THE HOUSE THAT JACK BUILT

(© by D. J. Walsh.)

RUTH DEANE had been away from her home for many months. Her precious little "Sun-Trap" was a veritable haven of rest after the noisy city. But one morning she was awakened by a loud "Clang! Chink! Tang!"

Whatever could it be? Surely no sound save the song of birds should ever be allowed to break the stillness of a golden morning like this, and yet the clink of metal, the ringing of tools brought an odd consternation to Ruth's heart.

Suddenly she sprang out of bed. There was a heavy knocking of nails and wood carpentering. What could it mean?

Drawing aside the curtains with a hand that trembled with apprehension, Ruth's eyes were suddenly blinded by a mist of tears.

"Oh, it just can't be! Builders! Houses right opposite. How dare they?"

After dressing, Ruth went downstairs and out to the front yard. A young man, busy with his motor cycle beside the wall, raised his hat when he saw her.

"Pardon me," began Ruth, rather fiercely, "but what does this all mean? I mean this building opposite my home?"

"'The Happy Homes' do not meet with your approval, then?"

"Approval? Their presence is an outrage in this glorious spot. They are hideously alike, and alike in being hideous. Mine has been a dream house of peace and beauty—and now—"

"Pardon me, but you have reveled in its peace and beauty so completely—for yourself," he said quietly, "that you have forgotten the teeming hundred of every city who have to live in two rooms—or even one. You call your house 'Sun-Trap,' I see, but what about the children who are robbed of their rightful heritage—sunshine and fresh air?"

"Who are you?" demanded Ruth.

He shrugged his shoulders and his blue eyes met hers steadily.

"Does that matter? I realize that there is no more pressing problem today than finding houses to live in. The 'Happy Homes' are just a small attempt to solve this problem for a few homeless people."

The man raised his hat and was off. Ruth's housekeeper told her what she knew of the man who was said to be putting up the houses. His name was Jack Reed and his name "big" in the building world.

But gone for Ruth was the perfect joy of her glorious little garden; gone was the keen enjoyment of the house which she had made a picture of perfection within and without.

But one day she thought that after all the man at the gate had spoken the truth. The very truth of his indictment against her selfishness had stabbed her to the quick.

Several times during the weeks that followed, Ruth heard the starting and stopping of a motor cycle. She could not forget that man.

The first tenant to arrive was a young man with a golden-haired wife whose happy eyes shone brightly. A few weeks later there was a baby's cry in the new house—the gift which had come to complete the joy of the young couple's home.

It was a day of sweltering heat and Ruth looked at the few wilted plants the young husband had found time to plant in the bare garden, then at her own rows and rows of bright blooms. Almost before she knew it she was cutting the finest of the roses, till her basket was full to overflowing. Ruth carried her offering across the road, murmured a kindly message for the young mother and hurried home before she realized what she had done.

Somehow after that the new houses did not seem the eyesores they had been before. She often saw the man on the motor cycle, too.

Two weeks later the golden-haired mother came over to thank Ruth for the lovely flowers she had sent.

Ruth laughed softly and said: "I am afraid I have been very selfish in the enjoyment of my garden. I am just beginning to wonder whether I have not missed the very best in life after all."

"Well, I never knew what real happiness was till my husband, and now my baby, came into my life," said the young wife. "We were obliged to live in furnished rooms for a year after we were married and were so cramped and the people did not like children. Oh, I did hope that my child might open its eyes in God's own countryside. We owe it all to Jack Reed."

"Reed? One of the building firm?" asked Ruth.

"Yes," said the neighbor. "He is still a young man, but wishes to give away the fortune he inherited. He is an architect and works right with his men. He builds these homes so that salaried people may purchase them on easy terms."

The noise of a motor cycle was heard; the man they had spoken about came up the path.

"I was looking for you, Mrs. Roberts," he began. "I came to tell you that your sister's house will be finished in time for her wedding day."

The happy little wife clapped her hands, then bent over her sleeping son in his carriage.

"Do you hear that, my wee one? Aunt Madge is coming to live near us." Then, lifting her eyes to Ruth, she said: "Mr. Reed spends his life making other people happy."

He did not answer, but his eyes sought Ruth's in a fashion that sent a crimson tide to her cheeks and set her wondering why it was that this man with all the qualities of the true home lover should spend his days providing homes for others and not make a home of his own?

But that question and many others were answered one evening sometime afterward when Mrs. Roberts saw Ruth and Jack Reed standing very close together on the porch of "Sun-Trap"," where he was now a frequent guest.

"They are going to be as happy as we are," she said ecstatically, running in quickly to tell her husband. "Oh, Roger, I bet the house that Jack builds for Ruth will be a charming one, but she deserves the very best."

What Makes Human Being Lift Up Voice in Song?

Why do insects make music? Dr. H. A. Allard of the United States Department of Agriculture, has been bothering about this problem. Agricultural interest led him to study insects. He became interested in their music. That led him into scientific speculation, and he was lost. The usual explanations, he decided, were no good.

"Sex alone doesn't explain it," he says. "No cricket needs to chirp himself to death, 4,000,000 or 5,000,000 times on one bush, to win the momentary attention of a silent, lonely female in the vicinity. Here is the weird mystery of insect music, its eternal persistence, an eternal wing-play in some restless role of life, designed, it would seem, to keep the insect happy and content while it lives along to the very threshold of death." So Doctor Allard gives it up.

Well, pass up the insects, then. What makes birds sing? Ornithologists often say they sing because they're happy. But some birds don't sound like it. A mourning dove, for instance. Or an owl. Or a gull. Let's get on more familiar ground. Why do people sing? Here, too, a casual observer may say we sing for happiness, or for reasons based on sex. But we may doubt either explanation. We don't notice men and women singing much when they go a-wooing. Sometimes we sing when we're happy. But the American philosopher, Bill Nye, said "I am saddest when I sing." And the English poet Shelley wrote, "Our sweetest songs are those that tell of saddest thought."

Generally speaking, we seem to sing because we like it, though this suggestion applies to voluntary singing—not school or church singing. Whatever the motive, the results are usually good. Like the insects, while we're singing we're not fretting ourselves with futile worry about the future.—Kokomo Tribune.

Find Old Secret Passage

A game of golf near Barnet, England, over the North Middlesex golf course, resulted in discovery of the underground passage to a monastery. While the match was in play the rear wheels of an automobile owned by one of the players sank out of sight. Investigations disclosed that the wheels disappeared in the entrance of the underground passages of the old Cistercian monastery, lost for more than 100 years. The place originally belonged to the Cistercian monks but was sequestered by Henry VIII, at whose death it passed to Queen Elizabeth. The site of the monastery now forms a major part of the North Middlesex golf course.

Punishment

The lady of the house was telling the maid about the woman across the hall who had become extremely disturbed over the playing of the radio all night and who had gone so far as to complain to the police.

"Ain't that awful!" exclaimed the maid. "Sure, an' she ought to be put in the home they have out in the country."

"What home is that, Norah?"

"Sure, ma'am, an' theys call it th' Home for Indignant Women."

"Spic" Not Correct in Phrase "Spick and Span"

"Spick and span" is the correct spelling. The phrase is frequently but erroneously written "spic and span," due apparently to a mistaken notion of its derivation. The original phrase was simply "span new," "span" being an old word for a chip or splinter. "Span new" meant bright and new as a chip just cut. In Icelandic it is "spannyr," from the "spann," chip, and "nyr," new. "Spick and span new" was merely an emphatic extension of the earlier phrase, "spick" being an old provincial or colloquial form of "spike," meaning a large nail. Therefore when a thing was particularly fresh in appearance it was said to be spick and span new, namely, bright and new as a spike and a splinter. There is no evidence that "spick" in the sense of a spike was ever spelled "spic," although there was an obsolete word "spic," meaning bacon or fat meat.—Pathfinder Magazine.

Lichens in Polar Mountains

Scientists are greatly interested in the report that specimens of lichen have been found in the Queen Maud mountains, about 300 miles from the South pole. Lichens have been found in many parts of the earth, but never have they been located so near the poles as in this case. And yet there is no reason why they should not be found in even more remote locations, for the demands of the plant are very limited. It is well known that it resists temperature to a very great extent. It requires only a piece of rock to cling to. It may be under snow for a considerable part of the year, but for a short period, at least, it must be exposed to the air or moisture. That is all the lichen requires.

Beware!

There's nothing much to be done for collapsible bridge tables, ping pong tables, folding beds and music racks once they are overtaken by weakening of the joints. You can patch them temporarily with rubber bands or tire tape, but some day just when you are making a grand slam or reaching for a low ball or turning over to shut off the alarm clock or taking a high note, there'll be a crash, and if you have any sense you won't laugh until you've counted your fingers. It's safer to live in the house with a snapping turtle or shake hands with a live lobster.—Kansas City Star.

A Speeding Clock

Policeman—This won't do, madam. I've been watching your clock; this car's been parked here twenty minutes.

Lady Motorist—Oh, you can't go by that; it's fast.—London Opinion.

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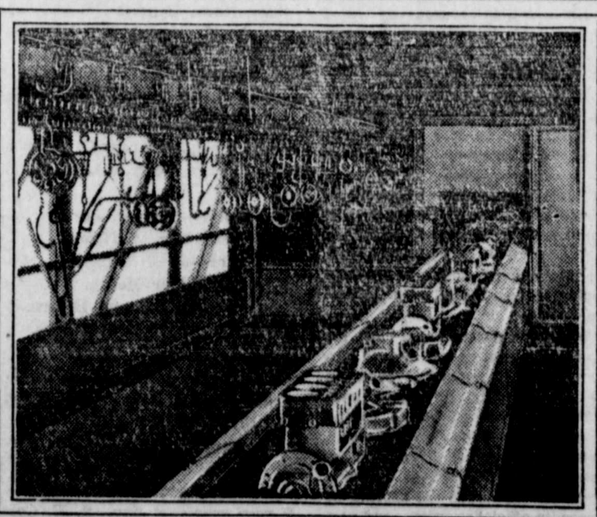
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Miles of Conveyors in Ford Plant



This picture shows two types of conveyors in use in the Rouge Plant of the Ford Motor Company.

AN ENDLESS chain conveyor, three and a half to four miles long, said to be the longest in the world, has just been completed at the Rouge Plant of the Ford Motor Company at Dearborn, Michigan. On it parts of Ford cars in the process of manufacture are transported from one building to another and completed parts are carried direct to railroad cars for shipment to branch assembly plants.

The conveyor, which carries its cargo on suspended hooks, has a daily capacity for 300,000 parts weighing over 2,000,000 pounds. It supplants freight cars and trucks which have been used for the transfer of many parts from one point to another in the Ford plant.

This longest conveyor of them all is a development of the Ford policy that nothing should be done by manual labor that could better be done by machine.

In the early days of his manufacturing career, Mr. Ford devised the assembly line—a moving track on which cars in the process of assembly went to the workmen instead of the workmen carrying parts to the car. The assembly line, perfected in many ways, is now used by automobile manufacturers generally.

The value of the conveyor in reducing physical labor, in saving time, in preserving system and in cutting costs soon became apparent and its use was extended to other purposes about the plant. Now there are literally miles of conveyors of various types in the Ford plant. Some of them carry parts from one building to another and are carefully synchronized so that the parts arrive at precisely the right moment and in the exact spot where they are needed. Others transport red hot ingots of steel weighing nearly a ton each. Still others move outgoing shipments.

If it were not for the conveyors, according to officials of the Ford Company, mass production would not be possible on its present scale.

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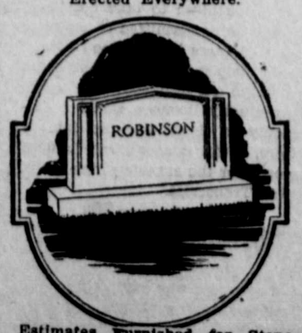


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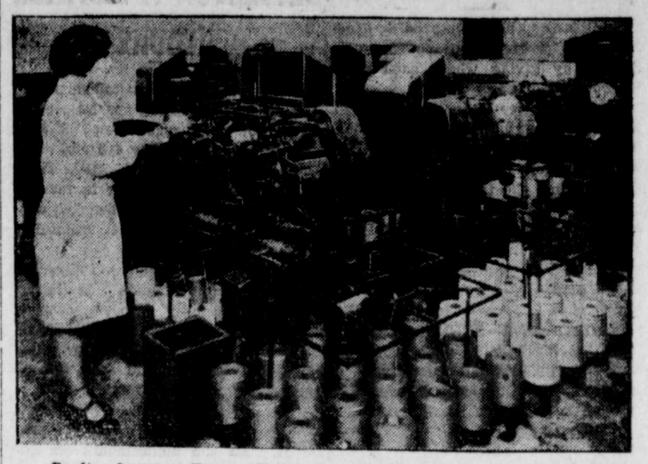
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COTTON PLAYS AN IMPORTANT PART IN TELEPHONE INDUSTRY

Manufacturers Use 5,000,000 Pounds Annually in Insulating Wires, Cable, Cords and Other Apparatus



Pauline Lycar at Kearny, N. J., plant, winding cotton yarn threads which will be used in insulating telephone equipment.

Cotton, a staple article for clothing long before the use of artificial silk crowded it into the background, is now coming back into its own. Today the well-dressed woman will find cotton in many shades and textures for her new spring wardrobe.

Cotton is also used extensively in many industries.

The world's largest manufacturers of telephone supplies—the Western Electric Company, now uses over 5,000,000 pounds of cotton annually to insulate the wires, cables and cords that are a necessary part of telephone equipment.

Cotton thread is used to cover almost all the wires used in the telephone system in general its toughness protects the wire and it insulates one wire from another, thus preventing the electric current that keeps the voice from wandering off the wire pathway and being lost.

One particularly interesting use of cotton thread in telephone systems is in the cords connecting the telephones in the home and office. These cords are bent and twisted many times and since bending breaks a copper wire, flat ribbons of copper no thicker than a hair are wound spirally around a cotton thread. This produces a species of tinsel that, like a spring, can be bent many times, without breaking. In this way cotton threads give strength to copper wires.

Before cotton can be used as insulating material in telephone equipment it must be given special treatment. This includes purifying and dyeing, because various colors are necessary to make the wires distinguishable. After dyeing, the cotton is put through a new process called flame-proofing. The cotton yarn used in the braid of telephone wires is made flame-proof in order to reduce the risk of fire in central offices.

Cotton used in telephone switchboard cords is also put through a glazing process which is similar to that of starching and ironing done in the domestic household or laundry, with this distinction, however, one is done mainly to improve the appearance, to put up a "starched front," so to speak; whereas the starching or glazing done by the Western Electric Company is primarily to increase the strength of the material.

Cotton has not always played so important a part in the world's commerce. The story of Eli Whitney and the invention of the cotton gin familiar to most people, form the last chapter in a tale which started with one John Kay in 1733. This Englishman invented a flying shuttle which enabled the weavers to turn out goods so fast the spinners could not easily keep up with them. For thirty-seven years the spinners struggled to supply the weavers. Then Hargreaves, another Englishman, invented the spinning Jenny.

This made the race even. The mills could furnish to the trade all the cotton goods it wanted. With this greater production the price of cotton goods dropped to a place where others than the very wealthy could buy. If the mills could get all the raw cotton they needed, cotton goods would be cheap enough for the common people to use. But there was the hitch—the cotton growers could not supply the mills with enough bales of raw cotton.

Eli Whitney solved this problem in 1793 by inventing the cotton gin which separates the lint from the seed. Under old methods one man would have to work two days to produce one bale of cotton. Now a cotton gin produces fifteen bales in a da

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