



Machines, very amazing and wonderful machines. That was the picture I got of Rockford — machines. It seems to be a city whose wealth and plenty and highwalled smoking industries are built on machines. Wherever you go, machines. Those swift-working machines perform many, varied kinds of labor swifter and cheaper, better and more exact than it can be done by hand.

Rockford not only works amid a buzz and whirr and pounding of machinery but it makes the machines that make the machines and it makes the machines that make the machines that make the machines —

When I started out to find "the story" in Rockford one man said to me, "It will be about furniture. Rockford has 35 important furniture-making plants. Furniture is always the story in Rockford."

Another said, "It will be the metals trade. Rockford's metals trade is more important than all else. It is big, massive, inspiring."

A third said, "Knitting. That's the Rockford. The first machine that ever knitted a sock was invented here by John Nelson. That's the machine that made cotton socks sell for five cents each; ten cents a pair."

I looked Rockford over, nosed about the furniture plants, poked through the pounding, throbbing mills where iron, and steel, are transformed into many shapes and gaped at the machines in the knitting plants with their endless hum and click. Then I said: "The miracle is machinery."

Rockford, they told me, is a city of 85,143 persons, of whom 27,000 are employed. It is estimated that \$300,000,000 is invested in Rockford's industries. More, it is almost all home-owned. You do not have absentee ownership. And Rockford has no slums at all. Its people are that sort.

The story of Rockford's machines is tied up in its people. First came New Englanders. Those Yankees have always been known as inventors, devisers, makers of the better mouse trap. Followed then Swedish immigrants and there are no finer artisans in metal under the sun than the Swedes.

I was told that one company in Rockford makes a great knitting machine, more intricate and exact in its fine working than the costliest watch ever made; a machine that builds up, thread on thread, finest fabrics and is valued at \$80,000. They told me of a machine for tying warp that will pick up a thousand thread-ends and tie them to the ends of another thousand threads and keep on weaving without stopping; a machine that if a thread breaks will search out the broken thread and tie it to the other broken end — without stopping the machine; that if it fails to do so after five swift attempts, it will ring a bell, call the attendant and wait for help.

They showed me machines in the furniture factory that do "hand carving" better than it can be done by hand. These machines turn spindles and furniture legs so that they come out with various designs, eight-sided, square, billowy, dimpled, or curved, or what will you have? Machines that bore square holes or lay in mortises.

They have machines that carve raised flowers and sunken ones, vines and tracery and rosettes, classic columns and bold, firm lines; machines that can fashion an invisible joint or prepare an inlay all with an exactness impossible to accomplish with the steadiest hand.

I saw veneering machines that unwind fine walnut logs, shearing them around, twenty thin strips to the inch, machines that in building up veneers held the surface to the body parts, in the making, under tons of pressure to the square inch.

In the metals plants a gear is to be fastened to a rod two inches thick. A machine grips the parts, there is a flare of sparks like a bursting skyrocket, the metal turns red then pale; a wheel that grinds buzzes and the job is done. Not only electrically welded but ground smooth as well.

Henry Ford wanted speed in a certain mechanical operation. A Rockford company built a machine at his order that cut the job from twenty minutes to thirty seconds. One plant in Rockford makes many great machines for Ford. In another, to my surprise, I found men working at intense speed.

I asked about the rush and was told, "They're making car parts for Ford."

The Mechanics Machinery Co. works 700 men on auto parts and makes parts for many of the biggest motor car manufacturers. Gears are built, smooth bored inside. Deep grooves are wanted. A steel cane, knotted and gnarled like a good old Irish Blackthorn is started through. A mighty pull and the steel cuttings fall. Tool steel is carved like dough. Magazines are fed and click, click, click, timers fall — six operations at a clatter.

In another plant beautiful things are fashioned of tin. Vari-colored they are, talcum cans with Jack and Jill, Mother Goose, Red Riding Hood, the wolf and all those other quaint characters of the child world on them. Artists work in amazing colors, printing is done without type; a million or five million may be an order.

One machine pours out a deluge of rouge boxes. Another boxes for oil paints. Metal holders for pink pills for pale people. In steady streams they flow.

We find a great plant turning out machines with only ten keys that add or subtract and total up columns. The inventor smiles and tells me that it is very simple.

Nearby machines grind down plate glass to ultra smoothness, and trace in flower designs. A solution as clear as sparkling water is poured on the glass. Watch and in a few minutes it darkens and a precipitate falls. The silver appears as if by magic. A looking glass, mirror.

Over there is a piano, action factory, turning out actions for piano factories all over the country. This is an age of specialization, you know. Another plant makes steel furniture.

One of the most interesting things I found in Rockford is the industry of making special machines for special purposes. There are rooms in Rockford that are guarded as closely as the vaults of the United States treasury. Here men work at new and intricate machinery, assemble it, take it apart, polish and redesign and put it together again.

The day I was there twenty or more railroad engineers came to town. Their visit had something to do with a machine, newly invented, which would cut down the time of building a locomotive. It was announced that another machine had just been made which would shorten the time of cutting a certain tool steel die block from sixteen hours to four hours and a half.

Rockford's thirty-five furniture plants specialize in dining room, bed room and library goods. It is Rockford's claim, backed by statistics, that it works up more black walnut lumber than any other city in the world. It specializes in fine furniture. No cheap furniture at all is made here.

Rockford's furniture industry employs 3,500 men and they are artists. Everything that goes into the furniture is made in Rockford — even to the screws, bolts, knobs, pulls, casters; even the veneers, varnishes, oils, and mirrors. These are a part of Rockford just as is the making of glue clamps, shapers, boring, mortising and tenoning machines and automatic lathes.

Thatcher Blake and Germanicus Kent, New Englanders both, halted at Rockford in 1834 because it was possible to build a dam there and employ water power in milling. Their first venture was a saw mill. Furniture-making was undertaken in 1868 and some of its earliest plants were operated on the co-operative plan. From these the industry has grown until, in some respects, Rockford leads Grand Rapids in furniture making and that is saying a great deal.

It is said to be wrong that public officials are not as well paid as the popular entertainers, but while the latter make us laugh, many of the former merely make us weep.

Claimed that the ministers should shorten their sermons, but there has been no movement to shorten the theater performances or ball games.

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## THE HIGHLAND, Nearing Completion

Being Rented by W. H. McKILLIP



THE HIGHLAND, one of Highland Park's most attractive buildings, being built by Mr. W. H. McKillip, will be ready for occupancy about May 1st. It is three stories high and has six shops on the main floor and sixteen three-room apartments with in-a-door beds and electric refrigeration, some of them so arranged that they may be thrown into suites, and twelve single rooms with bath and maid service. It will probably be furnished by Marshall Field & Co., or Colby & Son. The decorating and interior furnishings will be most attractive. Mr. McKillip will have an office in the building and will have personal charge of the renting.

### RELIGIOUS MEETINGS HELD IN WALL STREET

Is One of Principal Interests in the Street, According to Writer

Among the interests of Wall Street, what is the most staple subject which attracts attention through the years and through the various phases of the business cycle? asks Meryle Stanley Rukeysser, in Nation's Business Magazine. In attempting to answer this, I should say "religion." In the shadow of the world's greatest security market, religious proselytizers, attempting to represent

God in the stronghold of Mammon, hold noon day meetings every business day in the year and always attract huge throngs. Other meetings for political and philanthropic purposes are held on the streets of the financial district occasionally, but the gatherings to win converts to the church are as regular as the sounding of the gong each trading day which signifies the opening of the Stock Exchange for business.

Until his death last year, the Reverend William Wilkinson, who was known as the Bishop of Wall Street, was the dominating personality in these meetings. No one has yet wholly filled his role. One of the most popular preachers who holds

outdoor meetings in Wall Street, is a colored clergyman, ex-elevator operator, named Robert J. Blay, who speaks under the auspices of the National Bible Institute.

### CONTRIBUTIONS TO NEW TOKYO LIBRARY Thousands of Books Are Given By Many European Agencies, Is Reported

Contributions of books to the number of more than 400,000 have been made by libraries and agencies in Europe and America to the new library of Tokyo Imperial university,

Japan, to replace the books destroyed by fire during the earthquake of 1923. In addition, valuable private collections have been donated by many of the nobility and people of Japan, gifts from native sources, including 2,700 books on Japanese history, law, and economics, from the Imperial Household Library. The new library building, for the construction of which John D. Rockefeller, Jr., contributed 4,000,000 yen, approximately \$2,000,000, will house 500,000 volumes, and is expected to be ready for occupancy next year.

When it comes to getting out the vote William Hale Thompson seems to be the Al Smith of Chicago.

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