

# A HOME-MADE TOBOGGAN.

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THE term "toboggan" may include the "coaster," a simple form of horseless sleigh, which can be put together with a few pieces of rough board and nails, as illustrated in Fig. 1. An improved coaster of the same pattern may be evolved by shaping and planing the runners, cross-seat, and foot-rail, and providing hand-holes. Additional ease in running may be secured by fixing on the under edges of the runners strips of half-round or D-shaped iron as shoes. Make these act as springs by bowing them slightly, the ends being turned over and firmly secured by long screws. Such a coaster, when intended for a single passenger, need not be more than 36 in. long and 15 in. wide, the runners, of 1-in. or 1½-in. wood, being about 6 in. deep. The seat and foot-rail should be let into notches, as shown in Fig. 1 (preferably dovetailed), and held by stout screws. Steering must be accomplished by means of the feet, and a little practice will soon make this easy. For two or more persons the coaster need only be lengthened, the hindermost passenger steering with a pole held across his knees after the manner of a tight-rope walker, a touch on the ground with either end deflecting the course of the coaster to one side or other of the track. A short length of rope attached to the centre of the foot-rail will be found handy for dragging the coaster up the hill after a descent.

The usual form of Canadian toboggan consists merely of three 6-in. by 1-in. boards, 7 ft. or 8 ft. long, and held together side by side by cross pieces 2 in. wide and 1 in. thick, screwed on about 1 ft. apart and leaving about 15 in. of the longitudinal boards at one end to curl up (see Fig. 2). The curling up may be managed by soaking the ends of the boards in boiling water until they are soft enough to be bent, when they should be held in position with cord. A strip of 1-in. by 1-in. wood roughly rounded and placed along the cross pieces from end to end on the outer edges of the sleigh will serve as rails by which to hold on. The steering in this case must be done in the same way as in that of the coaster.

A much more satisfactory and steerable toboggan (Fig. 3) may be made as follows :—Procure a board A (Fig. 4), 6 ft. long, 18 in. wide, and 1 in. or 1¼ in. thick, and two cross pieces B and C, one 3 in. by ¾ in. by 18 in. and the other 2½ in. by 1 in. by 18 in. Screw on the former 9 in. or 10 in. from the front end, and the other 5 in. or 6 in. from the opposite end of the large board. For the runners prepare four other pieces D of 1-in. board, 6 in. wide and 27 in. long, shaping them as shown with notches E, 1 in. by 2½ in. These carry cross pieces, 18 in. long, fitted and screwed so as to hold each pair of runners together. Over the front pair screw firmly to the cross pieces E a piece F of 1-in. board 15 in. by 18 in. long. To the under side of the rear cross piece screw two (or, better still, three) strong iron door-hinges N, and fix the free flaps as shown. Now place the whole in position on the floor, and, having the sides of the front pair of runners flush with those of the top board, and the cross piece B in the centre of the board F, bore a ¾-in. or 1-in. hole right through A, B, and F, exactly in the middle. Through this pass a round-headed bolt fitted with two washers, a nut H, and lock nut J, and bolt up tight enough to allow the front bogie to move freely without too much play; then tighten up the lock nut J. A foot-rail M and screw-eyes at K and L (of course at both sides), with strings crossed from L and leading to the handles, will complete the toboggan. An india-rubber door-stop might, however, be screwed on at O to take any undue stress off the hinges in case of a very rough track. A short chain stay at each side is also desirable. As will be obvious, the steering can be easily done by means of the crossed cords, and feet outstretched in front will act as brakes when necessary.

The hinging at the rear end makes this form of toboggan almost flexible and very easy in running, even in unfavourable circumstances. Here, again, dovetailing the joints and fixing on spring shoes will be found decided improvements. The dimensions can likewise be varied to meet requirements, and the coat or two of paint would act as a preservative.

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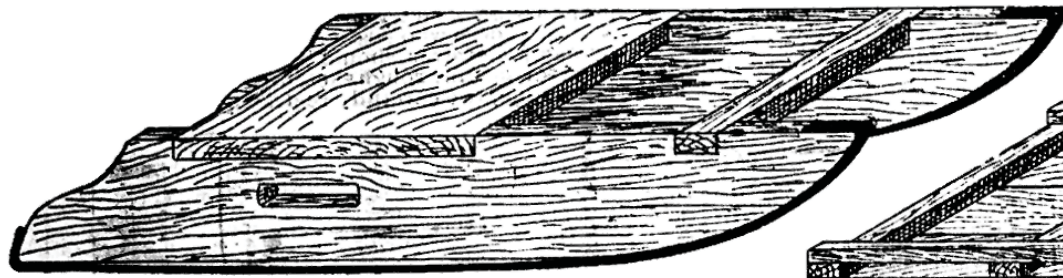


FIG. 1

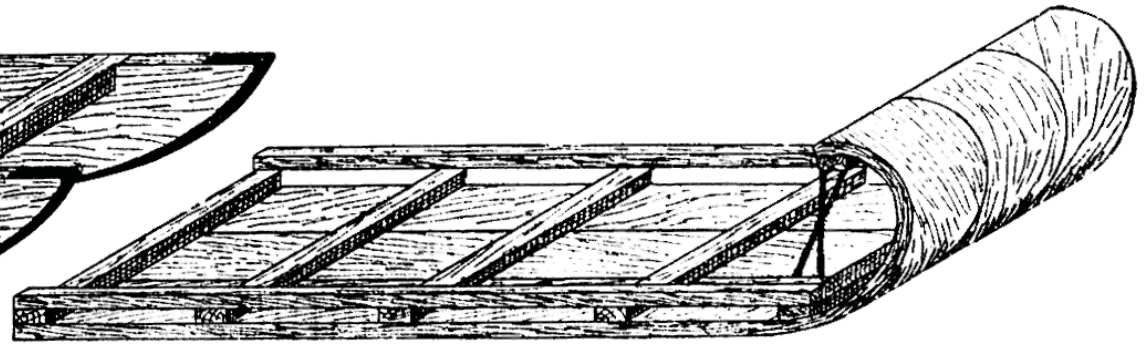


FIG. 2

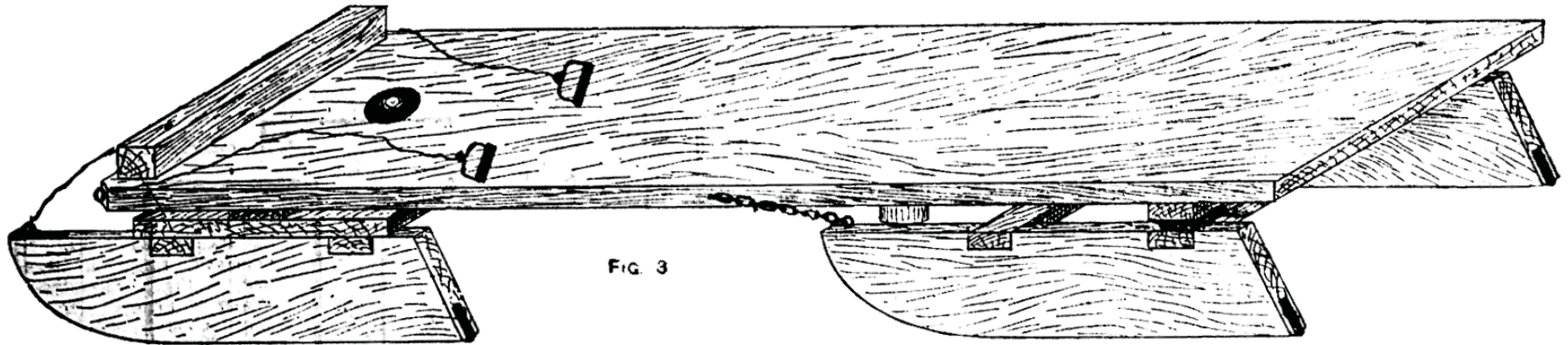


FIG. 3

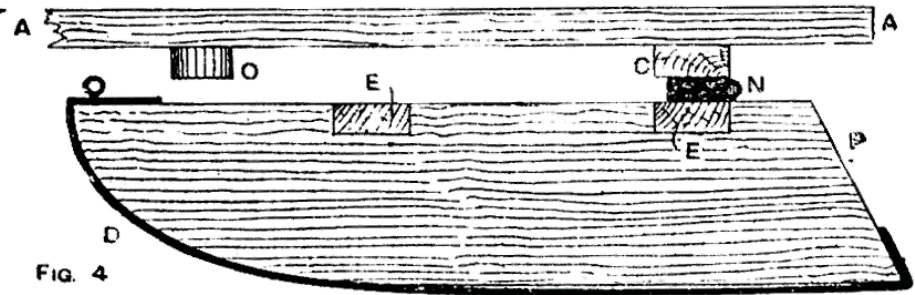
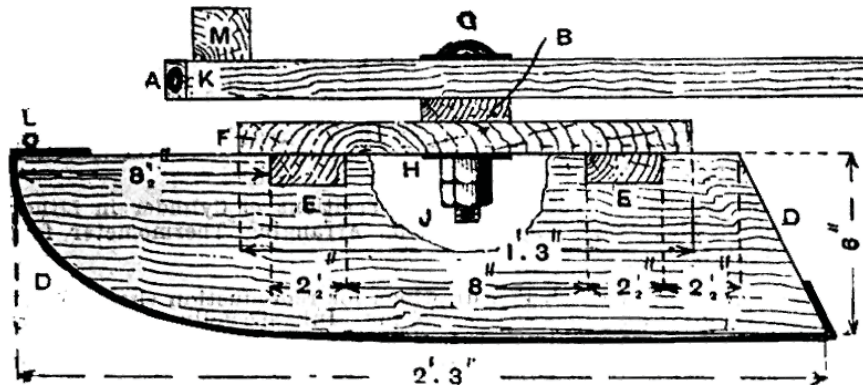


FIG. 4

A Home-made Toboggan. Fig. 1.—Simple Coaster. Fig. 2.—Canadian Coaster. Fig. 3.—General View of Dirigible Toboggan. Fig. 4.—Side Elevation.