

OUR FIRST ELECTRIC RAILWAY.

CONSIDERABLE interest has always centered on the electrical railway of the Toronto Industrial Exhibition. Not only was it the first electric railway operated in the Dominion of Canada, but it was among the first on the continent. It is also interesting from the fact that devices were first tried on it which have become necessary to the operation of electrical tramways the world over. The first year, 1883, in which the experiment was made, only a short piece of track was laid. The motor, an imitation outwardly of the experimental machine tried at Chicago the year before, did not "mote" to any great extent, owing to the dynamo used on the car being a double armature one with only one pole piece to each armature. The year following, 1884, produced the first practicable road. It was the work of Mr. C. J. Van Depoele, of Chicago, a genial gentleman and clever mechanic, who will be remembered by the pioneers of the electrical business in this province. It would be considered a crude affair as compared with the modern electric car, but it nevertheless "got there," though with the expenditure of a considerable amount of fuel and supplies. The current was taken from copper strips laid in a wooden box between the rails. This answered perfectly as long as the weather was fair and the box dry, but with the first shower of rain the trouble commenced. It was said to be as good as a play to see the astonished "Van" peering over the end of the car at the streak of blue fire a yard long that streamed out from it as it flew down the grade. But he was not beaten by any means. The next season he was to the front with the overhead wire, and the trolley arm, the original of those now used exclusively in railroad work. The track was lengthened, and became in this year for the first time an electrical railroad proper, running for business purposes, and it was largely patronized by the public as the readiest means of reaching the Exhibition grounds. The following years 1886-7-8-9 the road was operated by Mr. J. J. Wright under the auspices of the Toronto Electric Light Company, who built new machinery and otherwise improved the road. The passengers carried frequently numbered as high as twelve to fifteen thousand per day, and it is a noteworthy fact that there never was an accident even of the slightest nature to any person. The nearest approach to anything of the kind was during the year of Van Depoele's conduit, when an inquisitive agriculturist put his hand through the slot in the top of the box to see where the power came from. He made the discovery at once and effectively, but beyond this sudden accession of knowledge he was not hurt. However, it was noticed that he kept considerable real estate between himself and the railroad for the balance of the day. There were during the later years, four cars, each capable of carrying 70 to 75 persons. As these had to be hustled up a grade of considerable extent at a speed of twenty miles an hour or so, and there was only one motor, it can easily be seen that it took a considerable streak of electricity to do the work, and many a tale could be told of the difficulties that had to be encountered in all kinds of weather, to keep it within due bound, and hold down to its

work day in and out for sixteen hours at a stretch, and of the expedients resorted to at times to avoid an impending stoppage. But withal, the road was a great success, so much so, that Mr Wright was made the recipient of a handsome testimonial from the Exhibition authorities in recognition of the fact. We refer to this subject as now, on account of the extension of the street railway to the gates of the park, this historic road has become a thing of the past. The spot where crowds of merry excursionists were wont to sit along the line is to be used as a siding to unload cattle upon. *Sic transit gloria mundi*, but all the same, when the city's tramways are "electricized" and the modern motors achieving their perfect work, there will be in this city those whose thoughts will revert in loving remembrance to the old exhibition road, and the scenes and incidents of its stirring existence. Its grievous sins of omission and of commission, as shown up in the brilliant light of to-day, will be heartily condoned, inasmuch as, with all its faults, it achieved for its sponsors both moral and financial success.

SANDWICH, WINDSOR AND AMHERSTBURG ELECTRIC RAILWAY.

THE Sandwich, Windsor and Amherstburg Electric Railway, which went into operation a couple of weeks ago, is reported to be working most successfully. In fact, if we are to believe the statement of a local paper, the citizens are "tickled to death" over it. We do not understand this to mean that electrocution is getting in its work on them, but simply that they are greatly pleased with the new enterprise.

The people on the Canadian side of the river are now taunting Detroiters with being behind the age, and are enquiring when it is their intention to make an effort to "keep up with the procession."

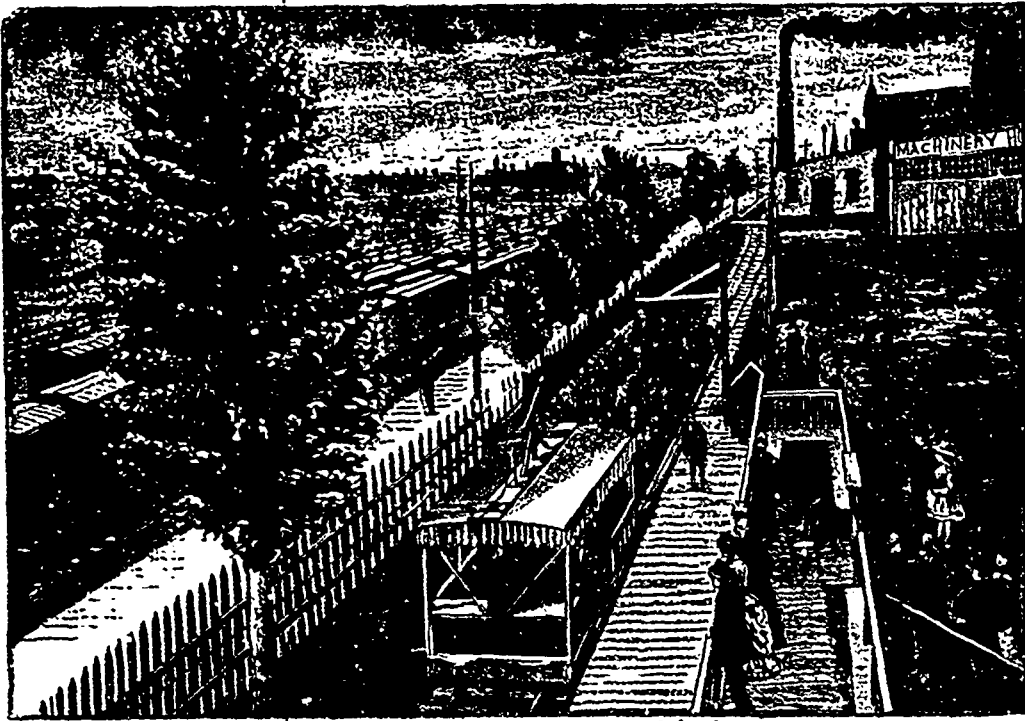
The motive power used is the Westinghouse overhead trolley system. We are pleased to see that the cars on this line are lit by incandescent electric lamps, a new and very desirable feature of electric railway equipment.

PUBLICATIONS.

The Fort Wayne Electric Co. have published a pamphlet entitled "Kind Words," which contains a large number of flattering testimonials to the excellence of the system of electric lighting of which the company are the promoters. We are indebted to Mr. W. J. Morrison, general agent for Canada, for a copy of the book.

The intellectual wealth of three continents is represented in the September *Arena*. The well-known English essayist, F. W. H. Meyer, of Cambridge, England, speaks for European thought in a careful paper on physical work. Kuma Oishi, M.A., of Tokio, Japan, represents Asia in a brilliant paper on the Extrinsic Significance of Constitutional Government in Japan; while such able thinkers as Rabbi Solomon Schindler, Rev. George C. Lorimer, Thomas B. Preston, Sylvester Baxter, and the editor represent America.

A quantity of electrical apparatus imported by the Calkin Electric Light Co., of St. John, N. B., was recently seized by the customs officers of that city on the ground of undervaluation.



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