NOTE ON AN OLD TIN OF PRESERVED MEAT.

By G. W. WIGNER, F.C.S., &c.

DURING the recent International Food Exhibition, Mr. Leonard Wallington brought under the notice of the judges a remarkable tin of preserved meat. This tin had been in Mr. Wallington's possession for twenty-nine years, and was, he supposed, some five or six years old when he received it. It was tinned (as appeared by the stamp on the tin) by D. Hogarth & Co. The tin was of what we should consider now to be unusual thickness. It had apparently been painted outside with an oxide paint; but, notwithstanding this, the exterior of the tin had corroded so much that in dusting it carefully two small scales were displaced, which left pin holes in the metal.

It was not convenient to open the tin for five or six days after this, and the contents began to smell. No odour had been perceptible in the first instance. When the tin was cut open, and the contents emptied in the form of a solid lump, two patches of decomposed meat were seen, each about $1\frac{1}{2}$ inch by $\frac{3}{4}$ inch, spreading from the two pin holes. The rest of the meat was sound, and, after the removal of the decomposed patches, appeared to be in excellent condition. It was tainted, but it was clear that was due to the odour from the decomposed patches, for, when washed, all taint was removed.

The contents consisted of veal, with a large proportion of fat, and a few peas. The fat appeared to be entirely the natural fat of the meat.

The meat was analysed, and gave only .68 per cent. of ash. This ash was free from lead, but contained minute traces of tin. The quantity was far too small to estimate quantitatively. It was unquestionably less than the proportion usually present in tinned goods one year old. The salt was also low, and this may have something to do with the absence of tin. Only .09 per cent. was found. This looks as if the veal had been boiled, and the liquor decanted before canning.

The most important result was that lead was absent. There has not been time enough to assay the metal of the can; but it seems pretty well evident that it was really tinned iron plate, and not Terne plate, containing lead.

Thirty odd years is a long test for tinned meat; and it is remarkable that any portion of it should have been quite free from decomposition after that time. Such a successful result may possibly lead to the use of better and sounder tins than those now in vogue.