

FOOD POISONING AND ITS RELATION TO CANNING METHODS

The tragic outbreak of botulism that recently occurred at Albany has so focussed the attention of the entire State of Oregon on the problem as to regard it in the light of gravest concern. Recent epidemiological observations have shown that the term "food poisoning" should probably be limited to the intoxication of B. botulinus and the poisonings by food contaminated with the organisms of the para-typhoid-enteritidis group and perhaps other bacteria. Outbreaks of food poisoning are explosive in character, usually short of duration and frequently disregarded, unless there are spectacular features or the outbreak is botulism, similar to the occurrence at Albany.

It can be noted by the discussion in the foregoing paragraph that there are two types of food poisoning. The symptoms are distinct and they should be easily recognized and differentiated. The first type is popularly known as "ptomaine" and is characterized by an incubation period of usually 4 to 6 hours, practically no mortality, nausea, vomiting, abdominal pain, prostration, diarrhoea, and rise of temperature. This type is due to food previously contaminated with the bacteria of the paratyphoid group through the agencies of a carrier, contact with polluted water and milk supplies, rodents, and other animals. In this type always suspect freshly cooked or "warmed over" food, especially if there has been some previous period of heating. These bacteria are comparatively easily destroyed by heat, therefore canned foods are not involved, and they rarely ever cause spoilage of food.

Botulism
In the majority of cases of botulism the incubation period is from 24 to 48 hours, though the

onset may occur earlier or may be delayed. The characteristic evidences of the disease recorded in botulism are quoted in their usual order as follows: Delayed onset, marked muscular weakness, gastro-intestinal symptoms, disturbances of vision, with double vision, loss of ability to swallow or talk, constipation, rapid pulse, and sub-normal temperature, rarely any pain, death from respiratory failure, and a mortality rate of sometimes 100 per cent.

In this type of food poisoning always suspect preserved foods and meat products such as sausages. The food causing outbreaks of botulism has often been observed to be spoiled and housewives are warned not to taste such foods.

Relation of Canning to Botulism

The majority of outbreaks of botulism have been due to under-heated or under-processed foods. It is fundamental that methods of canning must insure sufficient heat penetration and make allowance for altitude, and the acid or alkaline concentration of the products. Sanitation by the thoroughly cleansing, proper storage, and the use of fresh products is primarily essential. There have been no outbreaks of botulism traced to commercially canned food since February 1922, while there have been in the same period twenty-eight outbreaks attributed to home canned foods. It would appear that the precautions taken by the commercial canning industry have been efficacious. The minimum temperature used should be 240 degrees F., but a complete knowledge of the above requirements would replace scientific methods for empiricisms.

To summarize: When in doubt of your food destroy it or boil it thoroughly before serving.

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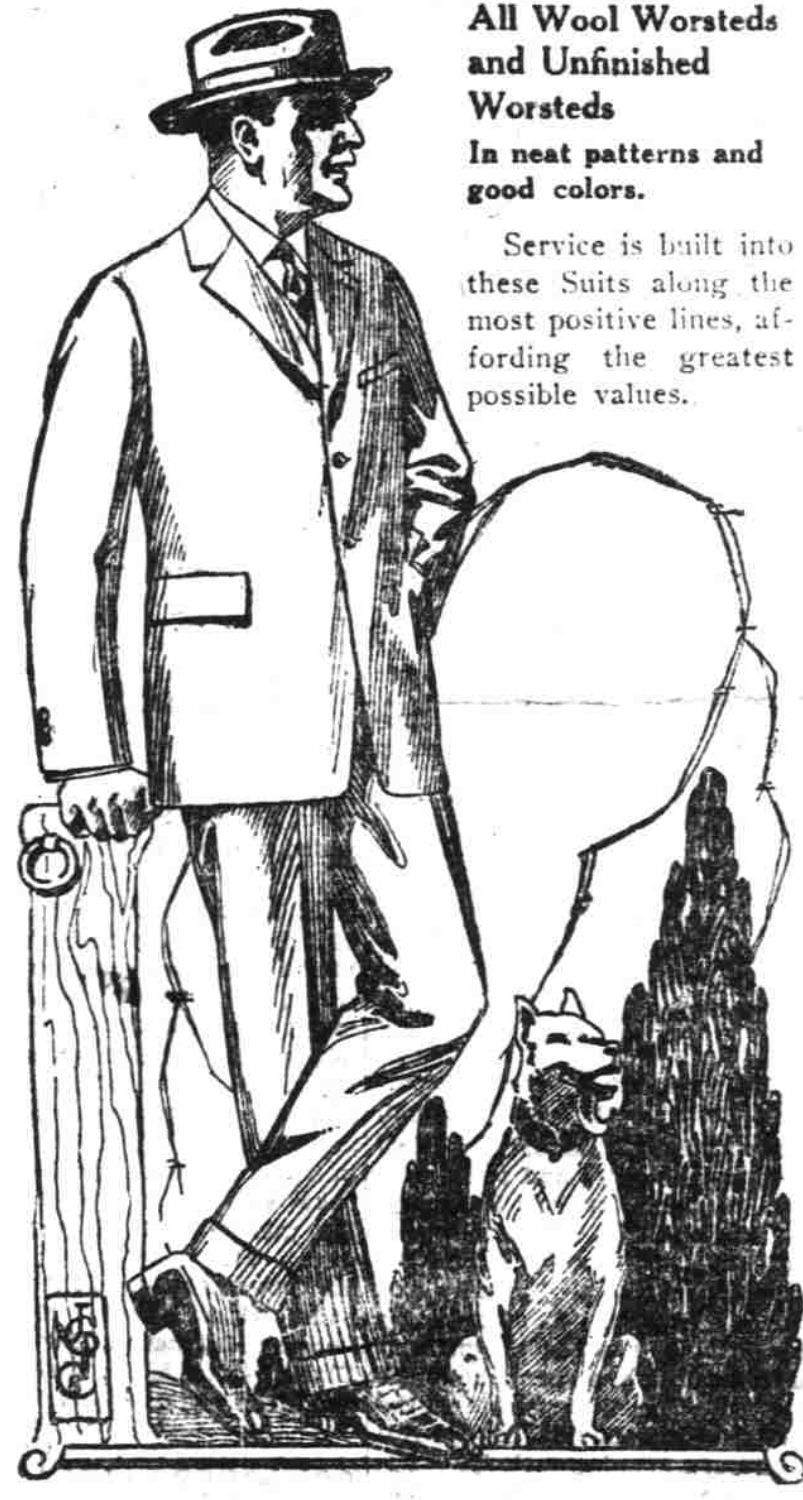
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HONGKONG AND CHRISTMAS, 1923

To begin with I am sure this bit of composition will not be euphoric to the ears of our learned critics, but being a commoner among the common this so called Asiatic dope will no doubt interest a few.

In the following lines I will endeavor to enlighten a few of our readers of the beauties of the Oriental City of Hongkong and to tell of an experience a few of us boys had on the day before Xmas.

There is little doubt in my mind that the majority of the people in U.S.A. picture Hongkong as one of China's largest cities. Are they right? First of all this allusion must be cleared and so, this bit of history.

Hongkong, an island having about 25 square miles in area, rises out of the coastal sea of South China. The City of Victoria situated on the southern side of this island, is known as Hongkong. Just across a wonderful mountain sheltered harbor on the mainland is the suburb of Victoria or the City of Kowloon as it is called. Both Hongkong and the City of Kowloon are the property of the British and under British rule.

If you are a mathematician with an imaginative mind you may be able to picture a city laid out the way Victoria is. Hongkong Island is just the remains of some prehistoric rumpus caused by some distant volcano. In other words it is the peak of some great submerged mountain of days gone by.

Credit is certainly due to the engineers who attempted a city on this sight and also the authors of such a beautiful park like product. Figure for yourself a mountain rising from sea level to a height of 1,800 feet with a base about a half mile long. Here on this incline these engineers have built what is rightly known as the Pearl of the Orient. Great wide well paved streets, modern buildings, beautiful public parks and a scenic railway reaching to the mountain's height.

The foreign section is just one grand park with its beautiful driveways, lanes and up to date homes. These beautiful homes look out over the business section of the city and on what is commonly termed one of the world's best harbors. At night this hill city is one glorious twinkle of a million electric lights and one feels greatly enchanted by its beauty.

And so into this beautiful city's harbor we dropped anchor the day before Xmas, 1923.

On the afternoon of the 24th a bunch of us set out to see the sights of Hongkong Island. After the usual preliminaries of wetting our whistles we hired a large touring car for our trip. The beauties of this semi-tropical island are made accessible by a concrete highway running up and down its length. I say up and down for this highway starts at sea level and rises to about 1,600 feet elevation. It being a good 20 miles around this driveway we spent about two hours on the trip. Half way around this island we

found an immense summer hotel, used exclusively by the well to do tourists. This hotel is located on one of the prettiest spots in Hongkong. As the tourist sits out on the spacious verandas overlooking tennis and golf courses in perfect condition, and the open smiling sea he realizes that this alone is well worth his trip to China.

The interior of this hotel is decorated, perhaps beyond the average human's imagination with its Oriental draperies and furnishings. Curious idols can be found throughout the halls and we are told these are lit up at night. Some of these are quite hideous enough to give you cold chills, but the tourist thinks these are all the go, and it is to these idols the hotel attributes a large part of their success.

After finishing our tour of the island we stopped in a restaurant to obtain our daily ration, and here we met a few shipmates from a destroyer then in port. During the confab one of the boys suggested we call on an American lady who had lived in Hongkong for the last 23 years. No sooner said than done when we found ourselves on our way to her home. On our way up we purchased a huge bouquet of flowers as a slight remembrance. The fellow with the flowers remained outside while the rest of us went streaming in. After being introduced around we called to the flower bearer to make the presentation. I wish you could have seen her face when she saw they were for her. She tried to thank us but words failed her and all she could do was just sit down in a chair and stare at the bouquet. When she looked up there were tears in her eyes and she told us it had been a long time since she had been remembered by her own people. Then she told us she was leaving the Orient for good next year and was going to return to her home in Indiana. She played the piano for us while we attempted to sing all the old songs we knew and then bidding her a Merry Xmas and Happy New Year we took our leave.

None of us had much to say after leaving the house for I guess we were all thinking of home and our mothers and wondering if they were happy too this Xmas eve.

Asiaties Regard Idea Anomally "Losing With Honor"

LONDON, Feb. 8 (Mail).—Sports are hygienic but it is doubtful if they are an unmitigated blessing for the Japanese, said B. J. Wilden-Hart, professor emeritus at the Imperial Japanese university, in a paper before the Japan society recently. "It is very difficult," he said, "for an Asiatic to grasp the idea of 'losing with honor' or 'being defeated but not disgraced.' The old attitude of the fatalistic and feudalistic east was 'win or die.'"

At any rate nobody accuses Daugherty of vindictiveness.