WALTER L. ROSS.

Walter L. Ross, whose election as president of the Toledo, St. Louis & Western to succeed Theodore P. Shonto's on September 1 was announced in last week's issue, furnishes another example of the scores of railway executives who have attained high positions from humble beginnings.

He was born at Bloomingston, Ill., on January 1, 1867, and obtained his early education in the public schools of his native town. After leaving school he became a messenger boy, and later an operator and clerk in the office of the Western Union Telegraph Company. He entered railway service in 1887 with the Wabash, and gained a thorough experience in the ground work of railroading as clerk, operator, chief clerk in local office, clerk in trainmaster's and dispatcher's offices, and local agent on the Wabash and the Indiana, Illinois & Iowa. Entering the traffic department, he became general agent of the Illinois, Illinois & Iowa, and to June 1, 1904, was division freight passenger agent of that road. From June 1, 1904, to April 1, 1905, he was general passenger agent of the Toledo, St. Louis & Western, and on April 1, 1905, he was appointed general freight agent also, with headquarters at Toledo. When the Clover Leaf took over the Chicago & Alton he was made general traffic manager of both roads, with headquarters in Chicago, on December 1, 1907, and in 1909 he was elected vice-president in charge of traffic.

While the Iowa Central and the Minneapolis & St. Louis were operated in connection with the Alton and the Clover Leaf, Mr. Ross was vice-president of all four lines. As president of the Clover Leaf, which is now to be separated from the Alton in management, he will have headquarters at Toledo.

Mr. Ross has devoted a large part of his time to efforts to promote a spirit of cooperation between the railways and the shippers along their lines, and has delivered several notable addresses on subjects pertaining to the relations between the transportation interests and the public. In these he has continually emphasized a full recognition of the duties of the railways to the public and has been one of the foremost exponents, if not the originator, of the motto, "the public be pleased," as a substitute for the much-quoted phrase in which the contrary idea has been so generally expressed.

SPANISH RAILWAY SUBSIDIES.—In order to induce foreign and Spanish capitalists to invest in the construction of railways in Spain, the government passed a law in 1908 authorizing the construction of 3,309 miles of secondary lines and 2,879 miles of main lines, and, as an inducement for investment of capital in these enterprises, guaranteed 5 per cent interest on the capital invested, and in addition exempted them from taxes for ten years. These concessions were without result, however.—Consular Report.

Walter L. Ross.

PLANS FOR NEW CHICAGO UNION STATION.

The railways using the Union station at Chicago have definitely decided where they will locate their new terminal. The head house is to face on Canal street and will be bounded by this street, Adams street, Clinton street and Jackson boulevard. The main concourse will extend under Canal street, and will have on its north and south sides what will be substantially two separate systems of stub end tracks.

The present Union terminal is situated between the Chicago river, Adams, Canal and Madison streets. The trains of the Pittsburgh, Fort Wayne & Chicago, the Burlington and the Chicago & Alton enter it from the south, and those of the Chicago, Milwaukee & St. Paul and the Panhandle from the north. It is expected that the same plan will be followed in the new station. The new terminal will have 26 station tracks, most of which will enter it from the south.

While the location has now been finally settled, the design of the terminal, which is being made by D. H. Burnham & Company, has not been worked out in detail. About all that can be said at present is that it will be one of the largest and most modern terminals in the country. The present Union station, which is used by the roads already mentioned, handles 45,000 to 50,000 passengers a day, who arrive and depart on 261 trains. Because of the fact that a great part of the traffic is through business, as distinguished from suburban, the facilities that must be provided for the accommodation of passengers, the handling of baggage, etc., are large. There is, however, heavy suburban business through the old station which will be transferred to the new one, and for the particular accommodation of this a subway to the terminal will be opened from Quincy street under the Chicago river. The plans call for as complete a segregation as practicable of the through and suburban business. Suburban passengers will be able to go to and from trains through the concourse without passing through the station head house.

The train shed will be a modification of the Bush type and, while it and the concourse will be depressed somewhat below the level of the head house, the train shed will not be in a subway, but will be open for the escape of smoke and gas to the air, there being no plan for electrification. The subway between the down-town business district and the terminal will remove a good deal of the traffic, both of pedestrians and vehicles, from the bridges which passengers must now use in passing between the down-town district and the present Union terminal. The estimated cost of the new terminal is $35,000,000.

One of the most interesting questions in connection with the plans is whether the government will erect a large post office building adjacent to the new terminal. It was long
thought probable that the Union station lines would go south and build on Twelfth street. The government has contemplated locating the new post office building at Van Buren and Jefferson streets, which would be somewhat remote from the station site now decided on. The location of the new post office building at Van Buren and Jefferson streets would necessitate the hauling through the streets daily of about 3,000 wagon loads of mail, with the resulting increase of the congestion of street traffic. Furthermore, at this location it would not satisfactorily fit into the scheme of the Chicago Plan Commission for the beautification of the city. E. R. Graham, of D. H. Burnham & Company, who is the architect for the station, is also, since the death of D. H. Burnham, the chief architect of the Chicago Plan Commission. The railroads having definitely decided to build at the location already indicated, the Plan Commission is now in favor of the erection of the new post office building on a tract of land directly west of the projected Union station, bounded by Adams, Clinton and Jefferson streets and Jackson boulevard.

Under the original plan of Chicago, Congress street was to be made the central east-and-west axis of the "city beautiful." With the new Union station and post office located west of the river between Adams and Jackson, Quincy street would be made the central east-and-west street. Quincy is now an unimportant street running between and parallel to Jackson and Adams. The existing post office building, which will continue to be used for government purposes, is bounded by Dearborn, Adams and Clark streets and Jackson boulevard, and if Quincy street were cut clear through it would run right through the site of the present post office, as it would through the site decided on for the new Union station. In other words, the old post office building is on a direct east-and-west line with the projected Union terminal, as would be the new post office if built directly west of the terminal; and with Quincy street opened through from the present post office building, except through the sites of the new terminal and post office building, to Halsted street, carried under the river by a subway and widened throughout its length, it would fit admirably into the plan of Chicago. The Chicago Plan Commission has, therefore, hailed with joy the announcement of the location of the new Union terminal, and it is probable that the railroads, the Chicago Association of Commerce and the Plan Commission will join in urging the government to put the new post office building adjacent to the new terminal.

There are strong utilitarian as well as aesthetic arguments in favor of this scheme. Forty-five per cent. of all mail received at and forwarded from Chicago is handled at the Union station, and 17 per cent. at the North Western station. The location of the new post office at Adams and Clinton streets would not only place it in close proximity with the Union depot, but would bring it much closer to the North Western station than it would be at the other site considered. Furthermore, the location at Adams and Clinton is more central, from the standpoint of the concerns sending out the largest mails, than either the present site of the post office or the proposed location at Van Buren and Jefferson streets. A vast quantity of mail originates in the wholesale district, lying west and outside of the elevated loop; the large afternoon newspapers have their offices in much the same district, and at present find it convenient to take their mails to the Canal sub-station, which is near the present Union station, rather than to the post office at Clark and Adams streets. The cartage of mail from the large mail-originating district of Chicago to a post office at Jefferson and Van Buren streets would involve a large added expense in time and money. The despatch of mails from an office located near the Union depot could be handled by a system of 30-in. belt conveyors through a sub-basement connecting with the trains arriving at and departing from the Union depot. This would not be feasible if the post office were located at Van Buren and Jefferson streets. The long distance to and from the last-named location would add materially to the cost of the screen wagon and pneumatic tube services, which now costs about $350,000 a year, and to the loss due to decreased efficiency resulting in waste of time.

The principal objection to the Van Buren-Jefferson street location, however, lies in the fact that it would not be possible to handle the mail collection service satisfactorily if the post office were located there. Outbound mail is despatched on schedule in large wagons for departing trains. The inbound mail from trains is handled much the same way, the exception in both instances being the despatch of letter mails through the pneumatic tubes. But the collections are not based on bulk and train connections. They are made at frequent intervals and the mail collected cannot be sent through the pneumatic tubes because to do so would require treatment which cannot be given this mail until it has been deposited in the post office.

If the post office be located at Jackson and Clinton streets, and if the proposed "plaza" connection with the Union depot be provided between Jackson and Adams streets—and Market street and the river, the collection problem can be solved by the use of a system of belt conveyors to extend from the "plaza" connection through under the sub-basement of the depot to the new post office. Under this plan all of the heavy collections made in the loop district can be brought to this "plaza" where the satchels can be thrown on the moving belt, thus delivering the collections into the post office almost continuously. The publishers located in the loop could, no doubt, use the same belt and thereby save long hauls. Three additional belts could also be provided, one between the "plaza" and "clearing house" in the sub-basement of the depot, and one each way between this "clearing house" and the new post office. The two belts between "clearing house" and post office could be utilized for the despatch of mails from trains to the post office and from the post office to trains. All mails would be "delayed" from this "clearing house" to and from trains on either side, either by means of motor trucks or by means of overhead bag conveyors.

If the postal department should decide to locate the new post office in proximity to the new terminal it would follow an example set in several cities. This has been done in connection with the Union terminal at St. Louis, the Union terminal at Washington and the Pennsylvania and Grand Central terminals in New York City.

The plan of the railroads contemplates the widening of the tracks on both the north and south sides of their terminal, and, doubtless, if the post office building is erected west of the station it will be of the same general style of architecture.

Buenos Aires & Pacific Railway, Argentina.—The Buenos Aires & Pacific's position is complicated by the fact that its report includes the figures of the Argentine Great Western, Bahia Blanca & North Western, and Villa Maria & Rufino Railways. In 1911 issues of $10,000,000 Bahia Blanca debenture stock were made, and in 1912 another $5,000,000 of 4½ per cent. debenture stock. There will be various savings, however, on account of the ranking since June, 1911, of $15,000,000 5 per cent. ordinary (1911) shares as ordinary stock and the completion of the writing off of the Argentine Great Western special expenditure, and of the fact that $102,000 was added to the surplus last year. To those there is the addition of $50,000 to gross receipts, which should mean $300,000 to $500,000 net. These will just about cover the increase in fixed charges, so that it is probable the ordinary stock will again receive 3½ per cent.—London Economist.