

of mineral salts in cooking and of vitamins, particularly vitamin C. The use of vegetables as in soup (because the liquid is used as well as the vegetables) tends of course to salvage certain nutritive soluble constituents, but not the vitamins.

Considerations such as these bring us to the use of salads, and the main criticism in regard to these is that they are not used enough. Further, we have to only a small extent learnt the art of making winter salads, which is not so difficult as it might appear, although we cannot go into details of their preparation here. The tender leaves of the inside of a cabbage make a useful basis for a salad when lettuce is not available, and it is rich in vitamins A and C and also in alkaline salts and roughage. Kale or curly green can be used for salad in winter time, and so also can

value we place upon the plant kingdom and the use we make of it, though we seek variety by using such things as the seeds of nasturtiums (thought to aid digestion) mint, knotted marjoram, thyme and sage. But the ladies of France and Switzerland know many more plants of field and roadside which they add to their very delightful salads. Also they are less wasteful in the use of vegetables, for they discard less. Often, for instance, there is set before one a very delicious dish of vegetables made from pea-pods. True we have learnt some similar economies ourselves of recent years as when we use such things as turnip-tops; here we would give a warning against the use of rhubarb leaves for the oxalic acid they contain acts as a poison. We might refer to the use of the nettle in the earlier part of the last century. It was held to be good



Photo:]

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NURSES AND INJURED SOLDIERS "DIGGING FOR VICTORY" IN THE HOSPITAL "CABBAGE PATCH."

savoys. With regard to other vegetables, whether cooked or uncooked, we will just draw attention to the properties of a few. Spinach is an excellent source of iron and the vitamins, and it can often be digested quite easily by people who find that certain other vegetables cause flatulence. Lettuce is, of course, the chief basis of most salads, and, apart from its value as a food, it is said to have properties that combat sleeplessness. This is quite an old belief, for John Gerarde says, "the juice of the lettuce procureth sleep" and, further, that "being outwardly applied mittigates all inflammations: It is good for burnings and scaldings if it be laide thereon with salt before the blisters appeere"; for authority for this statement Gerarde went to no less a personage than Pliny. Such is the antiquity of the family of lettuce. Watercress is an excellent source of iron, and, to quote again the 16th century herbalist, "there are three sorts of watercresses, one of the marish (marshy) ground; the other of the river; the last of cleere and silver running springs." It is this last that we should seek to use for salads. But we fall far behind the French and Swiss in the

for the blood and with this aspect in view nettle wine was often made and nettle soup was quite commonly used in Scotland. Thus even common plants may have their virtues, although sometimes, to quote old Gerarde again, "they may be known better to some than desired." Anyhow, we might suggest a wider use of the gifts of the earth in our national diet, and "commit them to the cunning cook and the teeth that eat them."

I. M.

CONSUMPTION OF FRESH VEGETABLES IN INSTITUTIONS.

We have received a Circular from the Ministry of Health, strongly advocating the desirability of making the greatest use of the ample supplies of fresh vegetables available at the present time, so that supplies of tinned vegetables may be reserved to meet a possible shortage at other seasons. Good advice, but where in cities can fresh vegetables be secured at a reasonable price?

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