



Railroad Building in Nicaragua.

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NICARAGUA has an area of some 50,000 square miles, about equal to that of New York state, and a population of approximately 650,000, close to that of the city of Buffalo. It is the largest of the Central American republics; many consider it the most beautiful. Much of the interior is mountainous; the coasts are generally flat. It faces the Pacific, with its back door to the Atlantic. Most of its people live in the cities in the western part of the republic, for the rainfall here is moderate as compared with that of the eastern coast; the climate, although tropical, is agreeable, and the land is fertile.

The cities of Chinandega, Leon, Managua, Masaya and Granada are located near the west coast and along the one line of railroad, extending from the port of Corinto, on the Pacific, to Granada, the main port on Lake Nicaragua. Managua, the capital, is the largest, and, although badly set back by the earthquake and fire that almost destroyed the city in the spring of 1931, will in time again become the most important business center of the country.

Leon and Chinandega, cities of artisans and small proprietors, are located among very fertile farming lands and are the centers of the sugar trade. Masaya is an Indian town and owes its importance to the coffee-growing district on the Sierras, located between the lakes and the Pacific.

Granada owes her early growth to the fact that she was the chief port for the trade between Central America and Spain, by way of Lake Nicaragua and the San Juan river. Her leading citizens are not only landed proprietors, but merchants who sell goods in person over the counters of their stores.

Matagalpa, the largest town off the railroad, is the center of an important coffee-growing district. Because of its altitude, it has a more agreeable climate than the cities located in the plains; but the absence of a railroad, or even a good highway connection with the outside world, has thwarted its growth.

East and West Are Divided.

Eastern and western Nicaragua are divided by mountains and jungle covered country, which have effectively prevented intercommunication except to a very minor degree. The physical separation has operated to prevent close political union and a common national outlook; to hamper trade and commerce; and to obstruct a desirable interchange of people and ideas.

In addition, the lack of a practicable route to its east coast has forced virtually all of Nicaragua's foreign commerce to seek a longer and more roundabout route via the west coast and the Panama canal. For these reasons it has been the desire of the government of Nicaragua for many years to open a means of communication between the west and east, either by the canalization of the San Juan river or by the construction of a highway or a railroad. A highway has been under construction from Managua through El Estero to Rama, on the Bluefields river, where boat connections can be made with Bluefields, the largest port town on the Caribbean. The population of the country is overwhelmingly of mixed Spanish and Indian blood, with Spanish the universal language, although one finds in Granada and the other large towns many families of pure Spanish blood. Perhaps 10 per cent of the population is pure Indian, found mostly in the area around Masaya and Matagalpa and in the thinly settled cattle-raising sections of the province of Chontales, east of Lake Nicaragua.

Still farther to the east, along the rivers that drain into the Caribbean north of Greytown, the Sumo Indians have their homes. They are a wild and timid race and have resisted all Spanish influence.

The Mosquito Coast.

Part of Nicaragua's Caribbean coast has the world's worst real estate title "The Mosquito Coast." It gets its name not from the prevalence of mosquitoes, but from the Misquito Indians. Here there is decided evidence of negro blood, partly a heritage from the cargo of a slave ship that was wrecked on the coast years ago. These blacks, or mixed Indians and blacks, called "Sambos" or "Zambos," were augmented by escaped slaves from the plantations that sparsely dotted the coast in later years, and by renegade slaves from Jamaica and other islands of the West Indies.

The Mosquito coast was also a refuge for buccaners and pirates and

was visited by many trading ships seeking turtle shells. As a result, the blood of the inhabitants became badly mixed, and characteristics of many races can be detected in the present-day population.

San Juan del Norte (Greytown), at the mouth of the San Juan river, has an English-speaking negro population. Long ago the port had an excellent harbor and was a thriving community, but drifting sands have closed the entrance from the sea, and now only an occasional schooner calls.

In the boom days, when the Maritime Canal company undertook the construction of a canal, Greytown had visions of being a metropolis; now it is only a dreary community of rusted tin and frame shacks, with a population of 250 people.

In spite of the financial difficulties that have been general throughout the world and have been particularly trying in Nicaragua, the president of the republic has improved the public schools and built new roads and railroads.

Along the country's roads you will occasionally meet a high-powered car snorting its way over ruts and bumps, carrying some government official or landed proprietor on business best known to himself. The car has a number of occupants, usually half a dozen in excess of its normal capacity, for the government official travels with his guards, his friends, and perhaps a large part of his family, while the usual car-owner always has his entire family in the car and baggage and other impedimenta strapped on the running board and anywhere else that it can be suspended or attached.

Cars Nearly All American.

Practically all cars are of American make, and it is a tribute to their sturdiness that they can stand the usage to which they are subjected. New cars are frequently equipped with extra spring leaves, as spare parts are hard to get, and for service on Nicaraguan roads springs have to be strong.

The cars on the roads are few and far between, but they add the touch which shows that you are traveling in a civilized country. The creaky ox-cart is the usual means of locomotion. Small but sturdy animals, with yokes or pulling bars lashed just behind the horns, draw these carts creaking and groaning over the trails, but they get through mud that will stop a strong pony.

It is not necessary to ask for road directions; there is never more than one road or trail in the direction you want to go. A question as to distance is futile, for no one has any conception of time or distance. A league may actually be any length from one to six miles. The usual answer to the question, "How far is it to any place?" is "No hay mas," the Nicaraguan equivalent of the answer, "Not fur," which one so frequently gets from the small darky on our southern roads.

Coffee Is the Main Crop.

The prosperity of the country depends upon the coffee crop and its price. Crops have been good in recent years, but the price has been very low. For its future Nicaragua looks to the building of the canal linking the Pacific and the Caribbean. A prosperous Nicaragua will no doubt mean a quiet Nicaragua, for prosperity will mean roads, railroads, and other public improvements. A hungry man in Nicaragua is a prospective recruit for one of the bandit gangs. Banditry probably will cease when any man seeking work can get it and when every man can boast of the few dollars rattling around in his pocket.

Gold in small quantities has been produced in Nicaragua for hundreds of years. The richest mines are in the province of Chontales. This area is also bandit-infested, and the mines are a favorite field for bandit activities. The situation has prevented the installation of modern machinery or the development of the properties on a large scale.

The Bablonia mine at La Libertad has the distinction of having had a young mining engineer named Herbert Hoover connected at one time with its management. Here only the richest strikes are now worked, the ore being brought to the mill by pack mule. The Javali mine at Santo Domingo is worked on a large scale and at considerable profit to its owners.

Putting a canal across Nicaragua is a matter of utilizing some geographic features and overcoming others. Of outstanding importance physically are the country's mountains and its two great fresh-water lakes in its central basin, "the Great Lakes of Central America."

what **Irvin S. Cobb** thinks about:

Making Money in "Stir"
BEVERLY HILLS, CALIF.— Things certainly are lovely for the boys in the big stone bide-awee homes, is it not so?

At San Quentin here in California, chosen groups turning out counterfeit money and never having to worry about getting in jail, since they are already in. And a nice jolly strike on at Alcatraz. And in my old home state, the inmates just seeming to come and go at will, as it were.

But in Illinois is where the chaps enjoy all the benefits of congenial society without the bother of paying dues. It must be grand, serving as a member of the house committee of the Joliet Indoor Country club, what with crap games and poker parties and liquor made right there on the premises and shots in the arm at the low rate of one dollar per shot. The day is at hand when "prison break" in the headlines won't mean that some of the fellows on the inside are trying to get out but that some of the fellows on the outside are trying to get in; and who could blame them?

The Yellow Peril's Peril
AT THIS moment the question before the house is whether it is more perilous to be a statesman in Japan and give offense to the soldiers or a soldier in America and give offense to the statesmen?

Howsoever, at the risk of being penalized for punning, this innocent bystander ventures the prediction that amongst us there won't be any more of these summary removals for the Ha-good of the service, as it were.

Because when something happens off or on a military post to make Tom Blanton, the blood-sweating behemoth of Texas Democracy, line up with a lot of Republicans—well, I never thought I'd live to see the day. I don't believe Uncle Tom did, either. I'll bet nobody is more surprised than he is.

Abolishing Potlatches

AT LAST accounts, the Canadian parliament had a bill before it to abolish potlatches. When an Indian gets prosperous, he gives a party, with free food and drink for all, and whatever he has left over he bestows upon the guests and so winds up beggared but happy. That's a potlatch. Although at present confined to the Indians, it's not their own idea. They borrowed it from some of the early settlers. It's an old Scotch custom.

Tracing the genesis of traditional things is interesting. I thought the famous motto of the Northwest Mounted police had originated within the force until once when I tackled some native smoking tobacco at a trading post in upper Ontario. As soon as I recovered consciousness I knew whence came the slogan, "Always Gets His Man!" That was years ago, but I still have dizzy spells in humid weather.

Speaking of borrowing or rather of trading, we could make a profitable deal—from our standpoint—by swapping Canada a great gross of parole boards and overly sentimental governors and judges who put technicalities before common sense and common justice for about half a dozen of their trial courts and one or two square-jawed prison wardens.

'Tis Holdout Time

IT IS the gladdest season when last year's stars swear they'll never put on uniforms again unless they get better contracts; while the managers just as loudly declare the boys will accept what's offered or stay out of the game forevermore. Through anxious weeks each group proclaims that, from the position thus taken, it will never, never abate one jot or tittle.

But when the first robin starts north and the last training squad starts south, something always happens. One side decides to abate quite a few of the jots. And the other side says, "Oh shuckins, after all, what's a tittle more or less between friends?"

So this spring's hold-outs become this fall's pennant-winners, or otherwise as the case may be, and frequently is. And behind the scenes, everything in either championship team will be just as peaceful as a cage full of panthers until this time next year.

Which Is the Leisure Class?

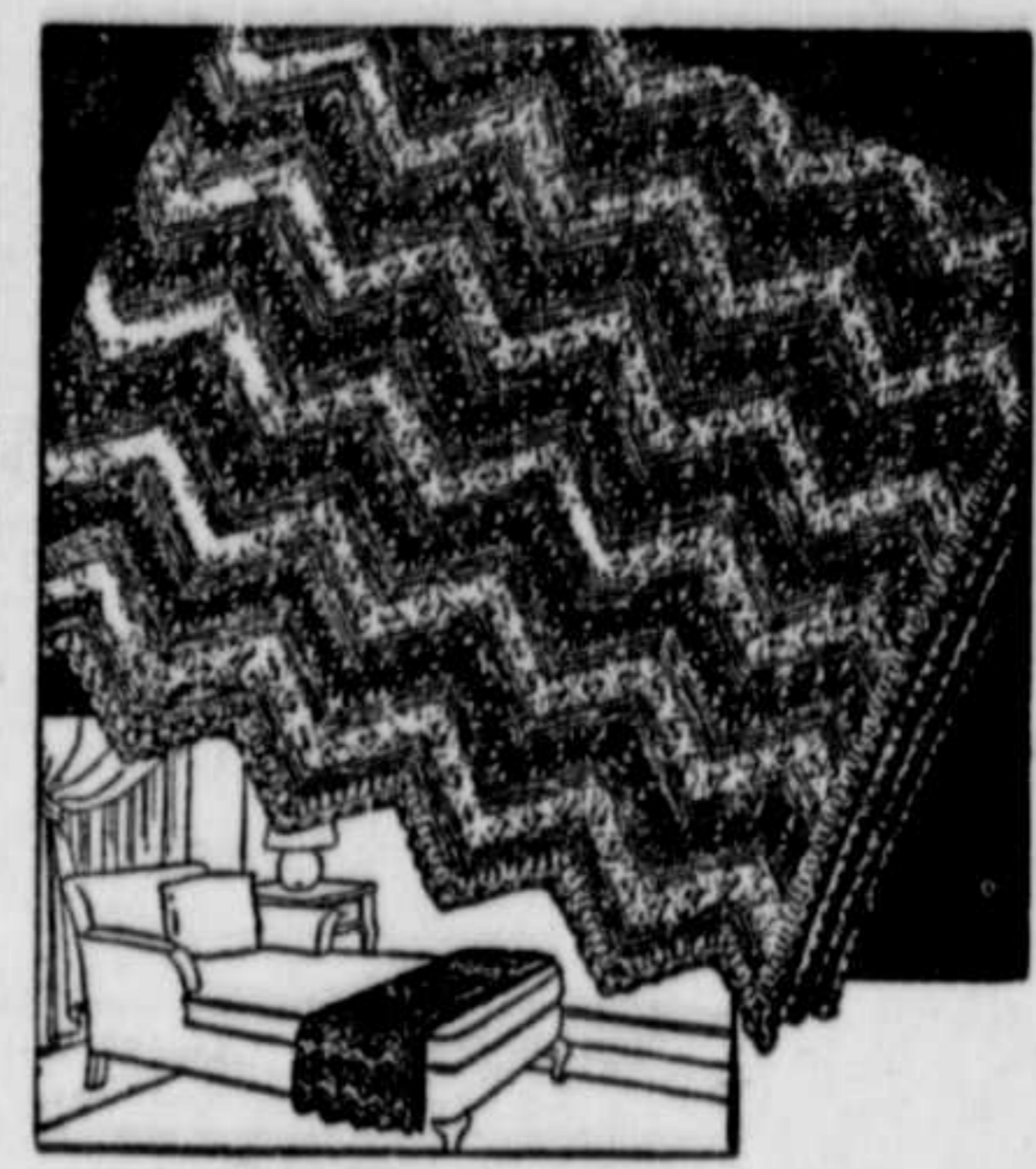
WHEN Mr. J. Pierpont Morgan said any American family that kept a maid belonged to the leisure class, he touched a responsive chord in the bosom of this household, only he got the proposition mixed as it applied to our little home-nest.

'Twas a maid we had for a short spell who really qualified. Possibly we didn't give satisfaction. Anyhow, one evening she took umbrage and some guest towels and a ham and one thing and another and silently stole away. But looking back, I can't recall anybody else who could be so leisurely and so classy, both at once.

We are wondering now what class we belong to on the present maid's night out. Probably Mr. Morgan isn't worried in that regard. He could ask the second man to stick around. We haven't a second man, though—haven't even worked up to the first one yet.

IRVIN S. COBB
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Crocheting a Fluffy, Lacy Afghan, to Be the Heirloom of Tomorrow



PATTERN 5254

What more conducive to "forty winks" than this fluffy, lacy afghan! Its crocheted warmth will ward off

the most treacherous draughts, its color brighten and gladden any room it adorns. A very simple pattern to follow, too. The stripes look like tiny daisies strung together, and are in a crochet stitch which busy hands and needle soon learn to do by heart. Lovely in three shades of one color, it is also effective with each stripe a different color.

In pattern 5254 you will find directions for making the afghan; an illustration of it and of the stitches used; material requirements, and color suggestions.

Send 15 cents in stamps or coins (coins preferred) to The Sewing Circle Household Arts Dept., 259 W. Fourteenth Street, New York City, N. Y.

Woman Linguist Maintains Vow of Silence 25 Years

Anne Louise Reinzi, of Boston, could talk fluently in seven languages. But for more than 25 years she uttered not a single syllable of one of them to a living soul!

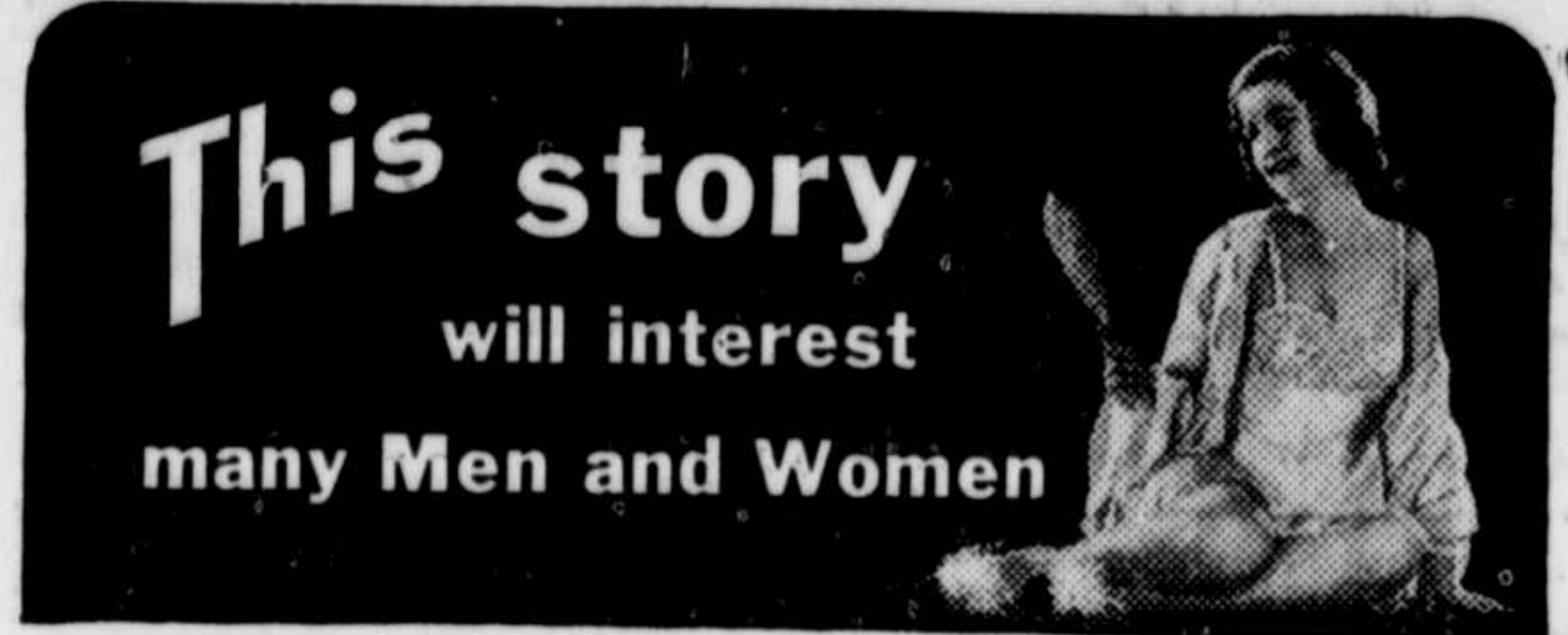
In 1910 she became a recluse, locking the door of her home to all visitors. Gas, electricity and water companies had to turn off supplies because she refused to admit their inspectors. Recently kindly neighbors grew anxious when she was not seen about. Police were called, battered down doors, found her lying on the floor with a fractured leg. She was rushed to a hospital, where she died, aged ninety.—Pearson's Weekly.

Dr. Pierce's Pleasant Pellets are the original little liver pills put up 80 years ago. They regulate liver and bowels.—Adv.

Lack of It
A mussy office is not necessarily an indication of a lot of work done.



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NOT long ago I was like some friends I have... low in spirits... run-down... out of sorts... tired easily and looked terrible. I knew I had no serious organic trouble so I reasoned sensibly... as my experience has since proven... that work, worry, colds and whatnot had just worn me down.

The confidence mother has always had in S.S.S. Tonic... which is still her stand-by when she feels run-down... convinced me I ought to try this treatment... I started a course. The color began to come back to my skin... I felt better... I did not tire easily and soon I felt that those red-blood-cells were back to so-called fighting strength... it is great to feel strong again and like my old self.

Insist on S.S.S. Tonic in the blood-red Cellophane-wrapped package... the big 20-oz. size is sufficient for two weeks' treatment... it's more economical, too.

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Every truck operator knows that internal friction causes heat and heat is the greatest destroyer of tire life. The only way to counteract friction and heat is by Gum-Dipping, the Firestone patented process which soaks the cords in liquid rubber, saturating and coating each tiny cotton fiber and strand within the cord, counteracting friction and heat at their very source. As a result of this patented process, Firestone Tires run up to 28° cooler than tires built without Gum-Dipped Cords.

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