

# IN ALL COUNTRIES

Mandolins and Guitars Made by J. W. Jenkins' Sons Are Used.

# WONDERS OF THE MAKE

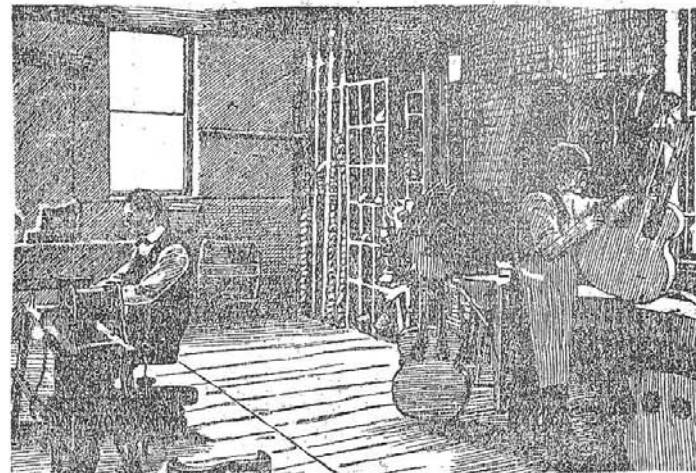
Music in Distant Lands From Kansas City Instruments.

# THE MARKET IS RAPIDLY INCREASING

An Interesting Account of How the Sweet Toned Instruments Are Manufactured in This City.

Five years ago the J. W. Jenkins' Sons Music Company, whose large retail store is located at 921-923 Main street, decided there was an opening in Kansas City for a factory that would turn out a good grade of mandolins and guitars. Up to that time

ment has gone on until to-day the factory of J. W. Jenkins' Sons, at 1417 and 1419 Walnut street, is one of the largest and best equipped in the United States. Twenty-five men are constantly employed, who annually use up 50,000 feet of lumber which goes into the frames of mandolins and



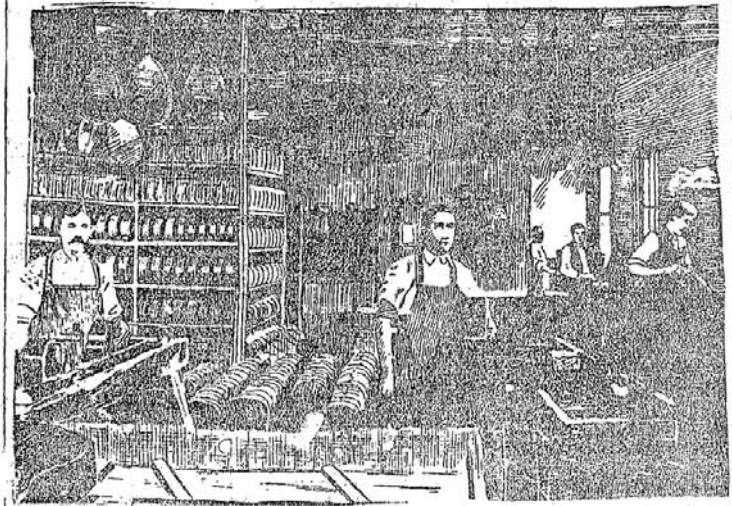
all such instruments sold in this city came from the East, which also supplied all the territory west and south of here. The factory was started in a small way, with two workmen, but the workmen were the best and most experienced that could be hired, and as a result in a short time the mandolins and guitars from the Jenkins factory had attained a reputation which not only created a demand for them in the West, but in the East as well, where they came into competition with the best work that could be turned out by Eastern and Continental factories.

It became necessary to enlarge the factory and employ more men in order to keep up with the orders, and this enlarge-

guitars. This consists of rosewood from South America, mahogany from Central America, spruce from Norway and Sweden and oak and maple from New York. The capacity of the factory is 500 mandolins and guitars a month, while the annual output is 5,000 instruments, which are sent to all parts of the world. J. W. Jenkins' Sons' mandolins and guitars, made in Kansas City, are played in Mexico, South and Central America, the Sandwich Islands, Cuba and Porto Rico. They can be found in almost every town and city in the Union and the "Harwood" guitar has attained a celebrity among musicians that places it at the head of that class of musical instruments. Both mandolins and guitars are made to suit all classes of pocket-

books from the plain but serviceable and sweet-toned instrument retailing at \$5 to the beautiful ones made of rosewood inlaid with handsome veneers that sell for \$150. The manufacture of a mandolin or guitar is a work of time, as the sweetness of the tone depends entirely on the way the material is handled and put together.

which is the thickness of guitar bodies. The sides, of the same thickness, are cut into lengths that, when bent into the proper form, constitute the sides of the instrument. All day long and day after day a workman stands at this saw cutting up the boards that, after passing through the successive departments, emerge at the end,



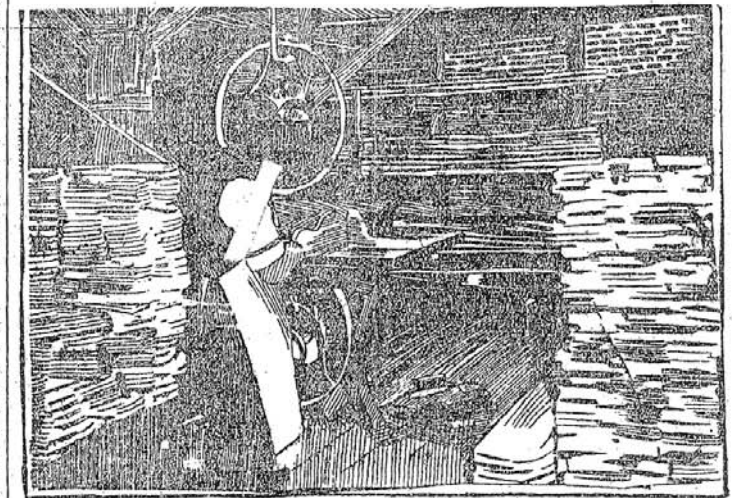
It is this perfection of work that has given instruments from the Jenkins factory such an enviable reputation. The first step in the process of manufacture is the receiving of the various woods in the rough state. This wood comes to the factory in the shape of planks, an inch thick and fourteen feet long. As the highest state of seasoning is necessary before this wood can be used, it is first put into the dry-room, where it remains for a period of from three to nine months; the higher grades of wood, like mahogany and rosewood, taking the longer period to season, and the cheaper grades, like oak and maple, taking the shorter period. The temperature in the dryroom is constantly kept at 150 degrees, and as fast as one lot of wood is seasoned it is removed and the room filled again with another lot, so that the factory has constantly on hand a full supply of material ready for use.

After leaving the dryroom, the rough boards are taken to the shaping room, filled with saws, shapers and smoothing machines. Like all parts of the factory, this room is equipped with the most modern tools obtainable for doing the work. At one end lies a huge pile of rough boards, just as they came from the sawmill. When the boards leave that room they are ready to put together in the form of a mandolin or guitar.

In cutting up stock for guitars, the first step is to place these boards on a band saw, which cuts them into what is known as tops, backs and sides. These are an inch thick, and the next step is to cut them down to one-eighth of an inch pieces.

a beautiful stringed instrument. This accumulation of stock is then turned over to the workmen in the gluing department, whose work is to put the various parts together.

Before that takes place, however, the sides are taken in hand by a man who sits



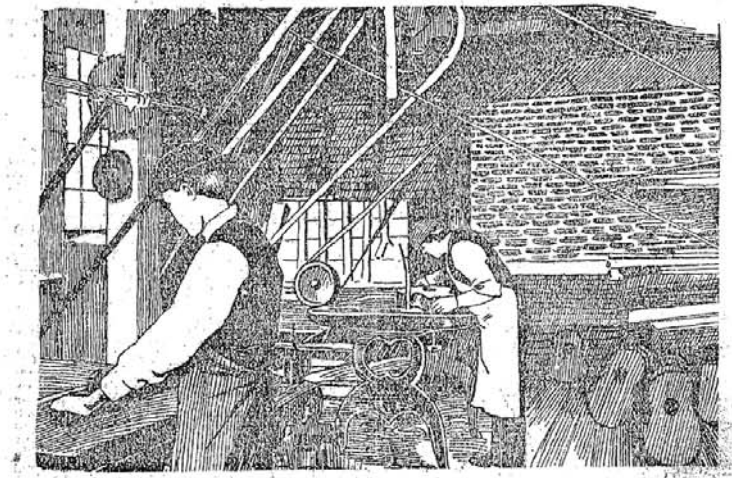
in front of three iron rollers, which are heated by gas. Taking the thin strips of wood he bends them first over one roller and then over each of the others until the pieces have taken on the graceful curves seen in the body of a guitar. In another

room busy workmen are engaged in fitting the various pieces together. First the tops and sides are reinforced with strips of wood that not only strengthen them but assist in maintaining their shape. The sides are placed in a guitar shaped mold and firmly glued together with a strip around the lower and upper edge that will help to hold top and bottom in place. After the edges have been planed smooth the top and bottom are glued on and the mold placed in a press screwed tightly down and left to dry. When dried it emerges in the form of a rough looking guitar body. It is at once passed over to another workman who takes it to the shaper. The shaper is an ingenious piece of machinery that removes any imperfections in the shape that may remain after the instrument has left the mold. Two rapidly revolving iron uprights move over and around the guitar body and in an incredibly short time make it perfect as far as shape is concerned.

Over in one corner of the room is a huge wooden drum inclosing another drum which is covered with sandpaper and in this machine the guitar body gets its first rough polishing. Pressed against the whirling sandpaper covered wheel the guitar body rapidly assumes a smooth appearance and the fine grain of the wood shows up distinctly. While all this is going on other workmen are engaged in making necks for the guitars. And right here is where guitars from the factory of J. W. Jenkins' Sons are given one of the touches of superior workmanship that helps make them better instruments than are turned out of other factories. A mortice is cut in the end of each neck which fits in a sock-

et in the body of the guitar and thus makes the junction of body and neck doubly strong. All the necks are first cut into a rough shape on the hand saw and then go to another machine where the slots in the end of the neck are cut out. After that still another workman takes them in hand and with the aid of a small circular saw cuts the groves in which the frets are inlaid.

From here bodies and necks are turned over to other workmen who join them together and turn out what looks like a guitar, but still lacks many things to make it a perfect instrument. It is now ready for the polishers who work on the floor above, a small army of whom all day long are engaged in imparting to the rough looking instruments that beautiful gloss so inseparably connected with musical instruments. The first man stands in front of a long rack to which is fastened a number of guitars that are receiving their first coat of "filler," a liquid that fills up the pores of the wood and leaves it ready for the varnish. Walking up and down the rack he polishes and repolishes each instrument in turn until the rough looking surface begins to shine. As fast as this part of the work is finished the instruments are placed on a table to receive their first



coat of varnish and then pass into still other hands to receive the final touches. Here a workman has the guitars fastened so as to make each part of them easily accessible to him and for hours he rubs and rubs until the instruments reflect his features like a looking glass. Next comes the putting in of the metal

tory a number of men are at work with what at first glance appear to be hat molds. They are iron frames, around which are shaped the mandolin bodies. Downstairs workmen are sawing thin strips of wood into double pointed pieces, which are taken upstairs and turned over to the shapers. These pieces are glued to-



frets and keys, when the instruments are ready to be hung up for another seasoning, for no guitar or mandolin is ready for the player until it has aged several months and gotten its "tone." When that has occurred they are taken to still another room, and the strings put on and are then ready for the market. This is the process through which ordinary guitars go at the factory of J. W. Jenkins' Sons, but there is another class of work going on in the manufacture of higher grades of instruments. These latter are made beautiful by veneers and inlaying of metal and tortoise shell, work that can only be done by skillful artists. Unlike other factories, at this place no inlaying is purchased, it is all made on the premises, experience having shown that the workmen there are able to turn out a better class of inlaying than is on the market. This inlaying is made by gluing together a number of thin sheets of wood of various colors and then sawing narrow strips "cut bias" from these sheets. These strips are let into the wood in different parts of the bodies of guitars and mandolins, generally around the edges, giving a most artistic effect.

In the manufacture of the bodies of mandolins an entirely different process is gone through with. Mandolins are made of successive strips of wood glued together, a process made necessary by the peculiar shape of the body of the instrument. In a large room on the second floor of the fac-

gether over the mold, the pointed ends converging together so as to form the bowl shaped body of the mandolin. The strips are of alternate colors, and the higher priced the instrument the narrower and more numerous are the strips. When the bodies are finished they go through the same process of shaping, polishing, inlaying and stringing as the guitars. Down in the big ware room are hanging hundreds of stringed instruments of all grades, ready to be shipped to all parts of the world.

Down in Central America may be seen a dark faced native picking at the strings of a guitar or mandolin made by J. W. Jenkins' Sons, heedless of the fact that the mahogany he helped load on an outgoing vessel has returned to him in the shape of a sweet toned instrument. In Mexico dark eyed Spanish women thrum on guitars which if examined would be found to be marked, "Manufactured by J. W. Jenkins' Sons, Kansas City, U. S. A." In the Sandwich Islands, in the new island colonies of the United States, guitars and mandolins manufactured by J. W. Jenkins' Sons furnish music and amusement for thousands. They have attained so high a standard in the musical world that it is but necessary to say "it was manufactured by J. W. Jenkins' Sons" to have it accepted as a perfect instrument.

If it is your desire to see Kansas City forged ahead and at the same time secure for yourself the best mandolin and guitar in the world, buy a Harwood, Washington, Clifford or Royal of J. W. Jenkins' Sons, 921-923 Main street.

