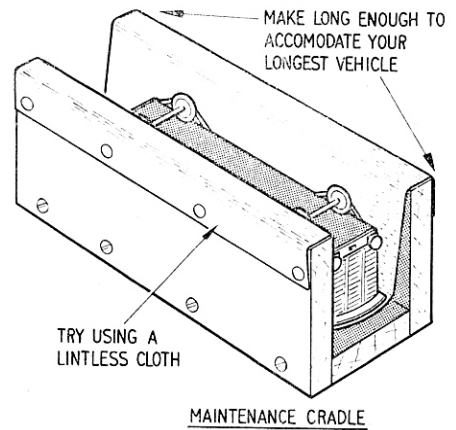
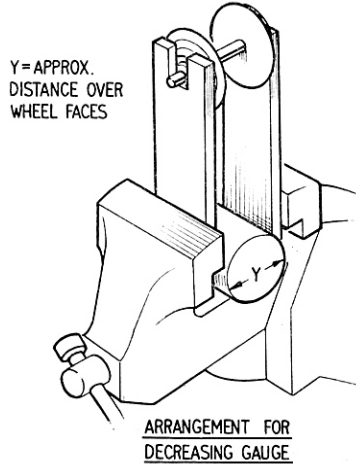


CARRIAGE AND WAGON MAINTENANCE

By T. W. BOURNE

THE holidays are over for most, and those odd unspent shekles are not yet earmarked for Christmas gifts — Did you mumble “Model railway investments?” But, of course! However, before plunging into fresh ventures make sure that which is in service is up to scratch. It is an easy job to restore rolling stock, and can be done after the gardening, while relaxing in an easy chair. The first essential is three pieces of wood screwed together and with a soft rag liner, forming a trough of suitable dimensions to hold a coach, in whatever scale is used.

Collect all the rolling stock together and segregate into three groups, Scrap, Repair and Service. Salvage any useful bits from the scrap and destroy the rest. Then take those requiring service only and place them on a suitably protected table to the right of the arm chair. Have another table on the left, the trough on the knee and then get cracking.



In turn, up end each vehicle into the trough, check the back-to-back of the wheels at three separate points on each circumference, and wash away the greasy muck from the bearings with an old artist's brush and carbon

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tet. (Thawpitt is one brand name available) or similar, and then deposit vehicles on the table on the left. When all the vehicles are done, pass them back into the trough and oil with a wire, needle or syringe with any fine oil, making sure it all goes in and stays in the bearings. Should any vehicles fail the back-to-back test, label it to that effect and put among the stock in repairs!

Automatic couplings should be checked and adjusted as routine servicing, and not annually. It is difficult to detail the adjustments for all automatic couplings, but failing anything better, wire a vehicle with known reliable couplings to a straight and level piece of track, and use one end of this vehicle as a check for both ends of every other vehicle.

Repairs

The most common failures on stock are couplings, buffers, back-to-back dimensions and decorations. The variety of couplings and decorations preclude dealing with them in discourse of this scope! It is, however,

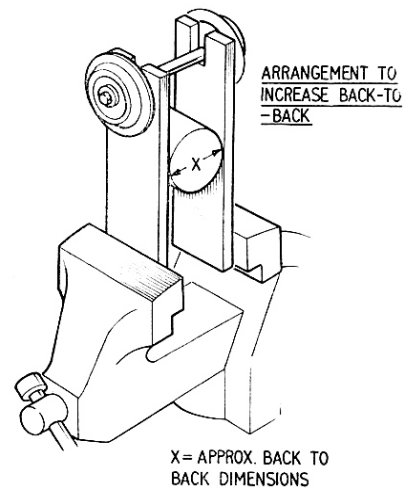
just as well to remember that a repaint is sometimes easier than a touch up!

Buffers work loose, threads get worn and buffers or buffer beams break. Usually, a suitable application of glue will cure these troubles, but in extreme cases a new set of buffers may be necessary. Should there be any doubt about the strength of a repaired buffer beam, back it up with a fairly heavy gauge of metal, drilled and soldered to the buffer shanks and glued or soldered to the buffer beam.

If the wheels of a vehicle which has failed the back-to-back test can not readily be removed and do not respond to twisting and squeezing back to gauge, then it is worth trying to adjust with two thin steel plates slotted to receive the axles and held in the vice with a blocking piece.

One final thought, having seen, in detail, the conditions and variety of your stock, put some of it (as necessary) on the duplicate list; during the coming season replace it as time and money permits. Another useful list which could be made at this period is

a list of the types of stock not owned, but needed to provide a proper balance of stock for the services envisaged.



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