

**NOTES ON MOTOR
CARRIAGES: WITH
HINTS FOR
PURCHASERS AND USERS**

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Notes on Motor Carriages: With Hints for Purchasers and Users by John Henry Knight

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JOHN HENRY KNIGHT

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MOTOR CARRIAGES

WITH
HINTS FOR PURCHASERS AND USERS

BY
JOHN HENRY KNIGHT
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NOTES ON MOTOR CARRIAGE

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTORY.

MECHANICAL power on common roads is now exciting considerable attention in England.

Electrical and steam power have been substituted with success for horse power on tramways, and it seems reasonable to suppose that the heavy omnibus traffic of London and other towns could be worked by means of some other power than that of horses. For busy men, for doctors, and for all who now make much use of horses, mechanical power will enable them to do their travelling more rapidly, and more cheaply than they can with horses.

There is a limit to the distance a horse can cover in a day ; and many men keep two or three horses, whereas a good motor carriage would do the work quite as well.

Then there is the large army of cyclists, the vast majority of whom have never ridden on horseback,

and can hardly hope to become the possessors of even the modest cob or pony. The cyclist as he advances in years will begin to feel the want of some auxiliary power to carry him up the hills, that for years past he has ridden up ; and the time must come when he will find it more comfortable to be propelled, than to pedal his machine. This man, with his mechanical knowledge of cranks and ball bearings, of chains and pneumatic tires, will take very kindly to the new conveyance.

A few words as to the origin of this little book. The author had paid two or three visits to Paris—two on purpose to see what the French engineers were doing in mechanical carriages ; and in the early summer of 1895 a short magazine article was written on the subject, but owing to absence from home and a serious accident it was not then published. By the autumn it was out of date ; for events had moved rapidly in this country and in France in 1895.

In November a lecture was given by the writer on the subject, at the Camera Club ; and this, enlarged and brought up to date, forms the chief part of this little book.

Whether motor carriages will ever become as popular in England as they appear to be in France, it is impossible to say. The French undoubtedly have better roads than we have in England. Still our

English roads are far better than they formerly were; the steam roller has done good work, and there must be few Highway Boards or District Councils on which there are not one or two cyclists who realise the necessity for good roads. Thousands of miles of our roads should be widened, so that it should not be necessary for the carriages, either those drawn by horses or propelled by machinery, to slacken speed when passing one another, or risk running off the macadamised surface on to the soft turf or the ditch. A wide road is more easily kept in repair, than a narrow one where all the wheels go in the same track: a wide road is more durable, as it dries more quickly after rain, than a narrow lane shut in with banks and hedges.

The adoption of the safety bicycle and the pneumatic tire has given a vast impetus to cycling; and thousands of individuals are now riders who would never have attempted to ride the old ordinary cycle, with its fifty or fifty-four inch wheel, or even the tricycle of fifteen years ago. Therefore it seems reasonable to suppose that in the near future some light motor, oil, steam, electricity, or possibly hot air, will be produced, that will require scarcely any attention for days together, and give no more trouble in working than the average sewing machine.