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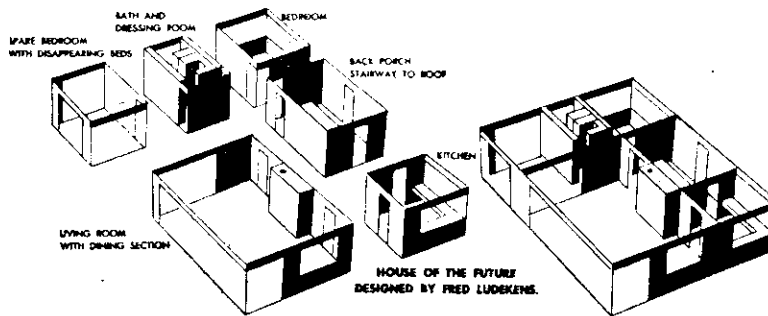
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I WISH I COULD MEET
EVERY WOMAN FACE
TO FACE! I'D SAY
"IF YOU WANT TO
SAVE CLOTHES AND
COUPONS USE RINSO
EVERY WASHDAY!"

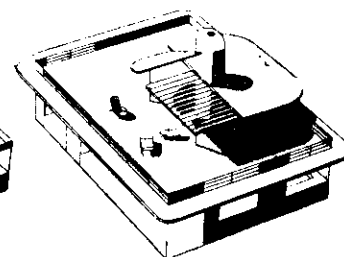


LEVER BROTHERS (N.Z.) LIMITED—PETONE 252.522



Room units may be combined into any layout desired, with variety attained by different sizes, designs, colours and textures.

Rooms may serve various purposes. The spare bedroom, with disappearing beds, could be turned into a play-room or a library.



The house is complete. Roof overhang allows for sun in winter, shade in summer. Other rooms may be added (or demounted) as needed.

Press A Button - And Get A House

PRESS a button and get a house. Get whichever design you prefer. Get whichever size you need. Press a button and wait 25 minutes if you want a four-room house. Or wait 45 minutes if you want a six-room house. Go down to the lower end of the factory and stand beside the big trucks at the end of the assembly line (writes Walter B. Pitkin in *The Rotarian*, U.S.A.)

There comes the front wall. There's the rear wall. Those sections are the parlour floor. These are the kitchen cupboards. Here are the front door and steps. Now the truck is filled with sections, all painted. So in go two big boxes packed with small fittings. To be used first, they are the last to go aboard.

Now climb up beside the truck driver. You roll off to your vacant lot. You reach it at 10.0 a.m. A man opens up the back of the truck. You look at your watch. It is not 10.6 a.m. When your watch says 11.56 a.m., you step up to the front door of your new house, turn the key, step inside, and welcome yourself home. You go to the kitchen, turn on the water, light the gas range, make yourself a pot of tea, and then pinch yourself twice to make sure you haven't been dreaming.

Faster Than a Mushroom

No, you haven't. But many other people have been dreaming for the past 25 years. And out of their many cruel awakenings has come this miracle. Yes, this house. This thing that has grown faster than the most precocious mushroom. This house that only two hours ago was a mass of sticks and items of hardware and glue and plywood and panes of glass and putty, lying all over an acre of ground.

A dream of the ages come true at last. And all within the past year. I saw it myself the other day in New Albany, a quiet town on the Indiana shore of the Ohio River, across from Louisville, Kentucky. And there I saw the man whom I first met in New York some 10 years ago when he was experimenting with other types of prefabricated houses. His name is Foster Gunnison. Many observers declare he is the Henry Ford of the housing industry.

Most men in the prefabricated field are building barracks, workers' dormitories, portable houses for contractors' gangs, cantonment structures, and more or less temporary houses. All these are

necessary, of course, and full credit goes to the men who have specialised on them. Gunnison has done that too, but he has also been looking ahead to the days after the war when families will need permanent homes. Visit his plant and you'll see them produced in mass by the line assembly method that brought automobiles within reach of the common men. They're coming out at a schedule you can hardly believe until you see them with your own eyes. And they have all the charm and solidity and variety of external form and decoration you find in the conventional hand-built house.

Not All Alike

I saw some 50 he erected on a patch of rolling land a few miles from New Albany. Are they all alike? They are not. I had difficulty in spotting even a few that had identical basic plans. The secret of how he does it is so simple it makes you laugh. Standardised trimmings which create the impression of variety: the corner quoins at outside wall corners, the gutters, the trim around doors and windows, the window boxes, the shutters, the porch design, the baseboards, and even the ornamental copper cupola — take it or leave it, ma'am! These items can be combined in hundreds of ways—just as the playing cards in a standard deck can be shuffled into millions of hands. Then you may combine colours galore. And finally, each house he offers may be had in either a right-hand or a left-hand design.

Inside is as varied as outside. The kitchen is designed to take one of these modern multiple-unit cabinets in any arrangement the housewife prefers. The sink may be here, the laundry tub there, the mop and pail cupboard under this place, the garbage-can over there, the overhead cabinets anywhere around the walls, the range to the right or to the left, or in the middle.

A Lesson from Human Nature

Some well-meaning pioneers, as many of us know, set out with the idea of making houses out of sheet steel. At the Century of Progress Exposition in Chicago in 1933-1934, people by the thousands walked around inside such structures and came out shaking their heads. Too odd. Not a real home. Rather a sort of super-sardine can. All sorts of jibes were hurled at the metal

houses. People shied away from such radical novelties. Gunnison watched and learned human nature. To-day, he starts all his thinking from the ordinary human being's viewpoint.

So he builds houses mostly of old familiar materials. Good lumber for studding the rafters and flooring. Good standard porcelain for tubs and sinks. His one slight innovation is his free use of heavy waterproof plywood bound with phenolic glue. Out of this wonderful material he makes his floors, walls, ceiling, and roofs.

If you like the bare plywood, it's yours. If you prefer shingles on the roof, they go on. And clapboards go on over the plywood if you insist on that homely touch for the exterior.

"Before long, people will insist upon a plastic house," says Gunnison. "When they want it, I'll have it ready."

Before long, people may choose between an all-plastic roof and a stainless-steel roof. They may, if they feel that way, have transparent plastic partitions (or sections of partitions), letting sunlight in throughout the whole dwelling to a degree hitherto impossible.

Last Longer, Cost Less

Each improvement from the laboratories makes the prefabricated house more durable. We are not far from the day when the life of an ordinary house may be a century. Nor are we far from the time when a house of any given size and quality will cost about half as much as to-day.

I've seen a plastic so transparent and so strong that if made up as a window pane, it would last for 1000 years, unless some returning soldier ran a jeep through it. You can hurl a baseball, full force, at the pane without cracking it or even annoying it. I've seen another plastic which, when used as floor material, would outlast five generations of pattering feet.

Now for another invisible asset:

Well, the prefabricated houses are demountable. All sections bolt together. The nuts are easily accessible, and can be removed without the slightest injury to any section. In about two hours the owner of such a house can take it apart. While he does so, a six-ton truck yawns to swallow each section as it comes loose. The family and its Home, Sweet Home can be on their way to the new site in three hours at the outside; after they're there, they can have the house up and ready to move into two hours later!