The Origin of Vehicles.

With what tools was the original wagon constructed? Very likely the first wagon was made with no other tools than an axe—or it might as well have been called a mallet or a pounder or pestle. It had an approximate edge, but was utterly unfitted to fine hewing. The saw was unknown. The wagonmaker had a hard task, and his work was of necessity rude. But the bronze axe was a finer tool and capable of doing nearly as good work as the steel-edge tool swung so proudly by a modern farmer. Fire played a prominent part in burning holes and charring down the solid wheels into usable shape and size.

The ropes used were, in all probability, twisted strips of hide taken from wild animals that were slaughtered, or were made from twisted vegetable fibre. Both these ropes or thongs were skillfully made by primitive races as they are by wild races to-day. The wheels of coaches of the earlier part of the nineteenth century were kept from flying off the axletree only by the insertion of a bit of sole leather, called a linch pin. Then an iron peg was used, and finally a nut displaced both. It does not need the most powerful imagination to picture the making of the first wagons in the forests of antiquity.

We thus have our wagon, or van, which is nearer the old word used by our sires of antiquity, for they called it vah, from which the Romans called it a vehicle, and to draw a wagon was "vehre." But can we determine by what sort of animal the very first vah was drawn? The first animal trained seems pretty surely to have been the dog. At any rate, his remains are found most freely with those of man. He seems to have domesticated with the savage beast who dwelt in caves, as a sort of co-hunter.

One of our best authorities, Buffon, says the dog is the greatest conquest ever made by man—the first element in human progress. "Without the dog," says Townsend, "a man would have been condemned to vegetate eternally in the swaddling clothes of savagery. Without the dog there could have been no flocks or herds, no assured livelihood, no legs of mutton, no roast beef, no wool, no blankets, no spare time, and consequently no astronomical observations, no science, no industry." But the two varieties of dog whose bones were found most ancient were of the shepherd and pointer stocks, or like them. The former of them may have been used largely for light drawing. But the horse is also of very ancient lineage, his bones being found in the refuse heaps of the European lake villages. All through the bronze period the horse was common.

The oldest Egyptian monuments do not note this animal, but the later ones, from 2500 B. C., constantly portray him. One eminent authority shows that there was a domesticated horse in Europe during the glacial epoch, and this animal was afterward displaced by the large Asiatic breed. In China the horse seems to have been in use 4,500 years ago. There seems to have been two animals, one designated as swift, one as slow, by our Aryan ancestors, and these may have been the ass and the horse. From Egyptian monuments and from fossil remains it is also pretty clear that the ox or horse was domesticated for labor during the stone era. Pictures on the monuments show him harnessed with a yoke.

Of the larger animals, it is hard to determine which was first driven, the ox, horse, camel or reindeer. Perhaps the evidence is weightiest that makes the last most ancient. The proof is, however, open to a good deal of question. The ox seems to have been known as "the slow," the reindeer as "the swift." Very probably the former was mainly used, as now, for plowing and the latter for journeying. The horse seems to have been a native of the western continent as well as the eastern, but to have become extinct long before the advent of Europeans.—*Saddlery and Harness.*

The new factory of the McLaughlin Carriage Co., of Oshawa, promises to be a very handsome structure. The original plans have been somewhat altered, adding 80 feet. When completed, the factory building will be 380 feet long by 80 feet wide. The warerooms, shipping rooms, and offices will be detached from the main building, and be no less than 252 feet long by 60 feet wide. This latter structure will have all the modern conveniences, while the factory will be supplied with the latest machinery and appliances. Then again, north of the main building the boiler house and engine house will be placed. The total floor space figures 142 000 feet.