

DISASTER FOR CABLE ROADS.

A Car Dashes Down the Ninth Street Incline—Twenty-Five Broken Grips.

The Kansas City Cable company was the worst sufferer from yesterday's storm and cold in the city. While accidents and delays on all of the street railways were numerous and vexatious, on no other road did they approach so nearly an epidemic. Beginning with the collision at the Junction with an Eighteenth street car at 6 o'clock in the morning, with the three hours' delay caused by the big rush of an Independence avenue car down the union depot incline, and the continual breaking of grips, the day was one of disaster.

President Smith estimates that the damage caused by the runaway car at the union depot will not exceed \$150 to the building and perhaps as much more to the car. The loss of this company from accidents and delays during the past month will run well up into the thousands.

The wheels and rails were covered with ice and snow when Conductor McCormick's Independence avenue train reached Jefferson street at 8:30 yesterday morning. The grip had been rendered brittle by the extreme cold and snapped as it was removed from the rope for the downward glide. Gripman C. A. Timberlake applied the brakes, but thirty feet from the top he realized that they were slipping from his control. The car was filled with twenty-one passengers, and as the conductor and gripman saw that the train was getting away from them the hook was thrown out to catch in one of the iron loops prepared for it, but the hook also broke. Men and women realized their peril as the car increased its speed, and there was some commotion, yet no one thought of courting certain death by jumping. As the train reached the curve at the bottom of the incline it left the track and plunged through the wooden partitions, tearing out about forty feet of woodwork and a quantity of railing. Timberlake pluckily stuck to his brakes and sustained a sprained ankle. H. S. Ferguson, secretary and manager of the United States Wind Engine and Pump company, was on the car and was slightly injured. Beyond this the passengers seemed remarkably cool

and hardly aware how near they had been to death's door. Had the car struck the station five feet to the left the turn stile man and watchman must certainly have been killed. As it was they heard women's screams, saw a flying shadow and the next instant there was a crash only a few feet from them that seemed as though the heavens were falling. The watchman said that he ran to the wreck, fully expecting to find it full of mangled corpses, but instead the passengers walked out "only a little white around the gills." All cars were stopped on the entire system until nearly 11 o'clock.

The grips on twenty-five cars were broken during the day and last night the power houses seemed like big hospitals for injured cars. On account of the terrible cold very little could be done toward repairing them.

On all the lines in the city sand cars were out all day, and in many cases salt was sprinkled on the inclines. The tracks were also swept as fast as the snow accumulated on them, but all this did not prevent the largest number of delays and accidents in many months. Officers of all the roads visited the power houses last night and planned what might be done in case the bad weather and bad luck should continue.