

filled up with fruit, which was being taken in from the growers' carts, examined, weighed, and passed in to the sorting room at the rate of 25 to 30 tons per day.

"Neat handed Phyllis and her companions were busy sorting the fruit in the next room, pulling out stalks, stray leaves, and occasionally a defective fruit. But very little trouble from the latter source is experienced, as growers know that only productions of the best quality will be accepted by the firm.

The fruit is sorted into two classes, one lot to be canned whole in syrup, and the other to be boiled down into jam. Only one kind of sugar is used throughout, the Colonial Sugar Co's. No 1; and thus the best sugar, combined with the best fruit, not more than 24 hours from the trees, ought to give and does give, a product that is hard to equal, and impossible to beat. Special mention should

The tinsmiths' room, now almost deserted during the fruit season, employed 19 hands last winter, who were able, with their up-to-date machinery, to construct a large quantity of tins, of various sizes, to hold the year's output of tinned fruits and jam. When we consider that one soldering machine is capable of soldering 11,000 tins per day, we are impressed with the idea that if perfection in this line has not been quite reached, the firm has got within measurable distance of it.

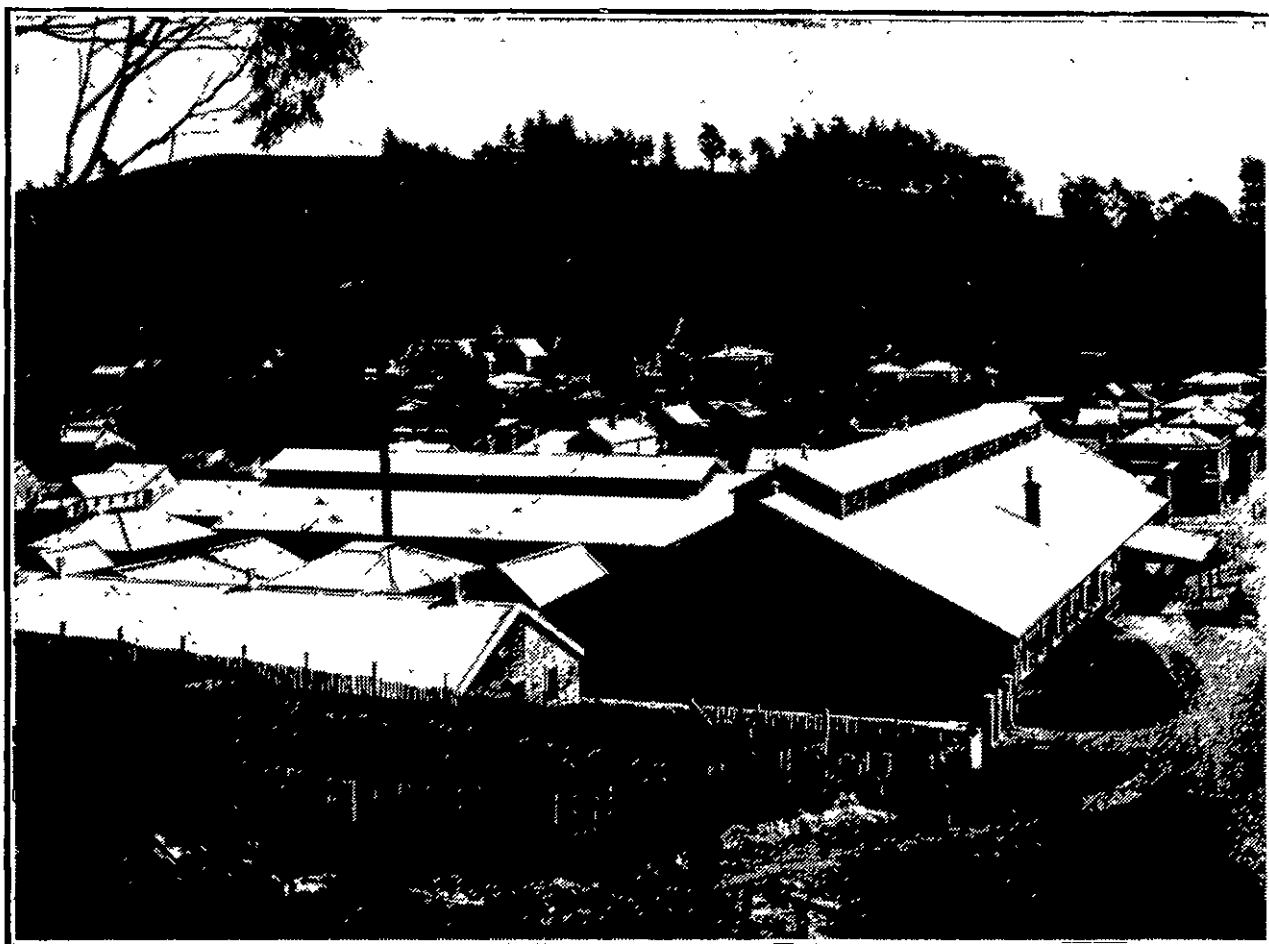
We must not forget to mention that tins are washed in boiling soda water, to take away any stray acid that may have adhered to them in the process of soldering, and then they are thoroughly rinsed in clean water. Bottles are washed in an equally careful manner.

Japanning, sealing, labelling, and packing need not be described in detail; it is suffic-

hibitions. It would be tedious to mention the whole of the various awards, consisting of gold and silver medals, and many honourable mentions. Perhaps the highest award of them all is the gold medal gained at the Exhibition of Colonial Products held last year at St. George's Hall, Liverpool. Probably all the colonial branches of the great preserving houses of England competed on that occasion, and the gaining of the Gold Medal for excellence is a feat upon which Mr. Kirkpatrick is to be congratulated, and of which Nelson may well be proud.

But, after all, the supreme test of excellence is the growing demand for the goods of the well-known "K" brand. The business has steadily expanded, not only in New Zealand, but in Australia, and each year shows a larger output.

What this means to Nelson district, not to



BIRD'S EYE VIEW OF FACTORY PREMISES FROM HILL.

be made of the fruit that is canned and boiled whole. Fruit of even quality and size is selected; this is put into the tins or glass jars, which are then filled with a clear syrup, heated by steam, and then hermetically sealed. No fruit is put up in water alone.

It often happens in the height of the season that supplies arrive too quickly to be immediately made into jam. The process of "pulping" is then resorted to. The fruit is simply plain boiled, without any chemical preservative, and sealed up in large tins until the rush of the season is over, when it is turned into jam in the usual way.

Passing into the "kitchen," the visitor sees six large copper pans, in which the fruit intended for jam is boiled by steam. These are capable of making 10 tons of jam per day, enough to fill 10,000 glass jars.

ient to say that every item in the manipulation of the various products dealt with displays evidence of the same forethought, care cleanliness, and transparent honesty that characterise the whole establishment.

Hitherto we have spoken only of fruits; but Messrs. Kirkpatrick and Co. preserve green peas, for which there is a large and increasing demand. They make pickles, sauces lemon cheese, mincemeat, and a host of other knick-knacks, too numerous to mention, but indispensable to the modern domestic *cuisine*. Peppers, spices, and baking powder, with other goods of a similar nature, are included in the firm's operations.

The estimation in which Messrs. Kirkpatrick and Co's. productions are held may be gauged by the large number of trophies that have been awarded to them at English, Colonial, and Continental Ex-

mention other places, which may and will profit by the object lesson which this industry presents, only the residents of Nelson and adjoining districts can fully realise. In past years, many a struggling family has been materially helped by finding a steady market for the tomatoes and other fruit and vegetables they were able to raise on their small holdings, to say nothing of the cheques earned by picking blackberries on waste lands, or of the employment in the factory itself, the staff numbering about 100 in the busiest time.

But now that the business has assumed so much larger dimensions, the influence on the community is becoming more marked. One sees a very remarkable development of market gardening in the raising of crops, which form the staple of Kirkpatrick's business. Besides the numerous hothouses for the