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**THE CAR SHORTAGE.** **M**R. W. J. Leonard of the C.P.R., giving evidence before the Railway Commission, said the Company could not find car builders to accept their \$19,000,000 appropriated for rolling stock recently. Canadian manufacturers, he said, could not handle the order, and most of it goes to United States makers, but it has been found impossible to get acceptances of orders for the 14,500 cars required.

Mr. Dalrymple of the Grand Trunk said that the Grand Trunk had ordered 3,000 box cars, 500 refrigerator cars, 500 flat cars and 200 Hart convertibles at a cost of about \$3,500,000, besides 35 locomotives for the Grand Trunk Pacific and 50 for the Grand Trunk. A large order, to be delivered to the Grand Trunk last May has not yet been filled.

There is evidently a greater demand for rolling stock in Canada than can be supplied, but meanwhile the trouble might be alleviated if it were possible for the companies to utilise the cars they have to their full capacity. This is said to be largely a question of terminal facilities and some of the people who are shouting the loudest about car-shortage are doing the most to block the companies in extending their terminal facilities.

**AUTOMOBILES AS SCAVENGERS.** **A** MANCHESTER engineer has invented and patented an apparatus to prevent the dust clouds raised by automobiles and other vehicles. According to the Consular and Trade Reports the device which is simple and inexpensive, collects the dust as it rises. The dust is drawn into conduits which are funnel-shaped at the mouth, and which run from the rear of the front wheels to the rear of the back wheels. These conduits are connected with a box, into which the dust is driven by the pressure of air, or this end can also be accomplished by the aid of a centrifugal fan geared to the driving shaft of the automobile. The contents of the dust-box can be discharged by pulling a lever at the front of the vehicle.

This should make the automobile not only a degree less of a nuisance than it now is, but actually useful to the public. Civic corporations have never got far beyond the idea of watering the roads to lay the dust for a few hours; and few of them have got so far as to water them enough to do much towards abating an intolerable nuisance, dangerous to public health and injurious to property. There would be poetic justice in making the automobile serve as a scavenger. The only thing left to do would be to make it consume its own odors.

**GERMAN WAR BALLOON IN HOLLAND.** **S**OME excitement has been created by the appearance of a German dirigible war balloon near Amsterdam. As usual the German military press rather goes out of its way to exaggerate the importance of the incident and incidentally to twist the tail of the British lion. The Tagliche Rundschau, the naval and military organ, says: "We should not be surprised if the Victoria Luise was next to appear unexpectedly over London. We shall await the London comment with breathless interest."

In that case the Tagliche Rundschau must not be surprised if something regrettable happens to the Victoria Luise. To send a war balloon over London with German military or naval officers on board would likely be considered simply an act of war. Even if not so regarded by the British Government, it might be so treated by some exasperated British patriots.

**THE BUZZARD AND THE MAN.** **T**HE late Wilbur Wright in a letter written shortly before his death to a German aviator said: "Our new aeroplane is the development of all we have learned in the years in which we have been transported in the air. Everybody who has ever seen a buzzard flying knows there must be some method whereby a human being can also remain in the air, once he really finds himself aloft. The sole difficulty is that nature has provided the birds with the means of soaring without exertion to themselves, while humans must devise an artificial means of achieving the same result. The real problem, now confronting us, is to find out whether we, too, like birds, once we are in the air, can stay in it indefinitely. The bird can do it. Why should not human beings?"

The lamented pioneer in aviation was evidently right in assuming that the buzzard's advantage over the man lies chiefly in its superior knowledge. The soaring bird is the heir of thousands of generations of soaring birds. Until a few years ago the human race knew nothing whatever about the principles of flight, to say nothing about soaring. Human aviation is in the stage of racial infancy. The surprising thing to-day is not that the man is inferior to the buzzard in the art and science of aviation, but that in so short a time he has become infinitely superior to the barn-door fowl in his mastery of the air. The success has been so rapid that it is difficult to realise that human aviation is but a thing of yesterday.