

MANY GIRLS FROM EAST SIDE CIGAR FACTORIES HAVE FOUND MORE PLEASANT WORK IN CONNECTICUT'S TENTED TOBACCO FIELDS.



TWO OF MANY NEW-YORK GIRLS IMPORTED INTO CONNECTICUT TO WORK IN THE TENTED TOBACCO FIELDS.

NEW WORK FOR GIRLS.

SEWING TOBACCO LEAVES IN CONNECTICUT VALLEY.

REQUIRED BY THE SYSTEM OF TENT GROWING—A SPECIAL INVENTION TO SHELTER THE PLANTS.

Tariffville, Conn., Sept. 20 (Special).—Woman has at last found her healthful position in the tobacco industry. The innovation of tent raised tobacco in Connecticut is responsible for this. Nine miles from Hartford, on a long stretch of Connecticut's rolling lands, in Tariffville and the Granbys, are the great tobacco plantations of the new industry of raising tobacco under tents; and it is here that the girl has found her place in the tobacco world, a place free from the objectionable features which attach to the cigarette and cigar factories for girls.

This is the busy period in the tobacco fields. More girls and women are employed now than at any other time in the year, for it is in the months of August and September that the heaviest picking of the leaves takes place, although the first picking begins as early as July 1.

On the plantation of the Connecticut Tobacco Corporation, which has under cloth 600 acres of tobacco, there are over one hundred girls daily doing their part in the harvesting of the weed that finally goes up in smoke. This tobacco grow-

ing the tiny plants are transplanted by a machine under the large tents, which are to be the homes of the growing young weed. From the time of transplanting the tobacco plant grows rapidly, and by July 1, if all has gone well, the first picking of leaves begins. These are the leaves nearest the ground. There are five pickings before the vigorous stalks are stripped of their topmost leaves. The last picking takes place in October. The earlier the picking the lighter and milder the leaf. It is when the beginning of the picking season opens that there is the greatest demand for girls for sewing the leaves, as they are carried to the work sheds in big baskets. From sewing to sorting, to sweating, then to sorting into shades, and then to packing, the girls are kept busy. The last of the sewing is not done until November, and the other processes occupy the time of more than half the year until the next June. That month, so far as the girls are concerned, is the off month, and there is little work to be done, except by nature and the men who are protecting the plants from insects and the elements.

The discovery of Schroeder that Sumatra tobacco could be raised under tents in America opened the way for the new field of labor to girls and women. Ariel Mitchelson, the secretary and treasurer of the Connecticut Tobacco Corporation, was the first Connecticut tobacco grower to enter extensively into the new line of tobacco raising. Mr. Mitchelson was born and brought up in the tobacco fields of the Granbys, and knows every detail of the work to perfection. One of the greatest sources of trouble at the start was to get a cloth that would be loosely enough woven to let in the air and the rain, and yet be strong enough to shield the tobacco plant from the violence of pelting hailstorms and blowing gales. Chesseloth would not do, and for a time it seemed that nothing could be found to answer the purpose. However, Mr. Mitchelson set to work and invented a ribbed cloth of a better quality than chesseloth. The ribs run through the cloth at intervals of a yard apart. These ribs give the cloth the strength

to withstand the storms. But for this invention of Mr. Mitchelson's it is doubtful if shadegrown tobacco in Connecticut would have amounted to much. The makers of this cloth have named it "Ariel," after Mr. Mitchelson's given name. One of the best evidences of the durability of the cloth is seen in the fifty-six-acre tent of the Connecticut Tobacco Corporation at Granby. This is the largest tent in the world. It is nine feet high, built on uprights and crosspieces, with wires running in a traverse direction to the cross sticks. The entire plot is covered, right down to the ground, not room enough being left for even an insect to get under. At intervals in the sides of the great tent are his swinging doors of Ariel cloth on frame skeletons, which allow the teams to

enter and drive through the long roads to gather the harvest.

Across the way from this great tent are a dozen tobacco barns for curing the green leaves. Here the new work of the girls is seen at its height. There are a hundred or more standing in long rows, in a cool shed, which is open at both ends, sewing the leaves. Last year was the first time that girls were seen in the tobacco fields. The aptitude for the work made them so desirable that they were in great demand at the opening of the season. The men bring in the big baskets of carefully picked leaves, just plucked from the stalks. The sewers take the leaves in twos and with a needle and a wax string sew the leaves in rows of forty, the ends of the string being attached to a lath, and the lath is then hung up in the tobacco shed.

The work furnishes pleasant employment for many schoolgirls in the vacation season, and is as beneficial to them as going to the mountains or seashore for rest. They are practically out of doors from morning till night, and there are no disagreeable odors about the green tobacco. The most disagreeable feature is the cumming up of their hands from the sap in the leaves when sewing them on the string. But the girls wash their hands with soap readily.

There was such a demand for girls on the tobacco plantations this summer that there were not enough native girls to go around, so Mr. Mitchelson went to New York, where he found a large number of girls and brought them back with him to the tobacco plantation. They were set to work, and it is not long since that they were compared to what some of them had been accustomed to in New York City. It was a decidedly cosmopolitan population. Some had been school teachers, other school teachers, but most of them were factory girls and store clerks. The work is light and they make from \$1 to \$10 a day. The home life of the tobacco girls is picturesque, that of those who come from New York. They are housed in a great roomy farmhouse, right on the plantation. They pay \$1 a week for their board, and there are no soda fountains and ice cream parlors where they can spend their money. In the evening all the most striking entertainments are given. There are many good singers, elocutionists, dancers and sketch artists in the crowd. Perhaps the most striking entertainment is a ball game, a contest between the girls and the boys. The girls are the daughter of William Stalker, an oldtime circus man. Every one of the girls spoken of by the reporter spoke the life on the tobacco plantation as being more like a big picnic than work, and they were regretting the day when they would have to return to the big city. If the girls are of an industrious turn they can make more money by working after hours in the warehouse at night. They are paid ten cents an hour sorting the tobacco leaves.

Before tent grown tobacco made its advent into Connecticut the tobacco was picked by the stalk, and men did all the harvesting. The stalk was hung up in the barn and the whole thing cured at once. There was no sweating, and no sorting. So the work of the girls is not an encroachment upon man's sphere. It is new and suitable work for girls.

There is nothing wasted on one of these well managed tent tobacco plantations. Even the stripped stalks are ground up and used for fertilizer on the ground where they grew. The broken leaves are used for bulk cover or sent to Germany for the manufacture of dynamite. Tobacco is used for binders and wrappers. Previous to the use of tents the leaves were treated with a dose of potash and glucose to give the desired Sumatra leaf speckle. On the Connecticut Tobacco Corporation girls of the vicinity have the right to pick the life on sewers on the big plantation. The great demand for sewers recently settled a strike in Hartford. The Capewell Horseshoe Nail Company had some misunderstanding with its girls. The girls struck, and two days later they were all at work sewing tobacco leaves. They went to and from their work each morning and night, and the railroad company attached a special car to the train to carry them. The strike settled the strike so far as the girls were concerned. The officers of the Connecticut Tobacco Corporation are: President, William J. Hazelwood, vice president, J. H. Lane, both of New York; secretary and treasurer, Ariel Mitchelson; general manager, Marcus L. Floyd, of Tariffville. Mr. Floyd was formerly a government expert on tobacco.

SPEAKER HENDERSON.

CHARACTERISTIC ANECDOTES OF THE MAN WHO RETIRES FROM HIS SEAT AS CONGRESSMAN AND THE PRESIDING OFFICER'S CHAIR ON MARCH 4.

The guides to the Capitol at Washington will have to make long scratches through their manuscripts before the opening of the next Congress. Colonel David Brenner Henderson, of Iowa, is not going back, and all the stories that they tell about him will soon be so much old junk, so far as their value in the mind of a guide is concerned. There

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not possess as much tact as a Speaker should have, the following story would seem to show that he had no mean amount of that quality: Some constituent had visited him at Washington, and the speaker had made a grievous mistake. He had lighted began to swell and blow off little jets of steam and gas. The end in his mouth began to wilt, so that the heavy cigar soon drooped down like a tomato vine in a hot sun. Suddenly the wrapper began to untwist, and before the constituent could recover himself the filling fell out in a shower. His vest was practically littered with tobacco and ashes.

The Speaker perceived the embarrassment of his visitor, who evidently tried to conceal the fact that he had never smoked such a high priced cigar before in his life, and said so cheerily that it straightened out the situation immediately: "That cigar reminds me of the way I entered Congress—wrong and forward!" Colonel Henderson possesses a marked aggressiveness. He does nothing half way. Often his political opponents at Washington had considerable fun with him because of the fight he showed in pushing certain measures which to them did not seem to demand such a bellicose spirit. Such an opportunity for sport was offered to the Democrats when Colonel Henderson became the ex-claimant of free seed distribution. It was a delight to him to send out seeds to his rural constituents, and one of the postal cards which he received in acknowledgment bore this message: "John's influence can't be got with fifteen cents' worth of seeds, but if you will send me a box of hairpins I will look after him. JOHN'S WIFE."

It is said that John was a Democrat. When out of the Speaker's chair, Colonel Henderson has a rollicking, half fellow well met way about him which makes him popular with every one, whether Democrat or Republican. He used to go stumping down one of the aisles of the House, and if he saw a group of Representatives whom he had been completely sure to see the next day, he would call out to them and say: "Hello, boys, how are you?" When a speaker he would greet them with a laugh and throw his arm around one of them in a friendly way. His spirit of frolic was shown at the end of a

THE NEWEST HOBBY.

PICTORIAL CHINA LIDS AND THEIR COLLECTION.

People who collect rare books or bric-a-brac—and collectors are many nowadays—says, "The London Chronicle," will hear with interest of the rise of a new hobby. It is the collection of small china pet lids, the covers of those artistic jars which long ago were used for holding shrimp paste and meats. James Dorman, a well known authority on book plates, has been looking into what may be called the history of the new hobby—he has himself a large collection of the pet lids—and one of our representatives has had a talk with him on the subject.

"So far as I can discover," he said, "the pots were first made for the shrimpers of Pegwell Bay, to contain the shrimp paste prepared there. Anyhow the earliest examples have views of Pegwell Bay, as showing where the contents of the pots came from, and as providing, at the same time, a pretty picture in colors. The vogue in them would have begun about 1850, perhaps, and it lasted more or less for thirty years. Some of the lids represent decorative designs. Often six or seven colors are lighted in color, and I am told by a friend that the illustrations must have been done by a transfer process.

"The art represented by the pet lids," continued Mr. Dorman, "is shown at its very best in a plaque, the workmanship of Pratt, of Fenton, which is at the Bethnal Green Museum. The pots, which are taken together, were made in groups; taking them altogether, there would be many relating to subjects of a uniform character. You find a set of lids with portraits—Prince Consort, the Duke of Wellington, or Lord Raglan, who commanded in the Crimea; a set with pictures by Wilkie, Landseer and other artists; a set with views of the quarter of England or the other. While the lids must have been almost endless in number, it is hard enough now to come by them; especially it is very difficult to complete a series of them. As to their value, one can only say that they are hardly on the market yet, but I suppose a really good specimen would fetch a guinea. 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