

A MODEL STREET RAILWAY.

SPOKANE FALLS rejoices in the possession of the most perfect street railway in existence. It is saying a good deal for a young city in what is so frequently styled the "wild and woolly west" to give it credit for surpassing the cultured east in anything involving the application of advanced science. The statement that the most perfect street railway in existence is in Spokane Falls is, nevertheless, true; and it has aroused a great deal of interest wherever the fact has become known. It is an electric railway, four miles long, and its entire equipment is as complete and elegant as it is possible to make it. It extends between the suburban town of Ross Park and the business center of Spokane Falls.

The Ross Park Electric Street Railway Company



OFFICE OF THE ROSS PARK ELECTRIC STREET RAILWAY CO.

was incorporated under territorial law in April, 1888, with a capitalization of \$50,000. Subsequently the capital stock was increased to \$150,000. The road cost, completed for service, \$300,000. Construction work was begun in June, 1889, and the road was opened for traffic on the seventeenth of the following November, since which time it has been operating continuously and in a manner that has delighted both its builders and the public that is so efficiently served by it.

This electric road runs from the corner of Post street eastward on Main to Park street, thence north one block, resuming its eastward course on Front street, crossing Dennis & Bradley's, Heath's, Wolverton & Conlan's and Forrest's additions, to Ross Park, terminating at Sapro & Ducker's and Webster's additions. Thus the line passes through the best business

portion of the city and furnishes rapid transit for the citizens of that charming residence suburb, Ross Park. It crosses the Spokane river on Dennis & Bradley's addition, which is one of the finest made to Spokane Falls. Its enterprising owners have graded the streets, built sidewalks, planted shade trees and provided protection for them, and laid out a beautiful park on the river, a glimpse of which is shown in one of the illustrations given herewith. The location is naturally a delightful one, and the tasteful and important improvements made by the owners greatly enhance its value. The entire length of the line lies through gilt-edged property, and what was open prairie when the road was built is being occupied by neat and cosy cottages and stately mansions.

In constructing the line the road bed was first brought to a perfect grade. Then standard gauge rail-

way ties were laid two feet apart from centers, upon which thirty-pound T rails were firmly spiked. On either side of the rails two-inch planks are fastened in contact with the iron. Thus the track is as perfect as it is possible to make it. The average grade of the road is less than one per cent., but in one place it is four and one-half per cent. for a distance of 350 feet. There is a double track the entire length of the line. The bridge across the

Spokane river is 350 feet long, and will support a great weight.

The center-pole system of supplying the electric wires was determined upon by President Dennis after a searching examination as to its merits. With the exception of one short line in Washington, D. C., this is the only road in the world having electric wires supported by poles in the center of the street. This mode is, of course, only practicable in cities having wide streets, as in Spokane. It is more expensive than the side poles, but the wires are held more firmly by it, and it renders possible complete lighting of the track in the night. It also does away with the unsightliness of the numerous street-side poles. These center-poles, between the two tracks of the road, stand twenty-three feet out of the ground, and are painted an olive-green. The copper electric cables are supported by metallic