

Canning Summer Corn for Winter Gustability

NEBRASKA leads many of the older states in canning factory industry. Without blare of trumpets or beating of cymbals, enterprises of this character have sprung up from time to time in various parts of the state until the canning factory whistle is now relied upon as a standard timepiece all the way from Kaya Paha to Dundy and from Scott's Bluff to Otoe.

Nebraska being pre-eminently a corn state it is very natural that corn is the chief product of the canning factory. But the tomato output is by no means an insignificant factor in local commerce and other vegetables receive attention as well. Arkansas and Missouri may can the peaches, the pears, the apples and the berries, but Nebraska pins faith to the solids and comes out winner hands down. Some canning factories, have, of course, proved unprofitable, but the same may be said of many other lines of business.

The canning factory of a dozen years ago was a crude institution compared with the factory of today. New wrinkles in machinery have been introduced, labor saving devices have been brought forward, capacity has been greatly increased and in a hundred ways the canning business has been improved, until it is now one of the leading industries of the country.

Time was when the farmer woman chipped her corn from the cob along in the autumn and spread it out on a big tablecloth to dry. In this way it was preserved for winter, only a little cooking in a stew pan being necessary to render it ready for the table. But that method compares with the present method about like an ox team wagon shows up alongside of an automobile.

What the Factory is Like.

Some canning factories are bigger than others, of course, but the one at Blair, this state, may be taken as a representative type, as these factories go in Nebraska. The process is practically the same everywhere. The buildings consist of a husking shed, can and box house, kitchen or cook room, engine and warehouse, besides numerous minor nooks and corners, all under roof and covering nearly two acres. A forty-horse power engine makes the wheels



SOLDERING THE CANS



AFTER THE CORN LEAVES THE COB

go round. The water consumption during the busy season amounts to nearly 100,000 gallons per week. Corn is bought by the ton under contract with farmers. An ordinarily well equipped establishment will handle from 175 to 200 tons of corn per day. The output of the Blair factory for 1900 was 2,000,000 cans of two pounds each. Other factories went higher, some lower, so that this figure is probably a good average.

The corn is delivered by farmers just

as it grows on the stalks—no husking. It is dumped into the sheds where from 200 to 300 boys and men are employed in husking. These workers receive 2½ cents per bushel. Wages run all the way from 20 cents to \$2 per day on this job—all contingent upon the skill of the huskers. After the corn is husked, it is thrown on tables, on each side of which stand from twenty to forty women whose duty it is to trim out all of the bad spots. Having been "culled," the corn is dumped into an elevator trough which is lifted by an endless chain system. It goes to the top of the building, where it is passed through the cutting machines, of which a well-equipped factory is supposed to have from eight to ten. Forty-five bushels each per hour is the capacity of each of these machines. Two women are required as operators for each machine. Iron troughs lead the corn to another department known as the silking machines. These machines remove every particle of silk and cobs. Some people might throw the cobs away, but the canning factory manager says nay. He thinks it better to rick them up and charge 20 cents a load for them, and he doesn't have any difficulty in getting it either. The man who ate husks with the swine, were he living in this age, might be pleased to know that even husks bring 25 cents per wagon load, and it doesn't take so very many to make a load.

Canning and Cooking.

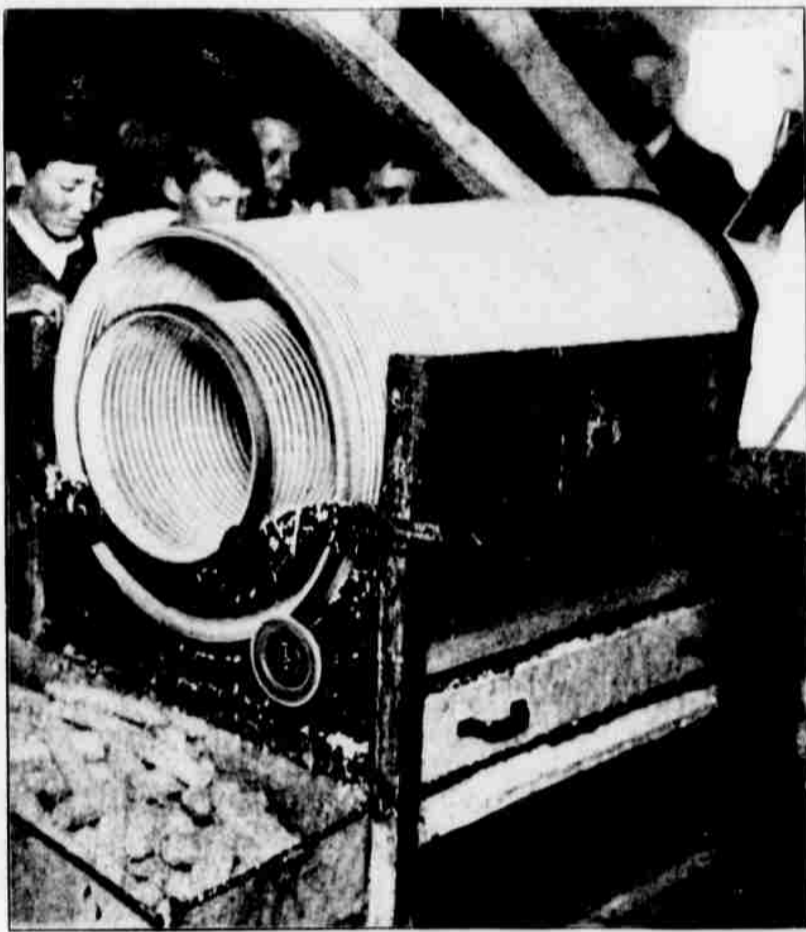
Leaving the silkers, the corn is carried to the canning machines. Here, sweetened water and salt, the only condiments used, are added to the corn. No chemicals enter into the process, it is said. After the corn has been sweetened and salted it is distributed into automatic filling machines. The soldering machines are also automatic. Every can is inspected and all defective soldering is returned for repairs. The cans are next placed in cooking retorts, where they are subjected to a pressure of fifteen pounds and 250 degrees of heat for nearly two hours, the time varying somewhat owing to the condition of the corn. From the retorts the cans go to the cooling vats, which are filled with running water. Half an hour in the vats, and the cans are sent to the warehouse, where they are piled up in rows reaching to the ceiling. None of the corn is packed for shipment short of two weeks after it has been placed in the

warehouse, thus giving time for all imperfections to develop. Labels are put in place by an automatic machine.

Many of the Nebraska canning factories operate their own electric light plants, and there is a mechanical process by which the machinery—every part of it that actually

comes in contact with the corn—is scrubbed by steam every night.

In many respects, the tomato canning process is similar to that of corn, the chief difference of course, being that in canning tomatoes, machinery for paring takes the place of the silking and husking process.



REMOVING THE SILK FROM CORN PRIOR TO CANNING.



COOKING THE CORN

Timely Gossip Concerning People Now Before the Public

THE NAME and home of John G. Milburn of Buffalo will ever be associated with the tragedy and death of President McKinley. In his capacity as president of the Pan-American exposition Mr. Milburn became the host of the presidential family. To the Milburn home the wounded president was taken and under its sheltering roof he suffered and passed away.

Mr. Milburn is an Englishman by birth, an American by choice and thirty-two years residence. He is 50 years of age, a giant physically and intelligently and a gentleman always. He is six feet tall, well proportioned, with broad, regular features and the impress of character and determination upon every line. His manner is pleasant and cordial always, with a style of conduct and deliberation that adds much to his force as a speaker, whether in serious argument or in lighter vein. As a public speaker he has enjoyed great popularity for years and is usually chosen for the most conspicuous duties of this character at all important affairs in Buffalo.

In politics he is an old-style democrat and supported McKinley each time he was a candidate against William J. Bryan. But he

has never sought or accepted political honors. There has never been a time in ten years past when John G. Milburn could not have had almost any honor of a political character that the city or county could have given, but he seems without ambition in that direction.

Never but once since his coming to America has Mr. Milburn had his residence outside of western New York. Shortly after being admitted to the bar he went to Denver, Colo., where he formed a law partnership with United States Senator Edward O. Wolcott, but he did not like the west and after a year's residence in Denver returned to Buffalo, where he has since lived.

Like their father, his sons are big, manly fellows, and in the last year the newspapers of the United States have told some gratifying things about the achievements of the Milburn boys in the athletic contests at old Oxford. The good work of his boys is a matter of considerable gratification to Mr. Milburn, and added to his pride as a father is also the pride that his boys are Americans and as such have won their laurels.

Mrs. Milburn is a woman of the kindest disposition and has much of her husband's sturdiness of character. They have three

sons, John George, Jr., and Devereux, who are in Oxford university, England, and Ralph, who is much younger. The Milburn home is situated in one of the most delightful sections of Buffalo, on a broad avenue, where the morning sun and the fresh air from the park reach it unobstructed, and in all the land the unfortunate president could not have fallen in a spot where his every need would have been more carefully supplied.

Herbert Spencer, the great English social-critic and philosopher, is fond of a game of billiards. He recently invited a young friend to a friendly game and as he chalked his cue observed: "Young man, good billiard playing is the proof of a well-balanced mind." The game proceeded and Mr. Spencer was beaten by a score of 100 to 28. He put away his cue in disgust and remarked: "Young man, such fine billiard playing as yours is the proof of an ill-spent youth."

Sir Michael Hicks-Beach's accession to the fatherhood of the British House of Commons has once again brought into prominence that fact, little known, perhaps, that

the peer who enjoys a similar distinction in the upper house is the earl of Templemore, who quite recently entered his eighty-first year, and who, difficult though it may be to believe, succeeded his father in the year in which the late queen ascended the throne, taking his seat some five years later on the very day following the attainment of his majority.

Major Henry Brainerd, who was one of the Greely party to the Arctic regions and has just returned from the Philippines, visited Buffalo last week to see especially the Eskimo village. He says that all the Greely party who were rescued by the ship under command of commander, now admiral, Schey, 1884, still live. They are, besides General Greely, Brainerd, Bolderbeck, Connel, Fredericks and Long.

Not long ago Joseph Chamberlain refused, with that firmness, not to say obstinacy, that is so irritating to the inquiring mind, to discuss the war with Mrs. George Cornwallis West. "I see," she said, sweetly, "you prefer to discuss your indiscretions in public." Not long after the colonial secretary made some rather earnest remarks about the political activity of cer-

tain women, adding that he could not understand why American women, who kept out of politics at home, overwhelmed us in England. "Ah," said Mrs. Cornwallis West innocently, "American men are too intelligent to heed our educating influence."

The popular king of Portugal is essentially a man of pleasure, but not in the sense that conveys discredit. He is a first-class tennis player and an enthusiastic yachtsman, he has something of the prince of Monaco's appreciation for the wonders of the sea and is a collector of many interesting curiosities from its depths. He is reputed to be one of the best shots in Europe, especially deadly in his aim with rifle or shotgun and able to hit birds in flight with a rifle bullet. He is an artist of no small repute.

The Palestine (Tex.) chapter of the Daughters of the Confederacy is raising funds for a monument to John H. Reagan, the surviving member of the confederate cabinet. A site has been granted by the city council at the intersection of two of the principal streets and the monument will probably be a fountain, with a bronze statue of the statesman.