



Pallor Preferred

BLANCHING vegetables is an ancient if not a dietetically honorable practice. For some perverse reason, people seem to prefer pallor: witness the care with which we bolt our flour even to the point of robbing it of its best food values; the efforts we put into breeding white poultry, farm animals and pets even though whiteness is a practical drawback rather than an advantage; the frequent reference of novelists to "aristocratic pallor"—which in actual life usually indicates either anemia or tuberculosis.

Why do we want white lettuce, white celery, white cauliflower, white onions? For crispness and delicacy of flavor, is the usual answer of the market-place.

Crispness of that sort usually means that the tissues of the stems and leaves we are buying are weakly built but crammed with sap until they are stiff. That is, a blanched vegetable is really a minimum of vegetable and a maximum of expensive water. It is the same state of affairs that we find in the pale shoots of potatoes sprouting in a dim cellar—the condition which plant physiologists consider more or less pathological and call "etiolated."

Delicacy of flavor really means, in

most cases, absence of all but a trace of flavor. This might be excusable in onions, but most of us, fed for years on salads made with "store" lettuce, have forgotten what the real flavor of lettuce is.

If it were merely a matter of cheating both our palates and our purses, we might pay the price of our folly, for we wouldn't be losing much that we really need. However, that isn't the whole story. Concealed behind the green chlorophyll that we so carefully get rid of is a yellow pigment, carotene, that is the parent substance of one of the most important vitamins.

Carotene gets its name from carrots, which have received a good deal of publicity lately because night-fighting aviators are encouraged to eat them freely, for deficiency of vitamin A would mean impairment of their vision in poor light. What's good for a flying fighter ought to be good for the rest of us, who are habitually not quite up to par anyway.

Science News Letter, May 2, 1942



SCIENCE CLUBS OF AMERICA

Sponsored by Science Service

NEWS OF CLUBS

PITTSBURGH, Pa.—The effectiveness of newspaper cooperation in staging a Science Fair is demonstrated in spectacular fashion in the Pittsburgh area. The big event will take place from May 1 to May 16, inclusive. Sponsored by the Buhl Planetarium, the Pennsylvania Junior Academy of Science and the Pittsburgh Press, the Fair this year promises to eclipse any similar previous event.

"We must not falter in encouraging our youth to tinker and experiment. We must tell these young people that they are important, and that we are interested in what they are learning and doing," says Edward T. Leech, editor of the Pittsburgh Press.

"Now, more than ever before, we are aware of our great debt to our chemists and engineers and physicists and biologists. It is they who give us the airplanes, the bombsights, the torpedoes, the sulfa drugs, the increased food supplies, and the machine guns with which we shall win this war," he continues.

"But I think we must not forget that these American scientists were, only a few years ago, boys and girls experimenting and tinkering in their home workshops and in their high school science laboratories."

Arthur L. Draper, Director of the Buhl Planetarium, has this to say: "We believe in the Junior Science Fair. We believe—and we think high school science teachers share the belief—that the Junior Science Fair at the Buhl Planetarium serves a vital function in science education in the Pittsburgh region."

NEW YORK, N. Y.—The Marconi Memorial Award Scholarships are announced again by the Veteran Wireless Operators Association. This is an annual, nationwide contest, open only to male members of Science Clubs of America.

There are two scholarships which are awarded annually; the first is a two-year, full-tuition scholarship in Radio and Electrical Communication at R.C.A. Institutes, either in New York, or Chicago, Ill.; the second, for the central United States zone only, is a one-year tuition scholarship in Aviation Radio at Midland Radio and Television School, Kansas City, Mo.

Announcements have already been sent to sponsors of all science groups affiliated with Science Clubs of America.

Award winners are decided by competitive examination and an evaluation of their school work.

The Committee on Awards is J. R. Poppele, representing Veteran Wireless Operators Association, Chairman of Scholarship Committee; Herbert S. Zim, Ph.D., representing The American Institute of the City of New York, and Joseph H. Kraus, Editor of Science Clubs of America.

JUNEAU, Alaska—Traveling Photo Shows stimulate interest in things photographic. These shows, consisting of about 45 prints, are made available to any group affiliated with Science Clubs of America. For several years, Traveling Photo Shows have been exhibited by the Irate Ions, a science club established in the high schools here. "Not only club members but the entire student body enthusiastically viewed the salon," writes Edna Harpole, sponsor of the Club. "Townpeople called during school hours and local newspapers as well as the high school publication gave the show some fine publicity. We plan to request another exhibit next year." And that's looking ahead.

ASHEBORO, N. C.—Primarily with the expectation of supplementing the school educational program in chemistry, the Central Carolina Crucible Club is continuing its activity under the new sponsor, science teacher Vertee Umstead. A greater interest in scientific topics is stimulated by a study of the lives of early scientists and by keeping abreast of modern developments in chemical fields; these are expected to add greatly to the knowledge of each member. The club looks forward to an exciting and pleasurable season.

LAS VEGAS, N. M.—Experimental and amateur radio activities within the prescribed limits of our state of war, are being undertaken by members of the Phy-Chy Science Club at Las Vegas High School. Some of the members are pursuing photography, taking camera flash shots, and handling all the darkroom work including the making of enlargements of worthwhile pictures. Charles W. Wolfe, chemistry and physics instructor, is sponsor.

Clubs are invited to become affiliated with SCA for a nominal \$2 for 20 members or less. You can become an associate of SCA for 25 cents. Address: Science Clubs of America, 1719 N St., N.W., Washington, D. C.

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