

My Adventures in Meccanoland.

By "SPANNER."

(Continued.)

After breakfast the boys pretended to show us where we had gone wrong in fixing up the bridge, and made some adjustments; but I don't think they made any improvements, because it worked perfectly any way. We played with it all kinds of ways for hours, and I don't believe it has been taken to pieces yet, because the boys wrote me a little time back to say that the Transporter was still going strong.

That first model was a great success, and the rest of my visit was spent in building others. I got badly bitten with the engineering microbe, and since then I have been busy giving Meccano Outfits to my boy pals and getting them started on this great mind training, brain building game. I have seen so many listless and moody boys converted into bright, happy, and clever boys solely through this hobby that I feel I want to pass on the good news to other boys through the *Meccano Magazine*.

When you get your Outfit, don't bother with the parts just at first, but take a careful look through the Manual of Instructions which you will find at the top of the box. This is a masterpiece, and I often wonder how many thousands of hours it took to complete, and how many clever brains were responsible for its amazing contents. A celebrated judge has called it "the key to a wonderful box of treasures," and I don't know of a better way of describing it.

First read what is said of Meccano on pages 2 and 3. That will give you a new line on the hobby and show you what an important and manly game it is. On pages 4 and 5 you will find illustrations of all the parts which make the system, with the correct engineering name for each one. You will have to refer to these pages a great deal later, and you will soon know all the names off by heart.

Then turn to pages 6 and 7. Here you have shown very clearly 14 different kinds of trucks. Didn't know there were so many kinds, did you? They all have their uses, in warehouses, in engineering shops, and railroad platforms. Now make one or two of them up with the parts of your Outfit, and see what a neat, handy, smooth-running toy each one is.

At the side of each illustrated model you will notice that there has been printed a list of the parts which are required to make it. Before beginning to build, take out just the exact number of parts you will need, and lay the remainder of your Outfit on one side. When you have finished the model, you will require no more parts and will have none left over, thus proving that you have made the model correctly.

When you are through with trucks turn over to pages 8 and 9, making any of the models which interest you, not omitting No. 19, which is a capital toy showing you how goods can easily be conveyed long distances by means of an Endless Rope Railway. Two boys can get a lot of fun conveying goods backwards and forwards across a room. Then there is the Telfer Span (Model No. 23), which shows you how goods are sometimes carried over hilly and difficult country. This method has been very largely used by our Allies, the Italians, to convey troops and munitions over the Alps to fight the Austrians. This is a great play model.

Pages 10 and 14 are full of cranes. Now of all the toys I know, I think a crane appeals to boys the most, and surely these pages ought to satisfy any boy. They are just full of fine cranes which any boy can build. And, talking

of cranes, if any boy can master all those which are shown throughout this great book, he will be able to talk with the best engineer in the country on the subject. I have counted them, and there are 24 altogether, each one with a distinct purpose and use, and no two alike—Travelling, Swivelling, Overhead, Rotating, Locomotive, Radial, &c., &c.

It is most interesting and often most useful to know all about the building of cranes, and the advantages and peculiarities of various types. In fact, if you are going to be an engineer, as I know many of you are, you must know all about them, and the sooner you begin the better. The beauty of all these Meccano cranes is that they are mechanically correct, and they work and raise and lower big loads, just as the real cranes do.

On page 12 you are shown how you can build signals for your toy Railway system, fully working, on correct lines, and how to construct scales for weighing everything accurately. Then follow a whole lot of splendid models of aeroplanes, automobiles, wagons, and bridges, with an Anti-Aircraft Gun (No. 67) which you mustn't miss, and a Telegraphic Code Key (No. 75) excellent for practising and learning telegraphy with your friends, and a real Roulette Wheel (No. 77) with which you can have games.

(To be continued.)

Result of the Meccano Essay Competition

"What Meccano Has Done for Me"

We have had many hundreds of very excellent essays submitted in this competition, and it has been very difficult to make a selection. All the competitors have vied with each other in saying complimentary things about Meccano, and it has been a great pleasure to us to know that Meccano has relieved the sufferings of thousands of sick boys and girls, and given them occupation and enjoyment during days and nights which would otherwise have been tedious; how it has proved a friend to lonely boys in out-of-the-way places, and how it has united happy bands of boys in common bonds of interest and enjoyment; how, in countless instances, the hobby has helped and inspired boys who, through its fascinations, have decided to take up engineering and mechanics as a profession. We have been both surprised and gratified to receive so many entries from girls who pursue the Meccano hobby with pleasure and enjoyment, and a consolation prize of an Inventor's Outfit has been awarded to Miss Phyllis M. Alexander, whose essay will be read with keen interest by every Meccano boy and girl.

Outfits have been dispatched to the winning competitors, and we would like to give a word of special commendation to those competitors from whose essays we have printed extracts.

Prize Essay by Max F. Covill, 62, Rodwell Avenue, Weymouth, Dorset.



Master Covill attended the Convent High School for some years, and at the age of 13 he entered the Weymouth Engineering and Technical School, stimulated by the knowledge and inspiration which he had derived from building Meccano models. He is now 14 years of age, and he intends to take up engineering as a profession. We wish him the greatest success.

Few people, I think, owe more to Meccano than I do. It has decided my career, and this important decision was gained at the small cost of a Meccano Outfit No. 2.

I had this on my tenth birthday, and so much did it please me that I determined to become an engineer. This was, of course, first looked upon as a boyish whim, which would soon "blow over." But later, when my

determination did not waver, my parents began to think about it.

Then an engineering and technical school was opened in my town. Meccano having awakened my zeal, I passed the entrance examination.

After a bit we came in our Science lessons to such things as levers, pulleys, and the inclined plane. Here again, Meccano was of infinite value to me, for I found models illustrating these and many other mechanical and scientific principles in my Meccano Manual, which is my favourite book.

All this time I was in my spare time building model after model with great enjoyment. I also regularly ordered the *Meccano Magazine*, in which I read with interest the praise which other boys training as engineers had for Meccano.

Meccano has also made a handy boy of me. Before I had Meccano I was quite useless—couldn't tell a nut from a bolt. Now I can do odd jobs about the house, and I am familiar with the parts of many machines. I am quite dexterous in fitting up Meccano models; my fingers have become accustomed to the little nuts and bolts, and are not "all thumbs" as they used to be.

Before I was given Meccano I used to moon about, complaining that I had nothing to do. Now, when I have time to spare, out come my Meccano outfits (for now I have three, and a fourth coming) and all is merry and bright.

If my career is a success, as I mean it to be, half the credit must go to my schoolmasters and instructors, but the other half must assuredly belong to that King of Toys—Meccano.

MAX F. COVILL.

Prize Essay by Phyllis M. Alexander, Christchurch Street, Ringwood.

Most people consider Meccano to be first and foremost for boys, so perhaps it might interest you to hear how I, a girl, spent so many happy hours "messing about," as my brothers termed it, with their Meccano outfit.

Their Meccano outfit was given them two years ago by an aunt, and naturally they were very enthusiastic over it. As I was a regular bookworm, Meccano did not interest me much, in fact I thought it then a rather overpraised toy. All my spare time I spent in reading. I read so much that my eyesight began to feel the strain. The doctor then said that for a time all reading must be given up. This was in the winter, and I hardly knew what to do with myself in my spare time. Everything seemed to go wrong, and I wandered about with a "physog like sour milk," as one of my brothers most elegantly expressed it. Then gradually I became interested in the boys' Meccano. In less than a week I became absorbed in it. We did have some fun then! We used to time ourselves seeing who could construct a certain model in the shortest time. It was rare fun. I found there was a real joy in constructing and making things for one's self. When once I had started on a model, I felt like staying to finish it, even if it took me all night, and no doubt I should have done so if mother hadn't sent me to bed punctually at nine. I may say that mother is very great on "Early to bed and early to rise, &c." After I had discovered the joys of Meccano I had no time to spend in being dull. You can imagine, too, how proud and happy I felt when I found that I could soon show the boys a thing or two about their own Meccano.

Model-making is such a complete change from reading that I often now turn to Meccano after a hard day's work.

After you have read this, perhaps you will see why I am grateful to Meccano for what it has done for me, for without it I am afraid I should have passed a rather miserable winter.

PHYLLIS M. ALEXANDER.

The following are extracts from essays, which are specially commended:—

"Meccano has given me two winters of happy evenings. I believe my father has enjoyed it as much as I have done."—H. H. Thompson, Glasgow Road, Kilmarlock.

"Meccano has taught me to be thrifty. I have always got my Meccano money box."—A. E. Baker, 89, Kenilworth Avenue, Walthamstow.

"I soon found I had the one toy in the world that always contained something new and interesting."—Norah Glead, 47, Killiser Avenue, Treatham Hill.

"It has made me popular amongst boys, because the first question they ask me is 'Have you got Meccano?'"—B. N. Giles, 19, Holywell, Oxford.

"Another thing Meccano has done for me is to make me more ambitious."—W. D. Russell, Mount Pleasant, Stornaway.

"Meccano has made many an enjoyable hour for me and it has taught me patience."—E. Fuller, Kenninghall, Thetford.

"Meccano has gained for me the name of being a clever boy. It has also made me popular, and made me many friends."—T. J. Handley, Royal Infirmary, Liverpool.

"Meccano is my best friend, because I never fall out with it."—L. Kaye, 64, Coldcotes Avenue, Leeds.