

based upon a supposition which the Court regarded as very unlikely to be justified. The street railway could not afford to have its passenger service damaged by its own freight cars, and the public authorities could interfere if the public traffic was unduly obstructed by such cars. Were electric cars to collect and deliver freight they would displace a much greater number of carts and waggons, with their horses, which take up a much greater space on the roadways in proportion to their loads than would an electric freight car. This class of service is promising to develop; it is one phase of the struggle between electricity and animal power, the result of which is certain to be the overwhelming victory of electric force.

NEW DANGERS.

Insurance an Absolute Necessity.

The craze for adopting mechanical means of locomotion for both work and pleasure is responsible for the creation of new dangers to life and limb. These dangers render insurance an absolute necessity, and of the many new risks attending the continual substitution of scientific for natural methods of propulsion few are receiving more attention than that associated with the introduction of the motor car. The "Insurance Spectator" of London presents the following view of the motor risk:—

"Since we last wrote on the subject very considerable progress has been made in the development of the coming era of motors of all kinds for ordinary road and street work. For one thing, several leading firms are now very busy building motors for heavy goods trade, and ere long many of these new wagons, notably millers' carts, for delivering flour to bakers, will be on the road. Conjointly with this, there have already appeared the motor omnibuses; and not a few cycle motors, which are likely to prove, should they become at all numerous, a very serious source of danger to the public as well as to drivers of all classes.

"We quite know that at the present stage of affairs nothing will check the advance of the new method of letting locomotives run on the roads and the streets without the discipline of the rail, and until the fresh departure in vehicular traffic has been fully and practically tested, it is not, of course, to be expected that the Legislature will be moved, as it most surely will be in due season, to bring in a bill for "the better regulation of all kinds of auto-carriages." There are many points of detail of which no one as yet appears to have taken much, if any, account. For one thing, obviously there is the fact that practically everybody has acquired the usual automatic habit of instantaneous calculation as to time and distance in crossing the road, whereby the overwhelming majority avoid accident. At present, when the auto-car is still a novelty, it is easy, as a rule, for the individual to escape harm from its incursions, but let not any one rashly suppose that it will be thus when these vehicles are common, because a wholly fresh set of automatic calculations

will have to be acquired for safely crossing where these locomotives run, seeing that their real pace cannot be safely judged like that of a horse. It is greatly to be feared that many lives will be sacrificed before the requisite habit is acquired by the majority.

"As to the motor cycles, they are really very dangerous, because they can be and are driven at a fearful rate. The writer of these lines saw two quite lately, on certainly a clear road, proceeding at fully thirty miles an hour. Now, although the road was certainly clear, the drivers of these motors could not tell what might come suddenly out of side turnings, and no one who witnessed, as many did, the terrible and resistless sweep of the machines, could hesitate in denouncing them as being decidedly to the common peril.

"But there are other considerations whereto due attention has not as yet been given, so far as we are aware. Let us grant that racing rates of speed will be always exceptional in towns, the fact remains that motor vehicles can no more avoid collision with each other, when they multiply on every road, than can other forms of vehicular traffic. But, consider the enormous difference between collision where both vehicles are simply horsed, and in the case of practical locomotives which are liable to abrupt explosion and to developing a fire that it is practically impossible to put out, as has been already illustrated in the instance of several motor-car accidents, where the conflagration resulting from the shock had to be left to burn itself out. But while these cases have occurred on country roads, and have merely damaged the carriages or scorched the drivers, it is terrible to think of the consequences that would follow the blowing up of a couple of big motor carriages in, say Cheapside or the Strand. But it is exactly in crowded thoroughfares that the worst accidents of the near future will necessarily occur, and then many will be ready enough to exclaim, better half-a-dozen runaway horses than one locomotive gone wrong in a busy thoroughfare!"

THE TICKET OF LEAVE SYSTEM JUST ESTABLISHED IN CANADA.

An exceedingly serious change was made in the criminal law of Canada last Session. Owing, we presume, to the Act by which it was effected being introduced when Parliament was wearied, and the members thinking, naturally enough, how to get away as soon as possible, the new legislation went through without exciting the ordinary comment either in or out of the House. The Act is entitled, "An Act to provide for the Conditional Liberation of Penitentiary Convicts." In plainer English, it is a law to authorize the release of the worst class of malefactors on a "Ticket of Leave" before their sentence has run its course. The power to grant a release is vested in the Governor General, who, of course, is supposed to act under the advice of the Minister of Justice, but this Minister nor any other in the Cabinet has any powers granted by the new Act beyond the offering advice to His Excellency.