

an important change is shortly to take place in the running of the Toronto Street Railway, it may not be amiss to consider the desirability or otherwise of following the example of some cities in the United States, that have abandoned the horse power on street railways for the electric system. Of all the places in which electricity is used for propelling cars, perhaps the severest test to which the system has been subjected, is the city of Richmond, Va., which is one of the most hilly cities in America.

When it was first proposed to run cars in Richmond by electricity, a company composed entirely of Northerners obtained a franchise from the council of the city, while at the same time many of the principal residents laughed at the idea of a street railway being run in Richmond by electricity, and prophesied that the whole affair would turn out to be a Yankee land speculation—money-making scheme, and that therefore the railway never would be built. In spite of these predictions, contracts were entered into with the Sprague Electric Railway and Motor Company of New York. The work was begun shortly after and the track was laid, and the wires were hung in an almost incredibly short time. Everything appeared to be ready for the cars. The day for commencing to run the cars was fixed several times only to be further postponed. These repeated unfulfilled promises to come to time afforded the wise men an opportunity of saying, as they did, "We told you so." At last, when not expected, one car was made to move by the electric motors, and sent round that portion of the line known as "Church Hill Loop Line," amid the deafening cheers of thousands of delighted spectators. The "objectors" then admitted that these cars might be made to run on level ground, but never on the up and down steep grades. The running of the Richmond cars was confined for a few weeks to the "Church Hill Loop," in order to test the machinery before attempting to run on the steep grades. So many difficulties were encountered at the commencement, such as imperfect work on the machinery, untaught operatives mismanaging the cars, and so on, that the owners of the road got discouraged, and were seriously considering the abandonment of electricity as a motive power, and the adoption of either horse or cable power. But the abiding faith of the sanguine spirits of the enterprise prevailed, and early in February, 1888, the opening of the electrical railway was announced, and finally resulted in a complete success. Since that time, with scarcely any friction or mishap, thousands of delighted passengers have been carried on the electric cars from one end of the city to the other—a distance of six or seven miles—in a much shorter time and at less cost than it was possible to do by either horse or cable power, in consequence of the very steep grades encountered, varying from three to ten feet in the hundred feet.

Since the initiation of the electric system it has been subjected to the severest tests and tried under almost every possible condition. Not the least difficulty met, we

are told, was the training of inexperienced men to handle the cars. To test the adaptability of the electric system to run cars successfully, "trial trips daily were made for weeks with closed sixteen foot cars, crowded with passengers, on the heaviest grades, often with slippery rails, and on twenty-seven foot curves, without the use of sand or extra help." Other tests were made in which the cars had to cut through mud, snow and ice, the tracks being buried out of sight. On the trial trips the cars would occasionally leave the rails, and in order to right them again the ground connection to the track was made with a flexible wire, termed an "electric kedge." The adaptability of electricity as a motive power on street railways has been demonstrated beyond the possibility of a doubt in the city of Richmond, under the most adverse circumstances.

Much of the information in this article was obtained from Mr. Sparrow, the superintendent of the Richmond street railway. In the most courteous manner, and with great pains and patience, that gentleman explained the many technicalities connected with the working of the electric railway system. Next week a short description may be given as to the way in which the power is generated and applied, with other interesting details of the working of the system.

THE LAKE ST. JOHN DISTRICT.

There are some minds which, when a tendency in commerce or industry is observed which does not suit them, turn at once to governmental aid or relief as the only panacea. It tempts one to repeat: "How small, of all that human hearts endure, the part that kings or laws can cause or cure." Here is *Le Progres du Saguenay* wailing over poor crops in that remote district of Quebec, and declaring that never have the prospects been so discouraging as now. The failure of the crops is to be attributed to dry weather and frosts. It seems that a number of families are preparing to emigrate to the United States to obtain employment in the cotton factories, being unable to obtain enough to live on. *Le Progres* believes it "the imperative duty of both Governments to do something to prevent this exodus."

Under these lugubrious circumstances it is refreshing to find in the *Quebec Chronicle* of one day last week an account of a project in connection with the lumbering industries of the Lake St. John district which takes a very different tone. According to that journal, two rich French-Canadians from Central Fall, Rhode Island, Messrs. Henri Chatel and Vilbon Monast, have had an interview with the members of the Provincial Government with a view to ascertaining what facilities will be afforded them for obtaining timber limits and erecting mills at Lake St. John. They propose to introduce machinery into such mills to prepare lumber for the United States market, to which it will be directly shipped. They left for Lake St. John on Wednesday, and state that if they succeed in establishing the proposed enterprise, a

large number of French-Canadians in the States will return to work for them.

MANTLES.

When the weather is clear and the sun bright, as was the case early this week, the millinery openings are not only an important event, but a pretty sight. The warehouses, dressed in their best, are well worth seeing at any time when filled with new styles and new goods; but when to these attractions is added a crowd of bright and interested women, for the most part well dressed, and all as eager as school girls to prattle with a buyer over the latest fashions, it is enough to make one wish he were a millinery salesman. The crowd is greatest around the pattern room, of course, where the mantles and bonnets and hats are shown. But a good sprinkling of customers were to be seen on the other flats.

Taking first the mantles, we observe that while English goods show up well in this department, especially in tweeds, serges, presidents, and stripes, the finer and most of the more stylish garments are from Berlin. This may be because the Germans reproduce the tasteful, if sometimes odd, Parisian styles to a greater extent than the staid Britons. Of the German mantles which we have seen in Canadian warehouses, the majority are paletots, and a favorite feature is the Medici collar, which is *de rigueur* in Paris modes. Braided collars and cuffs are much liked, too; and this, with the puffed sleeves (*a l'épaulette*) and buttons, give quite a military aspect to some of the garments. In fact one line of short jackets is called the *Militaire*, but it is so fiercely military as to look rather Russian than German. Short jackets are a great feature this autumn, and they are obtainable from a very low price up to twenty or fifty dollars. One we saw had Astrachan sleeves and trimmings, but the materials are for the most part fine and fancy German cloths, diagonals, tweed stripes and stockinettes. The colors are even more varied than the texture, the standard colors alternating with newer and lighter shades. Black, however, still commands attention for variety of shape and finish. We observed some plain diagonals and English president cloths that were very genteel, and a number of "corkscrews," as this ingenious texture is called. The newest thing of the season, however, is what is termed a "three-quarter jacket," which is intended to be between long and short, and succeeds pretty well. These are to be seen in light and dark fawn color, in beaver, navy, cardinal, black, and brown, and are a very jaunty garment indeed. Some of these, too, are shown with vest front, made of corkscrew-cloth, with corded silk facings. Matelasse wraps, silk and satin-lined, look handsome and almost as comfortable as fur-lined silk dolmans, which they resemble. A brocade velvet dolman, with gimp sleeves, has a very handsome and comfortable feel, while the "Sicilienne," a silk wrap, lined and wadded, is a rich and warm-looking garment. Fur trimming, we observe, is less in vogue this year; applique trimming, as well as braiding, is plentiful on German goods. Plush sleeves are made for various mantles. By the way, we must notice the fashionable "Bishop's sleeve," as well as the "angel" sleeves; where this name is derived from we know not, unless from a fancied resemblance to wings. The former are often used for young peoples' jackets or paletots. A large line of children's and misses' paletots was observed in one