

the total excess of actual cost over estimates is not more than about \$10,000. This is a truly remarkable showing. As contracts generally go, if the experience in England corresponds at all closely to that in Canada, the contractor's extras on this enormous expenditure would have cost a good many times that sum. Then the danger of scamped workmanship would have been far greater under the contract system, because under that system there is always a chance of dishonest gain from cheapening processes, material, and workmanship, while under the direct employment system there is no inducement to any such dishonesty. On the other hand, the popular belief that contractors can afford to do such work much more cheaply than it can be done under direct management of the Council, must rest upon the assumed ability of the former to procure workmen at lower rates of wages, and to keep them more steadily employed. The first condition will hardly constitute a recommendation in the eyes of thoughtful and philanthropic citizens. The second has been found a real difficulty so far as skilled labour is concerned, though it is not easy to see why it should be so, seeing that, as a rule, the contractor no less than the Council has to rely upon skilled foremen to superintend the work, and there is no sufficient reason why the one should be less able to procure the services of reliable men than the other. That there should be a distinct saving by the direct-employment method is clear from the fact that no contractor would think of attempting the work unless with the expectation of making gain for himself over and above the actual cost of the work, an expectation which can, as we have said, be realized only by means of inferior material and workmanship, or smaller wages.

#### The Future of the Trolley.

Those of us whose inclinations or occupations keep them prisoners for the most part within the City limits are, now and then, when occasion may chance to require a trip to some suburban village, very agreeably surprised to find that what would have been, a few years ago, a trip involving considerable time, inconvenience and expense, has now become a matter of but an hour or two, in a comfortable electric car, at the cost of one or two five cent tickets. Returning, it may be, on occasion from such a trip, with the mind full of speculation as to the limit, or rather absence of limit, to be set by the imagination to the development of this new mode of locomotion, which is being extended so quietly and so rapidly in every direction from the city centres, far into the rural district, we take up the *Popular Science Monthly*, prepared to read with not a little receptivity such an article as that in which Mr. Appleton Morgan predicts the supersession of the steam railways "loaded down with their vast burden of fixed charges and costly maintenance, crippled by all sorts of parasites, legal, illegal and mixed," by "the buzzing little trolley, humming along its inexpensive wires every five minutes." Well may he picture the poor handicapped railways as praying for time to turn around before the transcontinental trolley is upon them.

#### The Trolley Not a Finality.

It is pleasant to dream of all the wonderful transformations which may be wrought in a very few years through the agency of the trolley, and yet realize that the dream can hardly go beyond the limits of sober probability. It is by no means a wild fancy which sets vividly before us the startling changes which the trolley may easily be conceived of as effecting. Why may we not recognize in it the beneficent agency which is going to check and counteract the tendency to centralization of the labouring classes in the great cities? It may do

this either by making it easy for the city artisan to live with his family far from the madding crowd and the stifling heat, in the open country, or—who knows?—to bring about the return of the great factories to the cheapness and roominess of the country, by furnishing so cheap and easy a connection with the railway centres and lake or ocean seaports as to do away with the difficulties which have led to the abandonment of the country and the congestion of the cities. And then what benefit may it not be destined to bring to the dwellers in the rural districts themselves, in the way of cheap and rapid locomotion and transportation. Why may it not bring the solution of the hard problems of large farms, and long distances, and dreary isolations, and unschooled children, for the settlers of the great prairies? Just at this point, however, we may as well give the pegasus of the not unscientific imagination a little more rein. The trolley is, after all, a clumsy affair, with its cumbrous poles, expensive rails, and unsightly wires. It is doing injustice to the muse of scientific invention to suppose that these impedimenta are going to continue long to hamper the locomotive energies of the twentieth century. Even if we shrink timorously from the anticipation of aerial travel, may we not predict with some confidence, that the new century shall not be out of its teens before, whether through the successful storage of electricity, or some simpler means of engendering and applying it, the necessity for rails and wires shall have been obviated, and every man be placed in a position to purchase or generate, at a cheap cost, his own motive power, attaching it directly to his own conveyance. It costs no more to revel in the larger than in the smaller anticipation, and its realization would be only a shade more wonderful.

#### The Case of Clara Ford.

THE conclusion of this very remarkable and peculiar case undoubtedly brings to the general public mind a distinct sense of relief. Probably nine out of ten persons, hearing all the evidence, would coincide in the verdict actually given by the jury; and as probably a considerable proportion of these persons would be partially dissatisfied with their verdict.

When the trial began most people were of opinion that Clara Ford had committed the crime with which she was charged; but they were waiting to obtain further satisfaction on certain points. Ordinary human beings do not commit murder without some reason or motive; and Clara Ford did not seem to differ so widely from other people as to be thought capable of committing such a crime without any motive at all. Of course it was represented that there was a reason. The poor boy, so it was said, had some time ago taken liberties with the young woman—a young woman, who, apparently, could have doubled him up and reduced him to mince-meat without any trouble. Certainly the public could hardly be blamed if they looked for some further elucidation of this mystery. We can hardly be wrong in saying that there was a wide-spread feeling of expectation on this point.

It is now well known that nothing more could be ascertained, or at least was brought out in evidence. Where is the motive? What was the reason for the crime?—was the question perpetually asked, and no answer came to that question.

But perhaps there might be corroboration. It is seldom, indeed, that some facts cannot be got at which will support a well-grounded accusation. But here again we are at fault. There is no confirmation whatever. It would be absurd to attach the least importance to the evidence of the woman Black. Certainly her testimony could have no weight against the prisoner, although it might create prejudice in her favour. And there is hardly anything else except the suspicion arising from the contradictory stories told by the prisoner herself.