

## THE INDIAN AMBULANCE TONGA.

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EVERY medical officer who has been in India will remember the Indian ambulance tonga drawn by two bullocks. It affords most comfortable accommodation for four men sitting up, and when the

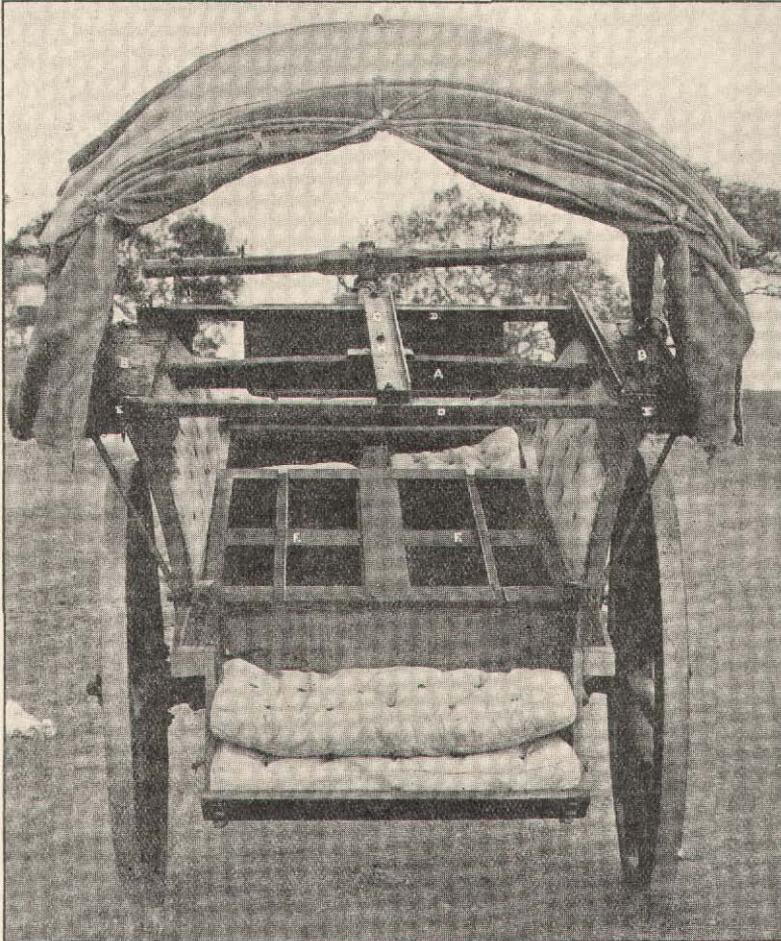


FIG. 1.—The tonga ready to carry three stretchers. The upper "H," formed by C, D, D, is turned on the bolt H to a right angle with the lower "H" formed by A, B, B the ends of D D rest on the sides of tonga B B and are bolted at E. There is a rail on the bar C and off-side of tonga B, so that a stretcher is run in on the off-side of tonga, then lifted to near side of frame; the second stretcher is run in on off-side and remains there. The third stretcher is run in below on the rails F F.

wooden frames are unfolded and the cushions spread on the top of them, one man (or two close together) can be carried lying down; but helpless patients who cannot step into the tonga are put in with difficulty; they are better on stretchers when out of bed. An



FIG. 2.

apparatus that I have invented, when fixed to the tonga, makes it possible to carry, comfortably, four men sitting up or three helpless patients lying down on regulation stretchers. The elasticity of the stretchers, the springs of the tonga, and slow action of the bullocks,

all make the carriage comfortable. This apparatus greatly increases the value of each tonga, and reduces the wheeled ambulance necessary on active service for the lines of communication, &c. And if it is becoming difficult to find suitable *Kahars* to carry dhoolies, it will be necessary to employ wheeled ambulance transport wherever it is possible in India.

The apparatus may be described as two "H" frames. When the "H's" are superimposed the cushions are arranged for four men to sit in the tonga. When the upper "H" is turned at right angles, for carrying stretchers.

For loading the tonga with stretchers, the first stretcher is run in on the rails on the off side of the framework, then lifted to the near side. The second stretcher is then run in on the off side and remains there. The third stretcher is then run in underneath. All stretchers are run in head first.

The hoods of the tonga are made of double canvas, and form good protection from sun and rain; they come down well beyond the handles of the stretchers, front and back, and there is ample ventilation for each man from the sides, for the curtains can be rolled up as required.

The new fixtures were applied to tonga at a cost of Rs. 25, but two folding seats costing each Rs. 20 and two rifle-racks costing each Rs. 6.12, total Rs. 53.8, are rendered unnecessary by the new fixtures, so that tongas could be made for Rs. 28.8 cheaper with my invention. The rifles would be carried on each side of the lower stretcher, resting in grooves made for them.

To prevent the stretchers shifting forward or backward in hilly country the stretcher slings are fixed at each end, loops passing over the handles and a turn being taken round the bar.