

ELECTRIC STREET RAILWAYS.

PORTLAND RAPIDLY BECOMING THE ELECTRIC CITY OF THE WEST.

Electricity, as applied for motive power for street cars, is a comparatively new application of this most wonderful of nature's forces. A year ago the people of Portland had only a vague idea of electric railroads, and to-day they see them in practical and successful operation. Portland's first road was the line from the western approach of the O. R. & N. Co.'s steel bridge to Albina, and has been in successful operation for the past two months. The next road was the Metropolitan railway, which started at the Northern Pacific passenger depot and extends to the flourishing suburb of Fultoa Park. The two other lines under construction are the line to Woodstock and the Multnomah Street Railway Company's Washington street line, both of which are to be completed within the next sixty days.

The power to run these roads is generated by steam, the engine used being high-speed automatic, belted direct to the dynamo, and the electrical current is carried from the dynamo to the motors by the medium of the overhead wires. This current is at a pressure of 500 volts, which is not dangerous to human life, as is evidenced by its daily use on over 200 roads in the country. Each car is equipped with two 15-horse power motors, one suspended from and geared to each axle, and are entirely independent of the car body. Should a motor become disabled it can be "cut out" and the car operated with one motor.

The cars are controlled by switches on each platform, operated with handles by the driver. A turn of the switch one way will start the car ahead, but should an accident be imminent, due to an obstruction on the track, by another turn of the switch the machinery is reversed and the car brought to a standstill. The importance of this cannot be overestimated, especially in crowded thoroughfares.

Cars operated by electricity are run at a cost of from one-third to one-half less than with horses, the ratio varying with the conditions and number of cars run, and give the public quicker, better, and cleaner service. Its adoption has caused Portland to take on a more metropolitan air than ever. Another advantage is that, situated as Portland is, it

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