



This car, designed to be driven by springs, is the first known example of a mechanically driven vehicle. It is not known whether it was ever

actually constructed in Leonardo's time. A far cry from da Vinci's auto is this modern version being entered by Telephone Operator Molly Spohn.

YOU HAVE another think coming if you believe:

The Wright Brothers flew the first airplane—

The tank was introduced in World War I—

The Gatling Gun was the first machine gun—because you would be wrong. These, and many other inventions by Leonardo da Vinci (famous for such works of art as "Mona Lisa" and "The Last Supper" and whose birth 500 years ago the world is celebrating this year) were first conceived just about the time Christopher Columbus accidentally discovered the American continent while hunting for the Indies.

And the horseless carriage of the 1890's has to take a backseat, too, because Leonardo made the first mechanical car. Spring-driven, its modified cousin reappeared on the roadways of Japan dur-

ing World War II, still useful as a means of transportation.

Leonardo's notebooks, filled with sketches of his inventions, ideas and improvements of already-existing devices, are crammed with such foresighted things as air conditioners, pressure cookers for feeding troops in the field, triple-tiered machine guns (one barrel could be fired while the second cooled and the third was being loaded), airplanes, anatomical drawings that are still in use in some medical schools, designs for two-level highways for pedestrian and vehicular traffic, as well as that indispensable and perhaps too-familiar roadside instrument, the jack.

Today, the American people have the opportunity of seeing these drawings brought to life. Despite the obstacles of war, time and the cryptic

Right: A self-portrait of Leonardo da Vinci. Already famous for his paintings of the "Mona Lisa" and "The Last Supper", it is only recently that Leonardo's achievements in many fields of science have been made known.



BORN