council of Chicago, 15; by the Governor of the State, 15; by the Speaker of the House and the President of the Senate, 15; by the Cook county commissioners, 2; by the various park boards, 6; by the Board of Education, 2; by the sanitary trustees, 2; and by the library board, 2. Pursuant to this arrangement Governor Deneen (Republican) appointed 12 Republicans, 1 labor unionist, and 2 Democrats; the Speaker and the President of the Senate (Republican) appointed 14 Republicans and 1 Democrat; the City Council appointed 10 Republicans and 5 Democrats; Mayor Dunne appointed 9 Democrats of various types, 3 labor unionists, 1 independent, 1 Socialist and 1 Republican (a Negro); and the several administrative boards appointed 4 Democrats and 10 Republicans. Consequently the convention is not representative and is overwhelmingly Republican. Even the Democratic members are for the most part by no means men of radical democratic tendencies or affiliations. They are what is known in Chicago as Union League Club Democrats. The convention met in December, 1905, but held only a few formal meetings. Slow progress was made either in the convention or in the committees until December, 1906; but after December 3, 1906, the convention was kept in almost continuous session until December 28, the object being to complete the charter in time to present it to the legislature early in the session.

Several important conclusions were arrived at in the sessions of the convention. Among them may be enumerated the following:

1. The management of the parks is made a city function. (Proceedings, pages 58, 59.)
2. Public schools and libraries are made city functions. (Pro., p. 59.)
3. The Mayor is to hold office for four years, and shall no longer preside at Council meetings, but shall retain the veto power. (Pro., pp. 51 to 94, and 243.)
4. Aldermanic districts to be 70, redistricted every ten years, and one alderman to be elected for four years from each. (Pro. pp. 221, and 243 to 264.)
5. No initiative or referendum, except that on public utility franchises a petition of 20 per cent. of the voters shall necessitate a referendum. (Pro., pp. 57 and 376 to 425.)
6. No home rule in matters of local taxation. (Pro., pp. 54, 454 to 470, and 526 to 561.)
7. Modification of special assessments for street improvement. (Pro., pp. 471 to 515.)
8. Providing for compensation for private use of space above and below street level. (Pro., pp. 515 to 526.)
9. Educational department put in charge of 15 trustees, who have power by majority vote to name a superintendent and a business manager, but no power to remove them or reduce their salaries without a two-thirds vote, and who can act administratively only upon their initiative, unless with a two-thirds vote (Pro., pp. 561 to 742).
10. No municipal suffrage for women (Pro., pp. 766 to 785).
11. Local option regarding sale of liquor on Sundays (Pro., pp. 785 to 795).
12. Jurisdiction of the State over the submerged water

front of Chicago to be ceded to the city. (Pro., pp. 818 to 825.)

13. Requiring confirmation by City Council of action by school trustees regarding the leasing of the school lands. (Pro., pp. 825 to 834.)

The convention adjourned on the 27th, to be reconvened by the chairman when the charter shall have been drafted by the rules committee in form for presentation to the legislature.

#### The Traction Fight in Cleveland.

The restraining order issued by Judge Phillips against the "Threefer" in Cleveland (p. 923), prohibiting this company from using the tracks of the "Concon" from the viaduct to the Public Square upon compensation fixed by the City Council, a right the Council may give to any company and did give to this one, has been sustained by Judge Phillips on the ground that the guarantee by Mayor Johnson and Mr. Scripps against loss gives Mr. Johnson a financial interest which invalidates the "Threefer" ordinance he signed as Mayor. To obviate this point in the future, Mayor Johnson has been released by Mr. Scripps from his guarantee, new guarantors having taken his place.

After Judge Phillips' decision Mayor Johnson said in a newspaper interview:

Whenever a judge is found who sees the private interest, no matter how small, and who fails to see the public interest, no matter how large, who resolves all doubts against the public interest and in favor of the private interest, that is the kind of a judge whom the corporations get behind to place on the bench. And, without disrespect to Judge Phillips or his decision, which I do not call in question, I venture the prophecy that Judge Sanders [the "Concon's" lawyer and a leading Republican politician] and every corporation lawyer in the State, Democratic or Republican, will be at the next Republican State convention working hard for the nomination of Judge Phillips to the Supreme Court bench of the State.

Meanwhile the "Threefer" had begun laying tracks of its own in Superior Avenue from the viaduct to the Public Square. But this work was stopped at 3 o'clock in the morning by another restraining order. The "Threefer" situation at present is this: One three-cent line seven miles long is in operation from the southern city limits west of the Cuyahoga river to Detroit street. It can go no farther toward the center of the city because an injunction covers 600 feet on Detroit street. But the "Threefer" runs busses over this break to the viaduct across the Cuyahoga, where passengers are transferred to the "Threefer" cars that cross the viaduct.

Another step in the low fare movement was taken in the Council on the 31st. By unanimous vote a franchise was granted "The Low Fare Company," a sister company to the "Threefer," but unguaranteed by Mayor Johnson, for 3-cent fare lines to the Public Square. Following the passage of this grant Mayor Johnson in a speech to the Council predicted