

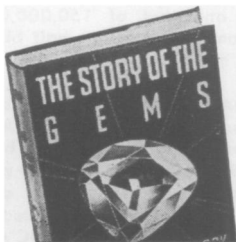


Chicory

➤ AUTUMN BRINGS a brave array of bright flowers that shine on in spite of shortening days and even defy the frost that begins to nip at night.

Goldenrod, wild aster, helenium and fringed gentian are old-time favorites among the native plants; but they have been joined, since the settlement of America, by a number of recruits from Europe and Asia that are as hardy as they and frequently very attractive in the bargain.

Well up in the ranks of these we must recognize the chicory, that hardy garden herb that has escaped almost everywhere in settled regions and is now one of the sturdiest and most independent of our semi-weeds.



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Roadsides and waste places are gay throughout the summer and autumn with the blue flowers of this upstanding weed that very wilyly knows how to make its own way in the world and asks for no favor from anybody.

It begins to produce its sharp-blue flowers fairly early in the summer and does not stop until really severe frosts cut it down altogether. Chicory is a perennial, storing food for the next season in its thickened root; and it would probably be in bloom all the time if the climate permitted. Its native home is temperate Europe and Asia, probably originally somewhere along the Mediterranean.

Chicory did not come into America as a stowaway, as did many of our worse weeds. It was brought here deliberately, and cultivated in gardens, from which it escaped to the roadsides and fallow fields.

What the history of chicory was in ancient times we have few documents to tell us, but since the discovery of coffee and its popularization as a European and American drink, chicory has been called on in times of stress to supply a substitute for the flavor most of us have come to be fond of in our morning cup.

It is, to be sure, a very poor substitute, making a thin and bitter drink which very few take unless they are forced into doing so by circumstances. Its thick, hard root, containing a bitter principle, is dried up and used either by itself or to eke out the more expensive coffee.

Chicory has a close cousin, however, that has a characteristically bitter taste. We seem to like a bitter tang, if it is a kind we have grown used to. This popular cousin of chicory is the well-known salad plant, endive.

Science News Letter, September 22, 1951

ENTOMOLOGY

Chemical on Screen Strips Routs Flies in New Mexico

➤ CORNELL UNIVERSITY entomologists have developed a revolutionary method of house fly control in dairy barns that threatens the "flit gun" method with oblivion.

Strips of screening about ¾ inch wide and 100 feet long are dipped in an insecticide called dieldrin and hung along the ceilings. Flies are irresistibly attracted to the strips and die soon after contact.

To perfect the new technique, the professors virtually lived with the flies, watching and recording their every move. They noticed that the little pests were partial to narrow objects as resting places, and preferred screen surfaces to wood, glass or metal. Screen strips placed near the ceiling were especially attractive.

Because of its high toxicity and non-repellant quality, dieldrin proved an ideal material. It gave good control for 16 weeks or more. The treated screening killed houseflies in five seconds in laboratory tests.

The new strip method removes the danger of milk contamination since the screening may be dipped and dried outside the barn, and fastened to the ceiling out of reach of livestock.

For various reasons, use of these strips have not yet been sanctioned by the Food and Drug Administration, but it is expected that official permission will be granted when second year's data are on official record.

The work was done by Drs. David Pimentel, H. H. Schwardt, and L. B. Norton of Cornell University in Ithaca, N. Y.

Science News Letter, September 22, 1951

PSYCHOLOGY

How to Help Child Talk

➤ MOST CHILDREN begin to talk by the time they are two years old. But quite a number do not start talking till they are three or even four.

Sometimes this is because of a hearing defect, mental backwardness or other handicap. When the chief problem, however, is that of helping the child reach a stage of readiness for speech, parents may find helpful the following suggestions from the National Hospital for Speech Disorders:

1. Talk slowly to the child and use simple language. He will more readily understand, and be more likely to repeat, a simple two- or three-word combination that contains the essentials of a sentence, like "Go bye bye" or "Get a drink," than a more complex statement.

2. Give the child many auditory experiences by reading simple stories to him,

stressing the important words or actions, and by playing suitable records for him. On shopping trips or other excursions, or about the home, point out familiar objects repeating their names several times. If the child shows an interest in an object, let him handle it, if possible, while you say its name for him. In this way, other senses will help establish the association between the object and its verbal symbol.

3. Put into words for the child the everyday actions he performs:

"We are going to eat," . . . "We get a drink," . . . "We put on shoes."

4. Don't, however, continually urge the child to talk or make him feel that because he doesn't speak he is less acceptable to you than other children are to their parents. Making him feel insecure or anxious will only add to his difficulty.

Science News Letter, September 22, 1951