There is More in a Boot than Meets the Eye

…You learn a-lot of things in the first few minutes in a boot factory. For instance willow-calf has nothing to do with veal basking under a weeping-willow tree. It is cow hide, and all the best boots and shoes are made from it. Further, coloured Glace Kid may sound like a coming world's champion, but really comes off the back, of an Indian goat. And again, much of the crocodile, snake and lizard skin never saw the swamps of an African jungle. Who has not heard of the Leicester and Northampton snake and lizard farms where horse hide becomes a ferocious-looking piece of python in ten minutes or less.

Sole-stirring Business.

Boots and shoes are made to paper, cardboard or metal patterns, and commence their career in the "clicking" room… …This is the room in a shoe factory where the uppers are cut out with sharp pointed knives. "Clickers" derive their name from the nut-cracking noise made the points of the knives on the tables. "Clicking" is an acquired art, as many an operative knows.

In the next department the making-up is done, and the uppers begin to to take their shape. Machines stamp the little holes and decorations, and a button machine puts the slit into the straps. Electrically sewing machines with double needles next sew the uppers together…

…Our pair of shoes now enter the lasting room. The consolidated lasting machine is one of the most human mechanical inventions ever perfected… …To watch one at work Is uncanny. A claw grasps the shoe. Little fingers grip the leather and pull over the edge of the last, distributing without wrinkle….

…The soles have been cut out… …in another part of the factory on presses. A couple tons pressure descends on a press knife and in few seconds two soles are ready to go marching on. Heels are stamped out the same way, and somewhere in the centre of the factory the uppers meet their sole mates and are joined in matrimony on another mechanical wonder - the heeling machine which drives a dozen or more brass rivets, and sets. Finally, the shoes go to the finishing department where the soles and heels are neatly trimmed off, the shoes are coloured and polished, checked and boxed.

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