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### **MAKING GAS FROM CORNSTALKS**

In the good old days, when the gas light suddenly began to flicker, we would send Johnny downstairs to put another quarter in the meter. But now John, somewhat more grown up, will probably be asked to go out behind the barn and shovel in a few more pounds of ground-up cornstalks.

This is chemistry's newest contribution to the problem of farm relief—making gas for cooking, lighting, and industrial uses from the hitherto despised cornstalk, the most conspicuous waste produced on millions of acres of midwestern and southern farm lands. At the Minneapolis meeting of the American Chemical Society a short time ago, a brisk and energetic professor of chemistry from the University of Illinois, Dr. A.M. Buswell, told how he and one of his research students, C.S. Boruff, have succeeded in producing paying quantities of methane, a gas of high fuel value, from nothing more costly than cornstalks, water, and sewage sludge.



### **IS THERE AN ETHER?**

Science still must answer the great and fundamental question: "Is there an ether?" And despite the many feats of the Einstein theories of relativity in explaining and predicting observed facts of physics, such as the way the planet Mercury moves in its orbit, they are seriously menaced by having one of their foundations pulled out from under them.

Prof. Dayton C. Miller has reported to the Optical Society of America that he has during the past year laboriously repeated the ether drift experiments that he has been making during the last nine years in a Cleveland laboratory and on high Mount Wilson in California.

Again, he finds an observed effect in the light path of his apparatus such as would be produced by a relative motion of the Earth and the ether of about ten kilometers (six miles) per second. This is the same result that Dr. Miller has obtained during the past few years. In 1925, his paper on this work won the annual prize of the American Association for the Advancement of Science. This continued ability to obtain the same results over a period of years, whether the apparatus is at normal level in Cleveland or on a California mountain, makes Dr. Miller's results all the more important.

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