remove the swollen vegetable from the water and permit it to remain at room temperature for twenty-four to thirty-six hours *it will return to its anhydrous state.* This phenomenon, it seems to me, stamps the anhydrous product as an entirely different product, structurally, from the fresh product, but does not necessarily indicate any lowering in food value. In other words a fresh vegetable holds its water much more tenaciously than does a dehydrated vegetable which has had its water removed and has subsequently been immersed in water and made to assume a form closely approximating that of the fresh vegetable. Is the failure of the anhydrous vegetable to retain its water to the same degree as the fresh vegetable due to the fact that the drying has brought about some change in the colloids of the vegetable cells which lowers their power to hold water? Or does the removal of salts through the "soaking" process lower the imbibition power of the colloids? Or is there some other answer? An explanation from our friends the physical chemists would be in order.

The above phenomenon was called to my attention by Mr. Charles Denby of the War Trade Board and Mr. Daniel Moreau Barringer both of whom are much interested in the general problem of food desiccation.

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NONSILVERABLE CONTAINERS FOR SILVERING MIRRORS

To the Editor of Science: In connection with recent contributions to your columns under the title "Nonsilverable Containers for Silvering Mirrors" the writer may be permitted to record an observation made several years ago. This was that silvering solution could not be made to deposit on black amorphous selenium, although it coated the walls of the glass vessel in which the piece of selenium was placed. The converse of this experiment, namely silvering a piece of glass in a vessel lined with selenium, was not tried, but would appear to offer the solution of the problem of a container that will not attract silver.

Herbert E. Ives

AD REM OF A HISTORY OF SCIENCES IN THE UNITED STATES

In the long years of my labors in scientific reference work I found myself greatly hampered by the lack of an available source history of the different branches of sciences, especially of the exact sciences, in the United States. There are three important contributions in this field, all written by the late George Brown Goode: "The Origin of the National Scientific and Educational Institutions of the United States," 1890; "The Beginnings of Natural History in America," 1886; and "The Beginnings of American Science," 1887. Nobody who is acquainted with these papers can withhold his admiration for Mr. Goode's painstaking work, but after all they are only stepping stones and cover only a limited period, and serve merely, as it was contemplated by Mr. Goode, as an outline.

The more interested I became in the matter the more I found myself impressed by the idea to see that this great lacuna should be filled. The best channel through which to accomplish this seemed to me to lay the matter before the American Association for the Advancement of Science, have it discussed there in its entirety, and if possible undertaken by the association or under the auspices of the association. The outbreak of the world war made it seem advisable to me to postpone my plan. A year or two ago I broached the subject with Dr. L. O. Howard, the permanent secretary of the association, who fell in with the idea and expressed his willingness to submit my suggestion to the committee on policy, whenever I should be ready to present it in concrete form. Last October when the end of the war seemed to be only a matter of months I thought the time had come for action. Therefore, I addressed on October 25th the following communication to Dr. L. O. Howard:

Dear Sir:

There is as yet no history of sciences in the United States showing the important and far-reaching participation of our men of science in the general development of science. Now seems to be the proper time to seriously consider such an undertaking, as the great world war has changed and