French bonnets would be incredible to those who do not see them. And here be it observed that a great deal of the *chic* and style of the bonnet of the season depends on the manner of placing it on the head and wearing it, as almost every shape—and they are not few—should be set on the head in a way peculiar to itself. Fashion now decrees that more forehead is to be seen than last year, therefore frizzed hair almost touching the eyebrows detracts much from the appearance of the new summer bonnets.

This costume could also be copied in etamine, embroidered in cross-stitch with coloured sprays, such as blue cornflowers or red carnations, on an écru ground, the under-dress being shot silk. This etamine, or canvas woven in imitation of Berlin wool work, is frequently seen, and the plain écru canvas used in combination is tucked; the foundation silk may be brown, blue, or scarlet.

The seated figure in the centre of the group wears one of the glacé mohair dresses much affected by Frenchwomen at this season. It is lustrous and cool, and in pale grey shot with pink, combined with a striped silk of the two colours and ornamented with white lace (as in our model) the result is decidedly attractive. Silver beads are added on the plastron, and a silver chatelaine at the side. The same costume is also made in mushroom mohair, with dark red velvet for the stripes and plastron. The two colours are of course blended in the ruches that edge the skirt. The hat should be in harmony with the costume, and the large bow in front should be of shot terry velvet. These bows are now important enough to be sold separately, and to match any costume.

The costume worn by the standing figure could be made in either shot cotton with a satin surface, in white damask linen, in Tussore, or in nun's veiling and Turkish embroidery, all of which are in vogue. Veiling is economical wear, hence its popularity. Some of the latest models in white are made up with green velvet of the shade called "new-born leaf," and with the white mohair lace only recently introduced, or perhaps revived. But coloured veiling is also very general, and in such shades as lavender, moonstone, terra-cotta-pink, and golden beige, it looks well on youthful figures when enlivened with loops and stripes of satin ribbon. Then there is nun's veiling in Oriental colouring and design, which makes up into pretty afternoon costumes for the seaside. The patterned fabric (calling to mind Turkish embroidery) is used for the over-dress only, plain veiling of the same shade doing duty for the tucked skirt; the trimmings are creamy lace and velvet revers.

It is impossible not to be struck at any large and fashionable gathering, whether in town or country, by the changes and new combinations always going on in *la mode*, and this season the many variations executed on one theme testify in a marked manner to the unlimited resources of the dressmakers. The diversity — not only of materials, but also of the shapes—of dresses, cloaks, and bonnets, defies description. Added to this, there is a decided mystery in the make of dresses—how the bodice is attached to the skirt, or where the drapery begins and ends. The revival of shot silks, and the fashion of wearing transparent grenadines over silk of a different colour, thereby producing shot effects, add also to the difficulty of describing various toilettes. These combinations are not absolutely new, but the association of colours is novel: black canvas grenadine is often seen over golden-brown silk and over red silk, and écru embroidered net over many-hued brocades. And with this multiplicity of material and colour, there is great solicitude among the well-dressed to have all the details of a toilette in harmony. The bonnet, the shoes, and even the parasol should be in unison. Take as an example the black lace dress now so fashionably worn over a coloured silk or satin foundation: the parasol will be of the same colour as the satin, and trimmed with a wide black lace flounce; and the bonnet will be lace, with flowers or feathers also to match the foundation of the dress.

SIGHTS AND SCENES OF THE NEW WORLD.*

A VISIT TO A CANNING HOUSE.

BY CATHERINE OWEN.

"DO you think they can be oysters?" The questioner was an English housekeeper, who had, by way of experiment, invested in a tin of American oysters.

She had probably expected to see the luscious bivalve just as he appears on the shell when opened; had, perhaps, never examined our own natives after they had been steamed and their fair and fat proportions reduced to a shrivelled morsel, looking like a piece of vulcanised india-rubber. Had she done so, she would not have been surprised at the appearance the tinned oysters of America presented.

My friend's question, however, suggested to me the idea that an account of the process of "canning" might be interesting, and add very much to the zest with which one might eat the preserved delicacy.

Baltimore is one of the great centres of this industry, and many of the streets are given up to "canning houses," or "canneries." The roads in such

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neighbourhoods are plentifully sprinkled with small disks of tin the size of a two-shilling piece, and the yards of the "canneries" are thickly strewed with them, and they lie in glittering heaps everywhere. No use had been found for the refuse disks, which are cut from the top of the "can," when I paid my visit to the place, but I lately read that they can now be utilised.

The canning house is generally little more than a great shed, of three storeys, and near the water for convenience.

Wishing to see the whole process, we went to the water's edge—the water being Chesapeake Bay—and watched the barge-load of oysters brought in from the dredging-grounds.

There was a train of small "cars," or trucks, waiting to receive the oysters, which were put into them, and when the train was loaded, it was started along the tramway which ran from the landing to the cannery. At the end of this tramway, and as a sort of entry to the main building, was a narrow shed. Here the train stopped, and we who had followed it saw it was enveloped in steam.

The stoppage had taken but a minute, during which, however, every car-load had been subjected to sufficient steam-heat to make the shells open. Then it went on its way into a large room, in which was a great crowd of women, girls, and small boys—a very poverty-stricken, rough crowd, too—each individual of which had a tin pail slung round his neck, and suspended in front, and a knife in hand.

This motley and not clean crowd were, as we learnt, "shuckers," their business being to remove the steamed oyster from its shell. This they did with wonderful dexterity, dropping it into the pail in front of them, and in a very short time the whole train of cars was empty, and the oyster-shells lying in a vast pile on the ground.

It was with a feeling of decided discomfort, while seeing this shucking process, that we remembered sundry meals of canned oysters of which we had partaken. However, we followed the procession of shuckers, each with a well-filled pail.

At the end of the room was a sort of spout, and into this each shucker emptied his pail, and returned with it to meet the arrival of another train, and go through the process again.

Meanwhile, after seeing a few pails so emptied down the spout, we went through a door into another large room, in which were numbers of young girls, of a superior class to the shuckers. Two of these stood by an enormous vat, or tub, into which, on one side, cold water was running, and on the other the mouth of the spout poured forth oysters—a constant stream of them; but not more constant than the flow of water, and in this it was infinitely comfortable to see them stirred, conscientiously and thoroughly—so thoroughly that even we who saw the unsavoury shuckers felt we could partake of the oysters without disgust. The water passed out as fast as it went into the vat, and the oysters were swirled quickly round several times by one girl, while the other ladled them out, and filled the tins in which they are sold, passing each as she did so to other girls, who put on the covers, and passed them along rapidly, till they got to a sort of lift, or elevator, of light iron, and looking something like an oven. As many cans are placed in this as will stand on the bottom, and then it is sent up.

We follow it, and find ourselves in a large room, at one end of which we see the elevator with the oysters.

It stands for about a minute, and we become aware that the oysters are again being subjected to heat, for now the elevator is really an oven; a man stands ready with soldering-iron, and with one dexterous turn of the hand each can, being sufficiently heated to expel the air, is hermetically sealed; another man takes it from him and passes it to a young girl, who is ready with label and paste; another quick movement and the can is gay with its legend, and ready to pack for the market.

The most remarkable thing to us was the quickness of the process. Not ten minutes elapsed between the time the oysters left the barge, and filled cans labelled and ready for sale.

During the oyster season this goes on all day, I am told; the trains run constantly, the spout pours its stream into the vat, and the filling, soldering, labelling goes on in one steady sequence.

When this is remembered, and the fact that in Baltimore alone the number of canning houses is very large, some idea may be gained of the immense trade done. Yet in New York, Baltimore, Philadelphia and Boston, comparatively few canned oysters are sold, even when there is no R in the month; but in the Western cities far from the sea-board they are largely used, although, I am told, the bulk are exported.

Considering how many hundreds of the very poorest make a livelihood by this industry, it seems almost providential that the oyster should be plentiful in that dead-winter season when there would otherwise be closed establishments and idle hands.

Of course these canning houses do not can only or even chiefly oysters. The oyster season ends just before vegetables and fruits begin. Green peas, strawberries, cherries, French beans, raspberries blackberries, huckleberries, all keep the canneries busy in their turn; but as the soft fruits are less popular—are, indeed, better preserved than canned—the greatest fruit business is in peaches.

These are so abundant as to be often a drug in the market, and as they are better preserved by the economical process of canning than in any other way, the quantity done is enormous.

Perhaps a few words as to what "canned" fruit really means may be useful. It is a process by which fruit with very little sugar, and only sufficient cooking to expel the air from the tins, will keep indefinitely. Almost every American housewife cans fruit very successfully; this is usually done, however, in glass jars, with rubber rings.

Fruit done up in *tin* is bought principally for economy, or where great quantities are required, such as in hotels, boarding-houses, &c.