

SURVEY TELLS US HOW FAST WE ARE WALKING

Pedestrians in Chicago Region Have Fault of Dodging Too Much, One Learns

Although traffic surveys as conducted by American cities usually devote the most attention to vehicular problems, the pedestrian problem cannot be overlooked, says the street traffic committee of the Chicago Association of Commerce, which is about to complete its \$50,000 survey of traffic in the Chicago automotive region. In conducting its study of traffic conditions in Chicago and adjacent suburbs the committee made a number of interesting investigations of pedestrian operations both on the sidewalks and on the roadways. It found that, fortunately, most of the business streets of Chicago and neighboring communities are supplied with comparatively broad sidewalks. However, even with this advantage, retardation of movement and inconvenience is making itself felt, due to pedestrian traffic congestion. To get authentic evidence on this point Miller McClintock, the director of the Erskine bureau for traffic research who directed the Chicago survey, checked the pace of pedestrians on typical loop streets. As a result Chicago knows for the first time in its history how fast its citizens move over the concrete sidewalks in the central business district. During the free hours of the morning, says Mr. McClintock, walkers step along at a speed of 3.16 miles per hour. But later in the day congestion reduces this speed to 2.81 miles per hour.

"The factors which have resulted in an increase in the concentration of traffic demands affect pedestrian traffic to practically the same degree that they affect wheeled traffic," continues Mr. McClintock. "Therefore any city that is considering plans for traffic relief should not overlook sidewalk pedestrian traffic as a part of the larger problem of relief. Moreover sidewalk traffic has a very important bearing upon business, especially that of re-

tail stores. The attractiveness of a retail district depends to no small extent upon the convenience and comfort which shoppers experience in going to and from shop to shop."

Although every city or community seems to have its quota of jaywalkers who run across roadways in the middle of the block thus slowing up vehicular traffic the survey has found that practically every city in the Chicago area has an abundance of still another type of jaywalkers. This is the individual whose normal movement along a sidewalk is a series of dodges and jumps, not always successful to avoid collision with other pedestrians. The operations of these walkers are good examples of how pedestrian traffic utilizes sidewalk space in a very ineffective manner, says the survey which urges that all foot traffic follow the fundamental rule of the road, "keep to the right," a procedure that would

greatly increase the comfort and capacity of the sidewalks. Although the strict enforcement of such a rule would be impossible in any community much benefit might be anticipated if cities and towns would put on an educational campaign to drive home the "keep to the right" rule.

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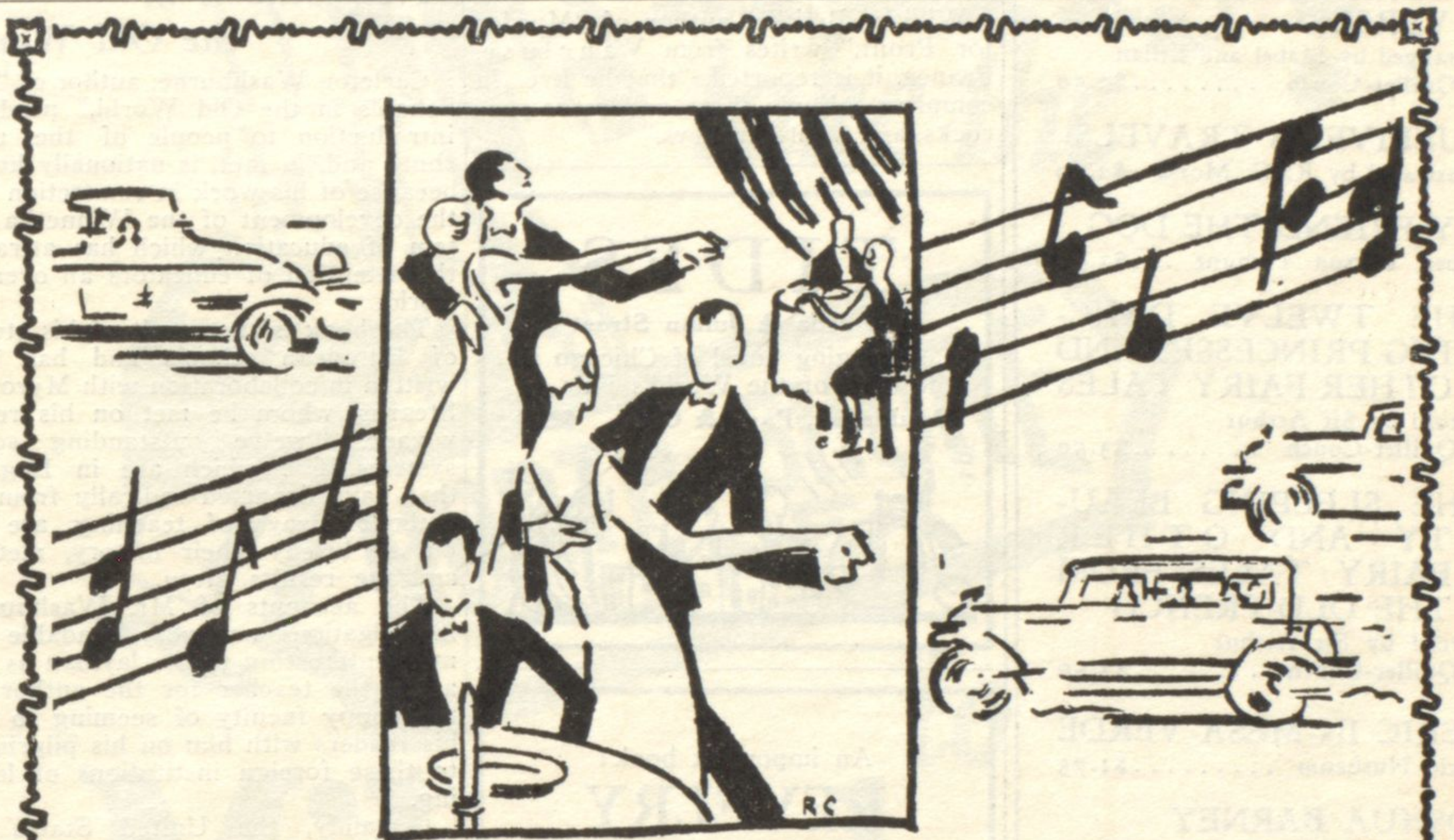
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