



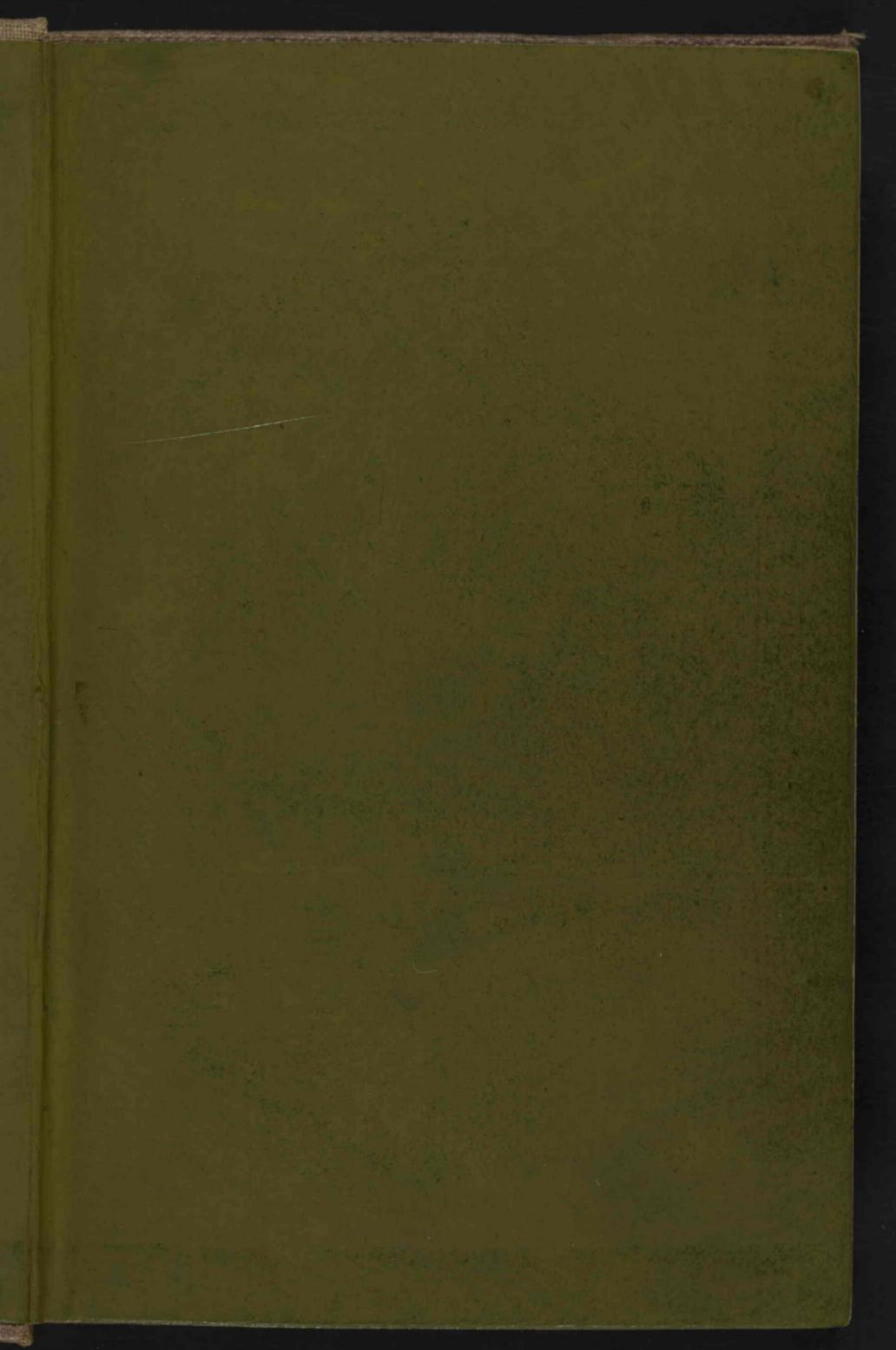
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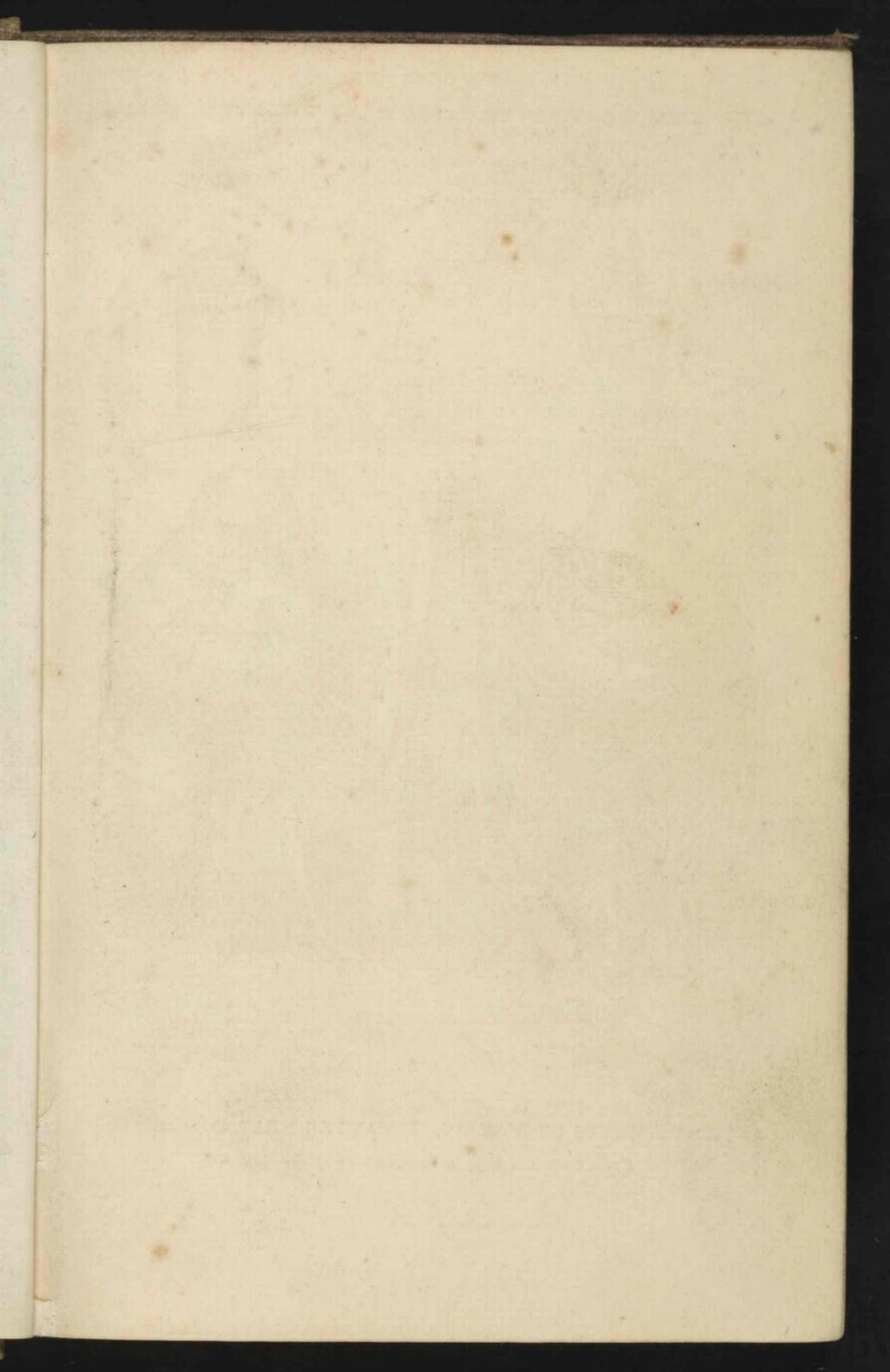
THE KATHERINE GOLDEN BITTING
COLLECTION ON GASTRONOMY

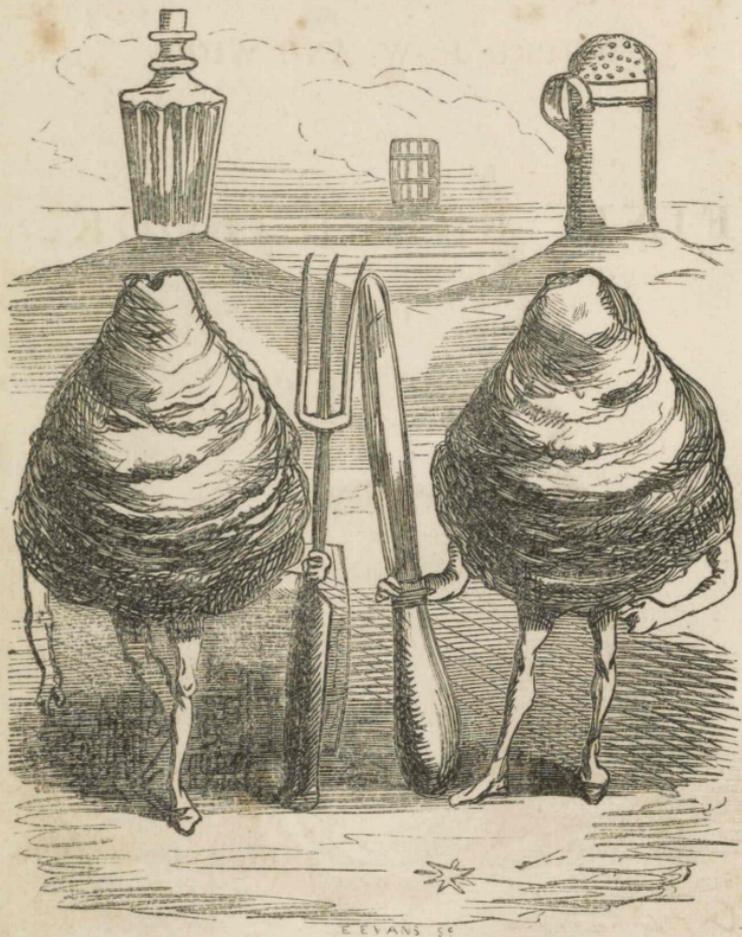
Presented by A. W. BITTING

"Give us this day our daily bread"
—the universal supplication of
all people in all times and places.



75





ANCIENT NATIVES OF BRITAIN, ENCAMPED NEAR COLCHESTER.

(From a curious Glyptic in possession of the Author.)

THE OYSTER;

WHERE, HOW, AND WHEN

TO

FIND, BREED, COOK,

AND

EAT IT.



LONDON:

TRÜBNER & CO., 60, PATERNOSTER ROW.

MDCCCLXI.

LONDON :

WILLIAM STEVENS, PRINTER, 37, BELL YARD,
TEMPLE BAR.

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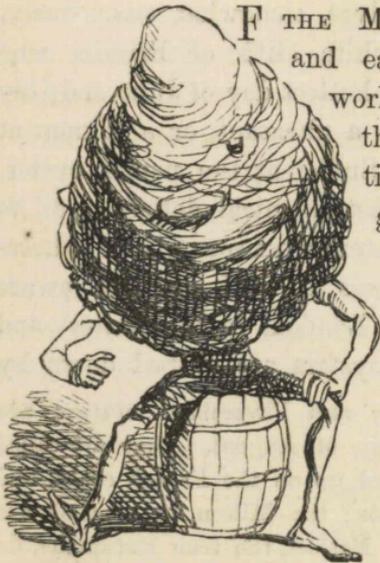
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THE OYSTER.

CHAPTER I.

THE OYSTER IN SEASON.

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F THE MILLIONS who live to eat and eat to live in this wide world of ours, how few are there who do not, at proper times and seasons, enjoy a good oyster. It may not be an ungrateful task, therefore, if I endeavour to inform them what species of animal the little succulent shell-fish is, that affords to man so much gastronomical enjoyment—how born and bred and nurtured; when, and where; and, lastly, how best it may be eaten, whether in its living and natural state, or having

undergone the ordeal of cooking by the skill of a superior artist.

I have oftentimes been told that it is a mere question of fastidiousness, or fashion, that oysters should be served for human food only at a certain fixed period of the year—those months possessing the letter *r* being proverbially the only months when the oyster is fit for human food. Why not, such reasoners have said, eat oysters all the year round? Life is short. Why not obtain the first of gastronomical enjoyments every month of the year and every day of the month? I can in no manner go with these opinions, either from my practical knowledge of the oyster, or from any just reasoning.

I am aware that there are many good men and true, and others calling themselves, somewhat erroneously, sportsmen, beyond the white cliffs of Britain, who would eat an oyster on the hottest day of June and July as they would a partridge, a pheasant, or a salmon at any season of the year. Sufficient the names oyster, partridge, pheasant—all gastronomical delights—all to be eaten, and by them eaten whensoever and wheresoever served, what matters it? I am also aware that in our good City of London, in the hottest and earliest days of August,* oysters are gulped down by

* The common Colchester and Faversham oysters are brought to market on the 5th of August. They are called *Common oysters*, and are picked up on the French coast, and then transferred to those beds; the Milton, or, as they are commonly called, the *melting Natives*, the true Rutupians, do not come in till the beginning of October, continue in season till the 12th of May, and approach the meridian of their perfection about Christmas. The denizens from France are not

the thousand: it is, nevertheless, an error—a revolting, unhealthy, unclean error—which ought to be denied, both at home and abroad, by the strong hand of the law.

I, for my part, utterly and entirely ignore fish or fowl of the game species, as fit for human food during the seasons of breeding; and although an oyster may be eatable in August, if the month be hot it is rarely fresh; and what is more disgusting or more likely to be injurious to man than a stale oyster? That which I have said, however, on the oyster in this little book which I offer to the million—for the million are interested in the subject—will, I hope, induce those who have hitherto broken through a rule strictly adhered to by all gastronomes, to abstain in future; and those who have hitherto enjoyed oyster-eating, fearlessly to eat on and secure the first and foremost of all gastronomical indulgences provided for man—only in due season.

On the 25th of July, says Brand, the antiquary, being St. James the Apostle's Day, the priests of old were wont to bless apples; and a popular belief too, in 1588, though generally ignored in the more enlightened days in which we live, was, that whoever ate oysters on that day would not be without money for the remainder of the year. This is very probable, for without they were selected with great care, disease and even death might follow. This conjunction of apples and oysters on St. James's Day may have suggested Bianca's remark

to be compared to British *Native* oysters, which are so called because they are born, bred, and fed in this country. These do not come to perfection till they are four years old.

in the "Taming of the Shrew," when comparing the resemblance of the old Pedant to that of Vincentio, which she remarks was as complete as that of an oyster to an apple.

One must, therefore, take care not to eat oysters during the months of June and July, because they are unwholesome on account of the spawning-time; and also be careful in their selection in August. There are instances when persons, after having eaten oysters during these months, have become ill, and have even died. Last summer, at Ostend, thirty persons were taken ill in consequence of having eaten oysters in the month of July. They are, during these months, very thin, and without taste; in the month of September they become again fat and eatable, which may be accounted for by the fact of their being self-generated. The strength of the poor oysters is entirely spent in fattening themselves, in order the more to tickle the palate of the epicure in the proper season.

Now let us proceed to open the oyster.

The Oyster! The mere writing of the word creates sensations of succulence—gastronomical pleasures, nutritive food, easy digestion, palatable indulgence—then go sleep in peace!

Lobster salads, beef and veal, truffles and chestnuts, all good in their way, are, nevertheless, attended with evil consequences to the human frame.

But oysters—ye pleasant companions of the midnight hours, or the mid-day feast; is there a man, woman or child in all Europe—ay, or in Asia, Africa, or America—who does not owe you a debt of gratitude which they

repay to the full by the enjoyment of your society *tête-à-tête*? You are eaten raw and alive, cooked and scolloped, in sauce and without sauce. True, true, oh oyster! thou art the best beloved of the loved!

The oyster, when eaten moderately, is, without contradiction, a wholesome food, and one of the greatest delicacies in the world. It contains much nutritive substance, which is very digestive, and produces a peculiar charm and an inexplicable pleasure. After having eaten oysters we feel joyous, light, and agreeable—yes, one might say, fabulously well. He who has eaten for the first time oysters is best enabled to judge of this; for, soon after having eaten them, he will experience a sensation he never felt before, and never had an idea of. This sensation scarcely remains with people who eat oysters every day; it is more practically felt when oysters are eaten for breakfast or before dinner, although they are also very wholesome in the evening, when taken moderately. Gourmets and epicures eat the oyster in its natural state, except that the beard is taken away. In England it is eaten with pepper, in Holland with vinegar, in Germany frequently with lemon-juice; but I am of the opinion, and am convinced, that when taken with the liquor they still contain, they are more digestible and more tasty. The opinion that this fluid is salt water, is an error; it is the white blood of the oyster itself, which it emits when injured in having its upper shell broken off. If it were sea-water, it would have a disagreeable bitter taste, and cause sickness; but as this does not take place, but on the contrary gives a fine taste to the oyster, the error is evident. The error

appears to arise from the fact that unconscientious oyster dealers wash the oysters with salt and water in order to give them a better appearance, as they say.

“The oyster,” says a writer in No. 824 of the “Family Herald”—that most agreeable of all window-seat books—“is a species of food combining the most precious alimentary qualities. Its meat is soft, firm, and delicate. It has sufficient flavour to please the taste, but not enough to excite to surfeit. Through a quality peculiar to itself, it favours the intestinal and gastric absorption, mixing easily with other food; and, assimilating with the juices of the stomach, it aids and favours the digestive functions. There is no other alimentary substance, not even excepting bread, which does not produce indigestion under certain given circumstances, but oysters never. This is a homage due to them. They may be eaten to-day, to-morrow, for ever, in profusion; indigestion is not to be feared, and we may be certain that no doctor was ever called in through their fault. Of course we except cooked oysters. Besides their valuable digestive qualities, oysters supply a recipe not to be despised in the liquor they contain. It is produced by the sea-water they have swallowed, but which, having been digested, has lost the peculiar bitterness of salt water. This oyster-water is limpid, and slightly saline in taste. Far from being purgative, like sea-water, it promotes digestion. It keeps the oysters themselves fresh, prolongs their life for some time until it is destroyed in our stomachs, or until the oyster has been transformed into a portion of ourselves.”

The degree of importance which different persons

attach to matters connected with the world in which we live, depends, of course, in a great measure, on the manner in which they view them.

One person considers a loving wife, and four hundred a year, wealth and happiness; another would be miserable without four thousand, and could dispense with the wife. Some consider a post with five thousand a year a tolerable means of existence; others a commission with twelve hundred. Some seek a good consulship; others, till they have travelled from St. Petersburg and back in a telega, or sledge, half a dozen times during mid-winter, use the interest, which in other days would have secured a snug governorship, even in the Island of Barataria, to obtain a queen's messenger's place. At least so it used to be. Whether competitive examinations will lead to our having the right man in the right place, the round pegs in round holes, and the square pegs in square ones, still remains to be seen. And so is it with most things in life, whether personal or gastronomical. Different men are of different opinions; some like apples, and some like—onions; but I have scarcely ever yet met with the man who has refused a thoroughly good oyster.

There is not a man, however unobservant, but knows that oysters are a great source of profit to some of that multitude which rises every morning without knowing exactly how, when, and where it shall dine. Billingsgate in the oyster season is a sight and a caution. Boats coming in loaded; porters struggling with baskets and sacks; early loungers looking on—it is so pleasant to see other people work—buyers and cheapeners, the fish

salesman in his rostrum, the wealthy purchaser who can lay out his hundreds and buy his thousands—all to be met with, together with that noise and bustle, and, far beyond it, all that incredible earnestness which always distinguishes an English market.

Oysters, says Dryasdust, in his very useful commercial work—in which, however, he makes alarming misstatements—oysters are consumed in London in incredible quantities, “and notwithstanding their high price, are largely eaten by the middle and lower classes!”

Thanking Dryasdust for his information, and being one of the great middle class ourselves, we can safely assert that oysters are *not* high in price. Fancy being able to purchase twelve succulent dainties for one sixpence at Ling’s or Quin’s, at Proctor’s or Pim’s, or any other celebrated shell-fish shop! Twelve “lumps of delight,” as the Mussulman—not mussel man—calls his sweetmeats! and then fancy Dryasdust saying that they are high in price! Oh shame, where is thy blush!

A farm of four acres, if well handled, may give occupation, and even bring pecuniary gain, to the possessor. A garden, for those who thoroughly understand and enjoy it, may secure untold pleasures, and perhaps help to pay the rent of the cottage. But an “oyster-bed” is a pleasure—an *el dorado*—a mine of wealth, in fact, which fills the owners’ pockets with gold, and affords to the million untold gastronomical enjoyment and healthy food. On the money part of the question, the Scientific and Useful column of Number 825 of the “Family Herald” furnishes the following information: “A very interesting report has been recently made to the French Government

on the results of experiments made for the improvement of oyster-beds. The locality chosen was the bay of St. Brioux, on the coast of Brittany. Between March and May, 1859, about 3,000,000 oysters, taken from different parts of the sea, were distributed in ten longitudinal beds in the above bay. The bottom was previously covered with old oyster shells and boughs of trees arranged like fascines. To these the young oysters attach themselves, and so fruitful are the results that one of the fascines was found at the end of six months to have no less than 20,000 young oysters on it. The report further states that 12,000 hectares may be brought into full bearing in three years at an annual expense not exceeding 10,000 francs."

M. Laviciare, Commissary of the Maritime Inscription, in his 1860 report to M. Coste, of the success of these operations in the Bay of St. Brioux, states that "a recent examination has fully and satisfactorily proved the advantageous results obtained on the five banks which have been laid down, and which have exceeded the most sanguine expectations. Three fascines, which were taken up indiscriminately from one of the banks formed in June, 1859, contained about 20,000 oysters each, of from one inch to two inches in diameter. The total expense for forming the above bank was 221f.; and if the 300 fascines laid down on it be multiplied by 20,000, 600,000 oysters will be obtained, which, if sold at 20f. a thousand, will produce 120,000f. If, however, the number of oysters on each fascine were to be reckoned at only 10,000, the sum of 60,000f. would be received, which, for an expenditure of only 221f. would give

a larger profit than any other known branch of industry."

But the breeding and fattening of the London oyster has long been a lucrative branch of trade, of which Cockaine may well be proud. It is carried on "contagious" to London, as Mrs. Malaprop would say—principally in Essex and Kent. The rivers Crouch, Blackwater, and Colne are the chief breeding places in the former, and the channel of the Swale and the Medway in the latter. These are contiguous to Milton; hence Dibdin's song, and hence also the corruption of "melting hoysters;" melting they are too. The corruption is classical, so let it stand.

Exclusive of oysters bred in Essex and Kent, vast numbers are brought from Jersey, Poole, and other places along the coast, and are fattened in beds. The export of oysters from Jersey alone is very considerable, having amounted on an average of the four years ending with 1832* to 208,032 bushels a year. The Jersey fishing then employed, during the season, about 1500 men, 1000 women and children, and 250 boats. Think of this, ye oyster-eaters! Think that ye are doing—such is the wise ordination of an overruling Providence—some good when you are swallowing your ante-prandial oyster, and are giving employment to some portion of those 3000 people who work for you at Jersey, besides helping to feed the cold-fingered fishmonger, who, with blue apron and skilful knife, tempts you to "Hanother dazzen, sir?"

* The exportation has by this time nearly doubled, but these are the latest statistics we can arrive at.

Of the quantity of oysters consumed in London we cannot give even an approximate guess. It must amount to millions of bushels. Fancy, if you can, also, that curiously courteous exchange which goes on every Christmas between our oyster-eating country cousins and our turkey and goose-loving Londoners. To the man

“Who hath been long in city pent,
 ’Tis very sweet to gaze upon the fair
 And open brow of heaven;—to breathe a prayer
 Full in the face of the blue firmament”—

sings John Keats. Oh, if he had been but an oyster-eater, that article from the “Quarterly,” savage and slaughterly, would not have killed him; but it is also very sweet to gaze upon a turkey, a leash of birds, a brace of pheasants, and, as Mrs. Tibbetts hath it, “a real country hare.” Such a present is promptly repaid by a fine cod packed in ice, and two barrels of oysters. How sweet are these when eaten at a country home, and opened by yourselves, the barrel being paraded on the table with its top knocked out, and with the whitest of napkins round it, as we shall presently have occasion to show. How sweet it is, too, to open some of the dear natives for your pretty cousin, and to see her open her sweet little mouth about as wide as Lesbia’s sparrow did for his lump of—not sugar, it was not then invented—but lump of honey! How sweet it is, after the young lady has swallowed her half dozen, to help yourself! The oyster never tastes sweeter than when thus operated on by yourself, so that you do not “job” the knife into your hand! True labour has a

dignity about it. The only time when I, who have seen most people, from Tom Thumb to the Benicia Boy, from Madame Doche to the Empress Eugenie, and from manly, sea-going Prince Alfred to the Staleybridge Infant and Jemmy Shaw's "Spider"—the only time, I say, that I have ever seen a nobleman look like a nobleman, was when a noble duke, a peer not only of England and Scotland, but of *la belle France* also, owned that he could do two things better than most people, and that was, open oysters and polish his own boots. I, like Othello, when he upbraided Iago for the last time, "looked down to his feet," but found that it was no fable.

So important is our illustrious bivalve as an article of trade, that it is protected by law. It is said that the only two things that George the Fourth ever did—the great Georgius, whom Mr. Thackeray envies and satirises—were to invent a shoe-buckle and an exquisite hair-dye. The brains of the black Brunswicker could do no more. But there is one act also—an Act of Parliament*—which was passed in his reign, for which he is to be thanked. The man who was at once the Lucullus and Apicius of his times must have had some hand in the framing of that Act.

* See page 25.

CHAPTER II.

ANCIENT HISTORY OF THE OYSTER.

The Ancients; Oysters a Greek and Roman Luxury; Sergius Orata and the Oyster-beds of Baia; Immense Consumption at Rome; Failure of the Circean and Lucrinian Oyster-beds under Domitian, and Introduction of Rutupians from Britain; Agricola, Constantine, and Helena; Athenian Oysters and Aristides.

HORACE, Martial, and Juvenal, Cicero and Seneca, Pliny, Ætius, and the old Greek doctor Oribasius, whom Julian the Apostate delighted to honour, and other men of taste amongst the ancients, have enlarged upon the various qualities of the oyster; and was it not to Sergius Orata that we owe our present oyster-beds; for he it was who introduced layers or stews for oysters at Baia, the Brighton of ancient Rome, as we have them at present. That was in the days when luxury was rampant, and when men of great wealth, like Licinius Crassus, the leviathan slave merchant, rose to the highest honours; for this dealer in human flesh in the boasted land of liberty, served the office of consul along with Pompey the Great, and on one occasion required no less than 10,000 tables to accommodate all his guests. How many barrels of oysters were eaten at that celebrated dinner, the "Ephemerides"—as Plutarch calls "The Times" and "Morning Post" of that day—have omitted to state; but as oysters then took the

place that turtle-soup now does at our great City feeds, imagination may busy itself if it likes with the calculation. All we know is, that oysters then fetched very long prices at Rome, as the author of the "Tabella Cibaria" has not failed to tell us; and then, as now, the high price of any luxury of the table was sure to make a liberal supply of it necessary, when a man like Crassus entertained half the city as his guests, to rivet his popularity.

But the Romans had a weakness for the "breedy creatures," as our dear old friend Christopher North calls them in his inimitable "Noctes." In the time of Nero, some sixty years later, the consumption of oysters in the "Imperial City" was nearly as great as it now is in the "World's Metropolis;" and there is a statement, which I recollect to have read somewhere, that during the reign of Domitian, the last of the twelve Cæsars, a greater number of millions of bushels were annually consumed at Rome than I should care to swear to. These oysters, however, were but Mediterranean produce—the small fry of Circe, and the smaller Lucrinians; and this unreasonable demand upon them quite exhausted the beds in that great fly-catcher's reign; and it was not till under the wise administration of Agricola in Britain, when the Romans got their far-famed Rutupians from the shores of Kent, from Richborough and the Reculvers—the *Rutupi Portus* of the "Itinerary," of which the latter, the *Regulbium*, near Whitstable, in the mouth of the Thames, was the northern boundary—that Juvenal praised them as he does; and he was right: for in the whole world there are no oysters like them; and of all

the "breedy creatures" that glide, or have ever glided down the throats of the human race, our "Natives" are probably the most delectable. Can we wonder, then, when Macrobius tells us that the Roman pontiffs in the fourth century never failed to have these Rutupians at table, particularly, feeling sure that Constantine the Great, and his mother, the pious Helena, must have carried their British tastes with them to Rome at that period.

The Greeks have not said much in praise of oysters; but then they knew nothing of Britain beyond its name, and looked upon it very much in the same light as we now regard the regions of the Esquimaux; and as to the little dabs of watery pulps found in the Mediterranean, what are they but oysters in name? Indeed, the best use the Athenians could make of them was to use their shells to ostracise any good citizen who, like Aristides, was too virtuous for a "Greek." However, on the plea that oysters are oysters, we presume—for it could not be on account of their flavour—"oysters," says the author of the "Tabella Cibaria," "were held in great esteem by the Athenians." No doubt when Constantine moved the seat of the Empire from Rome to Constantinople, he did not forget to have his Rutupians regularly forwarded; so, perhaps, after all it was our "Natives," which thus found their way into Greece, that they delighted in; and if so, the good taste of the Athenians need not be called into question; but, as in literature and the arts, in oyster-eating too, it deserves to be held up to commendation.

CHAPTER III.

MODERN HISTORY OF THE OYSTER.

Fall of the Rutupian Supremacy ; Louis IV. and William of Normandy ; Conquest of England, and Revival of Oyster-eating in England ; The Oyster under Legal Protection ; American Oysters.

WITH the fall of the Empire came also the fall of the Rutupian supremacy ; and even the Roman Britons, driven into Brittany and the mountains of Wales by their truculent Saxon persecutors, had to forego these luxuries of the table, unless, perhaps, Prince Arthur and his knights may now and then have opened a bushel when they were seated over their wine in that free and easy circle, which has become so celebrated as to have formed a literature of its own. From the fourth century, to which Macrobius brought us, to the reign of Louis IV. of France, the history of the oyster is a blank ; but that king revived the taste for our favourite, and during his captivity in Normandy brought it again into request with his conqueror, Duke William ; so, when the Normans invaded England under William the Conqueror—the descendant of that Duke William, little more than a century later—they were not long in finding out how much Kentish and Essex oysters were preferable to those of France.

Since then the Oyster has held its own against all

comers, as one of the most welcome accessories to the table of rich and poor, and has been protected in his rights and immunities by various Acts of Parliament. "In the month of May oysters cast their spawn," says an old writer in the "Transactions of the Royal Society," "which the dredgers call spat, and this spawn cleaves to stones, old oyster-shells, pieces of wood, and other substances at the bottom of the sea, which is called cultch. During that month, by the law of the Admiralty Court, the dredgers have liberty to take every kind of oyster, whatsoever be its size. When they have taken them they gently raise with a knife the small brood from the cultch, and then they throw the cultch in again, to preserve the ground for the future, unless they are so newly spat, that they cannot be safely severed from the cultch, in which case they are permitted to take the stone or shell, which the spat is upon, one shell having often twenty spats. After the month of May, it is felony to carry away the cultch, and punishable to take any other oysters except those of the size of a half-crown piece, or such as when the two shells are shut will admit of a shilling to rattle between them." These brood and other oysters are carried to creeks of the sea, and thrown into the channel, which are called their beds or layers, where they grow and fatten, and in two or three years oysters of the smallest brood reach the standard size.

The property in oyster beds is defined by the 7 & 8 George IV., c. 29, s. 36, which makes it larceny for any person to steal any oyster or oyster brood from any oyster bed belonging to another person, if such bed is

sufficiently marked out and known as such; and even the attempt to take either oysters or oyster brood from such an oyster bed, though none be actually disturbed, is a misdemeanor, punishable by fine or imprisonment, or both, though nothing is to prevent the fishing for floating fish within the limits of any oyster fishery.

The Admiralty Court also imposes great penalties upon those who do not destroy a fish, which they call Fivefingers (the crossfish, or common starfish of our coasts), because it is supposed that that fish gets into the oysters when they gape, and sucks them out. That it is injurious to oyster beds may be true; for its food, in part, consists of mollusks. It does not, however, walk into the oyster bodily, as the Admiralty Court suggests, but rather appears to overpower its prey by applying some poisonous secretion, and pouting out the lobes of the stomach, so as to convert them into a kind of proboscis, and thus suck the mollusks from their shells.

The reason of the penalty for destroying the cultch is that the ouse then will increase, and mussels and cockles will breed there and destroy the oysters, because they have no convenience for depositing their spat. Hence, mud and sea-weeds are extremely injurious to the "breedy creatures'" propagation and increase; for no less than starfish, cockles, and mussels, other enemies amongst shellfish and crustaceous animals, particularly crabs and scollops, eagerly devour the oyster, when they can capture it.

In America, where the quality of the native oyster, though little inferior to the larger species of Britain, is greatly over-rated, the legislature is now called upon to

make a similar provision for its protection against its greatest enemy, man. "It has been estimated," says a correspondent in No. 769 of the "Family Herald," "that the State of Virginia possesses an area of about 1,680,000 acres of oyster beds, containing about 784,000,000 bushels of oysters. It is also stated that the mother oyster spawns annually at least 3,000,000; yet, notwithstanding this enormous productive power, and the vast extent of oyster beds, there is danger of the oyster being exterminated unless measures are adopted to prevent fishermen from taking them at improper seasons of the year. It is therefore proposed to have either a flotilla of four steamboats employed to protect the oyster beds from piratical intruders, or to farm out the oyster beds to private contractors to do with them as they please."

CHAPTER IV.

THE OYSTER AT HOME :

Its Nature, Colour, and Structure ; Natural Food ; Perception of the changes of Light ; Uses of the Cilia ; Fecundity and Means of Propagation ; Age ; Fossil Oysters in Berkshire and in the Pacific ; Power of Locomotion.

THE Oyster belongs to those Mollusks which are headless, having their gills in the form of membranous plates, and are named *Lamellibranchiata*, from the Latin word *Lamella*, a plate ; or *Conchæ*, the Latin name for the whole family of oyster, scollop, cockle, mussel, and other well-known bivalves. Properly speaking, only six kinds are fit to take part in the gastromal treat, to say nothing of the sanitary advantages the family are good enough to provide for the world at large. These six peculiar and most agreeable aristocrats all belong to the family of the common oyster, *Ostrea edulis*, by far the most important tribe, and in fact, that in behalf of whose meritorious qualities I have more particularly taken up my pen.

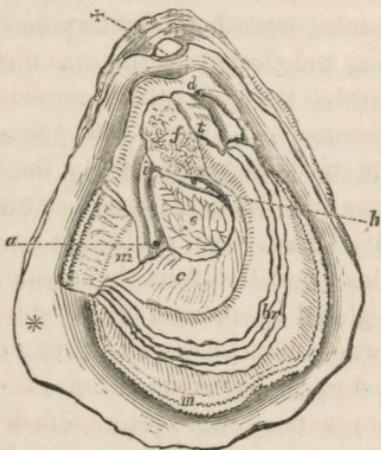
The oyster bears different names in accordance to the localities in which it is found, whether on rocky ground, mud, or sand, and has different colours in different places. In Spain, oysters are found of a red and russet colour ; in Illyria they are brown, but the fish is black, and in the Red Sea, of the colours of the rainbow. The green oyster, the Parisian delicacy, is brought from

Brittany; but the same flavour and colour can be produced by putting oysters into pits where the water is about three feet deep in the salt marshes, and where the sun has great power. In these they become green in three or four days; for these colours are derived from the elementary substance on which they feed; not, however, that it produces any peculiar difference as to flavour. I may, however, as well decide at once that the green oyster is, to my taste, the oyster *par excellence*, in which decision I shall doubtless be borne out by most *gourmets* whose knowledge extends to a choice of the good things of this life.

I know, in this, some of my friends north of the Tweed may differ, and, if still living, amongst them I should have had to include Professor Wilson, so long the very life and soul of oyster-suppers and whisky-toddy. But nobody can judge of the true flavour of an oyster without well *masticating* his delicious food; and, by his own showing, both he and the "Shepherd" bolted their "Pandores." These same "Pandores," by the way, are large fat oysters, much relished in modern Athens, which are said to owe their superior excellence to the brackish contents of the pans of the adjacent salt-works of Prestonpans flowing out upon the beds. Taken away young and transferred to the Ostend beds, these Pandores furnish the very best oysters to be met with on the Continent, surpassing even the far-famed ones of Flensburg, in Holstein. Had "Christopher North" tickled the fish first to death with his incisors before he swallowed it, I might have submitted my judgment to his; but how can a man who bolted

his food be quoted as an authority in matters of taste? At best, his must have been but an after-taste, a mere bilious reminder of what the repast had been, in which the whisky played as prominent a part as the "breedy creatures" themselves.

But let us return. The lower shell (*) of the oyster is concave, the upper flat. These shells are opened and closed by the medium of a strong muscle acting upon



a hinge (+), far more complete in its structure than ever locksmith could produce, even at the forthcoming Exhibition of all Nations.

On the outside of the shell, when placed in a dark place, we may often observe a shining matter of blueish light, like a flame of brimstone, which sticks to the fingers when touched, and continues shining and giving light for a considerable time, though without any sensible heat. This light is produced by three varieties of

minute animalcules, most interesting when examined under the microscope.

The oyster possesses an organ of respiration similar to that of a fish—branchiæ or gills, in fact (*br*), which are fringed by a mantle or beard divided into two lobes (*m*), filled up by small membranous fibres which terminate in the mouth (*b*), in the form of rays, serving the animal also with power to catch and eat. Unlike other shelled mussels the oyster has no feet; thus it is unable to make any other voluntary movement, save that of opening and closing its shell, as already named, in order to receive its food, which consists principally of small microscopical spores and young shoots of marine plants, made soft and thin by the action of the waves; whence arise the green beards or mantles. With some difficulty I have been enabled to separate a small portion of this vegetation from the mantle of an oyster, and having placed it under a strong microscope, discovered sea weed, of precisely the same species as that in which oysters are packed. They also feed on an infusion of sea worms called oyster animalcules. These are very accurately described in the "Journal des Savans," by M. Auzout. Some are iridescent, but others are not, and good specimens of all may be secured immediately the oyster has been taken from the sea.

By means of the beard or mantle described (*m*), the oyster secures his food, bringing it gradually, by means of little hooks bent inwards, to its mouth (*b*), wherein it is crushed and slowly consumed.

The stomach (*i*) is situated near the mouth, and all the organs are very simple. The mantle (*m* and *m'*)

above-named replaces the lungs. The liver (*f*) is small; the gall, comparatively speaking, large; the larger blood vessels little rarefied. The heart (*h*) consists of two cameras at a tolerable distance from one another, resembling small round bladders. The pulse beats rather slowly (caused by, perhaps, the want of food and sea water). From the stomach the rectum (*a*) leads directly to the anus. How digestion is effected in this short and simple way, I can scarce venture to assert. But it is a fact well known, that, after the spawning season, the oyster becomes thin, but a very short time enables it to recover its fat and succulence.

On examining the oyster the mantle (*m*), divided into two lobes (*m* and *m'*), the edges of which are fringed, will be perceived filling the greater part of the shell; also four membranous leaves crossed with stripes, which at their hinder extremities have as many capillary tubes. These leaves, or veins, unequally divided around the edges of the body perform the functions of the lungs, and separate from the water the necessary air for the maintenance of the animal.

The mouth (*b*) is a kind of trunk, or long aperture surrounded by four lips nearly resembling those of a gill, but far shorter.

Behind the muscles is to be seen a large fleshy white and cylindrical substance moving on a central muscle, and containing the stomach and intestines (*i*). This part resembles the trunk of other conchæ, but it has no power of opening or contracting. The canal of the intestines is situated on the top of the muscle (*a*).

The oyster has circular vessels, on the bottom of which

are to be seen deep muscular cavities, occupying the place of the heart (*h*), and sending their moisture to the small skin through which they come in contact with the water or the air.

In his "Outline of the Animal Kingdom," Professor Rymer Jones most happily describes all these peculiarities. "Wonderful indeed is the elaborate mechanism," are his words, "employed to effect the double purpose of renewing the respired fluid and feeding the helpless inhabitants of these shells! Every filament of the branchial fringe, examined under a powerful microscope, is found to be covered with countless cilia in constant vibration, causing, by their united efforts, powerful and rapid currents, which, sweeping over the surface of the gills, hurry towards the mouth whatever floating animalcules, or nutritious particles, may be brought within the limits of their action, and thus bring streams of nutritive molecules to the very aperture through which they are conveyed to the stomach, the lips and labial fringes acting as sentinels to admit or refuse entrance, as the matter may be of a wholesome or pernicious character."

Nature, too, has given the oyster a sensitive perception of the changes of light as the means of its protection from the many enemies it has to contend with; for if the shadow of an approaching boat is thrown forward so as to cover it, it closes the valves of its shell before any undulation of the water can have reached it. This sensitiveness is easily studied in the marine vivary, where the oyster, with its beautiful cilia, more beautiful by far than the richest lace of a bride's wedding dress, is always an object of great interest.

The oyster is an hermaphrodite animal, and hence its propagation is effected by self-produced eggs, which it bears within in the form of a greenish milky juice which it casts as spat in May, and which, as has already been stated, in this country is protected by wise and prudent acts of the Legislature. "The liquor in the lower shell of the oyster," says a writer in No. 587 of the "Family Herald," "if viewed through a microscope, will be found to contain multitudes of small oysters, covered with shells and swimming nimbly about—120 of which extend about an inch! Besides these young oysters, the liquor contains a variety of animalcules." Indeed, with the aid of a microscope one million of young have been discovered in a single oyster. Guarded by their two tender shells, these swim freely in the sea when ejected by the parent oyster, until, by means of a glutinous substance, they fix themselves so fast to some object that they can be separated only by force. These young are very soon able to produce others, many say at four months after their birth. When the oyster attains the size of a crown the shell is still very tender and thin; it is only after the second, third, or fourth year that it becomes fit for human food.

If we cannot answer the Fool's question in Lear, and "tell how an oyster makes his shell," we can, nevertheless, tell by his shell what is his age.

"A London oysterman," says a correspondent of No. 623 of the "Family Herald," "can tell the ages of his flock to a nicety. The age of an oyster is not to be found out by looking into its mouth. It bears its years upon its back. Everybody who

has handled an oyster-shell must have observed that it seemed as if composed of successive layers or plates overlapping each other. These are technically termed 'shoots,' and each of them marks a year's growth; so that, by counting them, we can determine at a glance the year when the creature came into the world. Up to the time of its maturity, the shoots are regular and successive; but after that time they become irregular, and are piled one over the other, so that the shell becomes more and more thickened and bulky. Judging from the great thickness to which some oyster-shells have attained, this mollusk is capable, if left to its natural changes unmolested, of attaining a great age." Indeed, fossil oysters have been seen, of which each shell was nine inches thick, whence they may be concluded to have been more than 100 years old.

For the most part the offspring remains near the mother, which accounts for the large oyster banks or beds which are found in almost all the seas of the temperate and torrid zones, and which in some places have been known to attain such magnitude as to cause ships to be wrecked upon them. The lower stratum is necessarily lifeless, being pressed upon by the upper one, so that the oysters beneath are unable to open themselves, and are consequently deprived of food.

The immense propagation of the oyster may be understood from the fossil oyster bed near Reading, in Berkshire. These fossils have the entire shape, figure, and are of the same substance as our recent oyster-shells, and yet must have lain there from time immemorial. This bed occupies about six acres, forming

a stratum of about two feet in thickness. But the largest fossil oyster banks are those raised by earthquakes along the western shores of South America, which measure from sixty to eighty feet in depth, are often forty miles in length, and in many places stretch above two miles into the interior.

The Abbé Dicquemare, fond of trying experiments in the spread of gastronomy, even to the stewing a mess of *Gemmaceæ*, the *Gems* of our water-vivaries, till they had something of the flavour of oysters, asserts that, when in a state of liberty, oysters can move from one place to another by suddenly admitting sea water into the shell, which they are able to open and shut with extraordinary power and rapidity, whereby they produce a strange sound; and this observation has been confirmed by other naturalists, and is recorded as an ascertained fact in several books of natural science. In like manner they defend themselves against smaller animals, especially against the spider crab, which constantly tries to penetrate into their half open shells. Much natural instinct or foresight is also attributed to the oyster; in proof of which I may name that, when in a position which is exposed to the variations of the tide, oysters seem to be aware that they remain for some hours without water, and consequently provide it within their shells.

This makes such oysters far more fit to be conveyed to a distance, than those taken nearer to the shore, which evacuate the water, thus exposing themselves to the heat of the sun, the cold, or an attack from their enemies; and this, too, is the reason why Colchester or Pyfleet oysters, packed at the beds, are in such request.

CHAPTER V.

THE OYSTER IN ITS NEW SETTLEMENT.

Dredging for Oysters; Oyster-beds and their formation; Sergius Orata; Pliny the Elder; Baia and the Lucrine Sea; Roman Epicurism and Gluttony; Martial and Horace, Cicero and Seneca; Masticate Oysters, and do not bolt them whole; Mediterranean and Atlantic Oysters; Agricola and the Rutupians; Apicius Cœlius, Trajan, Pliny, and the Vivarium.

THE Oyster does not leave his home like the duckling, upon the call of "come here and be killed." If he is wanted, like Mrs. Glasse's hare, we must "first catch him." This is done by dredging, and this dredging for oysters is performed by means of rakes and scrapers, on which is fastened a bag of sail-cloth, leather, or net-work. These are lowered into the sea by means of ropes and chains, and are dragged along its bottom by boats in full sail, or by rowing-boats. When the net or scraper is drawn to the surface, the oysters are immediately separated from all else which may be swept up. These oysters are then stowed away and sent up to market in due course. But it is not of these that are formed the new settlements or oyster-beds, which I am about to describe.

These oyster-beds are cavities or reservoirs which communicate with the sea by means of canals, and are placed in such manner that the level beds remain dry when

the tide is high. These beds are made with sand-stones or other hewn stones; and the water is kept in, or let out at low tide by means of locks, or traps, as may be most readily effected.

At some periods, however, the water is kept in for many days, or even weeks together. In the latter case the oyster becomes, for the most part, very tender, and green and fat, because the stagnant water promotes the germination of those microscopical spores of marine plants, which always abound in natural sea-water, and upon which it delights to feed. These reservoirs, therefore, are not only the means of preserving them for sale, but of purifying them from the muddy odour which they have imbibed at sea, and which indicates them to be hard and devoid of that luscious and somewhat gastronomic quality so much prized by the world at large.

The bottom and sides of these caves or reservoirs are paved with stones and thick layers of sand, to keep them free from all mud, which is not only very injurious to the animal, but sure to harbour its enemies; and great care is also observed not to admit too great a flow of water at one time, as that might drive particles of sand into the shells. When the reservoir is properly prepared, the oysters are placed in their natural position—the flat side being upwards, in a sloping or horizontal direction. The more care that is taken in keeping their beds clean and free from mud, by washing the sides of the reservoirs, pouring water over the oysters, especially those which are dry, and removing the dead ones, which can be recognised by their shells being open, the better; for the more valuable will they be as human food, both as

to profit and condition, and the more appreciated by the gastronomic million, who hail the oyster season as does a sportsman the advent of grouse and partridges, hares and pheasants.

The oysters, which are thus preserved, cleaned, nursed, and fattened are taken from their beds at the low tide when the water is out.

There are doubts, various and conflicting, as to whether oysters contained in reservoirs, where the water is changed each successive tide, are not on that account preferable to those which exist in the same water for two weeks at a time. I give a decided preference to the latter, though the water must be kept very clean by constant care and attention to the removal of the dead, the decomposition of which would otherwise, but for the frequent change of water, seriously affect the health of the whole settlement, by an accumulation of sulphuretted hydrogen, with a smell like that emitted by the Thames and other drainage rivers in the dog-days. These oysters slip down the human throat divine with a tenderness and sublime relish which no words can describe.

Let me pass over, for the nonce, the mode of packing and sending them to the interior. Thanks to the railways, the gastronomical delight of oyster eating is now secured to many who for years scarcely knew what an oyster meant in its entire freshness and best qualities.

Sergius Orata, as Pliny the Elder tells us in the eighty-ninth book of his invaluable Natural History, and, as we have already stated, first conceived the idea of planting oysters in beds. This epicure had large

reservoirs made at Baia, where he gathered thousands of these mollusks. Not far from these oyster-beds rose a palace in which the wealthy Roman used to assemble his choicest friends and feast with them the whole day and night. Oysters occupied the place of honour on the table of Sergius Orata; at every feast thousands of them were consumed. Satiated, but not yet satisfied, these gourmets were in the habit of adjourning into an adjoining room, where they relieved the stomach of its load by artificial means, and then returned to indulge again their appetite with a fresh supply of oysters.

Strange as it may appear to us in the nineteenth century, this custom was universal amongst the wealthy of Imperial Rome, Cæsar himself often indulging in it, when the repast was to his taste; and ladies, the cream of the cream of that luxurious period, carried about with them peacocks' feathers and other dainty throat ticklers for the purpose, when they anticipated a more luxurious feed than usual.

Who amongst us cares to eat white-bait in the crowded city? When the mood seizes us, do not we take boat and proceed up or down the river, as the whim dictates? The old Roman had no white-bait; and the oyster to him was therefore doubly welcome. To him the journey to his marine villa, by water or land, as with us, added but a zest to the anticipated treat. In the Bay of Naples is a smaller bay close to its most north-western point, bounded on the west by the pretty town of Baia and its hot wells, and on the north-east by the no less charming town of Pozzuoli. These little bays on the Italian coasts are dignified by

the name of seas by the writers of classical antiquity, and round the headland of Baia, to the north, in the open Mediterranean—the Tyrrhenian Sea—just such another bay, the present Lago di Fusaro, was called the Lucrine Sea, with its far-famed oyster-beds, easy of access from Baia and Pozzuoli, both situated in a charming country. Here, close to the Lucrine, under a clear sky, surrounded by a delightful atmosphere, were situated the country houses of the more wealthy Romans, where, far away from business and the noise and turmoil of the forum, these accomplished disciples of Epicurus, without fear or care, used to give themselves up to the delights of the table. Here they tasted the little-shelled oysters which Martial liked so much, and which, but a few hours previously to being served up, had been gathered on the sea-shore.

Gastronomic annals mention the names of some of these dainty persons who daily swallowed several hundreds of oysters; but Vitellius in this respect beat them all. That emperor, it is said, ate oysters four times a day, and at each meal swallowed neither more nor less than 1200 of them. Seneca himself, who so admirably praises the charms of poverty, yet left prodigious wealth behind him; Seneca the wise and moderate, ate several hundreds of them every week.

“Oyster, so dear to people of taste!” he exclaims; “thou dost but excite instead of satisfying the appetite, never causing indisposition, not even when eaten to excess; for thou art easy of digestion, and the stomach yields thee back with facility.” Cicero did not hesitate to confess that he had a special predilection for oysters;

but he adds, that he could renounce them without any difficulty; which, by the way, he might as well have told to the Marines, if they were in existence in his day, for all the credence this remark of his has gained from posterity.

We prefer Horace, who in every passage honestly makes known his love for oysters, and eats them himself with as much gusto as he extols them to others. Carefully, too, does he note down from whom he procured them, and the name of the famous gourmet who at the first bite was able to tell whether an oyster came from Circe or the Lucrine Sea, or from any part of Natolia. The ancients, our teachers in all arts, but especially in æsthetics, did not bolt the oyster, but masticated it. With true Epicurean tact, they always extracted the full enjoyment out of the good things set before them. Not so we; most of us now bolt them; but this is a mistake, for the oyster has a much finer flavour, and is far more nourishing, when well masticated.

“Those who wish to enjoy this delicious restorative in its utmost perfection,” says Dr. Kitchener, “must *eat* it the moment it is opened, with its own gravy in the under shell; if not *eaten* absolutely alive, its flavour and spirit are lost. The true lover of an oyster will have some regard for the feelings of his little favourite, and contrive to detach the fish from the shell so dexterously that the oyster is hardly conscious he has been ejected from his lodging till he *feels the teeth* of the piscivorous gourmet tickling him to death.”

The Romans needed not even the use of their teeth to tell from whence the oyster came; a mere look sufficed

to distinguish it, as may be seen in the following lines ascribed to Lucilius.

“When I but see the oyster’s shell,
I look and recognize the river, marsh or mud,
Where it was raised.”

Nor was this so very difficult a matter, for the shell, no less than the animal itself, as has already been shown, exhibits the nature of the food upon which the oyster has fed.

In Italy and Gaul it was for a long time a matter of dispute, which country produced the best oysters. At that time the Lucrine Sea maintained the superiority; but Pliny preferred those from Circe. “According to my opinion,” he says, “the most delicious and most tender oysters are those from Circe.”

At last, however, the preference was given to those of Britain, which under the wise administration of Julius Agricola had conformed to the manners and customs of her conquerors, and there no longer was need of dispute as to whether the Mediterranean oysters of Italy or Gaul should have the precedence. The little watery pulpy dabs, which had hitherto delighted the conquerors of the world, were cast aside in disgust. They had found a real oyster at last, and the insignificant and flavourless bivalves of the coasts of Italy ceased to be in demand. From that time, on the shores of the Atlantic, thousands of slaves were employed in procuring the oysters, which in Rome were paid for by their weight in gold. The expenses were so great that the censors felt themselves obliged to interfere. Not content with getting their oysters from distant shores, they had means

by which to preserve them for some time in hot weather ; for which purpose, as we see in the Pompeian model-house at the Crystal Palace, their domiciles were furnished with a receptacle for water ; for with those famous epicures the water-vivary was an essential necessary for the preservation of living fish, and all that was necessary was to substitute sea-water for fresh. Probably by some such means, Apicius Cœlius, who must not be confounded with the writer of a book of cookery which bears his name, sent Trajan, when that emperor was in the country of the Parthians, oysters, which when received were as fresh as they ever could be eaten when just taken from their beds ; and Pliny even believed that the journey had proved beneficial to their flavour.

CHAPTER VI.

THE OYSTER ON ITS TRAVELS.

The Isle of Sheppey, the Medway, and Whitstable; Milton, Queenborough, Rochester, and Faversham Oysters; Colchester and Essex Beds; Edinburgh Pandores and Aberdours; Dublin Carlingfords and Powdoodies; Poole and its Oyster-bank; Cornish Oysters and the Helford Beds; Poor Tyacke, and How he was Done; Dredgers and their Boats; Auld Reekie's Civic Ceremonials; Song of the Oyster; its Voyage to Market, and Journey by Coach and Rail.

WHO that has travelled by water from London Bridge to Herne Bay—and who among us who live within the sound of Bow bells has not?—should the trip have been made in the beginning of August, but must have noticed, after having passed the Isle of Sheppey, a little fishing-town to his right, in East Swale Bay, raising its head out of the river like a joyous child dressed in its gayest attire, anticipating a long-looked-for holiday? It is the 4th of August, and its holiday is at hand, for to-morrow the oyster season begins; and the town is Whitstable, in Kent, standing out gaily with its bright flags and pennons in beautiful relief from the low marshy soil by which it is surrounded. Then, too, the dredgers, in their picturesque costume, add greatly to the gay appearance of the place, whilst some seventy or eighty vessels lying

in the offing bespeak the importance of the oyster traffic between it and the Great Metropolis. What the Lucrine was to the citizen of Rome is the estuary of the Medway with the Swale to the citizen of London. The "Natives" obtained at Milton are in the highest repute, and consumed in every part of England; nor are the Faversham, Queenborough, and Rochester denizens less so; nor, indeed, any of the "breedy creatures" which are raised in the other beds of the Swale or the Medway.

The trade in oysters, as we have seen, has been an object of consideration in England for many ages, and now ranks in importance with the herring, pilchard, and other fisheries. The excellence of our oysters made the formation of artificial beds an object of attention soon after the Roman conquest; and the Kentish and Essex beds show a pedigree in consequence much older than that of the noble descendant of any Norman adventurer who came over with the Conqueror, claiming, on this head alone, precedence for our "Natives" amongst all the oysters of the known world. But Britain is the boasted land of liberty, and the "Natives" of one part of her coast boldly assert their equality with the "Natives" of any other. If London delights in Milton and Colchester oysters, Edinburgh has her "whispered Pandores" and Aberdours, and Dublin her Carlingfords* and "Powldoodies of Burran;" whilst all

* The Carlingford oyster is the best in Ireland; a black-bearded fellow, delicate and of fine flavour, to be eaten in Dublin alternately with the Redbank oyster, at a magnificent establishment in Sackville Street, and to be washed down with

round our shores each locality boasts of its own "Natives" as the best oysters in the land. Poole points proudly to her oyster-bank, and tells miraculous tales of her fishery, and of the number of oysters she sends to the London market, besides those which are pickled at sea for the export trade to lands where a fresh oyster is still a luxury unknown. The Poole fishermen who open oysters in their boats for pickling are compelled, by an Act of the Legislature, to throw the shells on the strand, and these, in the course of time, have formed a strong barrier against the waves of the sea at the flow of the tide, having the appearance of an island at high-water; and, simple as it is, such is the sole construction of this celebrated breakwater.

I cannot be expected to take the reader on a voyage of discovery all round the coast, nor to the Channel Islands, to taste the oysters which Providence has spread out for our enjoyment with such a lavish hand. But there is one little spot on the shores of Cornwall which I cannot pass over, because from it came one of the colonies on the banks of the Thames, from which the Whitstable boats still draw their annual supply. Into Mount's Bay the Helford River, upon which stands the little town of Helstone, empties itself, opposite Mount St. Michael's, into the sea, and in the estuary of that little river, a person of the name of Tyacke, within the memory of the "oldest

alternate draughts of brown stout. The Hibernian will tell you that even our Natives are inferior to these. He is right in his patriotism, but wrong in his assertion. How often do our prejudices trip up our judgment!

inhabitant," rented certain oyster-beds, famous amongst Cornish gourmets for a breed of oysters, which, it is said, the Phœnicians, "a long time ago," had discovered to be infinitely preferable to the watery things they got at home. These Helford oysters are regularly brought to London; but when Tyacke rented the beds they were unknown to the good citizens who frequented the oyster taverns, of which the Cock in Fleet Street is but a last lingering type. Determined to make his venture, Tyacke loaded a fishing smack with the best produce of his beds, and coasted along the southern shores, till passing round the Isle of Thanet he found himself in the Mouth of the Thames. Little did the elated oyster dredger think that that Mouth would swallow up the whole of his cargo; but so it came to pass. It had long been evident to those on board that oysters that travel, no less than men, must have rations allowed on the voyage, if they are to do credit to the land of their birth. Now the voyage had been long and tedious, and the oysters had not been fed, so Tyacke got into his boat, and obtained an interview with the owner of the spot at which it touched land. He asked permission to lay down his oysters, and feed them. This was granted, and after a few days the spores of *ulva latissima* and *enteromorpha*, and of the host of delicate fibrous plants which there abound, and all of which are the oyster's great delight, made the whole green and fat, and in the finest condition for reshipment. Four days, it is said, will suffice to make a lean oyster, on such a diet, both green and plump; and Tyacke, joyful at the improvement which he daily witnessed, let his stock feed on for a

week. It was towards evening that he bethought himself, as the tide was out, that if he meant to reach Billingsgate by the next morning, it would be wise to reship his oysters before turning in for the night. The boat was lowered; but, as he attempted to land, he was warned off by the owner of the soil, who stood there with several fierce looking fellows, armed with cutlasses and fowling-pieces, evidently anticipating the Cornishman's intention, and determined to frustrate it at all hazards.

"What do you want here?" he asked of Tyacke.

"The oysters I put down to feed," was the reply. "They were placed there by your permission, and now I am anxious to reship them, to be in time for to-morrow's market."

"True," replied the Kentishman, "I gave you leave to lay down the oysters and feed them, but not a word was said about reshipping them. Where they are, there they stay; and if you persist in trespassing, I shall know what to do."

Poor Tyacke found himself much in the predicament of many a flat who has been picked up by a sharp. A century ago law was not justice, nor justice law. Perhaps it may not even be so now; and the story of the lawyer who ate the oyster in dispute, and gave each of the disputants a shell, may hold as good in our day as it did in that when the author of the "Beggars' Opera" put it into verse.

The demand for oysters, wherever it exists along our coasts, creates a profitable source of employment to a class of men who necessarily become experienced sea-

men; and dredging for oysters is carried on in fleets, as the beds mostly lie within a comparatively small space. The boats, which are about fifteen feet long, usually carry a man and a boy, or two men. The dredge is about eighteen pounds weight, and is required to be heavier on a hard than on a soft bottom, and each boat is usually provided with two dredges.

In former days the commencement of the dredging season was held sufficiently important to entitle it to a civic ceremonial, at least such was the wont of the municipal authorities of "Auld Reekie," who also paid a particular regard both as to the supply and the price of the "breedy creatures" furnished to the good citizens of Edinburgh. The "Feast of Shells" was ushered in by the municipality of the ancient city making, for provosts and bailiffs, a somewhat perilous voyage to the oyster-beds in the Frith of Forth; and though the solemnity of wedding the Frith formed no part of the chief magistrate's office, as wedding the Adriatic with a gold ring did that of the Doge of Venice, the welkin was made to ring, as three cheers from all present uprose and announced the lifting of the first dredge upon the deck of the civic barge.

There is something poetical and pretty in the idea, which once prevailed, that the oyster was a lover of music, and as the fishermen trolled their dredging nets they sang,

"To charm the spirits of the deep."

The old ballad in use is still found in the mouth of

many a hardy seaman as he pursues his toil to the melodious words—

“The herring loves the merry moonlight,
The mackerel loves the wind,
But the oyster loves the dredger’s song,
For he comes of a gentle kind.”

Raised out of his native waters, the oyster makes the voyage to the first station in his destined travels in the company of those to whom long and kindred ties have bound him, on board the smack upon the deck of which they were jointly landed from the deep; and during the whole voyage, if it prove a long one, he is attentively supplied with refreshing water, so that when the smack lays alongside the wharf at which he is to part company with his captors, he is still as lively as when they first took him as a passenger on board.

Arrived in port, the oyster first truly becomes sensible of the miseries of slavery. Shovelled into sacks, or cast anyhow into carts and handbarrows, he may consider himself fortunate if a kindly hand but extends to him, in his great necessity, a drink of water impregnated with salt, instead of his own delicious beverage from the sea. Yet this is a cruelty which should be avoided wherever sea-water can be obtained, because it is neither the salt nor the water which sustains the oyster’s life, but the spores of vegetation which abound in the sea, and by mixing salt with fresh water we destroy even the life of the incipient fresh-water plants which the latter contains. It is as great a mockery as when Grumio proposes to give the famished Katherine the mustard without the brawn, and need no longer exist if oyster

dealers, who cannot obtain sea-water, would provide themselves with the prepared salts for the instantaneous production of artificial sea-water, the recipe for the preparation of which is thus given in No. 735 of the "Family Herald:"—

"For ten gallons it requires, sulphate of magnesia, $7\frac{1}{2}$ ounces; sulphate of lime, $2\frac{3}{4}$ ounces; chloride of sodium, $43\frac{1}{4}$ ounces; chloride of magnesia, 6 ounces; chloride of potassium, $1\frac{1}{4}$ ounce; bromide of magnesium, 21 grains; carbonate of lime, 21 grains."

This should be allowed to stand exposed to the air in a strong sunlight for a fortnight before it is used, during which time a few growing plants of *enteromorpha*, or *ulva*, should be introduced to throw off spores. These plants cost about one shilling each in London. The water then, when under the microscope, will be found to contain a confervoid vegetable growth, which forms as nourishing a food for the oyster as the spores of sea-weed in its ocean bed. Oysters laid down in a large trough and covered with this water will continue to live and thrive for months; and it was to some such method as this that the Romans were indebted for the preservation of their oysters in inland stews. On no account should oatmeal, flour, or any such *dead* stuff, be added, which only serves to make the water foul and the oyster sick.

When oysters are to travel by coach or rail, they are usually dispatched in barrels. Where the barrels are packed at the beds, as the Colchester or "Pyfleet barrelled oysters" are, they should not be disturbed till wanted for the table, as they will keep good as they are for a week or ten days; for being carefully packed so as

not to spill the water each carries in a reservoir of Nature's providing, they need no other viaticum for the journey.

The moment an oyster in the barrel opens its mouth it dies, because there is nothing in the barrel to sustain its life. It is therefore as well, on the receipt of the little cask, to open it at once by removing the top and the first hoop, and then to place the top on the uppermost layer of oysters, keeping it in position by the addition of some heavy weight, which causes the staves to spread and stand erect; and as the layers of oysters are required for the table, it is only necessary each time to replace the top and the weight to a similar position to keep the remainder fresh for a few days. But the true lover of an oyster will have some regard for his little favourite. Sea-water may be had in London and other large towns for sixpence per gallon, and when that cannot be procured the pound packet of salts, according to the recipe we have given, will not cost more than eighteen-pence at any chemist's, and that quantity will produce three gallons of artificial sea-water. Thus provided, unpack the barrel, and spread out the oysters in a large flat earthenware dish, just covering them with water, and you may keep them for many weeks as fresh as when they first left their beds.

CHAPTER VII.

THE OYSTER AT ITS JOURNEY'S END.

Oyster Stalls ; How to Open the Oyster ; an Oyster Supper ; Beer, Wines, and Spirits ; Roasted, Fried, Stewed, and Scoloped Oysters ; Oyster Soup, and Oyster Sauce ; Broiled Oysters ; Oyster Pie ; Oyster Toast ; Oyster Patties ; Oyster Powder ; Pickled Oysters ; Oyster Loaves ; Oyster Omelet ; Cabbage, Larks, and Oysters ; and Frogs and Oysters.

“If where Fleet Ditch with muddy current flows
 You chance to roam, where oyster-tubs in rows
 Are ranged beside the posts, there stay thy haste,
 And with the savoury fish indulge thy taste.”—GAY.

I AM writing for the Million, and the least the Million can do in return is every one to buy a copy of my book, and bid everybody to recommend everybody to do the same. The Fleet Ditch, which was once in the centre of the old Fleet Market, has disappeared since Gay wrote the lines I have just quoted, and now forms the great sewer of Farringdon Street ; but with the Ditch have not disappeared the oyster-stalls ; they have only changed their locality, and, like the Wandering Jew, have turned up in the most out-of-the-way places, where nobody would expect to find them. I know what stall-oysters are ; for when I was a school-boy many and oft is the time I spent my pennies, on the sly, at a stall behind the old cathedral that just abutted the ancient Market Cross. The maiden that opened them

had clean white hands—for, boy as I was, I could not have endured a baronet's hand to open oysters for me; for—

“The damsel's knife the gaping shell commands,
While the salt liquor streams between her hands.”

Never have I eaten finer oysters than those, fresh almost within a few hours from the placid Solent, upon which now the palace of Osborne looks down, and calls forth the heartfelt prayer of “God bless the Queen,” as we pass beneath the grass-covered slopes, reminding every Wykehamist of the founder's motto, “Manners maketh Men;” for Her Majesty is the tenant of Wykeham's College, and his arms and motto are carved upon the gates of the Queen's royal residence of Osborne.

Yes, “Manners maketh Men” no less than *Honores mutant Mores*, as the punster told the great Sir Thomas More, when he stood so high in favour with Henry VIII., and was just appointed Treasurer of the Exchequer. It is not riches that make man, any more than they need change him; and if there is any good gift of Providence more than another which teaches equality, it will not be far from the mark to say it is the Oyster. You cannot eat the oyster in greater perfection than at a street-stall, because, as the capital of the owner is small, so, too, is the stock; and, to be sure of a rapid sale, it must also be well and carefully selected, and therefore does not need the announcement we read in many a by-way one passes along, where “the tale of a tub” would seem to contradict it: “Oysters fresh every

day." The poor man has no need to bid his cook, like his wealthy neighbour, buy real sea-water, or salts for the preparation of artificial sea-water, for the preservation of his oysters. There are thousands of hands outstretched to receive his nimble penny, and to give him in return oysters as fine as any which can grace the table of the wealthiest in the land. To me it is a treat to stand by and see how rapidly oyster after oyster disappears down the capacious throat of some stalwart son of toil, and to think that my favourite health-giving mollusk, in every one that is swallowed, is adding strength and muscle to those upon whom we so greatly depend for the nation's wealth and prosperity.

People generally, however, are somewhat indifferent about the manner of opening oysters, and the time of eating them after they are opened; yet nothing deserves more consideration at the hands of your true oyster-eater. The oyster should be eaten the moment it is opened, if eaten raw, with its own liquor in the under shell, as we have already stated on the very highest of all gastronomical authorities. It is well worth a little practice to learn to open the oyster oneself, for a bungling operator injures our little favourite, and baulks the expectant appetite by his unsightly incisions. I learnt the art years ago in one of the Midland counties, where Christmas-eve would scarce be Christmas-eve, without an oyster supper. Let me sketch the scene. In the centre of the table, covered with a clean white cloth up to the top hoop, stands the barrel of oysters, a kindly remembrance from a friend, and the more kind because oysters are not found in fresh-water streams. Each gentleman at

table finds an oyster-knife and a clean coarse towel by the side of his plate, and he is expected to open oysters for himself and the lady seated by his side, unless she is wise enough to open them for herself. By the side of every plate is the *panis ostrearius*, the oyster-loaf made and baked purposely for the occasion, and all down the centre of the table, interspersed with vases of bright holly and evergreens, are plates filled with pats of butter, or lemons cut in half, and as many vinegar and pepper castors as the establishment can furnish. As the attendance of servants at such gatherings is usually dispensed with, bottled Bass or Guinness, or any equally unsophisticated pale ale or porter, is liberally provided; and where the means allow, light continental wines, such as Chablis, Sauterne, Mousseux, Marsault or Medoc, still Champagne, Moselle, or any light Rhenish wine, and failing any of these, Madeira or Sherry, are placed upon the table. In this list is contained the names of such wines only as are best suited to enhance the taste of the oyster, and to assist digestion. Of spirits, only good English gin, genuiue Schiedam, or Irish or Scotch whisky, are admissible, as rum and brandy, taken upon oysters, will almost always be sure to make them indigestible; and liqueurs are quite out of place.

At some of these oyster suppers, oysters roasted in the shell are brought in "hot and hot," and dishes of fried, stewed, and scolloped oysters follow each other in quick succession, and even oyster patties are sometimes introduced; but I hold up both hands against an American innovation which is creeping in, and introducing crabs

and lobsters, and mixed pickles, and other foreigners into the *carte* on such an occasion.

The mention of these various dishes of dressed oysters, reminds me of my promise at starting, to give some directions as to the proper mode of cooking them. So to begin:—

1. *The Fried Oyster*.—It is the most common one, and is fried in its own shell; but as it frequently takes the taste of lime when just fried, it is better to make use of another shell, or a porcelain one. The beard is taken off, the oyster loosened from its shell, and with the liquor it still contains is put into the vessel prepared for it, with some good butter, some Parmesan cheese, and pepper, and thus it is put into the oven, or on the gridiron, and when it has turned a little brown some lemon-juice is poured on it, after which it may be served up. Having no Parmesan, good dry Cheshire, or even bread crumbs, are desirable. The largest and finest oysters should be chosen for this purpose; and many persons fry oysters by simply allowing them to simmer in their own shells for a couple of minutes, when they take them out and lay them on a cloth to drain, beard them, and then flour them, put them into boiling fat, and fry them to a delicate brown.

2. *The Oyster roasted in its own shell*.—Open the oyster carefully, so as not to lose any of its own liquor, add a little butter and pepper, according to taste, place it upon a gridiron over a fierce clear fire, and serve up “hot and hot” in quick succession. Bachelors may manage to dress oysters in this way by placing them between the bars of the grate till done, and adding the butter and pepper as they eat them.

3. *Stewed Oysters*.—Open the oysters, and put their liquor in a stew-pan with a little beaten mace; thicken it with flour and butter; boil it three or four minutes; put in a spoonful of cream; put in the oysters, and shake them round in the pan, but do not let them boil. Serve them in a small deep dish, or if for one person only in a soup-plate.

4. *Scolloped Oysters*.—Open the oysters, put them in a basin, with their own liquor; put them into a small deep dish, or some of them, if preferred, into scollop shells; strew over them a few crumbs of bread, and lay a slice of butter on them; then more oysters, bread crumbs, and a slice of butter on the top; put them into a Dutch-oven to brown, and serve them up.

5. *Oyster Soups*.—(Each of the following is calculated for one person).

(a). *The English Soup*.—Take one pound of good lean beef, half a pound of raw lean ham, much parsley, and carrot roots, and a few onions; cut all in very small pieces, and burnish it into a dark-brownish colour with spices, bay-leaves, whole pepper and butter: after having boiled this with water for five hours, pour it through a hair sieve, and then put to it a little brown flour, and two ounces of Sherry or Madeira, and after having boiled again for an hour, take all the fat clean off, and put into it the oysters with their beards and liquor, and with cayenne pepper; all this is to be boiled up again, and then served. This soup is to be recommended, especially in winter when it is very cold. For invalids, the wine, spices, and pepper are omitted. This soup is valuable for convalescents, being very strengthening and nourishing.

(b). *The American Soup*.—Take half a pint of good fresh milk, or cream if possible; three ounces of good butter; boil this together, beat it up with the yolks of three eggs, and put into it six or twelve oysters with their beards and liquor; boil this up again, and in serving it up put into it a little cayenne pepper and a few drops of lemon juice. This soup is delicate; but no prejudice! Everybody must try it first. For invalids, butter, eggs, and pepper are omitted.

(c). *The Holstein Soup*.—Take good beef-stock, one-eighth of a pound of Sherry or Madeira, burnt flour, and proceed as with (a); and then beat it up with the yolks of two or three eggs. (The beard and the liquor must always be made use of, as they impart the strongest flavour of the oyster.)

6. *Oyster Sauce*.—I cannot do better than copy Dr. Kitchener's

valuable recipe for making oyster sauce, which was one of the great luxuries at the table of that celebrated gastronome :—

“Choose plump and juicy natives for this purpose ; do not take them out of their shells till you put them into the stew-pan. To make good oyster sauce for half a dozen hearty fish-eaters, you cannot have less than three or four dozen oysters ; save their liquor, strain it, and put it and them into a stew-pan ; as soon as they boil, and the fish plump, take them off the fire, and pour the contents of the stew-pan into a sieve over a clean basin ; wash the stew-pan out with hot water, and put into it the strained liquor, with about an equal quantity of milk, and about two and a half ounces of butter, with which you have well rubbed a large table-spoonful of flour ; give it a boil up, and pour it through a sieve into a basin, that the sauce may be quite smooth, and then back again into the saucepan ; now shave the oysters, and (if you have the honour of making sauce for “ a Committee of Taste,” take away the gristly part also) put in only the soft part of the oysters ; if they are very large, cut them in half, and set them by the fire to keep hot ; ‘if they boil after, they will become hard.’ If you have not liquor enough, add a little melted butter, or cream, or milk beat up with the yolk of an egg (this must not be put in till the sauce is done). Some barbarous cooks add pepper, or mace, the juice or peel of a lemon, horse-radish essence of anchovy, cayenne, etc. ; plain sauces are only to taste of the ingredients from which they derive their name. It will very much heighten the flavour of this sauce to pound the soft part of half a dozen unboiled oysters ; rub it through a hair sieve, and then stir it into the sauce. This essence of oyster, and for some palates a few grains of cayenne, is the only addition we recommend.”

Notwithstanding Dr. Kitchener’s objection to the introduction of extraneous substances by “*barbarous cooks*,” because *de Gustibus*, as the adage of “the apple and the onion” has already reminded me, is always a matter not to be disputed, I shall add Alexis

Soyer's "barbarous" method of preparing oyster sauce, which was introduced by him at the Reform Club in 1852 :—

"Mix three ounces of butter in a stewpan with two ounces of flour, then blanch and beard three dozen oysters, put the oysters into another stewpan, add beards and liquor to the flour and butter, with a pint and a half of milk, a teaspoonful of salt, half a salt-spoonful of cayenne, two cloves, half a blade of mace, and six peppercorns ; place it over the fire, keep stirring, and boil it ten minutes, then add a tablespoonful of essence of anchovies, and one of Harvey sauce ; pass it through a hair-sieve over the oysters ; make the whole very hot without boiling, and serve. A less quantity may be made, using less proportions."

He also gives the following :—

"Put a pint of white sauce into a stew-pan, with the liquor and beards of three dozen oysters (as above), six peppercorns, two cloves, and half a blade of mace ; boil it ten minutes, then add a spoonful of essence of anchovies, a little cayenne and salt if required ; pass it through a tammy, or hair-sieve, over the oysters, as in the last."

This is somewhat similar to that given in that most useful pennyworth "The Family Herald Economical Cookery," which is also preferred by many, and is as follows :—

"Simmer the oysters in their own liquor till they are plump : strain off the liquor through a sieve, wash the oysters clean, and beard them ; put them into a saucepan, and pour the liquor over them, taking care you do not pour in any of the sediment ; add a blade of mace, a quarter of a lemon, a spoonful of anchovy liquor, and a bit of horseradish ; boil it up gently, then take out the horseradish, the mace, and the lemon,

the juice of which must be squeezed into the sauce. Now add some thick melted butter, toss it together, and boil it up."

I am bound to admit that my own opinion coincides with that of Dr. Kitchener, and would only add that no trouble is too great to render the sauce perfectly smooth, and that no niggard hand should have the supplying it for the table.

6. *Large Oysters Broiled*.—Take the largest and finest oysters you can get, such as you find in the West of England and in America; clean the gridiron as if a fairy had done the work for Cinderella in her sleep; rub the bars with *fresh* butter, and set it over a clear fire, quite free from smoke; then place the oysters upon it, being careful not to let them burn, and when done on one side, turn them quickly on the other with a fork. Put some fresh butter in the bottom of a hot dish, and lay the oysters upon it, sprinkling them slightly with pepper. They must be served quite hot with fried parsley.

7. *Oyster Pie*.—Having buttered the inside of a deep dish, spread a rich paste over the sides and round the edge, but not at the bottom. The oysters should be as large and fine as possible, and when opened drain off part of the liquor from them. Put them into a pan, and season them with pepper, salt, and spice, and stir them well with the seasoning. Pour the oysters with their liquor into the dish, and strew over them the yolks of eggs chopped fine and grated bread. Roll out the lid of the pie, and put it on, crimping the edges handsomely. Take a small sheet of paste, cut it into a square, and roll it up. Cut it with a sharp knife into the form of a double tulip. Make a slit in the centre of the upper crust, and stick the tulip in it. Cut out some large leaves of paste, and lay them on the lid, and bake the pie in a quick oven.

Another way of preparing this favourite French dish

is this, communicated to me by a lady of some experience in matters gastronomical :—

“ Having buttered the inside of a deep dish, line it with puff-paste rolled out rather thick, and prepare another sheet of paste for the lid. Put a clean towel into the dish (folded so as to support the lid) and then put on the lid ; set it into the oven, and bake the paste well. When done, remove the lid, and take out the folded towel. While the paste is baking, prepare the oysters. Having picked off carefully any bits of shell that may be found about them, lay them in a sieve and drain off the liquor into a pan. Put the oysters into a skillet or stew-pan, with barely enough of the liquor to keep them from burning. Season them with whole pepper, blades of mace, some grated nutmeg, and some grated lemon-peel, (the yellow rind only,) and a little finely minced celery. Then add a large portion of fresh butter, divided into bits, and very slightly dredged with flour. Let the oysters simmer over the fire, but do not allow them to come to a boil, as that will shrivel them. Next beat the yolks only, of three, four, or five eggs, (in proportion to the size of the pie,) and stir the beaten egg into the stew a few minutes before you take it from the fire. Keep it warm till the paste is baked. Then carefully remove the lid of the pie ; and replace it, after you have filled the dish with the oysters and gravy.

“ The lid of the pie may be ornamented with a wreath of leaves cut out of paste, and put on before baking. In the centre, place a paste-knot or flower.

“ Oyster pies are generally eaten warm ; but they are very good cold.”

8. *Oyster Toast*.—Cut four slices of bread, pare off the crusts, and toast them. Butter the toast on both sides. Then select a dozen of fine fat and plump oysters, and mince them ; place them thickly between the slices of toast, seasoning them with cayenne pepper. Beat the yolks of four eggs, and mix them with half-a-pint of cream, adding, if thought necessary, a few

blades of mace. Put the whole into a saucepan, and set it over the fire to simmer till thick; but do not allow it to boil, and stir it well, lest it should curdle. When it is *near* boiling heat, take it off and pour it over the toast.

9. *Oyster Patties*.—"Roll out puff-paste a quarter of an inch thick," says Dr. Kitchener, "cut it into squares with a knife, sheet eight or ten patty pans, put upon each a bit of bread the size of half a walnut; roll out another layer of paste of the same thickness, cut it as above, wet the edge of the bottom paste, and put on the top, pare them round to the pan, and notch them about a dozen times with the back of the knife, rub them lightly with yolk of egg, bake them in a hot oven about a quarter of an hour: when done, take a thin slice off the top, then, with a small knife or spoon, take out the bread and the inside paste, leaving the outside quite entire: then parboil two dozen of large oysters, strain them from their liquor, wash, beard, and cut them into four, put them into a stew-pan with an ounce of butter rolled in flour, half a gill of good cream, a little grated lemon-peel, the oyster liquor free from sediment, reduced by boiling to one half, some cayenne pepper, salt, and a tea-spoonful of lemon-juice; stir it over a fire five minutes, and fill the patties."

10. *Oyster Powder*.—Open the oysters carefully, so as not to cut them, except in dividing the gristle which attaches the shells; put them into a mortar, and when you have got as many as you can conveniently pound at once, add about two drachms of salt to a dozen oysters; pound them and rub them through the back of a hair sieve, and put them into the mortar again, with as much flour (which has been previously thoroughly dried) as will make them into a paste; roll the paste out several times, and lastly, flour it, and roll it out the thickness of a half-crown, and divide it into pieces about one inch square; lay them in a Dutch oven, where they will dry so gently as not to get burned; turn them every half hour, and when they begin to dry, crumble them. They will take about four hours to dry; then pound them fine, sift them, and put them into dry bottles

and seal them. Three dozens of natives require seven ounces and a half of flour to make them into a paste weighing eleven ounces, or when dried and powdered, six and a half ounces. To make half a pint of sauce, put one ounce of butter into a stew-pan with three drachms of oyster powder, and six table-spoonfuls of milk; set it on a slow fire, stir it till it boils, and season it with salt. This makes an excellent sauce for fish, fowls, or rump steaks. Sprinkled on bread and butter, it makes a good sandwich. But only use plump juicy natives in the preparation.

11. *Pickled Oysters* are mostly used for salads when no fresh oysters can be got. Take good wine, or Tarragon vinegar, some onions cut in pieces, some slices of lemon, some spices, whole pepper, bay leaves, and salt. Boil this together, and whilst boiling put the oysters into it, and let the whole boil up once more. Put the result into bottles with a little good oil, and, tied over with bladder, it will keep for a long time.

However, pickled oysters also appear as a supper dish, when they are thus prepared:—

Take two dozen oysters; strain the liquor; add three blades of mace, six peppercorns, a little grated lemon peel, and one or two bay leaves; boil the liquor, and, when boiling, add the oysters for two minutes. When cold, strain off the liquor; place the oysters in a small dish, and garnish with parsley. According to this rate of ingredients the dish may be made to suit the number of guests likely to partake of it.

12. *Oyster Loaves*.—Make an oval hole in the top of some rasped French rolls, and scrape out all the crumb: then put the oysters into a stew-pan, with their liquor, and the crumbs that came out of the rolls, and a good lump of butter; stew them together five or six minutes: then put in a spoonful of good cream; fill the skeleton rolls with the compound, and lay the bit of crust carefully on the top again, setting them in the oven to crisp. Three form a side dish.

13. *Oyster Omelet*.—Having strained the liquor from three

dozen plump native oysters, mince them small; omitting the hard part, or gristle. If you cannot get large oysters, you should have forty or fifty small ones. Break into a shallow pan six, seven, or eight eggs, according to the quantity of minced oysters. Omit half the whites, and (having beaten the eggs till very light, thick, and smooth,) mix the oysters gradually into them, adding a little cayenne pepper, and some powdered nutmeg. Put three ounces or more of the best fresh butter into a small frying-pan, if you have no pan especially for omelets. Place it over a clear fire, and when the butter (which should be previously cut up) has come to a boil, put in the omelet-mixture; stir it till it begins to set; and fry it a light brown, lifting the edge several times by slipping a knife under it, and taking care not to cook it too much or it will shrivel and become tough. When done, clap a large hot plate or dish on the top of the omelet, and turn it quickly and carefully out of the pan. Fold it over, and serve it up immediately. This quantity will make one large or two small omelets. The omelet pan should be smaller than a common frying-pan, and lined with tin. In a large pan the omelet will spread too much, and become thin like a pancake. Never turn an omelet while frying, as that will make it heavy and tough. When done, brown it by holding a red-hot salamander close above the top.

Having given a baker's dozen of the most approved receipts for dressing oysters, I have only to add that the oyster, as an accessory, enters into many dishes, particularly into fricassees, is served with sweetbreads, fowl, and veal, and, as we all know from "Tom and Jerry," "gentlemen" eat oysters as sauce to rump steak; which, by the way, I, for one, regard as the ruin of both oyster and steak. I cannot refrain from adding the following, both little known in this country, yet both equally good:—

14. *Cabbage with Oysters and Fried Larks.*—When the cab-

bage has been cooked with a little Rhenish wine, Chablis, or Champagne, some good butter is melted, in which the oysters are put with their beards and liquor, and having been fried a little with the butter, they are put with the cabbage and and cooked again together, and then served up with the larks.

15.—*Fried Hind Legs of Frogs with Oysters.*—The hind legs of frogs are fried in the usual manner; when they are nearly done, some oysters with Parmesan cheese and a little pepper are added to them, and when done they are served up. This dish is undeniable, and is as much relished abroad as whitebait with us.

In closing this chapter, let me remind all cooks that the success in preparing the above-mentioned dishes depends on the goodness and freshness of the oysters used for this purpose. Very erroneous is the opinion that oysters which are not fresh are yet good enough to be fried and to be used for sauces. The greatest delicacy is a fresh oyster, but a stale one is a source of the greatest disgust, and only fit to regale the ghost of that Royal George who, when living, never relished a raw oyster unless the shell was self-opened on the dish.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE OYSTER AND THE DOCTOR.

Oyster-eating in Prussia; Disgusting Wagers; Oysters better than Pills; A Universal Remedy; Professional Opinions; When Ladies should eat them; Repugnance overcome; Oysters as an external application; Chemical Analysis; How to tell if dead before opening.

WHEN in Prussia, I once asked a person who did a large retail business in oysters, what class of persons he found to be his best customers, and what was the number of oysters daily consumed by each individual?

“The morning scarcely begins to dawn,” he replied, “ere ladies and gentlemen, boys and girls, and servants, both male and female, make their appearance, not only from my immediate neighbourhood, but also from the most remote parts of the city, when, on an average, every one buys from half a dozen up to a dozen, in addition to their purchases for the several families, and in accordance with their requirements.”

And those who do likewise in Great Britain and Ireland will soon find out the benefit of this nutritive food taken thus early on an empty stomach. I once heard of an individual who made a bet that he would eat twelve dozen oysters, washed down by twelve glasses of Champagne, while the cathedral clock of the city which he inhabited was striking twelve. He won his bet by placing a

dozen fresh oysters in twelve wine glasses, and having swallowed the oysters, he washed down each dozen with a glass of Champagne. I should not have mentioned this disgusting feat, but to add that he felt no evil effects from the oysters, proving incontestably the digestive and sanitary properties of this mollusk.

There is a similar tale showing equally the effects of oysters on the human digestion. Four persons met one Saturday night at an hotel, and made the following bet: each person was to call for whatever he might fancy, either to eat or to drink, and he who kept longest awake was to have no share in the liquidation of the bill. This settled, one of the party made a private arrangement with one of the waiters, promising him a reward if, in case of his evincing the slightest drowsiness, he would bring him forthwith twenty-five oysters.

This was accordingly done; but the waiters had to be constantly relieved until 11 o'clock on the following Monday morning, when, observing his three companions quietly asleep, our oyster-eating friend called for the landlord, and declared himself triumphantly the winner, attributing his good fortune entirely to the oyster.

Wise people eat oysters and eschew pills; take lumps of delight, instead of lumps of nausea; uphold the Sweetings, Pims, and Lynns, and have nothing to do with the Holloways, Morisons, and "Old Parrs."

When suffering from almost incurable indigestion, by taking oysters daily, they very soon find the most agreeable effects on the human kitchen and laboratory; its functions become regular, without the use of strong medicines, always dangerous. Depression

of spirits and other disagreeable feelings consequent on impaired digestion soon cease to affect them; they become cheerful and happy, and are enabled again to see clearly through the misty atmosphere which has hitherto enclosed them in a kind of living shroud; physical powers return, headaches disappear, and the heretofore dyspeptic, sour, unhappy tempered man becomes a pleasant and joyous companion, full of life himself, and inspiriting to those around him.

I have lived a good deal abroad, and am induced to ascribe much of the vivacity of the French to their intense love of oysters. During a long residence in France, I never met with a Frenchman or Frenchwoman who said nay to a dish of good fresh oysters; in fact, they have a craving for the "breedy creatures," which in many persons almost amounts to gluttony, and then, and then only, does this craving lead to mischief.

Physicians of old recommended the oyster as a general remedy, and employed it on all occasions with success. It has been proved beyond dispute that it possesses a remarkable vivifying influence in all cases where the nervous organs are affected, more than any other food. Oysters taken before mid-day with a glass of wine produce a most salutary effect. The nerves and muscles regain their strength, and the body its mental and physical powers, bringing cheerfulness and energy to compete with the duties of the day. If not a cure, at all events, an oyster diet, under medical supervision, brings unquestionable relief to those who are suffering from pulmonary complaints, indigestion, or nervous affections.

Dr. Leroy was in the habit of swallowing, every

morning before breakfast, two dozen oysters, and used always to say to his friends, presenting them with the shells: "There, behold the fountain of my youthful strength!"

Percy relates having seen a large number of wounded persons, exhausted by the loss of blood and bad treatment, who were entirely kept up by eating oysters; and Dr. Lenac considered them the most nourishing food in existence.

Oysters are strongly recommended to all persons suffering from weak digestion; and Dr. Pasquier adds, that "they may be given with great advantage to persons of intemperate habits, who, by inefficacious medical treatment have fallen into debility and lowness of spirits." He also recommends oysters to all who are suffering from the gout. I myself knew a person last winter, who was suffering from influenza, which, from his being an aged man, threatened the most serious consequences, who was entirely cured by eating oysters.

Oysters increase the blood without heating the system, and hence when a wound has caused much loss of blood, the eating of oysters not only prevents fever, but replaces the loss which no other remedy can effect. The great Boerhaave affirms to have known a tall, strong man, who had fallen into a decline, and who, after all other remedies had proved useless, by the use of oysters rapidly recovered, became strong, and died ninety-three years old.

But to ladies, particularly, do I recommend oysters as the best of all light meals between breakfast and dinner. At the period of a lady's married life, when nausea is prevalent, a few fresh oysters, taken raw in their own

liquor, with no addition but a little pepper, and a fairy slice of French roll or other light bread, stops the feeling of sickness, and keeps up the stamina unimpaired. During the time, too, when a young child most requires maternal care and attention, the mother's diet of oysters will impart strength to the infant, and tend much to alleviate the pains of its first teething.

I am well aware that some persons have a repugnance to the eating of oysters, and that it may be difficult to overcome the dislike. However, as a proof that oysters in general are nice to the taste, let me mention that children under two years of age eat them with great appetite; and it is only after having discontinued eating any for some time that they take a dislike to them.

I have often had the opportunity of overcoming this dislike, and the result was always satisfactory. The method is very simple. Take a French roll (or a piece of milk-bread) thinly buttered, and put on it the oyster deprived of its beard, squeezing a few drops of lemon and peppering it. "Well, after all, the taste of the oyster is really fine!" is the usual exclamation, and after that the person has eaten them in their natural state with gusto.

When eaten for health, an oyster is best swallowed in its own liquor the moment the shell is opened; or if too cold for the stomach, a sprinkling of pepper will remedy the evil. Vinegar counteracts the effect of the oyster enriching the blood; so when the oyster is eaten medicinally it must be excluded. Dr. Evans, in No. 834 of the "Family Herald" says, that when too many oysters

or other shell-fish has been taken, the unpleasant sensation excited by such excess may be removed by drinking half a pint of hot milk. Persons of delicate constitutions will do well always to take hot milk after oysters.

But the oyster was also formerly used externally as a remedy no less than taken internally for its medicinal properties. Its very abundance is a clear proof of the bounty and goodness of Providence, furnishing us, at one and the same time, with such delicious food, and so universal a remedy for the ills which man is heir to. Ambrois Paré, physician to Charles IX., and the only Protestant whom the king sought to save from the terrible massacre of St. Bartholomew, by shutting him up in his own closet, recommends oysters smashed in their shells as an excellent poultice. "This animal, so used," says he, "diminishes pain, and removes all heat and inflammation in a remarkable manner." As the opinion of one, of whom the king himself declared that "a man so useful to all the world ought not to perish like a dog," it may be admitted to a place in my little book, more particularly as it is borne out by Paul Egona, who also recommends oysters being smashed and saturated with their own liquor as the very best of all poultices for sores or boils.

Let me, as a close to this chapter, add a few words on the chemical analysis of the oyster. The animal itself contains a great proportion of phosphate of iron and lime, a considerable quantity of osmozone, and a certain amount of gluten and isinglass, being of a peculiar nature, which phosphorus penetrates like an element.

It also contains a great quantity of particles of salt, the same as that of the sea-water in which it lives.

The oyster-liquor, or, as I have said, more properly speaking, its life's blood, contains a great amount of hydroïdum, kali, sulphur of lime, sulphur of magnesia, some organic matter, osmazone, and a very little salt. The shell is composed of a very intimate mixture of salt, carbonic lime, and animal mucus. It exhibits, also, phosphate of lime and magnesia in small quantities, as also sulphuretted hydrogen.

At the moment in which natural death ensues, all animal matter begins to show its chemical affinities by separating again into the elements of which it consists; and as at such times it is always more or less of a poisonous nature, it is well to study the method by which it may be known whether an oyster was living or dead when its shell is opened. This can be seen at a glance. If the muscle appears sunk, it is a proof that the animal was living; but if it appears higher and above the oyster, it was dead before it was opened, and the animal is, consequently, unwholesome and unfit for food.

CHAPTER IX.

THE OYSTER ABROAD.

British Oysters in Ostend Quarters ; the Whitstable in a Slow Coach ; Holstein, Schleswig, and Heligoland Natives ; Norwegian and Bremer Oysters ; American Oysters ; French Oysters ; Dutch Oysters ; Mediterranean Oysters, and Classical Judges.

I AM not writing a book for the man of science. I could not if I would. It is for those who love oysters for the eating that I have turned author ; and all the facts which are strung together in the last chapters were put there for their delectation, and not for the sake of raising the smile which I saw just now pass over the face of my friend Sawbones when I mentioned oyster-poultices. Just because I am not scientific, but only practical, I shall not trouble myself to notice any of the many species of oysters, both at home and abroad, which, though pretty in themselves, never find their way to the table, which is the sole field of my discoveries.

I shall therefore begin my list of foreign oysters with the best of them all, the next of kin to our Native, and next to it the best oyster in the world.

1. *The Ostend Oyster* is nothing more than the real British oyster, cleaned and fattened in the Ostend oyster-beds. It has a fine, thin, transparent but deep shell, the upper shell being quite flat ; it is very full,

white, and fat, has a very small beard, and is very digestible. During a south-west wind, which brings to these beds the microscopic spores of sea vegetation and animalcules upon which it delights to feed, from the channel, its beard is of a green colour. The Ostend oyster is much prized in Berlin, which it reaches the quickest of any from the sea, (in thirty-six to forty hours,) and consequently lives there several days, remains the longest fresh, and can be sent farthest. Last winter Ostend oysters were sent to Moscow and Odessa, where they arrived still good and tasty. The former were seventeen days, and the latter eleven days on their way. Scarcely any other kind of oysters could be sent to such a distance. In the autumn of 1847, after the opening of the Cologne-Minden Railway, the first trial was made of sending these oysters to Berlin, *via* Cologne. The result was most satisfactory; they sold for $1\frac{1}{2}$ thalers the hundred. This caused no little sensation, especially among the old oyster dealers, who were accustomed to receive from five to six, even from eight to nine thalers per hundred. The good folks of Berlin are now supplied with abundant fresh and fine oysters. The Ostend natives may be obtained from the owner of the oyster beds in Ostend. I speak of Berlin, as the Germans are great oyster-eaters, and the North, in a great measure, is supplied from thence.

In Brussels, Antwerp, Ghent, Bruges, and Lille, Ostend oysters are eaten with slices of home-baked bread, and butter. They are served up in their shells, open, and not broken apart. They have a tender, fragrant, and melting flesh, and are only half the size of ordinary

oysters; but they gain in thickness what they lose in size. In Flanders and the Netherlands they are known under the name of "English oysters," but are called in Paris after the name of the beds where they are reared. They are in reality Edinburgh "Natives," cleaned and fattened in the Ostend oyster-beds, and hence called Belgian or Ostend oysters.

The oyster of Ostend cannot be too much recommended to gourmets. It is to the common oyster what a chicken is to an old hen. It is a draught of bitter ale to a thirsty palate. It is a known fact, that after having abstained from food for a long time, the first oyster one eats produces a kind of unusual rictus (or opening of the mouth), the reason of which physiologists have never been able to explain. This same sensation is produced in eating an Ostend oyster, but it is much sweeter, more lasting, and much more delightful. If the Romans had ever known them they would have sung their praises both in verse and prose, and would by far have preferred them to their sadly over-praised oysters from the Lucrine Sea.

The only oysters which can be brought into competition with those of Ostend in the same markets are the Whitstable oysters, which have only recently become an article of trade on the Continent. These are also "natives" from the Channel, generally larger than the former, but unequal, not being sorted, very fat and full, but much more tender, and do not keep fresh so long. The cause of this may be that they are first taken from Whitstable to London, where they are packed up and sent by sea and rail to Hamburg and Berlin, which takes always from

six to seven days. They have a fine flavour, and are by some people preferred to the Ostend oysters: although the latter, generally speaking, occupy the first rank. These two species, and that of Holstein, are the best oysters to be met with in the north of Europe.

2. *Channel Oysters*.—The oysters which, more particularly in the north of Germany, are an article of trade, come from the Bay of St. Brieux and the Rock of Cancale, on the British Channel, between the castle of that name, Mount St. Michael, and St. Malo, and from the Channel between Calais and its extreme point near Falmouth. The bottom of this sea is flat and firm, and its stream near the bottom not very strong, both favourable circumstances for the propagation of oysters. This propagation must be very considerable, and the banks where the oysters breed very extensive, since, in spite of the continual dredging, they produce a sufficient quantity without any apparent decrease, to guard against which, the new beds of St. Brieux, mentioned in the first chapter, are carefully supplied. The dredging lasts generally from the middle of September till the end of May; during the other months the fishing should properly be discontinued, because the spawning, which then takes place, would be disturbed, and because during that time the oyster is generally not fit for food.

3. *Holstein Oysters* are very good and fine, but the sea-banks do not afford enough for the present consumption, so that it is necessary to have good connexions in order to obtain real and good Holstein oysters. They are easily distinguished from all the other oysters by their size, the thin, greenish-blue shells, especially the

lower shell. The upper shell is always concave, by which they are the more easily distinguished from the Heligolanders, which have always a strong convex upper shell. As to the little animal itself, it is very fat, white, thick, and tender, and therefore very digestible. It has only a small beard, by which it is distinguished from the Norwegian and Scottish oyster, which, by the appearance of the shell, might be mistaken for the Holstein oyster by novices in gastronomy. These delicate favourites are to be obtained from the lessees of the Royal Oyster-banks on the western coast of Holstein in Flensburg, in the kingdom of Denmark.

4. *The Schleswick Oyster of Husum and Silt* is very like the former—almost undistinguishable. It is very excellent, but seldom exported, and consumed for the most part in Kiel. The two last-named oysters are often taken to St. Petersburg by sailors, when making the passage to and fro.

5. *The Heligolanders* are very large; have thick shells, which renders the duty and carriage very high, but are not at all fine, and generally sold in all the innocence of ignorance by dealers as Holstein oysters.

Have nothing to do with *Norwegian oysters*; I only mention them here as things to be shunned. *Bremer oysters*, the *Neuwerkers*, and the *Wangerogers*, however, deserve a better fate.

6. *The Oyster of the Bay of Biscay* is of the same size as that of Holstein, with a very large beard, like those caught in the south of England. The beard, like the oyster itself, is quite grass green—a quality which is to be found generally only with oysters from Dieppe, Cancale, and the Marennes. Its flavour is very fine and

good, but great care must be taken, in opening the shell and detaching the oyster, not to break the double shell, which they mostly possess, for this contains sulphuretted hydrogen, which gives a bad smell and flavour to the oyster, and poisons the stomach of the consumer.

7. *American Oysters*, though, to my taste, by no means so delicate as others I have mentioned, are nevertheless superior for cooking. For my own part, although I have stated that pepper, vinegar, lemon juice, and other stimulating ingredients, are commonly made use of when eating the oyster, I offer, in all courtesy, the decided opinion, that the taste must be vitiated that can swallow such in preference to the delicate, fresh, luscious, charming little morsel, saturated merely, or perhaps the word ought to be merely bedewed, like the rose on a summer morning, by its own liquid life's blood. Americans, themselves, generally prefer their large oysters even to our British Natives.

8. *French Oysters*.—The French oysters are chiefly taken from beds in the Bays of Cancale and St. Brieux, from Marennes, from Havre and Dieppe, from Dunkirk, and from the Bay of Biscay. The three first are very fine, but the distance to Paris is too great; they are therefore dear in that capital. Those from Dunkirk are similar to those of Ostend, but not quite so fine; and those from the Bay of Biscay are quite green, and highly esteemed in the south of France, especially at Bordeaux.

9. *Dutch Oysters* are both good and dear. The four sorts I recommend are Seelanders, Vliessingers, Middleburgers, and Vieringers. The latter are almost the finest and best, but uncommonly dear, and are mostly consumed in Holland.

10. *Mediterranean Oysters*.—I have already referred to classical authorities for the character the ancients gave those of Circe and the Lucrine Sea; and the old rule, "*de mortuis nil*," forbids me to say in what rank I place Horace the inimitable, Seneca the wise, and Pliny the naturalist, as judges of what an oyster should be. Where ignorance is bliss, people can be very happy. Till the Turk, by an accidental fire, had become acquainted with the taste of roast pork, there were many less fires in Stamboul than now. Till the Romans found the Rutupians, the Lucrine flourished; so did Circe.

CHAPTER X.

"THE TREASURE OF AN OYSTER."

Sweet names given to Pearls ; Barry Cornwall Proctor's lines ; Component parts of Pearls ; Mother-of-pearl ; How Pearls are formed, Sorrows into Gems ; Their nucleus ; Sir Everard Home and Sir David Brewster ; Curious shapes and fancy Jewellery ; Pearl Fisheries : Bahrein Island and Bay of Candalchy ; Miseries of the Divers ; Pearls as Physic ; Immense value of recorded Pearls.

OF all beautiful things in the world the pearl is the rarest and most beautiful. Nothing can exceed it, nothing can equal it, although they try very hard in "French" and "Roman" ways, in glassy globules which continually crack, or in round spots of wax, which, instead of adorning, adhere to the neck of beauty, and when old age comes upon it, turn yellow and wrinkled like the skin of a dowager. Nay, nothing can well imitate it, although art has gone somewhat near it. But to a knowing eye one might as well seek to imitate truth, or palm away upon the unwary a copy of true virgin innocence as to imitate a pearl. We know all the answers that the dowagers can make ; we know that the imitations are "so cheap," so pretty ; we know that certain dowagers—witness Margaret, Duchess Dowager of Lancaster—sell their real pearls and wear cunning imitations ; we know that they in vain try to persuade themselves that the false are as

good as the true ones; but only look hard at the ornaments, and the duchess is abashed. To test false pearls, one has only to put a true one by them, and the "difference," as advertisers say, "will be at once perceived."

Let us devote this last portion of our book to the history of the pearl. Its very names are pretty. *Looloo*, *Mootoo*, *Mootie*, *Margaritæ*, *Perles*, *Perlii*, *Perlas*, *Pearls*, all sweet, pretty, mouth-rounding names, but worthy to be applied to the lustrous and beautiful spheres which we call pearls. *Principium culmenque omnium rerum pretii tenent*: "Of all things, pearls," said Pliny, two thousand years ago, "kept the very top, highest, best, and first price." What was true then is true now. There are few things so immortal as good taste. Let us pay something "on account" of our debt to the oyster. Having regarded that placid creditor as an article of food, I now propose to treat him as an assistant to the toilet. And, looking at him in that point of view, here is not a bad instalment of the aforesaid debt, contributed by Barry Cornwall.

"Within the midnight of her hair,
 Half-hidden in its deepest deeps,
 A single peerless, priceless pearl
 (All filmy-eyed) for ever sleeps.
 Without the diamond's sparkling eyes,
 The ruby's blushes—there it lies,
 Modest as the tender dawn,
 When her purple veil's withdrawn—
 The flower of gems, a lily cold and pale.
 Yet, what doth all avail?—

All its beauty, all its grace?
All the honours of its place?
He who pluck'd it from its bed,
In the far blue Indian Ocean,
Lieth, without life or motion,
In his earthy dwelling—dead!
All his children, one by one,
When they look up to the sun,
Curse the toil by which he drew
The treasure from its bed of blue."

Costly as pearls are, they are merely the calcareous production of Mollusks. Diamonds have elsewhere been shown to be merely charcoal; the pearl is little else but concentric layers of membrane and carbonate of lime. All Mollusks are instances of that beneficent law of nature, that the hard parts accommodate themselves to the soft. The common naked snail, the mussel, cockle, oyster, garden helix, strombus, and nautilus, elegant or rough, rare or common, each illustrate this grand law. The body of a soft consistence is enclosed in an elastic skin. From this skin calcareous matter is continually exuded. This protects the animal, and forms the shell. Where the waves are rough, and rocks superabundant, then the shell is rough, hard, stony, fit to weather anything; where only smooth water and halcyon days are to be looked for, Nature, which never works in vain, provides but paper sides and an egg-shell boat, such as the little nautilus navigates and tacks and steers in.

Besides forming the rough outside, the calcareous exuvium, the mucus of the oyster, and other mollusks, form that beautiful substance, so smooth and polished,

and dyed with rainbow tints and a glorious opalescence, which, be it as common as luxury has made it, still charms the eye. This is the lining of the shell, the mother-of-pearl, nacre. "The inside of the shell," said old Dampier—that old sailor with a poet's mind—"is more glorious even than the pearl itself."

It is glorious; it has the look of the morning, and the tint of the evening sky; the colours of the prism chastened, softened, retained, and made perpetual in it: this is mother-o'-pearl.

To render its bed always soft and cosy, to lie warm, packed as one might at Malvern in wet sheets, seems to be the oyster's pleasure. This singular exuvium, this mucus, not only creates pleasure, but alleviates pain. Some irritating substance, some internal worry and annoyance, it may be a dead embryo, or a grain of sand insinuates itself, and, lo! the creature covers it with this substance to ease off its unkind tooth, and converts it into a pearl.

That is the way they are made, these wondrous gems! And very beautiful is the thought that the most highly prized of gems should be but the effect of a creature to ease off a sorrow. Every one knows Shakspeare's wondrously fine reflection upon the uses of sorrow and adversity, which,

" Like the toad, ugly and venomous,
Bears yet a precious jewel in its head."

The precious jewel of the toad, which some critics and commentators have endeavoured to prove its glittering eye, has long been exploded. Our old alchemists

believed in the toadstone; we do not. The fable remains in its pristine beauty; but here is one truth equally beautiful, that the adversity of the oyster turns to a jewel so costly and glorious, that monarchs reckon it amongst the records of their houses and conquered provinces. May we ever turn our sorrows and troubles to as good an account; may we ever continue to do so, for assuredly some men do. The best of men are those who are tried by affliction and trouble, or those who have some deep and secret care, which they hide in their hearts, and which makes them wiser and better. Shelley has a theory that poets are made somewhat after the fashion of pearls, or that, at any rate, their poetry is so produced. He sings—

“Most wretched men
Are cradled into poetry by wrong;
They learn in suffering, what they teach in song.”

We have very little doubt but that the true poetry from which the world learns anything worth learning is so produced.

There have been other theories as to the production of the pearl, some holding that the interior formation which we state to be a grain of sand, is a dead ovum which the fish attempts to exude. This theory, too, has its supporters.

“If,” said Sir Everard Home, “if I can prove that this, the richest jewel in a monarch’s crown, which cannot be imitated by any art of man” (he is rather wrong there; it can be imitated, and wonderfully imitated too,) “either in beauty of form or brilliancy of

lustre, is the abortive egg of an oyster enveloped in its own nacre, who will not be struck with wonder and astonishment?" Wonder and astonishment are words which scarcely exist now. Science has shown so many wonders that we are hardly astonished at anything; but Sir Everard's assertion admits of proof. A pearl cut in two exhibits the concentric layers like an onion, as may be seen through a strong lens; and in the centre is a round hole, very minute it may be, but wherein the ovum has been deposited.

Sometimes the ovum, or sand, or enclosed substance has attached itself to the shell, and has then been covered with mucus, forming a pearl which cannot be separated from the shell. There are several specimens of such pearls in the British Museum.

The great beauty in pearls is their opalescence, and a lustre which, as we have before observed, however clever the imitation, has never yet been given to artificial pearls. Sir Everard Home supposes that this lustre arises from the highly polished coat of the centre shell, the pearl itself being diaphanous. Sir David Brewster accounts for it by the pearl and mother-of-pearl having a grooved substance on its surface resembling the minute corrugations often seen on substances covered with oil, paint, or varnish. Philosophers are sometimes not very explanatory. Sir David means to say that beneath the immediate polish of the pearl there are certain wavelets and dimples from which the light is reflected. "The direction of the grooves," again to quote Sir David, "is in every case at right angles to the line joining the coloured image; hence, in irregu-

larly formed mother-of-pearl, where the grooves are often circular, and have every possible direction, the coloured images appear irregularly scattered round the ordinary image."

In the regular pearl these are crowded, from its spherical form, into a small space; hence its marvellous appearance of white unformed light, and hence its beauty and value.

To prove the translucency of the pearl, we have only to hold one which is split to a candle, where, by interposing coloured substance or light, we shall have the colour transmitted through the pearl. Curious as is the formation of the pearl, we have yet a cognate substance to it. What we call *bezoar*, and the Hindoos *fadyj*, is a concretion of a deepish olive-green colour found in the stomach of goats, dogs, cows, or other animals: the hog bezoar, the bovine bezoar, and the camel bezoar; this last the Hindoos turn into a yellow paint; but the harder substances the Hindoo jewellers polish and thread and use as jewels; so that from the stomach of the lower animals, and from the secretions of a shell-fish, the still grasping, prying, worrying, proud, vain-glorious, busy man gets him an ornament for her whom he most loves, for him whom he most honours.

The question of obtaining pearls and of slaying divers, of feeding sharks with human limbs, of the eye-balls starting and the tympanum of the ear bursting, of the pains, perils, and penalties of the pearl divers, must be touched incidentally in any true account of this precious gem.

Vanity demands the aid of Cruelty, and for her gratification human sacrifices are still made.

In the Persian Gulf, at Ceylon, and in the Red Sea, the early sources of the Greeks and Romans, we yet find our supply. Pearls are also found in the Indian Ocean along the Coromandel coast and elsewhere; as also in the Gulf of California; but the two grand headquarters are in Bahrein Island, in the Persian Gulf, and in the Bay of Condalchy, in the Gulf of Manaar, off the Island of Ceylon.

The fishery at Ceylon is a monopoly of the British Government, but, like many Government monopolies, it is said to cost a great deal more than it produces. In 1804 Government leased it for £120,000 per annum; in 1828 it only yielded £28,000.* It is a desert and barren spot; no one can fall in love with it; sands and coral reefs are not picturesque; yet, in its season, it attracts more to its shores than one of our best watering-places. Divers, merchants, Arab-hawkers, drillers, jewellers, and talkers; fish-sellers, butchers, boat-caulkers, and Hindoo Robinsons and Walkers are all found there. The period is limited to six weeks, or two months at most, from February to April; and whilst they are making money these people are rather eager, look you. But the fishers themselves, victims of cruelty as they are, are also victims to their own super-

* The pearl fishery at Ceylon, however, has been very profitable during the present year, the yield being sometimes worth from 10,000 dollars to 30,000 dollars per day. An attempt is being made to re-establish the pearl fishery in the Gulf of California. Some very fine pearls were found there nearly a century ago.

stition and ignorance. A Hindoo or Parsee blesses the water to drive away the sharks; a diver may be frightened or ill, and the holidays are so numerous, that the actual work-days amount only to thirty in the season.

The boats assembled sail at ten at night, a signal gun being then let off. They then set sail, reach the banks before daybreak, and at sunrise the divers begin to take their "headers." They continue at this work till noon, when a breeze starting up, they return. The cargoes are taken out before the night sets in, and the divers are refreshed.

Each boat carries twenty men—ten rowers and ten divers—besides a chief, or pilot. The divers work five at a time alternately, leaving the others time to recruit. To go down quickly they use a large stone of red granite, which they catch hold of with their foot. Each diver holds a net-work bag in his right hand, closes his nostrils with his left, or with a piece of bent horn, and descends to the bottom. There he darts about him as quickly as he can, picking up with toes and fingers, and putting the oysters into his net-work bag. When this is full, or he is exhausted, he pulls the rope, and is drawn, leaving the stone to be pulled up after him. When the oysters are very plentiful, the diver may bring up one hundred and fifty at a dip.

After this violent exertion, blood flows from nose, ears, and eyes. The divers cannot exceed generally one minute's immersion. One and a half, and even two, have been reached by extraordinary efforts. Those who can endure four and five minutes are spoken of. One also we are told of—an apocryphal fellow, we should

think—who coming in 1797 from Arjango, stayed under water six minutes.

The divers live not to a great age. Heart diseases, surfeits, sores, blood-shot eyes, staggering limbs, and bent backs—these are part of their wages. Sometimes they die on reaching the surface, suddenly, as if struck by a shot.

At Bahrein, the annual amount produced by the pearl fishery may be reckoned at from £200,000 to £240,000; add to this purchases made by the merchants of Aboota-bee, and we have £360,000 to include the whole pearl trade of the Gulf, since, through their agents at Bahrein, merchants from Constantinople, Bagdad, Alexandria, Timbuctoo, New York, Calcutta, Paris, St. Petersburg, Holy Moscowa, or London, make their purchases.

“But,” says our credible informant, “I have not put down the sum at *one-sixth* of that told me by the native merchants.” But even then an enormous amount is that, to be used in mere ornament, and in one article only.

Well, not exactly ornament. “In Eastern lands,” says Mr. Thomas Moore, “they talk in flowers.” Very flowery certainly is their talk. They also, good easy people, take pearls for physic—not for dentifrice—Easterns always having white teeth, apparently, so far as I have been able to judge, without the trouble of cleaning them—but as a regular dose. They call it *majoon*; it is an electuary, and myriads of small seed pearls are ground to impalpable powder to make it. As for the adulteration in this article, doubtless to be found, I say nothing. The simple lime from the inside of the shell would be

just as white and just as good. Common magnesia would have the same effect; but, good sirs, if an old Emir, or rich Bonze, wishes to pay an enormous price for something to swallow to comfort his good old inside, why not? Do not let us brag too much: from the time of old Gower, doctor of physic, to Dr. Cheyne, we have, sir, swallowed everything, from toads' brains to the filings of a murderer's irons, as very proper physic.

The Bahrein fishery-boats amount to 1500, and the trade is in the hands of merchants who possess much capital. This they lend out at cent. per cent.; they buy up, and they beat down; they juggle, cheat, rig the market, rob in a legal way a whole boat's crew, grow enormously rich, and preach morality.

Nor do they forget superstition. In the chief boat, when they fish, sits a jolly old cheat, a magician, called the binder of sharks, who waves about his skinny hands, jumps, howls, incants, and otherwise exerts his cabalistic powers, and will not allow the divers, nor are they willing, to descend till he declares the moment propitious. To add some weight to their devotions, they debar themselves of food or drink during this *Mumbo-Jumbo* play, but afterwards a species of toddy makes them like "Roger the Monk,"—"excessively drunk."

The true shape of the pearl should be a perfect sphere. In India, and elsewhere, those of the largest size find the readiest sale, and realize immense prices. The very finest pearls are sent to Europe, and of these the very finest of the fine are sent to London and Paris. Thence the great people of the land procure their choice speci-

mens. The late Emperor of Russia used to purchase for his wife—of whom he was exceedingly fond, and who has lately joined him in that bourne from which neither traveller, emperor, king, nor beggar ever returns—the very finest pearl he could procure: a virgin pearl and a perfect sphere was what he sought, for he would not have any that had been worn by others. After five-and-twenty years' search, he presented to the Empress such a necklace as had never been seen before.

Immense prices have been given and are still given for pearls. Julius Cæsar, in love with the mother of Marcus Brutus, is said to have presented her with a pearl worth £48,417 10s., which we can believe or not, according to our natures. Cleopatra, as all the world has read, drank, dissolved in vinegar, a pearl which cost £80,729 of our money, and, as we know from Shakspeare, Marc Antony sent to her "a treasure of an oyster" of wondrous beauty. Clodius, the glutton (surely a gourmet, not a gourmand), swallowed one worth £8072 18s. One of the modern pearls was bought by Tavernier at Catifa, and sold by him to the Shah of Persia for £110,000; another was obtained by Philip II. of Spain, off the Columbian coast, which weighed 250 carats, and was valued at 14,400 ducats, which is equal to about £13,996.

Pliny, the naturalist, tells us of a pearl which was valued at £80,000 sterling. That which Philip II. had was nearly as large as a pigeon's egg. Pliny's was somewhat smaller. But size is not alone the test of value. Shape and form must be taken into consideration. Some pearls are very curiously misshapen, and of

so large a size that it would seem a wonder how the fish could exist with them in the shell. These misshapen pearls are generally of an uneven surface and lustre, and are prized by the Eastern jewellers very much, and were also sought after by the fanciful goldsmiths and enamellers of the *cinque-cento* period, when they were set into sword-hilts, or formed into toys or gems, just as the fancy and shape might suggest. We have seen one large long pearl mounted by a Spanish jeweller into the order of the golden fleece, the legs and head of the sheep being of gold, the body formed by the pearl. Amongst the loot taken at Lucknow was a set of miniature animals and birds, all formed of large but misshapen pearls, the tails, heads, eyes, &c., of the creatures being of gold set with diamonds. Any one who has seen much mediæval work in the precious metals, or the illuminated pages of early printed books on vellum, of Italian execution, will be able to recall many curious instances of this quaint kind of *vertu*.

The largest pearl of which we have heard was one spoken of by Böethius, the size of a muscadine pear. It was named the *Incomparable*, and weighed thirty carats or five pennyweights. Tavernier's pearl would, if engraved, well illustrate the rocky, eccentric, and oft-times triangular shapes in which these gems are found. They often adhere to the shell, and cannot be removed without the saw. After such an operation they would merely rank as half pearls, which, by the way, are those generally mounted in jewellery and rings.

Did our scope allow of a description of the manufacture from fish scales of the substitute for the real pearl,

the marvellously clever imitation which is worn, wittingly, by many a gracious lady, and unwittingly by many another, we should have another interesting story to tell. But these imitations may be considered as frauds upon our placid creditor the oyster—or, shall we say, compositions with him, and beneath the notice of, debtors who are trying to behave honestly to a bivalve.

Properly speaking, however, the Pearl oyster (*Avicula margaritacea*), from which the greater number of pearls, and the largest quantity of mother-of-pearl is obtained, is not an oyster strictly so called, but belongs to an allied genus. The pearl oyster is an oval-pointed recurved-edged mussel; the lower shell with a hood-shaped hollow point, the upper one like a cover, leafy and pearly, of a rosy purple-white colour. The common oyster (*Ostrea edulis*), on the contrary, has a round-oval mussel-shell, thin towards the edges, with tiled leaves adhering to one another, the upper shell quite flat. Some variety exists in these, some having elongated edges, owing to the difference of age.

Gentle reader! when Queen Mary, whom men call "Bloody Mary," died, and Queen Elizabeth, Protestant Elizabeth, came to the throne, Osorius, the good Bishop of Arcoburge, a staunch bishop of the Church of Rome, sent her a sugared pill, which he hoped would at once convert the queen, and drive out the "obnoxious heresy" from the land. That all might read it, he himself wrote it in Latin: "*Epistola ad Clarissimam Principam Elizabetham*;" had it translated into French, which honest old Strype says "gave great offence," as "*une bien longue*

et docte Epistre à Madame Elizabeth, Royne d' Angleterre;" and to gild the nasty thing, called it, in English, "A Perle for a Prince;" but all the ingenuity of quackery could not disguise the drastic pill, and neither the queen nor her lieges would swallow it. I have seen all three books in the Grenville Library in the British Museum, and at once pronounce them nothing but "mock" pearls. Now, I have extracted for your delectation a real pearl out of the Oyster, in the shape of this little book. It is Christmas-tide. Cherish it for those best of pearls, kindly thoughts and loving remembrances, which the Oyster calls into being when the Holly and the Mistletoe deck our walls.

THE
ART OF DINING;

OR,
GASTRONOMY AND GASTRONOMERS.

Hayward, Abraham
"

SECOND EDITION.

LONDON:
JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE STREET.
1853.

LONDON : PRINTED BY W. CLOWES AND SONS, STAMFORD STREET.

S. B. No. 1948-4-26

PREFATORY NOTICE.



THE groundwork of this little book is taken from two articles in the *Quarterly Review*, by the same writer; the first of which, entitled *Gastronomy and Gastronomers*, appeared in July, 1835, and the second, being a review of the late Mr. Walker's *Original*, in February, 1836. The following pages are an attempt to consolidate those articles, and to bring down and adapt to the present time the disquisitions, descriptions, and directions contained in them.

Among the many distinguished and accomplished persons who have kindly fallen in with the humour of the undertaking, and have supplied the writer with valuable materials in the shape of hints, recipes, and illustrative anecdotes, he deems it an imperative duty to acknowledge his obligations to Count d'Orsay, Lord Marcus Hill, the Right Hon. Colonel Damer, the Hon. W. Stuart (attached to the British Embassy at Paris), Sir Alexander Grant, Bart., Sir H. Hume Campbell, of Marchmont, Bart., the Editor of the *Quarterly Review*, the

Author of the Spanish Handbook, Lady Morgan, and (last, not least) the author of 'Stuart of Dunleith.'

In preparing the second edition for the press, he has corrected what has been proved to him to be erroneous; but his excuse for not adopting more of the alterations and improvements suggested by able critics is to be found in the limited scope and humble object of the work.

A. H.

Temple, January, 1853.

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THE ART OF DINING.

M. HENRION DE PENSEY, late President of the Court of Cassation, the magistrate (according to M. Royer Collard) of whom "regenerated" France had most reason to be proud, expressed himself as follows to MM. Laplace, Chaptal, and Berthollet, three of the most distinguished men of science of their day:—"I regard the discovery of a dish as a far more interesting event than the discovery of a star, for we have always stars enough, but we can never have too many dishes; and I shall not regard the sciences as sufficiently honoured or adequately represented amongst us, until I see a cook in the first class of the Institute." Most rational and candid persons will coincide with the judge, to the extent of thinking that mankind are deeply interested in the due cultivation of the art which improves health, prolongs life, and promotes kindly feelings, besides largely contributing to a class of material enjoyments which are only reprehensible when tinged by coarseness or excess. The history of gastronomy is that of manners, if not of morals; and the learned are aware that its literature is both instructive and amusing; for it is replete with curious traits of character

and comparative views of society at different periods, as well as with striking anecdotes of remarkable men and women, whose destinies have been strangely influenced by their epicurean tastes and habits. Let it, moreover, be remembered, that a tone of mock seriousness or careless gaiety does not necessarily imply the absence of sound reflection. The laughing philosopher may prove better worth attention than the solemn pedant; and the thoughtful reader of the following pages may learn from them, not merely how and where to dine best, but by what means, and upon what principles, convivial intercourse has been carried to the highest pitch of refinement in circles like those described by the poet:—

“When in retreat Fox lays his thunder by,
And Wit and Taste their mingled charms supply,
When Siddons, born to melt and freeze the heart,
Performs at home her more endearing part.”

As regards the historical parts of our lucubrations, we shall be exceedingly brief, and not at all learned—bestowing only a passing glance on the ancients, and hurrying on as fast as possible to France and England.

It is sagaciously remarked by Madame Dacier, that Homer makes no mention of boiled meat in any of his works; and in all the entertainments described by him, as in the dinner given by Achilles to the royal messengers in the ninth Iliad, the *pièce de résistance* undoubtedly is a broil; from which it is plausibly, if somewhat hastily, inferred that the Greeks had not then discovered the mode of making vessels to bear fire.

This discovery is supposed to have reached them

from Egypt, and they rapidly turned it to the best possible account. The Athenians, in particular, seem to have as much excelled the rest of Greece in gastronomy, as the French, the modern nation most nearly resembling them, excel the rest of Europe in this respect. The best proof of this assertion is to be found in the circumstance that the learned have agreed to rank amongst the most valuable of the lost works of antiquity, a didactic poem on gastronomy, by Arcestratus, the intimate friend of one of the sons of Pericles. "This great writer," says Athenæus, "had traversed earth and sea to render himself acquainted with the best things which they produced. He did not, during his travels, inquire concerning the manners of nations, as to which it is useless to inform ourselves, since it is impossible to change them; but he entered the laboratories where the delicacies of the table were prepared, and he held intercourse with none but those who could advance his pleasures. His poem is a treasure of science, every verse a precept."

These terms of exalted praise must be taken with a few grains of salt, for, considering the imperfect state of the physical sciences at the time, it may well be doubted whether Arcestratus succeeded in producing so complete a treasure of precepts as his admirers have supposed. Another ground of scepticism is supplied by the accounts that have come down to us of the man himself, who is said to have been so small and lean, that, when placed in the scales, his weight was found not to exceed an obolus;

in which case he must have borne a strong resemblance to the Dutch governor mentioned in Knickerbocker's History of New York, who pined away so imperceptibly, that when he died there was nothing of him left to bury. Besides, it is highly probable that all which was really valuable in the cookery of the Greeks was carried off, along with the other arts to which ordinary opinion assigns a yet higher value, to Rome. As, indeed, we know that the Romans sent a deputation to Athens for the laws of Solon, and were in the constant habit of repairing thither to study in the schools, it would be ludicrous to suppose that they neglected the *cuisine*; and there can be little or no doubt whatever, that when, at a somewhat later period, the Grecian philosophers, poets, and rhetoricians flocked to Rome as the metropolis of civilization, the cooks of Athens accompanied them. Yet concentrating, as the Roman banquets must have done, all the gastronomic genius and resources of the world, they were much more remarkable for profusion and costliness than for taste. The sole merit of a dish composed of the brains of five hundred peacocks or the tongues of five hundred nightingales, must have been its dearness; and if a mode of swallowing most money in a given time be the desideratum, commend us to Cleopatra's decoction of pearls—although even this was fairly exceeded in originality and neatness of conception by the frail fair one—the famous Mrs. Sawbridge, we believe—who, to show her contempt for an elderly adorer, placed the hundred pound note, which he had laid

upon her dressing-table, between two slices of bread and butter, and ate it as a sandwich. Captain Morris, in one of his songs, has set the proper value on these fancied Roman luxuries.

“ Old Lucullus, they say,
Forty cooks had each day,
And Vitellius’s meals cost a million ;
But I like what is good,
When or where be my food,
In a chop-house or royal pavilion.

“ At all feasts (if enough)
I most heartily stuff,
And a song at my heart alike rushes,
Though I’ve not fed my lungs
Upon nightingales’ tongues,
Nor the brains of goldfinches and thrushes.”

Neither have we much respect for epicures who could select so awkward and uncomfortable a position as a reclining one. It is quite startling to think how they must have slobbered their long beards and togas, in conveying food from the table to their mouths without forks—for forks are clearly a modern discovery, none having been found in the ruins of Herculaneum—and it is difficult to conceive how they could manage to drink at all, unless they sat up as the goblet was passed to them. Eating, however, had certainly engaged the attention of the Roman men of science, although one only of their works on the subject has come down to us. It is supposed to have enlightened the public about the time of Helio-gabalus—and bears the name of ‘ Apicius,’ in honour of the connoisseur who spent about a million and a half of our money in the gratification of his palate, and then, finding that he had not above fifty thou-

sand pounds sterling left, killed himself for fear of dying of hunger.

The period comprising the fall of the Roman empire and the greater portion of the middle ages, was one of unmitigated darkness for the fine arts. Charlemagne, as appears from his Capitularies, took a warm personal interest in the management of his table; and the Normans, two or three centuries later, are said to have prided themselves on their superior taste and discrimination in this respect. Sir Walter Scott had good authority for the graphic details of their real or affected refinement which are contained in his description of Prince John's banquet in 'Ivanhoe.' But the revival of cookery, like that of learning, is due to Italy. We are unable to fix the precise time when it there began to be cultivated with success, but it met with the most enlightened encouragement from the merchant-princes of Florence, and the French received the first rudiments of the science from the professors who accompanied Catherine de Medicis to Paris.* There is a remarkable passage in Montaigne, which shows that the Italian cooks had learnt to put a proper estimate on their vocation, and that their mode of viewing it was still new to the French.

"I have seen amongst us," says Montaigne, "one of those artists who had been in the service of Cardinal Caraffa. He discoursed to me of this *science de gueule* with

* It is clearly established that they introduced the use of ices into France. *Fricandeaus* were invented by the *chef* of Leo X. Coryat, in his 'Crudities Gobbled Up,' writing in the reign of James I., says that he was called "Furcifer" by his friends, from his using their "Italian neatnesses namely forks."

a gravity and a magisterial air, as if he was speaking of some weighty point of theology. He expounded to me a difference of appetites: that which one has fasting; that which one has after the second or third course; the methods now of satisfying and then of exciting and piquing it; the *police* of sauces, first in general, and next particularising the qualities of the ingredients and their effects; the differences of salads according to their season; that which should be warmed, that which should be served cold, with the mode of adorning and embellishing them to make them pleasant to the view. He then entered on the order of the service, full of elevated and important considerations—

‘Nec minimo sane discrimine refert
Quo gestu lepores et quo gallina secetur.’

And all this expressed in rich and magnificent terms, in those very terms, indeed, which one employs in treating of the government of an empire—I well remember my man.”

The strongest proofs in favour of the excellence of the ancients in painting are deduced from the descriptions of the principles and effects of painting to be found in the poets, historians, and orators of antiquity, who, it is argued, would never have spoken as they do speak of it, had not those principles been understood, and those effects been at least partially produced.* Arguing in the same manner from the above passage, we infer that culinary science must have made no inconsiderable progress to enable Montaigne’s acquaintance to discourse upon it so eloquently. There is also good

* This argument is well put in Webb’s ‘Dialogues on Painting.’

reason to believe that it had made some progress in England, for Cardinal Campeggio, one of the legates charged to treat with Henry VIII. concerning his divorce from Catherine, drew up a report on the state of English cookery as compared with that of Italy and France, probably by the express desire and for the especial use of his Holiness the Pope. Henry, moreover, was a liberal rewarder of that sort of merit which ministered to the gratification of his appetites; and on one occasion he was so transported with the flavour of a new pudding, that he gave a manor to the inventor.

History, which has only become philosophical within the last century, and took little note of manners until Voltaire had demonstrated the importance of commemorating them, affords no authentic materials for filling up the period which intervened between the arrival of Catherine of Medicis and the accession of Louis XIV., under whom cookery made prodigious advances, being one while employed to give a zest to his glories, and then again to console him in their decline.* The name of his celebrated *maitre d'hôtel*, Béchamel—a name as surely destined to immortality by his sauce, as that of Herschel by his star, or that of Baffin by his bay—affords guarantee and proof enough of the discriminating elegance with which the royal table was served; and, as may be seen in the memoirs and correspondence

* Liqueurs were invented for the use of Louis XIV. in his old age, as were *Côtelettes à la Maintenon* to protect the royal stomach against grease.

of the time, Colbert, the celebrated administrator, and Condé, the great captain, were little, if at all, behindhand in this respect with royalty. The closing scene of Vatel, the *maître d'hôtel* of Condé, has been often quoted, but it forms so essential a portion of this history, that we are under the absolute necessity of inserting it:—

“I wrote you yesterday,” says Madame de Sévigny, “that Vatel had killed himself; I here give you the affair in detail. The king arrived on the evening of the Thursday; the collation was served in a room hung with jonquils; all was as could be wished. At supper there were some tables where the roast was wanting, on account of several parties which had not been expected. This affected Vatel. He said several times, ‘I am dishonoured; this is a disgrace that I cannot endure.’ He said to Gourville, ‘My head is dizzy; I have not slept for twelve nights; assist me in giving orders.’ Gourville assisted him as much as he could. The roast which had been wanting, not at the table of the king, but at the inferior tables, was constantly present to his mind. Gourville mentioned it to the prince; the prince even went to the chamber of Vatel, and said to him,—‘Vatel, all is going on well; nothing could equal the supper of the king.’ He replied,—‘Monseigneur, your goodness overpowers me; I know that the roast was wanting at two tables.’ ‘Nothing of the sort,’ said the prince; ‘do not distress yourself, all is going on well.’ Night came; the fireworks failed; they had cost sixteen thousand francs. He rose at four the next morning, determined to attend to everything in person. He found everybody asleep. He meets one of the inferior purveyors, who brought only two packages of sea-fish: he asks, ‘Is

that all?' 'Yes, Sir.' The man was not aware that Vatel had sent to all the seaports. Vatel waits some time; the other purveyors did not arrive; his brain began to burn; he believed that there would be no more fish. He finds Gourville; he says to him, 'Monsieur, I shall never survive this disgrace.' Gourville made light of it. Vatel goes up stairs to his room, places his sword against the door, and stabs himself to the heart; but it was not until the third blow, after giving himself two not mortal, that he fell dead. The fish, however, arrives from all quarters; they seek Vatel to distribute it; they go to his room, they knock, they force open the door; he is found bathed in his blood. They hasten to tell the prince, who is in despair. The duke wept: it was on Vatel that his journey from Burgundy hinged. The prince related what had passed to the king, with marks of the deepest sorrow. It was attributed to the high sense of honour which he had after his own way. He was very highly commended; his courage was praised and blamed at the same time. The king said he had delayed coming to Chantilly for five years, for fear of the embarrassment he should cause."

Such are the exact terms in which Madame de Sévigny narrated one of the most extraordinary instances of self-devotion recorded in history. "Enfin, Manette, voilà ce que c'était que Madame de Sévigné et Vatel! Ce sont ces gens-là qui ont honoré le siècle de Louis Quatorze."* We subjoin a few reflections on the same subject taken from the Epistle dedicatory to the shade of Vatel, appropriately

* Vanderdoort, who had the charge of Charles I.'s collection, *naug* himself because a miniature by Gibson was missing at the moment. — *Walpole*.

prefixed to the concluding volume of the *Almanach des Gourmands* :—

“ Who was ever more worthy of the respect and gratitude of true gourmands than the man of genius who would not survive the dishonour of the table of the great Condé, who immolated himself with his own hands, because the sea-fish had not arrived some hours before it was to be served? So noble a death insures you, venerable shade, the most glorious immortality! You have proved that the fanaticism of honour can exist in the kitchen as well as in the camp, and that the spit and the saucepan have also their Catos and their Deciuses.

“ Your example, it is true, has not been imitated by any *maître d'hôtel* of the following century; and in *this* philosophic age all have preferred living at the expense of their masters to the honour of dying for them. But your name will not be revered the less by all the friends of good cheer. May so noble an example ever influence the emulation of all *mâitres d'hôtel* present and to come! and if they do not imitate you in your glorious suicide, let them at least take care, by all means human, that sea-fish be never wanting at our tables.”

The Prince de Soubise (immortalized by the sauce named after him) rejoiced in an excellent cook—a man of true science, with princely notions of expenditure. His master one day announced to him his intention to give a supper, and demanded a *menu*. The *chef* presented one with an estimate; and the first article on which the prince cast his eyes was this,—*fifty hams*. “Eh! what!” said he; “why, Bertrand, you must be out of your

senses! are you going to feast my whole regiment?" "No, Monseigneur! only one ham will appear upon the table; the rest are not the less necessary for my *espagnoles*, my *blonds*, my *garnitures*, my —" "Bertrand, you are plundering me, and this article shall not pass." "Oh, my lord," replied the indignant artist, "you do not understand our resources: give the word, and these fifty hams which confound you, I will put them all into a glass bottle no bigger than my thumb." What answer could be made? The prince nodded, and the article passed.

To turn for a moment to England—the state of cookery under Charles II. is sufficiently indicated by the names of Chiffinch and Chaubert, to whose taste and skill the author of *Waverley* has borne ample testimony by his description of the dinner prepared for Smith, Ganlesse, and Peveril of the Peak, at the little Derbyshire inn:—

"We could bring no chauffettes with any convenience; and even Chaubert is nothing, unless his dishes are tasted in the very moment of projection. Come, uncover, and let us see what he has done for us. Hum! ha! ay—squab pigeons—wild-fowl—young chickens—venison cutlets—and a space in the centre, wet, alas! by a gentle tear from Chaubert's eye, where should have been the *soupe aux écrevisses*. The zeal of that poor fellow is ill repaid by his paltry ten louis per month."—*Peveril*, vol. ii. p. 165.

Decisive evidence of the palmy condition of the art in the seventeenth century is afforded by 'The

Accomplisht Cook' of Robert May, the first edition of which appeared in 1665. In the dedication to Lord Montague, Lord Lumley, Lord Dormer, and Sir Kenelm Digby, the author says, "In the mean space, that our English world may know the Mæcena's (*sic*) and patrons of this generous art, I have exposed this volume to the public, under the tuition of your names, at whose feet I prostrate these endeavours."

He speaks rather contemptuously of the French *cuisine*, but acknowledges himself "not a little beholding to the Italian and Spanish treatises; though, without my fosterage and bringing up under the generosities and bounties of my noble patrons and masters, I could never have arrived to this experience." This fosterage was certainly remarkable. From "a short narrative of some passages of the Author's Life," modestly prefixed to the book, we learn that, having attained to some perfection under his father, one of the ablest cooks of his time, the old Lady Dormer sent him over to France, where he continued five years, in the family of a noble peer and first president of Paris. On his return he was bound apprentice to "Mr. Arthur Hollinsworth, in Newgate Market, one of the ablest workmen in London, cook to the Grocers' Hall and Star Chamber. His apprenticeship being out, the Lady Dormer sent for him to be her cook, under his father (who then served that honourable lady), where there were four cooks more; such noble houses were then (about 1610) kept, the glory of that and the shame

of this present age. Then were those days wherein were practised the triumphs and trophies of cookery." One of these triumphs is the construction of a ship of confectionery, with guns charged with actual powder, and a castle of pies, containing live frogs and birds. After giving directions as to the firing of the guns, he proceeds:—

“ This done, to sweeten the stink of powder, let the ladies take the egg-shells full of sweet waters and throw them at each other. All dangers being seemingly over, by this time you may suppose they will desire to see what is in the pyes; where, lifting first the lid off one pye, out skip some frogs, which makes the ladies to skip and shreek; next after the other pye, whence come out the birds, who, by a natural instinct, flying in the light will put out the candles; so that, what with the flying birds and skipping frogs, the one above, the other beneath, will cause much delight and pleasure to the whole company: at length, the candles are lighted, and a banquet brought in, the musick sounds, *and every one with much delight and content rehearses their actions in the former passages*”—i. e. whilst the candles were out.—“ These were formerly the delights of the nobility before good housekeeping had left England, and the sword really acted that which was only counterfeited in such honest and laudable exercises as these.”

Under Queen Anne, again, the gouty queen of gourmands, who had Lister, one of the editors of the *Apicius*, for her pet physician, and who, in fact, achieved the highest honour of gastronomy by giving her name to a pudding, cookery certainly did not suffer from any lack of encouragement; but,

soon after the accession of the House of Brunswick, a fashion was introduced, which we cannot but think adverse to the true and proper object of the art:—

“The last branch of our fashion,” says Horace Walpole, “into which the close observation of nature has been introduced, is our desserts. Jellies, biscuits, sugar-plums, and creams, have long since given way to harlequins, gondoliers, Turks, Chinese, and shepherdesses of Saxon china. But these, unconnected, and only seeming to wander among groves of curled paper and silk flowers, were soon discovered to be too insipid and unmeaning. By degrees, meadows of cattle, of the same brittle materials, spread themselves over the table; cottages rose in sugar, and temples in barley-sugar; pigmy Neptunes in cars of cockle-shells triumphed over oceans of looking-glass or seas of silver-tissue. Women of the first quality came home from Chenevix’s, laden with dolls and babies, not for their children, but their housekeeper. At last, even these puerile puppet-shows are sinking into disuse, and more manly ways of concluding our repasts are established. Gigantic figures succeed to pigmies; and it is known that a celebrated confectioner (Lord Albemarle’s) complained that, after having prepared a middle dish of gods and goddesses eighteen feet high, his lord would not cause the ceiling of his parlour to be demolished to facilitate their entrée. ‘*Imaginez vous,*’ said he, ‘*que milord n’a pas voulu faire ôter le plafond!*’

“The Intendant of Gascony,” adds Walpole, “on the birth of the Duke of Burgundy, amongst many other magnificent festivities, treated the noblesse of the province with a dinner and a dessert, the latter of which concluded with a representation, by wax figures moved by clock-work, of the whole labour of the dauphiness and the happy

birth of an heir to the monarchy."—*Lord Orford's Works*, vol. i. p. 149.

Fortunately there were men of taste on both sides of the Channel, who made art minister to other purposes than vanity, and amongst these the Regent Duke of Orleans most signally distinguished himself. His *petits soupers* conferred a celebrity on the scene of them, which it still preserves, sufficiently to justify the reply of the Frenchman, who, on being asked by a stranger in a remote part of Europe if he could tell him the direction of Paris, made answer, "*Monsieur, ce chemin-là vous conduira au Palais Royal.*" There is a vague tradition that the *chef* of the Regent was pre-eminent in a *dinde aux truffes*.

It was the fashion of his day for each guest to place a piece of gold in every dish of more than ordinary merit. This was an admirable method of calling out the genius of the artists; for judicious praise is as necessary as discriminating censure to inspire energy and animate exertion. The Duke of Wellington once requested the connoisseur whom the author of 'Tancred' terms "the finest judge in Europe" to provide him a *chef*. Felix, whom the late Lord Seaford was reluctantly about to part with on economical grounds, was recommended and received. Some months afterwards his patron was dining with Lord Seaford, and before the first course was half over he observed, "So I find you have got the Duke's cook to dress your dinner." "I have got Felix," replied Lord S., "but he is no longer the Duke's cook. The poor fellow came to me with

tears in his eyes and begged me to take him back again, at reduced wages or no wages at all, for he was determined not to remain at Apsley House. 'Has the Duke been finding fault?' said I. 'Oh no, my lord; I would stay if he had: he is the kindest and most liberal of masters; but I serve him a dinner that would make Ude or Francatelli burst with envy, and he says nothing; I go out and leave him to dine on a dinner badly dressed by the cookmaid, and he says nothing. Dat hurt my feelings, my lord.'" To facilitate criticism and individualize responsibility, it is the practice at some distinguished Russian and German tables—at the Royal table of Hanover, in particular—to print in the *carte*—a copy of which is placed beside the plate of each guest—the name of the cook by whom each dish has been dressed, like the programme of a concert with the names of the performers. See the Appendix, No. 1.

Louis XV., amidst his other luxuries, was not unmindful of that which, it has been sagaciously observed, harmonises with all other pleasures, and remains to console us for their loss. It is generally understood that *tables volantes* were invented under his eye:—

“At the petits soupers of Choisy (says the most graceful and tasteful of poets) were first introduced those admirable pieces of mechanism—a table and a sideboard, which descended and rose again covered with viands and wines. And thus the most luxurious court in Europe, after all its boasted refinements, was glad to return at last, by this

singular contrivance, to the quiet and privacy of humble life."—*Rogers's Poems*, p. 135, *note*.

It was to please Louis XV. that the Duchesse de Mailly invented the *gigot à la Mailly*. Louis XVI. is said to have been somewhat neglectful of his table, which may have been one amongst the many causes of his fall; for, as Johnson observes, a man who is careless about his table will generally be found careless in other matters. Louis XVIII. (whom we mention now to obviate the necessity of returning to the dynasty) was a gastronome of the first water, and had the Duc d'Escars for his grand *maitre d'hôtel*—a man whose fortunes were hardly on a par with his deserts. He died inconsolable at not having given his name to a single dish, after devoting his whole life to the culinary art. When his best friends wished to wound him mortally, they had only to mention the *Veau à la Béchamel*. "Gentlemen," he would exclaim, "say no more about it, or fancy me the author and inventor of the dish. This French Revolution was necessary, that, in the general break up, poor Béchamel should be decorated with this glory. *Entre nous*, he was wholly innocent of any invention whatever. But such is the way of the world! he goes straight to posterity, and your most humble servant will end by leaving no token of remembrance behind him."

M. d'Escars' fate was the harder because he died a victim to gastronomy. It is related of Herbault, of

bonnet-making fame, that, when he was occupied with the more recondite mysteries of his art, his porter was wont to put off visitors with, "Monsieur n'est pas visible, *il compose.*" When the Duc d'Escars and his royal master were closeted together to meditate a dish, the ministers were kept waiting in the antechamber, and the next day the following announcement regularly appeared in the official journals:—"M. le Duc d'Escars *a travaillé* dans le cabinet." Louis XVIII. had invented the *truffes à la purée d'ortolans*, and, reluctant to disclose the secret to an ignoble confidant or menial, he invariably prepared the dish with his own royal hands, assisted by the Duc. On one occasion they had jointly composed a dish of more than ordinary dimensions, and duly consumed the whole of it. In the middle of the night the Duc was seized with a fit of indigestion, and his case was declared hopeless: loyal to the last, he ordered an attendant to wake and inform the King, who might be exposed to a similar attack. His Majesty was roused accordingly, and told that his faithful servant was dying of his invention. "Dying!" exclaimed Louis le Désiré—"dying of my *truffes à la purée*? I was right then. I always said that I had the better stomach of the two."

The Revolution bade fair at its commencement to bring back a long night of barbarism upon art; and the destruction of the pre-existing races of amphitryons and diners-out was actually and most efficiently accomplished by it. We allude not merely to

the nobility, with their appendages the chevaliers and abbés, but to the financiers, who employed their ill-got fortunes so gloriously.

What a host of pleasing associations arise at the bare mention of a dish *à la financière*! They were replaced, however, although slowly, by the inevitable consequences of the events that proved fatal to them. The upstart chiefs of the republic, the plundering marshals and *parvenus* nobles of Napoleon, proved no bad substitutes in this way for the financiers, although they tried in vain to ape the gallant bearing, as well as the arms and titles, of the old feudal nobility. Amongst the most successful of this mushroom generation was Cambacères, second consul under the republic and arch-chancellor under the empire, who never suffered the cares of government to distract his attention from "the great object of life." On one occasion, for example, being detained in consultation with Napoleon beyond the appointed hour of dinner,—it is said that the fate of the Duc d'Enghien was the topic under discussion,—he was observed, when the hour became very late, to show great symptoms of impatience and restlessness. He at last wrote a note, which he called a gentleman usher in waiting to carry. Napoleon, suspecting the contents, nodded to an aide-de-camp to intercept the despatch. As he took it into his hands, Cambacères begged earnestly that he would not read a trifling note on familiar matters. Napoleon persisted, and found it to be a note to the cook, containing only the follow-

ing words: "*Gardez les entremets—les rôtis sont perdus.*"

When Napoleon was in good humour at the result of a diplomatic conference, he was accustomed to take leave of the plenipotentiaries with—"Go and dine with Cambacérés." His table was, in fact, an important state-engine, as appears from the anecdote of the Genevese trout sent to him by the municipality of Geneva, and charged 300f. in their accounts. The Imperial *Cour des Comptes*, having disallowed the item, was interdicted from meddling with municipal affairs in future. The fame of Barrère's suppers had preceded that of Cambacérés' dinners. Sir James Mackintosh relates, in the Diary which he kept at Paris in 1814, that in 1794 Metternich presented to Trautmansdorf, his colleague at Brussels, a Frenchman, a persecuted Royalist, probably a spy, saying, "Here is M. —, just arrived from Paris, who says that peace ought not to be made with Robespierre." Trautmansdorf maintained the contrary. M. —, to confirm his own opinion, said, "I supped at Barrère's fifteen days since, and he told me that Robespierre's government would not last six weeks." "I have never supped at Barrère's," replied Trautmansdorf. "It is impossible," rejoined M. —, "to understand the Revolution without having supped at Barrère's." Barras, also, was famous for judicious attention to his table.

As some compensation, again, for the injurious influence of the Revolution in its first stages upon cookery, it is right to mention that it contributed to

emancipate the *cuisine* from prejudice, and added largely to its resources. *Pièces de résistance*, says Lady Morgan on Carème's authority, came in with the National Convention,—potatoes were dressed *au naturel* in the Reign of Terror,—and it was under the Directory that tea-drinking commenced in France. But both her ladyship and Carème are clearly in error when they say that one house alone (*les Frères Robert*) preserved the sacred fire of the French kitchen through the shock. The error of this supposition will appear from a brief sketch of far the most important change effected by the revolution,—a change bearing the strongest possible affinity to that which the spread of knowledge has effected in literature.

The time has been when a patron was almost as indispensable to an author as a publisher: Spenser waiting in Southampton's ante-room was a favourable illustration of the class; and so long as this state of things lasted, their independence of character, their position in society, their capacity for exertion, their style of thinking, were lowered, contracted, and cramped. Circumstances, which it is beside the present purpose to dwell upon, have widened the field of enterprise, and led literary men to depend almost exclusively on the public for patronage, to the manifest advantage of all parties. Precisely the same sort of change was effected in the state and prospects of French cookery by the Revolution; which rapidly accelerated, if it did not altogether originate, the establishment of what now

constitute the most distinctive excellence of Paris, its *restaurants*.

Boswell represents Johnson as expatiating on the felicity of England in her "Mitres," "Turks' Heads," &c., and triumphing over the French for not having the tavern-life in any perfection. The English of the present day, who have been accustomed to consider domesticity as their national virtue, and the habit of living in public as the grand characteristic of the French, will read the parallel with astonishment; but it was perfectly well-founded at the time. The first restaurateur in Paris was *Champ d'Oiseau, Rue des Poulies*, who commenced business in 1770. In 1789 the number of restaurateurs had increased to a hundred; in 1804 (the date of the first appearance of the *Almanach des Gourmands*) to five or six hundred; and it now considerably exceeds a thousand. Three distinct causes are mentioned in the Almanach as having co-operated in the production and multiplication of these establishments. First, the rage for English fashions which prevailed amongst the French during the ten or fifteen years immediately preceding the revolution, "for the English," said the writer, "as is well known, almost always take their meals in taverns." Secondly, "the sudden inundation of undomiciled legislators, who, finishing by giving the *ton*, drew by their example all Paris to the *cabaret*." Thirdly, the breaking up of the domestic establishments of the rich secular and clerical nobility, whose cooks were thus driven to the

public for support. Robert, one of the earliest and best of the profession, was *ci-devant chef* of the *ci-devant* Archbishop of Aix. A fourth cause has been suggested, on which we lay no particular stress: it has been thought that the new patriotic *millionaires*, who had enriched themselves by the plunder of the church and the nobility, were fearful, in those ticklish times, of letting the full extent of their opulence be known; and thus, instead of setting up an establishment, preferred gratifying their Epicurean inclinations at an eating-house.* Be this as it may, at the commencement of the nineteenth century the culinary genius of France had become permanently fixed in the *restaurants*, and when the allied monarchs arrived in Paris in 1814 they were absolutely compelled to contract with a restaurateur (Véry) for the supply of their table, at the moderate sum of 3000 francs a day, exclusive of wine.

About this time, however, a reactionary movement took place. Many of the best cooks were again formed and retained in private establishments. The illustrious strangers who repaired to Paris after the peace vied with the native Amphitryons, royal and noble, in munificent patronage of the art; and the ten or fifteen years immediately subsequent to the Restoration may be specified as the epoch during

* It was not unusual amongst the English adventurers who had enriched themselves by the plunder of India, in the golden days of Paul Benfield and Lord Clive, to make a mystery of their wealth. "What does — mean (said a country gentleman) by buying that farm, which is at least five miles distant from his principal estate?" — "He means to join them at the proper season," replied an old Indian, who proved right.

which French cookery had reached its culminating point.

If a new Pantheon or Valhalla were set apart for eminent cooks, the following, who matured or laid the foundations of their fame during the first quarter of this century, would have been held entitled to niches, pedestals, or inscriptions within its hallowed precincts:—Robert (inventor of the sauce), Rechaud, Merillion; Benaud, the *chef* of Cambacérés; Farci, *chef de la Bouche Impériale*; Boucheseche, Chevalier, Louis Esbras, Plumeret, and Paul Véry, who formed the famous culinary brigade of Talleyrand; Legacque, cook to Marshal Duroc, and the founder of a *restaurant* which, under the Empire, became celebrated for its *parties fines*; Joubert, many years cook to M. Lafitte, and afterwards to Prince Esterhazy; Baleine and Borel, of the renowned *Rocher*; Tailleur; the brothers Véry; Robin, afterwards in the service of the late Lord Stair; Beauvilliers, Carème, &c. &c. Of these, the three first have been ingeniously characterised as the Raphael, Michael Angelo, and Rubens of cookery; and Beauvilliers was placed by acclamation at the head of the classical school, so called by way of contradistinction to the romantic school, of which the famous Carème used to be considered as the chief. Here again the philosophic observer will not fail to mark a close analogy between cookery and literature.*

* Dugald Stewart was struck by the analogy between cookery, poetry, and the fine arts, as appears from the following passage:—
“Agreeably to this view of the subject, *sweet* may be said to be *intrinsically* pleasing, and bitter to be *relatively* pleasing; which both

Beauvilliers was a remarkable man in many ways, and we are fortunately enabled to furnish a few materials for his future biographer. He commenced the practice of his profession about 1782, in the Rue Richelieu, No. 20, which we record for the instruction of those who love to trace the historic sites of a metropolis. His reputation grew slowly, and did not arrive at its full height until the beginning of the present century, but it was never known to retrograde, and in 1814 and 1815 he fairly rivalled Véry in the favour of "*nos amis les ennemis*." He made himself personally acquainted with all the marshals and generals of taste, without regard to country, and spoke as much of the language of each as was necessary for his own peculiar sort of intercourse. His memory, also, is reported to have been such, that, after a lapse of twenty years, he could remember and address by name persons who had dined two or three times at his house; and his mode of profiting by his knowledge was no less peculiar than his aptness in acquiring and retaining it. Divining, as it were by instinct, when a party of distinction were present, he was wont to approach their table with every token of the profoundest submission to their will and the warmest interest in their gratification. He would point out one dish to be avoided, another to be had without delay; he would himself order a third, of which no one had

are, in many cases, equally essential to those effects, which, in *the art of cookery*, correspond to that *composite beauty* which it is the object of the painter and of the poet to create!"—*Philosophical Essays*.

thought, or send for wine from a cellar of which he alone had the key ; in a word, he assumed so amiable and engaging a tone, that all these extra articles had the air of being so many benefactions from himself. But he vanished after having supported this Amphitryon-like character for a few minutes, and the arrival of the bill gave ample evidence of the party's having dined at a *restaurant*. "Beauvilliers," says the author of the *Physiologie du Goût*, "made, unmade, and remade his fortune several times, nor is it exactly known in which of these phases he was surprised by death ; but he had so many means of getting rid of his money, that no great prize could have devolved upon his heirs." Shortly before his exit he discharged the debt which, according to Lord Bacon, every man owes to his profession (though we should not be sorry if it were less frequently paid), by the publication of his *Art du Cuisinier*, in two volumes octavo. He died a few months before Napoleon.

Carème, like his great rival, is an author, and an intrepid one, for in the preface to his *Maître d'Hôtel Français* he says, "I have proved incontestably that all the books, down to the present time, on our *cuisine*, are full of errors ;" and he then proceeds to give evidence of his own superior breeding, with his natural and acquired qualifications for the art. We have to thank himself and Lady Morgan, who prides herself on a personal acquaintance with him, for most of the leading particulars of his life.

Carème is a lineal descendant of that celebrated

chef of Leo X. who received the name of *Jean de Carème* (*Jack of Lent*), for a soup-maigre which he invented for the Pope. It is remarkable that the first decisive proof of genius given by *our Carème* himself was a sauce for fast-dinners. He began his studies by attending a regular course of roasting under some of the leading roasters of the day; although it is a favourite belief amongst gastronomers that poets and roasters belong to one and the same category;—*on se fait cuisinier, mais on est né rôtisseur—poëta nascitur, non fit*. He next placed himself under M. Richaut, “*fameux saucier de la maison de Condé,*” as *Carème* terms him, to learn the mystery of sauces; then under M. Asne, with a peculiar view to the *belles parties des froids*; and took his finishing degree under *Robert l’Ainé*, a professor of *l’élégance moderne*.

The competition for the services of an artist thus accomplished was of course unparalleled. Half the sovereigns of Europe were suitors to him. He became by turns *chef* to the Emperor Alexander, Talleyrand, the present Lord Londonderry, the Princess Bagration, &c. Early in his career, he was induced by persevering solicitations and the promise of a salary of 1000*l.*, to become *chef* to George IV., then Regent, but left him at the end of a few months. We have heard that, whilst he condescended to stay at Carlton House, immense prices were given by aldermen for his secondhand *pâtés*, after they had made their appearance at the Regent’s table. The most tempting offers to return were subsequently made to him, but in vain;—*mon ame* (says he),

toute Française, ne peut vivre qu'en France;—and he ended by accepting an engagement with Baron Rothschild of Paris, who, in common with the English branches of the same distinguished family, nobly sustains the characteristic reputation of a *financier*.

Having spoken of Beauvilliers and Carème as chiefs of two rival schools of art, we may naturally enough be expected to distinguish them; yet how are we to fix by words such a Cynthia of the minute as the evanescent delicacy, the light, airy, volatile aroma of a dish?—*nequeo narrare, et sentio tantum*. But if compelled to draw distinctions between these two masters, we should say, that Beauvilliers was more remarkable for judgment, and Carème for invention,—that Beauvilliers exhausted the old world of art, and Carème discovered a new one,—that Beauvilliers rigidly adhered to the unities, and Carème snatched a grace beyond them,—that there was more *à plomb* in the touch of Beauvilliers, more curious felicity in Carème's,—that Beauvilliers was great in an *entrée*, and Carème sublime in an *entremet*,—that we would bet Beauvilliers against the world for a *rôt*, but should wish Carème to prepare the sauce were we under the necessity of eating up an elephant or our grandfather.*

As example is always better than precept, we subjoin Lady Morgan's animated sketch of a dinner by Carème at the Baron Rothschild's villa:—

“I did not hear the announcement of *Madame est servie*

* ‘Lorsque cette sauce est bien traitée, elle ferait manger son grand-père ou un éléphant.’—*Almanach des Gourmands*.

without emotion. We proceeded to the dining-room, not as in England by the printed orders of the red-book, but by the law of the courtesy of nations, whose only distinctions are made in favour of the greatest strangers. The evening was extremely sultry, and, in spite of Venetian blinds and open verandas, the apartments through which we passed were exceedingly close. A dinner in the largest of them threatened much inconvenience from the heat; but on this score there was no ground for apprehension. The dining-room stood apart from the house, in the midst of orange-trees: it was an elegant oblong pavilion of Grecian marble, refreshed by fountains that shot in air through scintillating streams, and the table, covered with the beautiful and picturesque dessert, emitted no odour that was not in perfect conformity with the freshness of the scene and fervour of the season. No burnished gold reflected the glaring sunset, no brilliant silver dazzled the eyes; porcelain, beyond the price of all precious metals by its beauty and its fragility, every plate a picture, consorted with the general character of sumptuous simplicity which reigned over the whole, and showed how well the masters of the feast had consulted the genius of the place in all.

“To do justice to the science and research of a dinner so served would require a knowledge of the art equal to that which produced it; its character, however, was, that it was in season,—that it was up to its time,—that it was in the spirit of the age,—that there was no *perruque* in its composition, no trace of the wisdom of our ancestors in a single dish,—no high-spiced sauces, no dark-brown gravies, no flavour of cayenne and allspice, no tincture of catsup and walnut pickle, no visible agency of those vulgar elements of cooking of the good old times, fire and water.

Distillations of the most delicate viands, extracted in silver dews, with chemical precision—

‘On tepid clouds of rising steam’—

formed the *fond* all. EVERY MEAT PRESENTED ITS OWN NATURAL AROMA—EVERY VEGETABLE ITS OWN SHADE OF VERDURE: the *mayonnaise* was fried in ice (like Ninon’s description of Sévigné’s heart),* and the tempered chill of the *plombière* (which held the place of the eternal *fondue* and *soufflets* of our English tables) anticipated the stronger shock, and broke it, of the exquisite *avalanche*, which, with the hue and odour of fresh-gathered nectarines, satisfied every sense and dissipated every coarser flavour.

“With less genius than went to the composition of this dinner, men have written epic poems; and if crowns were distributed to cooks, as to actors, the wreaths of Pasta or Sontag (divine as they are) were never more fairly won than the laurel which should have graced the brow of Carême for this specimen of the intellectual perfection of an art, the standard and gauge of modern civilization. Cruelty, violence, and barbarism were the characteristics of the men who fed upon the tough fibres of half-dressed oxen; humanity, knowledge, and refinement belong to the living generation, whose tastes and temperance are regulated by the science of such philosophers as Carême, and such Amphitryons as his employers!”—*France in 1829-30*, vol. ii. p. 414.

We have been at considerable pains to learn the history, as well as to ascertain the precise merits, of the principal Restaurants of Paris at the present time; but what we may have to say regarding them is always subject to one preliminary remark. In the preface to his Agricultural Chemistry, Sir Humphry

* Ninon’s comparison was to “*une citrouille frite à la neige.*”

Davy described science as "extending with such rapidity, that, even while he was preparing his manuscript for the press, some alterations became necessary." Now, not only does cookery advance and vary upon the same principle, but its professors are subject to changes from which the professors of other sciences are happily exempt. The fame of a restaurateur is always, in some sort, dependent upon fashion,—for a *plat*'s prosperity lies in the mouth of him who eats it; and the merit of a restaurateur is always in some sort dependent upon his fame. Confidence gives firmness, and a quick eye and steady hand are no less necessary to seize the exact moment of projection and infuse the last *souppçon* of piquancy, than to mark the changing fortunes of a battle, or to execute a critical winning hazard at the billiard-table. Besides, few will be public-spirited enough to keep a choice of rare things in readiness, unless the demand be both constant and discriminating. We must, therefore, be held blameless in case of any disappointment resulting from changes subsequently to the commencement of 1852.

We must also pause to commemorate one defunct establishment, the far-famed *Rocher de Cancale*, which has been broken up since the Revolution of 1848. It first grew into reputation by its oysters, which, about the year 1804, M. Baleine, its founder, contrived the means of bringing to Paris fresh and in the best possible order at all seasons alike; thus giving a direct practical refutation of the prejudice, that oysters are good in those months only which include

the canine letter.* He next applied himself with equal and well-merited success to fish and game ; and at length, taking courage to generalise his exertions, he aspired to and attained the eminence which, for more than forty years, the *Rocher* enjoyed without dispute. To form a just notion of his enterprising spirit, it is necessary to bear in mind the state of the French roads, and the difficulties of transport, in 1804. His fulness of reputation dates from November 28th, 1809, when he served a dinner of twenty-four covers in a style which made it the sole topic of conversation to gastronomic Paris for a month. The bill of fare, a most appetising document, preserved in the 'Almanach,' exhibits the harmonious and rich array of four *potages*, four *relevés*, twelve *entrées*, four *grosses pièces*, four *plats de rôti*, and eight *entremets*. Indeed, to dine in perfection at the Rocher, a dinner of ten covers should have been ordered a week or ten days beforehand, at not less than forty francs a-head, exclusive of wine ; nor was this price deemed excessive, for three or four louis a-head had been ordinarily given at Tailleur's.†

If unable to make a party, or compelled to *improvise* a dinner, connoisseurs were in the habit of asking the *garçon* to specify the luxuries of the day ; and it was amusing to witness the quiet self-possessed manner, the *con amore* intelligent air, with which he

* Apicius is said to have supplied Trajan with fresh oysters at all seasons of the year.

† Cambacères was present at one of Tailleur's three louis a-head dinners, given by M. des Androuins, and exclaimed in a transport of enthusiasm, *M. Tailleur, on ne dine pas mieux que cela chez moi.*

dictated his instructions, invariably concluding with the same phrase, uttered in an exulting self-gratulatory tone—*Bien, Monsieur, vous avez-là un excellent dîner!* Never, too, shall we forget the dignity with which he once corrected a blunder made in a *menu* by a tyro of the party, who had interpolated a *salmi* between the *bisque* and the *turbot à la crème et au gratin*. “*Messieurs,*” said he, as he brought in the turbot according to the pre-ordained order of things, “*le poisson est NATURELLEMENT le relevé du potage.*” The whole establishment was instinct with the same zeal. A report had got about in the autumn of 1834 that the celebrated *chef* was dead, and a scientific friend of ours took the liberty to mention it to the *garçon*, avowing at the same time his own total incredulity. He left the room without a word, but within five minutes he hurriedly threw open the door, exclaiming, “*Messieurs, il vient se montrer;*” and the great artist in his own proper person presented himself, and our distinguished ally enjoyed the honour of a brief but pregnant conversation with a man whose works were more frequently in the mouths of his most enlightened contemporaries than those of any other great artist that could have been named.

It is an odd coincidence that this zeal was most remarkable in the staff of another establishment which has also been discontinued, namely, Grignon's. On one occasion—to give an illustration of the head *garçon's* taste—he was apologising to the writer for the length of time a particular dish would take in dress-

ing. "*Mais Monsieur ne s'ennuiera point,*"—he added, presenting his neatly-bound octavo volume of a *carte*—"voilà une lecture très-agréable!" On another occasion—to give an illustration of his good faith—a friend of ours resolved on finishing with the very best wine that could be had, and the *Clos de Vougeot* was fixed on. The *garçon* took the order, but hesitated, and, after moving a few paces as if to execute it, stood still. It was evident that conflicting emotions were struggling for mastery in his soul, but the struggle terminated in our friend's favour, for he suddenly stole back to the table, and with the most unqualified admission of the excellence of the *Clos de Vougeot*, which was generally in request—still, if he might venture to hint a preference, he would recommend a trial of the *Richebourg* instead. Now, Richebourg is by no means in the first class of wines, and the wine in question was only five francs a bottle, whilst the *Clos de Vougeot* was twelve; but our correspondent found every reason to rejoice in the discovery.

Remember, we do not vouch for the existence of this identical Richebourg at any long subsequent period; for vintages are unfortunately not renewable like hogsheads—and in Paris, where even some of the best restaurateurs pay comparatively little attention to their cellars, a first-rate wine of any sort may be described in the terms applied to a virtuous despot by the late Emperor Alexander; who, when Madame de Staël was expatiating to him on the happiness of his subjects in the possession of such a czar,

is said to have exclaimed pathetically,—“Alas, Madam! I am nothing but a happy accident.” When one of these happy accidents (the wine or the emperor) expires, it is very seldom that the vacant place can be adequately supplied. It is therefore just as well to procrastinate the catastrophe, by making no imprudent disclosures which may accelerate it; and in the present instance our informant did not make up his mind to impart the secret until fairly convinced that there was little prospect of his profiting by it again—pretty much as Jonathan Wild was once induced to be guilty of a good action, after fully satisfying himself, upon the maturest deliberation, that he could gain nothing by refraining from it.

To return to the *Rocher*—it was particularly famous for frogs and robin-redbreasts. Frogs are excellent in fricassee or fried with crisped parsley. But they must be bred and fed with a view to the table, or they may turn out no better than the snails on which Dr. Hutton, and Dr. Black, of chemical renown, attempted to regale, in imitation of the ancients. These learned Scotch Professors caused a quantity of common snails to be collected in the fields and made into a kind of soup. They took their seats opposite to each other, and set to work in perfect good faith. A mouthful or two satisfied both that the experiment was a failure; but each was ashamed to give in first. At last Black, stealing a look at his friend, ventured to say, “Don’t you think they taste a little green?” “D—d green!” emphatically responded Hutton; “tak’ ’em awa, tak’ ’em awa!”

The robin-redbreast is remarkable for a delicate bitter flavour; but as our ingenuous recommendation of him as an eatable commodity has been occasionally regarded as symptomatic of a latent tendency to cannibalism, it may be as well to state that the popular notion of his amiability, which rests upon the somewhat apocryphal story of the Children in the Wood, is altogether a mistake. Ornithologists are agreed that he is one of the most quarrelsome of birds; and his loneliness is, in fact, the natural result of his pugnacity. At all events, the following argument does not admit of a logical reply:—

“Le rouge-gorge,” says the Almanach, “est la triste preuve de cette vérité—que le gourmand est par essence un être inhumain et cruel! car il n’a aucune pitié de ce charmant petit oiseau de passage, que sa gentillesse et sa familiarité confiante devraient mettre à l’abri de nos atteintes. *Mais s’il fallait avoir compassion de tout le monde, on ne mangerait personne*; et commiseration à part, il faut convenir que le rouge-gorge, qui tient un rang distingué dans la classe des becs-figues, est un rôti très succulent. On en fait à Metz et dans la Lorraine et l’Alsace, un assez grand commerce. Cet aimable oiseau se mange à la broche et en salmi.”

The following letter from one of the most eminent of cotemporary connoisseurs (the late Count d’Orsay) contains an accurate classification and description of the principal Restaurants of Paris; and we do not know that we can do better than print it as it stands:—

“Paris, May 1, 1852.

“I must confess with regret that the culinary art has sadly fallen off in Paris; and I do not very clearly see how

it is to recover, as there are at present no great establishments where the school can be kept up.

“ You must have remarked, when you were here, that at all the first-class restaurants you had nearly the same dinner; they may, however, be divided into three categories. Undoubtedly the best for a great dinner and good wine are the Frères Provençaux, Palais Royal; Philippe, Rue Mont Orgueil; and the Café de Paris: the latter is not always to be counted upon, but is excellent when they give you a *soigné* dinner. In the second class are Véry (Palais Royal): Vefour: Café Anglais; and Champeaux (Place de la Bourse), where you can have a most *conscientious* dinner, good without pretension; the situation is central, in a beautiful garden, and you must ask for a *bifstek à la Châteaubriand*. At the head of the third class we must place Bouvallet, on the Boulevard du Temple, near all the little theatres; Defieux, chiefly remarkable for corporation and assembly dinners; Durand, Place de la Madeleine; Ledoyen, in the Champs Elysées, where is also Guillemin, formerly cook to the Duc de Vincennes. The two best places for suppers are the Maison d’Or and the Café Anglais; and for breakfasts, Tortoni’s, and the Café d’Orsay on the Quai d’Orsay. In the vicinity of Paris the best restaurant is the Pavillon Henri Quatre, at St. Germain, kept by the old cook of the Duchesse de Berri. At none of these places could you find dinners now such as were produced by Ude; by Soyer, formerly with Lord Chesterfield; by Rotival, with Lord Wilton; or by Perron, with Lord Londonderry.

“ I must not forget to mention the two great contractors for dinners and suppers: these are Chevet, of the Palais Royal, and Potel, of the Boulevard des Italiens. The best possible materials may be procured at these establishments, but the dinners of Chevet and Potel are expensive and

vulgar—a sort of *tripotage* of truffles, cocks'-combs, crawfish mounted on the back of a fillet of beef, and not a single *entrée* which a connoisseur can eat; the roast game always *tourmentés* and cold, for their feathers are stuck on again before they are served up.

“ You are now *au fait* of the pretended French gastronomy. It has emigrated to England, and has no wish to return. We do not absolutely die of hunger here, and that is all that can be said.”

This letter, complete so far as it goes, suggests a few reflections, and admits of a few additions. The transitory nature of gastronomic glory needs no further illustration when we find *Véry* degraded to the second class. The two brothers of that name once stood at the very head of the first. Allusion has already been made to a decisive indication of their greatness in 1814, when they were commissioned by the Allied Sovereigns to purvey for them during their stay; and so long as their establishment on the Tuileries was left standing, the name of *Véry* retained its talismanic powers of attraction, the delight and pride of gastronomy—

“ Whilst stands the Coliseum, Rome shall stand;
And whilst Rome stands, the world —”

but when the house in question was removed to make way for the public buildings which now rest upon its site, the presiding genius of the family deserted it—*ex illo retro fluere et sublapsa referri*. Death, too, intervened, and carried off the most distinguished of the brothers. A magnificent monument was erected to his memory in *Père la Chaise*,

with an inscription concluding thus:—*Toute sa vie fut consacrée aux arts utiles.*

The establishment of M. Philippe is close to what was once the *Rocher de Cancale*, but on the opposite side of the *Rue Mont Orgueil*, and (making due allowance for the general decline of Parisian cookery) it fills pretty nearly the same relative place in the estimation of the connoisseur. His prices are not extravagant; and a party of six or seven may have an excellent dinner for twenty francs a-head, exclusive of wine. This was the price of a dinner which made some noise in the spring of 1850. The party consisted of Lord Brougham, M. Alexandre Dumas, Count D'Orsay, Lord Dufferin, the Hon. W. Stuart (attached to the embassy), Mr. John Dundas, of Carron, and the writer of these pages. It was ordered by the writer after an anxious consultation with Count D'Orsay; and it was delightful to see the enlightened enthusiasm by which M. Philippe, his *chef*, and his waiters, were, one and all, animated on the occasion. The most successful dishes were the *bisque*, the *fritures Italiennes*, and the *gigot à la Bretonne*. Out of compliment to the world-wide fame of Lord Brougham and M. Alexandre Dumas, M. Philippe produced some *Clos de Vougeot*, which (like his namesake in 'High Life Below Stairs') he vowed should never go down the throat of a man whom he did not esteem and admire; and it was voted first-rate by acclamation.

Amongst the dishes most in fashion at Philippe's may be specified, in addition to the three named

above, the *potage à la Bagratiou*, and quails *désossées et en caisse*.

An elaborate dinner for a large party at the *Trois Frères* is certainly inferior to a corresponding banquet at Philippe's; but, on the other hand, an improvised dinner in the common room for two or three is, on an average, the best thing of the sort in Paris, if it is ordered by a qualified *habitué*. Amongst the favourite dishes at the *Trois Frères* are the *bisque*, the *potage à la purée de marrons*, the *côtelettes à la Provençale*, the *omelette soufflée à la vanille*, and the *croûte aux ananas*. The wines at this establishment are much esteemed, particularly the *Pichon* (a light dinner-wine), the *Grand Lafitte* of 1834 and 1841, the *Fleur de Sillery*, the *Vieux Pommard*, and the *Romanée Gelé*.

The *Café de Paris* has declined in general reputation of late years, but it still retains some of its pristine merits and advantages. The rooms are lofty; there is no lack of fresh air, the look-out on the Boulevards is gay and enlivening, and the fish is generally good. The *filets de sole à l'Orly* is a *plat* which may be had in perfection at the *Café*; and it may be taken for granted that M. Véron would not dine there every day, the centre of an admiring circle, unless a great many other good things were to be had. The *Maison Dorée* is famous for its *croûte au pot*. Vachette's, on the Boulevard Montmartre, excels in genuine French cookery of the less ambitious order. The *Pavillon Henri Quatre*, at St. Germain, favourably mentioned by our correspondent, will justify his praise; its fried gudgeons

are superior to those of the York House at Bath, and the *filet de bœuf à la Bernaise* is not to be had anywhere else. The choicest champagne there is called *vin du Président*, being, we presume, the precise description of wine which the Emperor, when President, caused to be served out to the troops at Satory, and it probably harmonizes admirably with sausages.

Hardy and *Riche* have been condemned to a critical kind of notoriety by a pun—‘*Pour dîner chez Hardy, il faut être riche; et pour dîner chez Riche, il faut être hardi.*’ *Hardy* has been immortalized by Moore in the *Fudge Family*:—

“ I strut to the old café Hardy, which yet
Beats the field at a *déjeûner à la fourchette*:
Then, Dick, what a breakfast! oh, not like your ghost
Of a breakfast in England, your curs’d tea and toast;
But a sideboard, you dog, where one’s eye roves about,
Like a Turk’s in the harem, and thence singles out
One’s pâté of larks, just to tune up the throat;
One’s small limbs of chicken, done *en papillote*;
One’s erudite cutlets, dress’d all ways, but plain—
Or one’s kidneys—imagine, Dick—done with champagne;
Then some glasses of Beaune, to dilute—or mayhap
Chambertin, which you know ’s the pet tippie of Nap.*
Your coffee comes next, by prescription; and then, Dick, ’s
The coffee’s ne’er failing, and—glorious appendix—
A neat glass of *parfait-amour*, which one sips
Just as if bottled velvet tipp’d over one’s lips.”

Tortoni, however, the Gunter of Paris, is still the favourite for a *déjeûner*; and *parfait-amour* is obsolete. Claret for boys, port for men, and brandy for heroes, was the decision of Johnson, and there can be no doubt that old Cognac is your true *chasse* for the heroes of gastronomy. If tempted to indulge

* In justice to Napoleon, it ought to be remembered that *Chambertin* was not his “pet tippie” on serious occasions. In his carriage, taken at Waterloo, were found two bottles nearly empty—the one of *Malaga*, and the other of *Rum*.

in a liqueur or *chasse-café*, they generally confine themselves to *curaçoa*. Even with ladies, *parfait-amour*, notwithstanding the attraction of its name, is no longer in repute; they have adopted Maraschino in its place, and sip it with such evident symptoms of enjoyment, that once upon a time, when a certain eminent diplomatist was asked by his *voisine*, at a *petit-souper*, for a female toast, to parallel with the masculine one of *Women and Wine*, his Excellency gave *Men and Maraschino*, which elicited very general applause.

Colonel Damer was one day dining at Beauvilliers', in 1814, just after the first Restoration, when a Russian officer, having finished his dinner, inquired what liqueur was most in vogue. The waiter replied "*La liqueur a la mode, Monsieur?—mais c'est le petit lait d'Henri Quatre.*" Here the waiter had the best of it. But the writer was once dining at the *Rocher de Cancale*, soon after the suppression of the last Polish insurrection, in company with a Russian officer, when the waiter having thought proper to give vent to his enthusiasm for the Polish cause rather too audibly, was suddenly ordered by our Russian friend to bring us *un jeune Polonais bien frappé*.

The following advice may still be implicitly depended upon:—

"If some who 're Lotharios in feeding, should wish,
 Just to flirt with a luncheon (a devilish bad trick,
 As it takes off the bloom of one's appetite, Dick)—
 To the *Passage des*—what d'ye call't?—*des Panoramas*,
 We quicken our pace, and there heartily cram as
 Seducing young *pâtés*, as ever could cozen
 One out of one's appetite, down by the dozen."

The place indicated is *Madame Felix's*, the demand for whose *pâtés* was once said to vary between twelve and fifteen thousand a day.

We have spoken of the important effects produced by the breaking out of the Revolution. We now proceed to mention the no less important effects produced by the conclusion of it—or rather of one of its great stages—which are most dramatically indicated by the author of the *Physiologie*.

“By the treaty of November, 1815,” says M. Brillat-Savarin, “France was bound to pay the sum of 50,000,000 francs within three years, besides claims for compensation and requisitions of various sorts, amounting to nearly as much more. The apprehension became general that a national bankruptcy must ensue; the more particularly as all was to be paid in specie. ‘Alas!’ said the good people of France, as they saw the fatal tumbrel go by on its way to be filled in the Rue Vivienne, ‘Alas! our money is emigrating; next year we shall go down on our knees before a five-franc piece; we are about to fall into the condition of a ruined man; speculations of all sorts will fail; there will be no such thing as borrowing; it will be weakness, exhaustion, civil death.’ The event proved the apprehension to be false; and to the great astonishment of all engaged in finance-matters, the payments were made with facility, credit rose, loans were eagerly caught at, and during the whole time this superpurgation lasted, the balance of exchange was in favour of France; which proves that more money came into than went out of it. What is the power that came to our assistance? Who is the divinity that effected this miracle?—*Gourmandise*. When the Britons, Germans, Cimmerians, and Scythians broke into France, they brought with them a rare voracity and

stomachs of no ordinary calibre. They did not long remain satisfied with the official cheer which a forced hospitality supplied to them; they aspired to more refined enjoyments; and in a short time the queen city was little more than an immense refectory.

“The effect lasts still; foreigners flock from every quarter of Europe, to renew during peace the pleasing habits they contracted during the war; they *must* come to Paris; when there, they *must* eat and drink without regard to price; and if our funds obtain a preference, it is owing less to the higher interest they pay, than to the instinctive confidence it is impossible to help reposing in a people amongst whom gourmands are so happy!”—vol. i. p. 239.

To give an individual illustration of the principle—when the Russian army of invasion passed through Champagne, they took away six hundred thousand bottles from the cellars of M. Moët of Epernay; but he considered himself a gainer by the loss, his orders from the North having more than doubled since then, although most of the champagne drunk in Russia is made in the Crimæa. M. Moët’s cellars, be it said in passing, are peculiarly deserving of attention, and he is (or was) always happy to do the honours to travellers. We ourselves visited them in 1835, and were presented, at parting, with a bottle of the choicest wine—a custom, we understand, invariably observed in this munificent establishment.

Be the cause what it may, the taste for French cookery is now universally diffused; nor is it confined to the Old World, for amongst the other special missions intrusted to M. Armand de Bremont by

Bolivar was that of bringing over the best cook he could get. Those who may be intrusted with similar missions would do well to consult Mercier's *Tableau de Paris*, where cooks are classified by provinces. "The best," he says, "are from Picardy; those from Orleans come next; then Flanders, Burgundy, Comtois, Lorraine; the Parisian last but one, and the Norman last of all." But it is not enough to choose your cook; it is your bounden duty, and (what is more) your interest, sedulously and unceasingly to watch over his health. The orthodox doctrine on this point has been fully developed in an elaborate essay, entitled *De la Santé des Cuisiniers*, from the pen of no less a person than Grimaud de la Reynière, the editor of the Almanach—

"L'index d'un bon cuisinier doit cheminer sans cesse des casseroles à sa langue, et ce n'est qu'en dégustant ainsi à chaque minute ses ragoûts qu'il peut en déterminer l'assaisonnement d'une manière précise. Il faut donc que son palais soit d'une délicatesse extrême, et vierge en quelque sorte, pour qu'un rien le stimule et l'avertisse de ses fautes.

"Mais l'odeur continuelle des fourneaux, la nécessité de boire fréquemment et presque toujours de mauvais vin pour humecter un gosier incendié, la vapeur du charbon, les humeurs et la bile, qui, lorsqu'elles sont en mouvement, dénaturent nos facultés, tout concourt chez un cuisinier à altérer promptement les organes de la dégustation. Le palais s'encroûte en quelque sorte; il n'a plus ni ce tact, ni cette finesse, ni cette exquise sensibilité d'où dépend la susceptibilité de l'organe du goût; il finit par s'excorier, et par devenir aussi insensible que la conscience d'un vieux juge. *Le seul moyen de lui rendre cette fleur qu'il a perdue, de lui*

faire reprendre sa souplesse, sa délicatesse, et ses forces, c'est de purger le cuisinier, telle résistance qu'il y oppose ; car il en est, qui, sourds à la voix de la gloire, n'aperçoivent point la nécessité de prendre médecine lorsqu'ils ne se sentent pas malades."

The late Marquis of Hertford had a cook who, in his master's opinion, was inimitable in a *suprême*. Dining one day with an intimate friend, a distinguished Privy Councillor, who had frequently contested the point, his Lordship declared the *suprême*, which he was with difficulty persuaded to taste, detestable. "Now I have you," exclaimed the Right Honourable friend; "that dish was dressed by your own *chef*, who is at this moment in my house." "Then all I can say," replied the Marquis, "is, that you must have spoiled his palate by drinking beer with him."

We have now arrived at the literature of the Art. The 'Almanach des Gourmands' was the first serious and sustained attempt to invest gastronomy with the air of an intellectual and refined pursuit. But incomparably the completest essay on what may be termed the æsthetics of the dinner-table, is the famous *Physiologie du Goût*, and a short biographical sketch of the author may not be unacceptable as an introduction to a few extracts from the work.

Anthelme Brillat-Savarin, judge of the Court of Cassation, member of the Legion of Honour, and of most of the scientific and literary societies of France, was born in 1755 at Belley. He was bred up to his father's profession of the law, and was practising with some distinction as an advocate, when (in 1789) he was elected a member of the Constituent

Assembly, where he joined the moderate party, and did his best to avert the ruin that ensued. At the termination of his legislative duties, he was appointed President of the Civil Tribunal of the department of *L'Ain*, and on the establishment of the Court of Cassation he was made a judge of it. During the reign of terror he found himself amongst the proscribed, and fled for refuge to Switzerland, where he contrived to while away the time in scientific, literary, and gastronomical pursuits. He was afterwards compelled to emigrate to America, where also his attention seems rarely to have been diverted from the study in which he was destined to immortalize himself. It is related of him, that once, on his return from a shooting expedition, in the course of which he had the good fortune to kill a wild turkey, he fell into conversation with Jefferson, who began relating some interesting anecdotes about Washington and the war, when, observing the distracted air of M. Brillat-Savarin, he stopped, and was about to go away: "My dear sir," said our gastronomer, recovering himself by a strong effort, "I beg a thousand pardons, but I was thinking how I should dress my wild turkey." He earned his subsistence by teaching French and music, an art in which he excelled. He returned to France in 1796, and, after filling several employments of trust under the Directory, was re-appointed to his old office of judge of the Court of Cassation, in which he continued until his death in 1826. The *Physiologie du Goût* was published some time in

the year 1825, and ran rapidly through five or six editions, besides reprints in Belgium. Its great charm consists in the singular mixture of wit, humour, learning, and knowledge of the world—*bons mots*, anecdotes, ingenious theories, and instructive dissertations—which it presents; and if, as is currently related, Walton's Angler has made thousands turn fishermen, we should not be at all surprised to hear that the 'Physiology of Taste' had converted a fair portion of the reading public into gastronomers.

The book consists of a collection of aphorisms, a dialogue between the author and a friend as to the expediency of publication, a biographical notice of the friend, thirty meditations, and a concluding miscellany of adventures, inventions, and anecdotes. The Meditations (a term substituted for chapters) form the main body of the work, and relate to the following subjects:—1. *the senses*; 2. *the taste*; 3. *gastronomy*, definition, origin, and use; 4. *the appetite*, with illustrations of its capacity; 5. *alimentary substances in general*; 6. *specialities*, including game, fish, turkeys, truffles, sugar, coffee, chocolate, &c. &c.; 7. *frying*, its theory; 8. *thirst*; 9. *beverages*; 10. *episode on the end of the world*; 11. *gourmandise*, its power and consequences, particularly as regards conjugal happiness; 12. *gourmands*, by predestination, education, profession, &c.; 13. *éprouvettes gastronomiques*; 14. *on the pleasures of the table*; 15. *the halts in sporting*; 16. *digestion*; 17. *repose*; 18. *sleep*; 19. *dreams*; 20. *the influence of diet on repose, sleep, and dreams*; 21

obesity; 22. *treatment preventive or curative of obesity*; 23. *leanness*; 24. *fasts*; 25. *exhaustion*; 26. *death*; 27. *philosophical history of the kitchen*; 28. *restaurateurs*; 29. *classical gastronomy put in action*; 30. *gastronomic mythology*.

Such is the *menu* of this book. Amongst such a collection of dainties it is difficult to select, but we quote the following reflections on the pleasures of the table, in the hope that they may help to dissipate some portion of the vulgar prejudice against *gourmets*, whose high vocation is too frequently associated in the minds of the unenlightened with gluttony and greediness :

“The pleasure of eating is common to us with animals; it merely supposes hunger, and that which is necessary to satisfy it. The pleasure of the table is peculiar to the human species; it supposes antecedent attention to the preparation of the repast, to the choice of place, and the assembling of the guests. The pleasure of eating requires, if not hunger, at least appetite; the pleasure of the table is most frequently independent of both.

“Some poets complained that the neck, by reason of its shortness, was opposed to the duration of the pleasure of tasting; others deplored the limited capacity of the stomach (which will not hold, upon the average, more than two quarts of pulp); and Roman dignitaries went the length of sparing it the trouble of digesting the first meal, to have the pleasure of swallowing a second. The delicacy of our manners would not endure this practice; but we have done better, and we have arrived at the same end by means recognized by good taste. Dishes have been invented so attractive, that they unceasingly renew

the appetite, and which are at the same time so light, that they flatter the palate without loading the stomach. Seneca would have called them *Nubes Esculentas*. We are, indeed, arrived at such a degree of alimentary progression, that if the calls of business did not compel us to rise from table, or if the want of sleep did not interpose, the duration of meals might be almost indefinite, and there would be no sure *data* for determining the time that might elapse between the first glass of Madeira* and the last glass of punch."

It may not be deemed beside the purpose to state that M. Brillat-Savarin was of a sober, moderate, easily-satisfied disposition; so much so, indeed, that many have been misled into the supposition that his enthusiasm was unreal, and his book a piece of badinage written to amuse his leisure hours. The writer of these pages has been frequently exposed to depreciating remarks of the same tendency, but has contrived to bear up against the calumny.

An anecdote (related to Colonel Damer by Talleyrand) may help to rescue the fair fame of Brillat-Savarin from the reproach of indifference, and illustrate the hereditary quality of taste. He was on his way to Lyons, and was determined to dine at Sens. On his arrival he sent, according to his invariable custom, for the cook, and asked what he could have for dinner? The report was dispiriting.

* The custom of taking Parmesan *with*, and Madeira *after*, soup, was introduced into France by M. Talleyrand.

“Little enough,” was the reply. “But let us see,” retorted M. Savarin, “let us go to the kitchen and talk the matter over.” In the kitchen he found four turkeys roasting. “Why!” exclaimed he, “you told me you had nothing in the house. Let me have one of these turkeys.” “Impossible!” said the cook, “they are all bespoken by a gentleman upstairs.” “He must have a large party to dine with him then?” “No, he dines by himself.” “I should like much to be acquainted with the man who orders four turkeys for his own eating.” The cook was sure that the gentleman would be glad of his acquaintance; and M. Brillat-Savarin immediately paid his respects to the stranger, who turned out to be his own son. “What, you rogue, four turkeys all for yourself?” “Yes, sir; you know that, whenever I dine with you, you eat up the whole of *les-sots-les-laissent*”—the titbit which we call the *oyster* of the turkey or fowl—“I was resolved to enjoy myself for once in my life, and here I am, ready to begin, although I did not expect the honour of your company.”

It may not be deemed an unpardonable digression to state here that the late Lord Alvanley had his *suprême de volaille* made of the *oysters*, or *les-sots-les-laissent*, of fowls, instead of the fillet from the breast; so that it took a score of fowls to complete a moderate dish. The same distinguished epicure, who was also one of the three or four pleasantest companions and wittiest men of the century, held

that partridges were only worth eating in July, and he used to be regularly furnished with them from his own estate during that month.

To proceed with our extracts:—

“But, the impatient reader will probably exclaim, how then is a meal to be regulated, in order to unite all things requisite to the highest pleasures of the table? I proceed to answer this question.

“1. Let not the number of the company exceed twelve, that the conversation may be constantly general.

“2. Let them be so selected that their occupations shall be varied, their tastes analogous, and with such points of contact that there shall be no necessity for the odious formality of presentations.

“3. Let the eating-room be luxuriously lighted, the cloth remarkably clean, and the atmosphere at the temperature of from thirteen to sixteen degrees of Réaumur.

“4. Let the men be *spirituels* without pretension—the women pleasant without too much coquetry.*

“5. Let the dishes be exceedingly choice, but limited in number, and the wines of the first quality, each in its degree.

“6. Let the order of progression be, for the first (the dishes), from the most substantial to the lightest; and for the second (the wines), from the simplest to the most perfumed.

“7. Let the act of consumption be deliberate, the dinner being the last business of the day; and let the guests consider themselves as travellers who are to arrive together at the same place of destination.

* “I write,” says the author in a note, “between the Palais Royal and the Chaussée d’Antin.”

“8. Let the coffee be hot, and the liqueurs chosen by the master.

“9. Let the saloon be large enough to admit of a game at cards for those who cannot do without it, and so that there may notwithstanding remain space enough for post-meridian colloquy.

“10. Let the party be detained by the charms of society, and animated by the hope that the evening will not pass without some ulterior enjoyment.

“11. Let the tea be not too strong; let the toast be scientifically buttered, and the punch carefully prepared.

“12. Let not the retreat commence before eleven, but let everybody be in bed by twelve.

“If any one has been present at a party uniting these twelve requisites, he may boast of having been present at his own apotheosis.”—vol. i. pp. 297-302.

M. Brillat-Savarin has here omitted one very important requisite, which it may be as well to supply without delay from another section of his book.

“APHORISM.—*Of all the qualities of a cook, the most indispensable is punctuality.*

“I shall support this grave maxim by the details of an observation made in a party of which I was one—*quorum pars magna fui*—and where the pleasure of observing saved me from the extremes of wretchedness.

“I was one day invited to dine with a high public functionary (Cambacérès); and at the appointed moment, half-past five, everybody had arrived, for it was known that he liked punctuality, and sometimes scolded the dilatory. I was struck on my arrival by the air of consternation that reigned in the assembly; they spoke aside, they looked into the court-yard; some faces announced

stupefaction: something extraordinary had certainly come to pass. I approached one of the party whom I judged most capable of satisfying my curiosity, and inquired what had happened. 'Alas!' replied he, with an accent of the deepest sorrow, 'Monseigneur has been sent for to the Council of State; he has just set out, and who knows when he will return!' 'Is that all?' I answered, with an air of indifference which was alien from my heart; 'that is a matter of a quarter of an hour at the most; some information which they require; it is known that there is an official dinner here to day—they can have no motive for making us fast.' I spoke thus; but at the bottom of my soul I was not without inquietude, and I would fain have been somewhere else. The first hour passed pretty well; the guests sat down by those with whom they had interests in common, exhausted the topics of the day, and amused themselves in conjecturing the cause which had carried off our dear Amphitryon to the Tuileries. By the second hour some symptoms of impatience began to be observable; we looked at one another with distrust; and the first to murmur were three or four of the party who, not having found room to sit down, were by no means in a convenient position for waiting. At the third hour the discontent became general, and everybody complained. 'When *will* he come back?' said one. 'What can he be thinking of?' said another. 'It is enough to give one one's death,' said a third. By the fourth hour all the symptoms were aggravated; and I was not listened to when I ventured to say that he whose absence rendered us so miserable was beyond a doubt the most miserable of all. Attention was distracted for a moment by an apparition. One of the party, better acquainted with the house than the others, penetrated to the kitchen; he returned quite

overcome ; his face announced the end of the world ; and he exclaimed in a voice hardly articulate, and in that muffled tone which expresses at the same time the fear of making a noise and the desire of being heard, 'Monseigneur went out without giving orders ; and, however long his absence, dinner will not be served till his return.' He spoke, and the alarm occasioned by his speech will not be surpassed by the effect of the trumpet on the day of judgment. Amongst all these martyrs, the most wretched was the good D'Aigrefeuille,* who is known to all Paris ; his body was all over suffering, and the agony of Laocoon was in his face. Pale, distracted, seeing nothing, he sat crouched upon an easy chair, crossed his little hands upon his large belly, and closed his eyes, not to sleep, but to wait the approach of death. Death, however, came not. Towards ten, a carriage was heard rolling into the court ; the whole party sprang spontaneously to their legs. Hilarity succeeded to sadness ; and in five minutes we were at table. But alas ! the hour of appetite was past ! All had the air of being surprised at beginning dinner at so late an hour ; the jaws had not that isochronous (*isochrone*) movement which announces a regular work ; and I know that many guests were seriously inconvenienced by the delay."—vol. i. pp. 93-96.

On the part of the guests, also, punctuality should be regarded as imperative ; and the habitual want of it may commonly be set down to affectation or to long-indulged selfishness. Rather than place the slightest restraint on himself, the transgressor makes a whole party uncomfortable. It is no answer to

* The friend and principal gastronomic aide-de-camp of Cambacérés.

say that they can sit down without him, for a well-selected company may be spoiled by a gap; and a late arrival causes discomfort and confusion in exact proportion to the care that has been taken in the preparatory arrangements. Lady Morgan, in one of her early works, speaks of a young nobleman who never saw soup or fish except at his own table. This was understood to refer to an ex-Foreign Secretary. The late Lord Dudley used to say that the most unpunctual persons he ever knew were two distinguished brothers—the survivor is now a peer—for, added his lordship, if you asked Robert for Wednesday at seven, you got Charles on Thursday at eight.

It is currently related of a distinguished peer that he was once observed mounting his horse for his afternoon ride by the party assembled for dinner in his drawing-room. The authenticity of this anecdote, however, may well be doubted; for his lordship is one of the most liberal and uncompromising patrons of the culinary art, and would never have risked the reputation of his *chef*—although he might have made light of the health and comfort of his guests—by such an unprincipled and unfeeling disregard of the essential duty of a dinner-giver. The great Carême was in his service for a short period; and his lordship once gave a very remarkable proof of his enlightened and patriotic desire to make his own country the head-quarters of gastronomic refinement. Dining (so goes the story) with the Baron de Rothschild, at Paris, he was so

struck with the whole arrangements, as well as with the exquisite composition and execution, of the dinner, that the very next day he intimated, through a trusty agent, to the Baron's *maitre d'hôtel, chef,* and confectioner, that engagements at increased salaries were at the disposal of all three, if they would exchange their Jewish allegiance for the service of a Christian nobleman. They are said to have refused, with some marks of indignation; and it must be admitted that the offer partakes somewhat of the spirit in which Christian noblemen dealt with Jew financiers in the olden time; for you might as well draw a man's teeth at once as deprive him of the means of employing them with his wonted gusto.

The Meditation entitled *Gourmandise* is replete with instructive remark; but we must confine ourselves to that part of it which relates to the ladies, some of whom, since Lord Byron's * silly prejudices upon the subject were made public, think it prettiest and most becoming to profess a total indifference as to what they eat. Let them hear the professor on this subject:—

“*Gourmandise* is by no means unbecoming in women; it agrees with the delicacy of their organs, and serves to compensate them for some pleasures from which they are obliged to abstain, and for some evils to which nature appears to have condemned them. Nothing is more pleasant than to see a pretty *gourmande* under arms: her nap-

* Goethe, in *Wilhelm Meister*, expresses a similar dislike to seeing women eat.

kin is nicely adjusted; one of her hands is rested on the table; the other conveys to her mouth little morsels elegantly carved, or the wing of a partridge which it is necessary to pick; her eyes are sparkling, her lips glossy, her conversation agreeable, all her movements gracious; she is not devoid of that spice of *coquetterie* which women infuse into everything. With so many advantages she is irresistible; and Cato the Censor himself would yield to the influence.

“The penchant of the fair sex for *gourmandise* has in it somewhat of the nature of instinct, for *gourmandise* is favourable to beauty. A train of exact and rigid observations have demonstrated that a succulent, delicate, and careful regimen repels to a distance, and for a length of time, the external appearances of old age. It gives more brilliancy to the eyes, more freshness to the skin, more support to the muscles; and as it is certain in physiology that it is the depression of the muscles which causes wrinkles, those formidable enemies of beauty, it is equally true to say that, *cæteris paribus*, those who understand eating are comparatively ten years younger than those who are strangers to this science. The painters and sculptors are deeply penetrated with this truth, for they never represent those who practise abstinence by choice or duty, as misers and anchorites, without giving them the paleness of disease, the leanness of poverty, and the wrinkles of decrepitude.

“Again, *gourmandise*, when partaken, has the most marked influence on the happiness of the conjugal state. A wedded pair endowed with this taste have once a-day, at least, an agreeable cause of meeting. Music, no doubt, has powerful attractions for those who love it; but it is necessary to set about it,—it is an exertion. Moreover, one may have a cold, the music is not at hand, the instru-

ments are out of tune, one has the blue devils, or it is a day of rest. In *gourmandise*, on the contrary, a common want summons the pair to table; the same inclination retains them there; they naturally practise towards one another those little attentions which show a wish to oblige; and the manner in which their meals are conducted enters materially into the happiness of life. This observation, new enough in France, had not escaped the English novelist; and he has developed it by painting in his novel of 'Pamela' the different manner in which two married couples finish their day."—vol. i. pp. 244-251.

Considering the high privileges attached to the character of a *gourmand*, no one will be surprised at finding that it is not to be assumed at will. The next Meditation is headed *N'est pas Gourmand qui veut*, and begins as follows:—

“There are individuals to whom nature has denied a refinement of organs, or a continuity of attention, without which the most succulent dishes pass unobserved. Physiology has already recognised the first of these varieties, by showing us the tongue of these unfortunates, badly provided with nerves for inhaling and appreciating flavours. These excite in them but an obtuse sentiment; such persons are, with regard to objects of taste, what the blind are with regard to light. The second is composed of *distraits*, chatterboxes, persons engaged in business, the ambitious, and others, who seek to occupy themselves with two things at once, and eat only to be filled. Such, for instance, was Napoleon; he was irregular in his meals, and ate fast and ill; but there again was to be traced that absolute will which he carried into everything he did. The moment appetite was felt it was necessary

that it should be satisfied, and his establishment was so arranged that in all places, and at all hours, chicken, cutlets, and coffee, might be forthcoming at a word."—vol. i. p. 252.

The habit of eating fast and carelessly is supposed to have paralysed Napoleon on two of the most critical occasions of his life—the battles of Borodino and Leipsic. On each of these occasions he is known to have been suffering from indigestion. On the third day of Dresden, too, (as the German novelist, Hoffman, who was in the town, asserts) the Emperor's energies were impaired by the effects of a shoulder of mutton stuffed with onions.

There can be no doubt that Napoleon's irregularity as to meals injured his health and shortened his life. The general order to his household was to have cutlets and roast chicken ready at all hours, night and day, and it was observed to the letter by his *maitre d'hôtel*, Dunand, who had been a celebrated cook. In his more dignified capacity, he contrived to fall in with the humours of his Imperial master, and, by so doing, to be of essential use at critical emergencies, when an hour of prolonged flurry or irritation might have cost a province or a throne. On one occasion, when matters had gone wrong in some quarter, Napoleon returned from the *Conseil d'Etat* in one of his worst tempers and most discontented moods. A *déjeuner à la fourchette*, comprising his favourite dishes, was served up, and Napoleon, who had fasted since daybreak, took his seat. But he had hardly swallowed a mouthful,

when apparently some inopportune thought or recollection stung his brain to madness; receding from the table without rising from his chair, he uplifted his foot—dash! went the table—crash! went the déjeuner; and the Emperor, springing up, paced the room with rapid and perturbed strides, indicative of the most frenzied rage. Dunand looked on without moving a muscle, and quietly gave the fitting orders to his staff. Quick as thought, the wreck was cleared away, an exact duplicate of the déjeuner appeared as if by magic, and its presence was quietly announced by the customary “*Sa Majesté est servie.*” Napoleon felt the delicacy, and appreciated the tact, of this mode of service. *Merci bien, mon cher Dunand!* and one of his inimitable smiles, showed that the hurricane had blown over. Whether Napoleon was a hero to his *valet de chambre* we will not pretend to say, but he was certainly a hero to his *maître d’hôtel*.

An occupied man, who values his health and wishes to keep his physical powers and mental energies unimpaired, should sedulously eschew business, as well as agitating or anxious topics of all kinds, whilst the digestive organs are at work. When M. de Suffrein was commanding for the French in the East, he was one day waited upon by a deputation of natives, who requested an audience just as he was sitting down to dinner. He desired an aide-de-camp to inform them that it was a precept of the Christian religion, from which no earthly consideration would induce him to depart, never to

attend to business of any sort at dinner-time; and the deputation departed, lost in admiration at the piety of the Commandant. To dine alone is neither wholesome nor agreeable. To solitary diners may be applied the fine lines of Goldsmith:—

“ Unknown to them, when sensual pleasures cloy,
To fill the languid pause with finer joy.”

Better, indeed, far better, to rank with the class described by Byron, which, by the way, may sometimes include a connoisseur,—

“ Who think less of good eating than the whisper,
When seated near them, of some pretty lisper.”

But what a deceased clerical wit called “ flashes of silence ” may occasionally intervene. We were once dining with the author of ‘ Vanity Fair ’ at the *Rocher*, when a *matelotte* of surpassing excellence was served up. “ My dear fellow,” exclaimed the distinguished moralist, “ don’t let us speak a word till we have finished this dish.” He is not less eminent as a dinner-giver than as a diner-out, and conceives himself to have discovered that a slight infusion of crab is a decided improvement to curry. This reminds us of an anecdote related of a deceased Irish nobleman, who had expended a large fortune in (as he said) the cause of his country. When dying, he summoned his heir to his bedside, and told him he had a secret to communicate which might prove some compensation for the dilapidated condition of the family property. It was—that crab sauce is better than lobster sauce.

If this was a fair sample of his Lordship's judgment, no wonder he was ruined.

The gifted beings predestined to *gourmandise*, are thus described by M. Brillat-Savarin :—

“They have broad faces, sparkling eyes, small foreheads, short noses, full lips, and round chins. The females are plump, rather pretty than handsome, with a tendency to *embonpoint*. It is under this exterior that the pleasantest guests are to be found : they accept all that is offered, eat slowly, and taste with reflection. They never hurry away from the places where they have been well treated ; and you are sure of them for the evening, because they know all the games and pastimes which form the ordinary accessories of a gastronomic meeting.

“Those, on the contrary, to whom nature has refused an aptitude for the enjoyments of taste, have long faces, long noses, and large eyes ; whatever their height, they have always in their *tournure* a character of elongation. They have black and straight hair, and are, above all, deficient in *embonpoint* : *it is they who invented trousers*. The women whom nature has afflicted with the same misfortune are angular, get tired at table, and live on tea and scandal.”
—vol. i. p. 254.

Out of the many modes proposed of testing this theory, we shall confine ourselves to one—the judicious employment of *éprouvettes* :—

“We understand by *éprouvettes*, dishes of acknowledged flavour, of such undoubted excellence that their bare appearance ought to excite, in a human being properly organised, all the faculties of taste ; so that all those in whom, in such cases, we perceive neither the flush of

desire nor the radiance of ecstasy, may be justly noted as unworthy of the honours of the sitting and the pleasures attached to it."

A distinguished gastronomer, refining on this invention, proposes *épreuves* by negation. When, for example, a dish of high merit is suddenly destroyed by accident, or any other sudden disappointment occurs, you are to note the expression of your guests' faces, and thus form your estimate of their gastric sensibilities. We will illustrate this matter by an anecdote. Cardinal Fesch, a name of honour in the annals of gastronomy, had invited a large party of clerical magnates to dinner. By a fortunate coincidence, two turbot of singular beauty arrived as presents to his Eminence on the very morning of the feast. To serve both would have appeared ridiculous, but the Cardinal was most anxious to have the credit of both. He imparted his embarrassment to his *chef*. "Be of good faith, your Eminence," was the reply; "both shall appear; both shall enjoy the reception which is their due." The dinner was served: one of the turbot relieved the soup. Delight was in every face—it was the moment of the *épreuve positive*. The *maître d'hôtel* advances; two attendants raise the turbot and carry him off to cut him up; but one of them loses his equilibrium: the attendants and the turbot roll together on the floor. At this sad sight the assembled Cardinals became pale as death, and a solemn silence reigned in the *conclave*—it was the moment of the *épreuve negative*; but the *maître*

d'hôtel suddenly turns to the attendant—"Bring another turbot," said he, with the most perfect coolness. The second appeared, and the *éprouvette positive* was gloriously renewed.

We offer no apology for having devoted so many pages to M. Brillat-Savarin, since his book indisputably affords the most favourable specimens of gastronomic literature. There exists nothing in English at all comparable to it; for, unluckily, Dr. Johnson rested satisfied with beating the Academy in another field. "Women," once observed the sage, "can spin very well, but they cannot write a good book of cookery. I could write a better book of cookery than has ever yet been written; it should be a book on philosophical principles." His mode of eating, however, was exceedingly coarse; and, according to Mrs. Piozzi, "his favourite dainties were a leg of pork boiled till it dropped from the bone, a veal pie with plums and sugar, and the outside cut of a salt buttock of beef." He has been known to call for the butterboat containing the lobster sauce during the second course, and pour the whole of its contents over his plum-pudding. His disqualifying sentence on women, also, should not be received with implicit acquiescence. Mrs. Glasse's book was written by Dr. Hunter; but Mrs. Rundell's was her own, and is certainly not devoid of merit, although hardly equal to Ude's, Soyer's, or Francatelli's more ambitious productions. In our humble opinion, too, women make far the best English cooks, practically speaking; and

the fair sex have supplied some tolerably apt pupils to the French school; but they seldom arrive at distinguished proficiency unless they are both handsome and *coquettes*—for the simple reason that no Frenchman who affects taste will take pains to teach a woman who is not able and willing to minister to the gratification of his vanity.

It may consequently turn out no great hardship after all to be obliged to follow the advice given in the *New Almanach des Gourmands* (of 1830): “Si les gages d'un cuisinier, et surtout les habitudes de l'artiste, vous le rendent trop dispendieux, bornez-vous au *cordon-bleu*. Faites choix d'une *cuisinière* active, propre,” &c. This passage may suffice to refute the common error of supposing that *cordon-bleu* means a first-rate artist of either sex. In gastronomic language, the term is exclusively applicable to females, and the original cause of its being so applied was an involuntary and enthusiastic recognition of female merit by Louis XV. The confirmed opinion of this royal voluptuary was, that it was morally and physically impossible for a woman to attain the highest pitch of perfection in the culinary art. Madame Dubarry, piqued by his frequent recurrence to this invidious theory, resolved to bring him over to a way of thinking more complimentary to her sex. She accordingly sought out the best *cuisinière* that France could produce, and gave her the minutest private instructions as to his Majesty's favourite dishes and

peculiar tastes or caprices. If the story, we are now repeating be a lie, it is certainly a lie circumstantial, like the account of the duel in the *School for Scandal*—for tradition has handed down the exact *menu* of the supper prepared under the Dubarry's supervision by her *protégée*. It comprised a *coulis de faisan*, *les petites croustades de foie de lottes*, *le salmis de bécassines*, *le pain de volaille à la suprême*, *la poularde au cresson*, *les belles écrevisses au vin de Sauterne*, *les bisquets de pêches au noyau*, and *la crème de cerneaux*. The dessert consisted of some *raisins dorés*, a *salade de fraises au marasquin*, and some Rheims biscuits. Every dish prospered, and the enraptured monarch, instead of starting up, like Dryden's Alexander, and rushing out to fire a city, sank back in his chair with an ineffable feeling of languid beatitude, and, if Désaugier's verses had existed at the time, would doubtless have sung—

“ A chaque mets que je touche
Je me crois l'égal des dieux,
Et ce que ne touche ma bouche
Est dévoré par mes yeux.”

“ Who is this new *cuisinier* of yours?” exclaimed the monarch, when this unparalleled succession of agreeable surprises was complete. “ Let me know his name, and let him henceforth form part of our royal household.” “ *Allons donc, la France!*” retorted the delighted *ex-grisette*. “ Have I caught you at last? It is no *cuisinier* at all, but a *cuisinière*; and I demand a recompence for her worthy

both of her and your Majesty. Your royal bounty has made my negro, Zamore, governor of Luciennes, and I cannot accept less than a *cordons bleu* for my *cuisinière*." There was probably nothing which the King (or the lady) would not have granted at such a moment, but the name of this *cuisinière* was unfortunately not inscribed in the register of the Order, and she has thus been cheated of her immortality.*

There is no part of the world in which the connoisseur may not find some delicacy peculiar to the place—as the turkey, fattened on the olives of Mount Hymettus, at Athens; the famous *minestra del riso*, at Milan; the *pesce reale* (royal fish), at Naples; the *ombre chevalier* (a large species of char), of the Lake of Geneva; the red trout of the lake near Andernach; the crawfish from the Rhine, or the thrushes from the Rhenish vineyards; the *pâté de chamois*, on the Simplon; the white truffles of Piedmont; the wild boar, at Rome; the *coquille d'écrevisse*, at Vacluse; the *ortolan* and *beccafico* of the South of Europe, &c. &c.—for the list might be indefinitely extended. Yet, to the best of our information and experience, whenever a dish attracts attention by the art displayed in its conception or preparation apart from the material, the artist will commonly be discovered to be French. Many years ago we had the curiosity to inquire, at the Hôtel de France at Dresden, to whom our party were indebted for the enjoyment

* Lady Morgan says that the title of *cordons bleu* was first given to Marie, the cook of the *fermier-général* who built the Elysée Bourbon.

they had derived from a *suprême de volaille*, and were informed that the cook and the master of the hotel were one and the same person—a Frenchman, *ci-devant chef* of a Russian minister. He had been eighteen years in Germany, but knew not a word of any language but his own. “*A quoi bon, Messieurs,*” was his reply to our expression of astonishment; “*à quoi bon apprendre la langue d’un peuple qui ne possède pas une cuisine ?*”

The same cannot be affirmed of England, much as we may be indebted to our neighbours across the Channel in this respect. It is allowed by competent judges that a first-rate dinner in England is out of all comparison better than a dinner of the same class in any other country; for we get the best cooks, as we get the best singers and dancers, by bidding highest for them, and we have cultivated certain national dishes to a point which makes them the envy of the world. In proof of this bold assertion, which is backed, moreover, by the unqualified admission of Ude,* we request attention to the *menu* of the dinner given to Lord Chesterfield, on his quitting the office of Master of the Buckhounds, at the Clarendon. The party consisted of thirty; the price was six guineas a-head; and the dinner was ordered by the late Count d’Orsay.

“*Premier Service.*”

“*Potages.*—Printannier : à la reine : *turtle.*”

* “I will venture to affirm that cookery in England, when well done, is superior to that of any country in the world.”—*Ude*, p. xiii.

“*Poissons*.—Turbot (*lobster and Dutch sauces*) : saumon à la Tartare : rougets à la cardinal : friture de morue : *white bait*.

“*Relevés*.—Filet de bœuf à la Napolitaine : dindon à la chipolata : timballe de macaroni : *haunch of venison*.

“*Entrées*.—Croquettes de volaille : petits pâtés aux huîtres : côtelettes d’agneau : purée de champignons : côtelettes d’agneau aux points d’asperge : fricandeau de veau à l’oseille : ris de veau piqué aux tomates : côtelettes de pigeons à la Dusselle : chartreuse de légumes aux faisans : filets de cannetons à la Bigarrade : boudins à la Richelieu : sauté de volaille aux truffes : pâté de mouton monté.

“*Côté*.—Bœuf rôti : jambon : salade.

“*Second Service*.

“*Rôts*.—Chapons, quails, turkey poults, *green goose*.

“*Entremets*.—Asperges : haricot à la Française : mayonnaise d’homard : gelée Macedoine : aspics d’œufs de pluvier : Charlotte Russe : gelée au Marasquin : crème marbre : corbeille de pâtisserie : vol-au-vent de rhubarb : tourte d’abricots : corbeille des meringues : dressed crab : salade au gélatine.—Champignons aux fines herbes.

“*Relevés*.—Soufflé à la vanille : Nesselrode pudding : Adelaide sandwiches : fondus. Pièces montées,” &c. &c.

The reader will not fail to observe how well the English dishes—turtle, white bait, and venison—relieve the French in this dinner; and what a breadth, depth, solidity, and dignity they add to it. Green goose, also, may rank as English, the goose being held in little honour, with the exception of its liver, by the French. The execution is

said to have been pretty nearly on a par with the conception, and the whole entertainment was crowned with the most inspiriting success. The price was not unusually large. A tradition has reached us of a dinner at *The Albion*, under the auspices of the late venerable Sir William Curtis, which cost the party between thirty and forty pounds a-piece. It might well have cost twice as much, for, amongst other acts of extravagance, they despatched a special messenger to Westphalia to choose a ham. We have also a vague recollection of a bet as to the comparative merits of the Albion and York House (Bath) dinners, which was to have been formally decided by a dinner of unparalleled munificence, and nearly equal cost, at each; but it became a drawn bet, the Albion beating in the first course, and the York House in the second. But these are reminiscences, on which, we frankly own, no great reliance is to be placed.

Lord Southampton once gave a dinner at the Albion, at ten guineas a-head; and the ordinary price for the best dinner at this house (including wine) is three guineas. In our opinion extravagance adds nothing to real enjoyment, and a first-rate English dinner (exclusive of wine) ought to be furnished for a third of the price.

This work would be incomplete without some attempt to commemorate the great artists who have acquired, or who are in a fair way to acquire, a culinary reputation on British ground.

Vilmet, Leclair, Henry Brand, Morel, Grillon,

Chevassut, Goubeaud, and Huggins, were famous in their time, and formed the eminent culinary brigade of Carlton House; Courroux, Honoré, Ménéil, Morel senior, Barge, House, Cotton, Mills, Sams, Oudot senior, Farmer, Pratt, and Dick Wood, were first-rate cooks. Honoré was many years cook to the late Lord Holland and to the late Marchioness of Hertford. Florence, cook to successive Dukes of Buccleuch, is immortalised by Scott, as inventor of the *potage à la Meg Merrilies*. Farmer, for many years cook to the late Earl of Bathurst, is said to have been the very first English artist of his day. Pratt was head cook to his late R. H. the Duke of York.

At the head of the celebrities here enumerated, we must not forget to place Louis Eustache Ude. For upwards of twenty years he had the honour of educating the palate of the late Earl of Sefton, who, in his day, was considered a great *gourmet* as well as a great *gourmand*—and, be it understood, these qualifications are seldom united. The difference between a *gourmet* and a *gourmand* we take to be this: a *gourmet* is he who selects, for his nice and learned delectation, the most choice delicacies, prepared in the most scientific manner; whereas, the *gourmand* bears a closer analogy to that class of great eaters ill-naturedly (we dare say) denominated, or classed with, aldermen. Ude was also once *maitre d'hôtel* to the late Duke of York, from whom he contrived to elicit many a hearty laugh through his clever mimicry. Under his auspices, also, it was that “the great playhouse” in

St. James's, yclept Crockford's, was ushered into its destructive career.

Louis Eustache Ude was verily the Gil Blas of the kitchen. He had, in his latter days, a notion of writing his memoirs; and if they had not proved deeply interesting, those who knew him well can with truth assert that many would have relished the curious scandal and pleasant gossip with which his astonishing memory was so well stored. Ude's mamma was an attractive and lively milliner, who married an underling in Louis XVI.'s kitchen. She thought Master Eustache too pretty a boy to be sacrificed to the "*Dieu ventru.*" The consequence was, that after an attempt made by his sire to train him in his own "*glorious path,*" the youngster absconded, and apprenticed himself, first to a "*bijoutier en faux,*" then to an engraver, next to a printer, and lastly to a haberdasher! after which he became traveller for a mercantile house at Lyons. Something occurred at this point which occasioned him to change his vocation once more. He returned to Paris, and there tried his genius as an actor at a small theatre in the Rue Chantreine. He soon, however (aided by a discriminating public), discovered that his share of the world's cake was not on that stage, and, by some means, he set up an office and a "*cabriolet,*" and forthwith started into life as an "*agent de change.*" This scheme did not last long; he got "*cleaned out*" on 'Change, and shortly after was installed as an inspector of gambling-houses. He soon tired of this appointment,

and, on relinquishing it, determined to return to his original calling, and became once again a cook.

After practising in the culinary profession some few years in the early dawn of the fortunes of the house of Bonaparte, Ude raised himself to the post of maître d'hôtel to Madame Letitia Bonaparte. Here our artist remained for about two years, when, owing to some difference of opinion between Madame Letitia and himself in matters arithmetical, he somewhat suddenly left that lady's service to honour our land with his presence; and ever after, when fitting opportunity presented itself, he was wont to express his indignation against the "*usurpateur*" and all his family. Good cooks were scarce in England in those days, and, shortly after his arrival, the late Earl of Sefton secured his services at a salary of 300 guineas per annum; and not only proved himself a liberal and kind-hearted patron during his lifetime, but, with that benevolence for which he was remarkable, handsomely provided for the old age of his favourite cook by leaving him 100*l.* for life.

On Ude's retirement from the active duties of his high vocation at Crockford's, his mantle fell on Charles Elmé Francatelli—an author of merit, and a man of cultivation and accomplishments, as well as an eminently distinguished artist. His treatise on Gastronomy, published by Bentley, were alone sufficient to place him in the front rank of the scientific professors of the art. He was many years *chef* at Chesterfield House, when its dinners were the admira-

tion of the gastronomic world of London. We subsequently trace him by his reputation to *Rossie Priory* (Lord Kinnaid's), and to the *Melton club*, or *reunion*, of which Lord Kinnaid, Sir W. M. Stanley, Mr. Rowland Errington, Mr. Lyne Stevens, and the late Count Matuzavicz were the members. He succeeded Ude as *maitre d'hôtel* at *Crockford's*, and was afterwards, through the discriminating patronage of the late Earl of Errol, promoted to the honourable and enviable post of *maitre d'hôtel* and chief cook to the Queen. It is generally understood that his skill, zeal, and judicious economy obtained the full approval of her Majesty and her Royal Consort; but what can such exalted personages know of the intrigues of the basement story of a palace? or how can they be fairly made responsible for the heart-breaking humiliation and injustice that may be perpetrated by their authority? At the end of two years *Francatelli* was displaced, or reluctantly resigned, the victim (he doubtless believes) of some pantry, scullery, still-room, or steward's-room cabal, and the *Coventry Club* was fortunate enough to possess him for a period. At present, if we are not misinformed, he is in the full enjoyment of the *otium cum dignitate*, and of a handsome competence to boot—a circumstance at which we should rejoice more cordially, did it not militate very seriously against the gratification of our palates.

Soyer is another *artiste* and writer on gastronomic subjects, whose name has been a good deal before the public. He is a very clever man, of inventive

genius and inexhaustible resource; but his execution is hardly on a par with his conception, and he is more likely to earn his immortality by his soup-kitchen than by his soup.

Amongst the most eminent cooks of the present time in England are Pierre Moret, of the Royal Household; Aberlin, chef to the Duke of Devonshire; Crépin, of the Duchess of Sutherland's household; Dunand, Paraire, Gérin, Mesmer; Labalme, cook to the Duke of Beaufort; Bony, cook to the Duke of Buccleuch; Auguste Halinger, cook to Baron de Rothschild; the brothers Mailliez; Brûnet, cook to the Duke of Montrose; Lambert, to Mr. Charles Townley; Valentine, to Lord Poltimore; Hopwood, to Lord Foley; George Perkis, to the Marquis of Bristol; Louis Besnard, to Mr. Maxse; Frottier, to the Duke of Cambridge; Carpentier, to the Earl of Sefton; Perron, to the Marquis of Londonderry; Bernard, to Lord Willoughby d'Eresby; Guerault, to Mr. H. T. Hope; Chaudeau, to the Marquis of Lansdowne; Rotival, to Lord Wilton; Douetil, to the Duke of Cleveland; Palanque, to the Carlton Club; and Comte, to Brookes's. Paul Pasquier, Alphonse Gouffé, and Fouillois are the first *pâtissiers* of the day. Perugini, Raffaella, Vincent, and Mauditt are the first confectioners.

The present Duke of Beaufort had a Neapolitan confectioner who was thoroughly impressed with the dignity, and imbued with the spirit, of his art. His Grace was one night in bed, and fast asleep, when he was roused by a knock at his door, which was impatiently repeated. He asked who was there.

“It is only me, Signor Duc,” said the artist; “I was at the Opera, and I have been dreaming of the music. It was Donizetti’s, and I have got an idea. I have this instant invented a sorbet; I have named it after that divine composer, and I hastened to inform your Grace.” This is almost as good as Herbault’s address to Lady D., when he hurried into her hotel, and thus announced the felicitous completion of an order for a turban adorned with ostrich feathers:—“Madame, après trois nuits d’insomnie les plumes sont placées.”

Young men rising into reputation are: Mortière, cook to Lord Hardwicke; Dubois; Sevestre, to the Duchess of Gloucester; Montoy, to Lord Castle-reagh; Charles Lion, to Lord Ernest Bruce; Denise, Tessier, Cartal, Débille, Amato, George White, George Tredway, Filippo Betti.

It is a curious fact that almost all the great artists in this line are erratic, restless, and inconstant. They seldom stay long with the same employer, be he as liberal, indulgent, and discriminating as he may. Is it that they sigh, like the Macedonian, for new worlds to conquer, or that—extending the principle of the German *Wanderjahr* to the whole of human life—they fancy that knowledge and intellect are cramped and restricted by becoming stationary? The phenomenon well merits the serious attention of the metaphysician.

We are now arrived at the conclusion of our sketch of the history and present state of the culinary art, and have only a single cautionary observation to add.

Without appliances and means to boot, it is madness to attempt entrées and entremets; and "better first in a village than second in Rome" is a maxim peculiarly applicable to cookery. "A good soup, a small turbot, a neck of venison, ducklings with green peas, or chicken with asparagus, and an apricot tart, is a dinner for an emperor." So said the late Earl of Dudley; and such a dinner can be better served in England than in any other—or, more correctly speaking, there is no other country in the world where it could be served at all. But before proceeding to illustrate the advantages of the simple style of dinner-giving when the Amphitryon does not happen to be a millionaire, we must pay a well-merited tribute to the memory of the man who did for it almost as much as *Brillat de Savarin* effected for the more composite style amongst the French. We allude to the late Thomas Walker, formerly one of the police magistrates of the metropolis, and author of 'The Original.' This remarkable publication appeared in weekly numbers, beginning May 20th, 1835, and was continued till the commencement of the following year, when the series was abruptly discontinued by the lamented death of the writer. To enable our readers to estimate his weight as an authority on dinner-giving, we shall begin by bringing together a few of the quaint and amusing reminiscences he has printed of himself. The following are prefixed, by way of introduction, to a series of papers 'On the Art of attaining high Health,' which commence with the third number of the work:—

“ During these years (he is speaking of his early youth) and for a long time after, I felt no security of my health. At last, one day when I had shut myself up in the country, and was reading with great attention Cicero’s treatise ‘De Oratore,’ some passage—I quite forget what—suggested to me the expediency of making the improvement of my health my study. *I rose from my book, stood bolt upright, and determined to be well.* In pursuance of my resolution I tried many extremes, was guilty of many absurdities, and committed many errors, amidst the remonstrances and ridicule of those around me. I persevered, nevertheless, and it is now, I believe, full sixteen years since I have had any medical advice, or taken any medicine, or anything whatever by way of medicine. During that period I have lived constantly in the world—for the last six years in London, without ever being absent during any one whole week—and I have never foregone a single engagement of business or pleasure, or been confined an hour, with the exception of two days in the country from over exertion. For nine years I have worn neither great-coat nor cloak, though I ride and walk at all hours and in all weathers. My dress has been the same in summer and winter, *my under garments being single and only of cotton, and I am always light shod.* The only inconvenience I suffer is occasionally from colds; *but with a little more care I could entirely prevent them; or, if I took the trouble, I could remove the most severe in four-and-twenty hours.*”

The time and manner of his determination to be well strongly resemble Major Longbow’s no less strenuous determination on board the steamer, that no human consideration should induce him to be sick; and from his power of preventing or rapidly removing colds, we should suppose Mr. Walker re-

lated to the Marquis of Snowdon, immortalised by Mr. Hook in 'Love and Pride,' who scouts, as a reflection on his nobility, the bare supposition that a Plinlimmon could catch cold. But it is unnecessary to resort to fiction for instances of the exemption obtained by great men, apparently by mere dint of volition, from the ordinary wants and weaknesses of humanity. The Duke of Wellington is said to have been enabled to sustain the extraordinary fatigues of the late war in the Peninsula by the acquired habit of snatching sleep at any period of the day or night indifferently. Lord Brougham's capacity for intellectual exertion on a corresponding scale is, in part, owing to the same habit. We are the more particular in our enumeration of instances, to prepare the reader for the still more startling assertion of personal privilege or exemption which comes next. Our author is describing the results of an abstemious diet:—

“ Indeed, I felt a different being, light and vigorous, with all my senses sharpened—I enjoyed an absolute glowing existence. I cannot help mentioning two or three instances in proof of my state, though I dare say they will appear almost ridiculous, but they are nevertheless true. It seems that from the surface of an animal in perfect health there is an active exhalation going on which repels impurity; *for when I walked on the dustiest roads, not only my feet, but even my stockings, remained free from dust. By way of experiment, I did not wash my face for a week, nor did any one see, nor I feel, the difference.*”

Yet even these things may be paralleled from the memoirs of a hero of real life, who resembles Mr.

Walker both in his personal peculiarities and manner of telling them. The famous Lord Herbert of Cherbury says in his Life,—

“It is well known to those that wait in my chamber that the shirts, waistcoats, and other garments I wear next my body, are sweet beyond what either easily can be believed or hath been observed in any one else—which sweetness also was found to be in my breath above others before I used to take tobacco, which towards my latter time I was forced to take against certain rheums and catarrhs that trouble me, which yet did not taint my breath for any long time. I scarce ever felt cold in my life, though yet so subject to catarrhs that I think no man ever was more obnoxious to it; all which I do in a familiar way mention to my posterity, though otherwise they might be thought scarce worth the writing.’

It was said of M. de Fitzjames that he might be rolled in a gutter all his life without contracting a spot of dirt. Still we are not surprised to find Mr. Walker endeavouring, in a subsequent number, to corroborate his statement by a high medical authority:—

“My most staggering assertion I take to be this”—[‘The Original’ here repeats it]—“Dr. Gregory says of a person in high health, the exhalation from the skin is free and constant, but without amounting to perspiration—*exhalatio per cutem libera et constans, citra vero sudorem*—which answers with remarkable precision to ‘my active exhalation,’ and the repulsion of impurity is a necessary consequence. In fact, it is perspiration so active as to fly from the skin instead of remaining upon it, or suffering anything

else to remain ; just as we see an animal in high health"—[*e. g.* M. de Fitzjames]—"roll in the mire and directly after appear as clean as if it had been washed. I enter into these particulars, not to justify myself, but to gain the confidence of my readers, not only on this particular subject, but generally—more especially as I shall have frequent occasion to advance things out of the common way though in the way of truth. Well-grounded faith has great virtue in other things besides religion."

It is needless to repeat Lady Mary Wortley Montagu's remark on a French lady's expressing some astonishment at the not quite spotless condition of her hands. Miss Berry, in her clever and agreeable book on the Social Life of England and France, quotes this reply in illustration of the coarseness of the times ; but the inference is hardly just, for, assuming Lady Mary to have been acting on Mr. Walker's theory, her frank avowal was simply tantamount to saying that she was ill. At the same time, in case of confirmed ill health, it might be advisable to try the effect of an occasional ablution instead of trusting to "active exhalation" exclusively. Mr. Wadd, in his Treatise on Leanness and Corpulency, records the case of an elderly female who had shunned all contact with water, both hot and cold, for more than twenty years, under a belief that it was bad for the *rhéumatism*, to which she was a martyr ; when, long after she had given up all hopes of cure, she had the good fortune to get half drowned in a pond, and the immersion, combined with the consequent stripping and rubbing, effected her perfect

restoration to health. It may also be just as well to caution Mr. Walker's admirers against following his example as to clothing too rigidly, particularly in the article of cotton stockings and thin shoes; for by going "lightly shod" in wet weather they may incur an inconvenience of a very different description from cold. The Baron de Béranger relates that, having secured a pickpocket in the very act of irregular abstraction, he took the liberty of inquiring whether there was anything in his face that had procured him the honour of being singled out for such an attempt:—"Why, Sir," said the fellow, "your face is well enough, but you had on thin shoes and white stockings in dirty weather, and so I made sure you were a *flat*."

At the conclusion of Mr. Walker's first Number appeared this attractive intimation:—

"*Notice.*—I propose ere long to enter upon three subjects of interest and importance—the Art of Dining and Giving Dinners, the Art of Travelling, and the Art of attaining High Health—all from experience."

These three "Arts" formed in fact the staple commodities of the collection. The art of dining and giving dinners, in particular, was expounded with such comprehensiveness of view, and such soundness of principle, although with little show of refinement or delicacy of taste, that we are tempted to employ his remarks as a kind of text-book, and to convey our own peculiar notions in the shape of commentary. The subject is pursued through ten or twelve Num-

bers, at the rate of three or four pages in each, but Mr. Walker deals so largely in that kind of amplification which rhetoricians find useful in impressing opinions on the mass, that we shall be able to give the pith of his observations and theories within little more than a fifth of the space he has devoted to them. It seems best, however, to quote the greater part of the introductory paper as it stands—

“According to the lexicons, the Greek for *dinner* is *Ariston*, and therefore, for the convenience of the terms, and without entering into any inquiry critical or antiquarian, I call the art of dining, *aristology*, and those who study it, *aristologists*. The maxim that practice makes perfect does not apply to our daily habits; for, so far as they are concerned, we are ordinarily content with the standard of mediocrity or something rather below. Where study is not absolutely necessary, it is by most people altogether dispensed with, but it is only by an union of study and practice that we can attain anything like perfection. *Anybody can dine, but very few know how to dine so as to ensure the greatest quantity of health and enjoyment*. Indeed, many people contrive to destroy their health; and, as to enjoyment, I shudder when I think how often I have been doomed to only a solemn mockery of it; how often I have sat in durance stately to go through the ceremony of dinner, the essence of which is to be without ceremony, *and how often in this land of liberty I have felt myself a slave!*

“There are three kinds of dinners—solitary dinners, every-day social dinners, and set dinners; all three involving the consideration of cheer, and the last two of society also. Solitary dinners, I think, ought to be avoided as much as possible, *because solitude tends to produce thought,*

and *thought tends to the suspension of the digestive powers.* When, however, dining alone is necessary, the mind should be disposed to cheerfulness by a previous interval of relaxation from whatever has seriously occupied the attention, and by directing it to some agreeable object."

We do not know what agreeable object was particularly meant here—but the author of 'The Parson's Daughter,' when surprised one evening in his arm-chair, two or three hours after dinner, is reported to have apologised by saying—"When one is alone, the bottle *does* come round *so* often." It was Sir Hercules Langrishe, who, being asked on a similar occasion, "Have you finished all that port (three bottles) without assistance?" answered, "No—not quite that—I had the assistance of a bottle of Madeira." To return to the *Original*:—

"As content ought to be an accompaniment to every meal, punctuality is essential, and the diner and the dinner should be ready at the same time. A chief maxim in dining with comfort is to have what you want when you want it. It is ruinous to have to wait for first one thing, and then another, and to have the little additions brought when what they belong to is half or entirely finished. To avoid this, a little foresight is good, and, by way of instance, it is sound practical philosophy to have mustard upon the table before the arrival of toasted cheese. There are not only the usual adjuncts, but to those who have anything of a genius for dinners, little additions will sometimes suggest themselves which give a sort of poetry to a repast, and please the palate to the promotion of health."

The inconveniences of certain modish observances,

and the present bad system of attendance, are the first subjects of detailed commentary :—

“ There is in the art of dining a matter of special importance—I mean attendance—the real end of which is to do that for you which you cannot so well do for yourself. Unfortunately, this end is generally lost sight of, and the effect of attendance is to prevent you from doing that which you could do much better for yourself. The cause of this perversion is to be found in the practice and example of the rich and ostentatious, who constantly keep up a sort of war-establishment, or establishment adapted to extraordinary instead of ordinary occasions ; and the consequence is, that, like all potentates who follow the same policy, they never really taste the sweets of peace—they are in a constant state of invasion by their own troops. I am rather a bold man at table, and set form very much at defiance, so that, if a salad happens to be within my reach, I make no scruple to take it to me ; but the moment I am espied, it is nipped up from the most convenient to the most inconvenient position. That such absurdity should exist among rational beings, and in a civilised country, is extraordinary ! See a small party with a dish of fish at each end of the table, and four silver covers unmeaningly starved at the sides, whilst everything pertaining to the fish comes, even with the best attendance, provokingly lagging, one thing after another, so that contentment is out of the question ; and all this done under pretence that it is the most convenient plan ! This is an utter fallacy. The only convenient plan is to have everything actually upon the table that is wanted at the same time, and nothing else ; as, for example, for a party of eight, turbot and salmon, with doubles of each of the adjuncts, lobster-sauce, cucumber, young potatoes,

Cayenne, and Chili vinegar; and let the guests assist one another, which, with such an arrangement, they could do with perfect ease.

“With respect to wine,” (he continues, after complaining of the laborious changing of courses and the constant thrusting of side-dishes in his face,) “it is often offered when not wanted; and, when wanted, is perhaps not to be had till long waited for. It is dreary to observe two guests, glass in hand, waiting the butler’s leisure to be able to take wine together, and then, perchance, being helped in despair to what they did not ask for; and it is still more dreary to be one of the two yourself. How different, where you can put your hand upon a decanter at the moment you want it! I could enlarge upon and particularise these miseries at great length; but they must be only too familiar to those who dine out; and those who do not may congratulate themselves on their escape.”

Lord Byron was strongly impressed with the same evil, which has been sadly aggravated of late years:—

——— “I hate a lingering bottle,
Which with the landlord makes too long a stand,
Leaving all claretless the unmoisten’d throttle,—
Especially with politics on hand.”

The ladies are deeply interested in discountenancing the prevalent fashion of being helped to wine by servants, as it has ended by nearly abolishing the old English habit of taking wine together, which afforded one of the most pleasing modes of recognition when distant, and one of the prettiest occasions for coquetry when near,—

“Then, if you can contrive, get next at supper,
And if forestall’d, get opposite and ogle.”

So says the noble author of 'Don Juan,' who had some slight experience in this sort of tactics; but whether you get next or opposite, one of the best-contrived expedients for deepening a flirtation has been destroyed. There was once a well-known lady-killer who esteemed his mode of taking wine to be, of all his manifold attractions, the chief; and (to do him justice) the tact with which he chose his time, the air with which he gave the invitation, the feeling he contrived to throw into it, the studied carelessness with which he kept his eye on the fair one's every movement till she was prepared, and the seeming timidity of his bow when he was all the while looking full into her eyes—all these little graces were inimitable, and all these little graces have been lost. The difficulty of getting a glass of wine in the regular way began many years since to exercise the ingenuity of mankind. Mr. Theodore Hook was once observed, during dinner, nodding like a Chinese mandarin in a tea-shop. On being asked the reason, he replied, "Why, when no one else asks me to take champagne, I take sherry with the *épergne*, and bow to the flowers."

But the inconveniences of the fashions in question are aggravated as they descend:—

"I have been speaking hitherto of attendance in its most perfect state, but then comes the greater inconvenience and the monstrous absurdity of the same forms with inadequate establishments. I remember once receiving a severe frown from a lady at the head of her table, next to whom I was sitting, because I offered to take some fish from her to

which she had helped me, instead of waiting till it could be handed to me by her *one* servant; and she was not deficient either in sense or good breeding; but when people give in to such follies, they know no mean. It is one of the evils of the present day that everybody strives after the same dull style,—so that, where comfort might be expected, it is often least to be found. *State without the machinery of state is of all states the worst.* In conclusion of this part of my subject, I will observe that I think the affluent would render themselves and their country an essential service if they were to fall into the simple refined style of living, discarding everything incompatible with real enjoyment; and I believe that, if the history of overgrown luxury were traced, it has always had its origin from the vulgar-rich, the very last class worthy of imitation.”

This is just and true in the main—we have put in italics a maxim worthy of Bacon—but to desire the gorgeous establishments of our first-rate Amphitryons to be broken up, and the ornate style of living to be totally suppressed, would be as unreasonable as to propose the suppression of palaces because houses are better fitted for the ordinary purposes of life. The golden rule is, let all men’s dinners be according to their means;—discard the degrading fopperies of affectation, and the imitative meanness of vanity.

It is, however, undoubtedly true that the art of waiting is not understood at one house in a hundred. Servants, meaning to be very polite, dodge about to offer each *entrée* to ladies in the first instance; confusion arises, and whilst the same dishes are offered two or three times over to some

guests, the same unhappy wights have no option of others. One set of waiters should commence from the top, and go quietly and regularly round, whilst another set, simultaneously commencing from the bottom, should do the same. Where there are more than four side-dishes besides flanks and removes, the *entrées* ought to be in duplicates at opposite corners. The true principle is few *entrées*, but well-filled dishes; for, if the *entrées* are first rate, the presumption is that each guest will eat of each. The *service à la Russe* divides the opinions of the best judges; but we once saw it most pleasingly and originally put in practice. The party at a country house (Sandoe House, in Northumberland) having become too large for *one* ordinary round table, the hostess hit upon the happy idea of having *two* in the same room, each holding eight or nine persons, and served *à la Russe*. The respective advantages of differently formed tables depend upon the number, age, dispositions, and qualifications of the party; with reference to which you must determine whether it is best to facilitate tête-à-tête or general conversation.

A practical exemplification of Mr. Walker's principles comes next:—

‘As, like most people I suppose, I can write most easy upon what is freshest in my mind, I will give you, dear reader, an account of a dinner I have ordered this very day at Lovegrove’s, at Blackwall,—where, if you never dined, so much the worse for you. This account will serve as an illustration of my doctrines on dinner-giving

better than a long abstract discourse. The party will consist of seven men beside myself, and every guest is asked for some reason, upon which good fellowship mainly depends, for people brought together unconnectedly had, in my opinion, better be kept separate. Eight I hold to be the golden number, never to be exceeded without weakening the efficacy of concentration. The dinner is to consist of turtle, followed by no other fish but whitebait; which is to be followed by no other meat but grouse; which are to be succeeded by apple fritters and jelly, pastry on such occasions being quite out of place. With the turtle, of course, there will be punch; with the whitebait, champagne; with the grouse, claret: the two former I have ordered to be particularly well iced, and they will all be placed in succession upon the table, so that we can help ourselves as we please. I shall permit no other wines, unless perchance a bottle or two of port, if particularly wanted, as I hold variety of wines a great mistake. With respect to the adjuncts, I shall take care there is Cayenne, with lemons cut in halves, not in quarters, within reach of every one, for the turtle; and that brown bread-and-butter in abundance is set upon the table for the whitebait. It is no trouble to think of these little matters beforehand, but they make a vast difference in a convivial entertainment. The dinner will be followed by ices and a good dessert, after which coffee and one glass of liqueur each, and no more; so that the present may be enjoyed rationally, without inducing retrospective regrets. If the master of a feast wishes his party to succeed, he must know how to command, and not let his guests run riot according each to his own wild fancy. Such, reader, is my idea of a dinner, which I hope you approve; *and I cannot help thinking that if Parliament were to grant me 10,000*l.* a-year in trust to*

entertain a series of worthy persons, it would promote trade and increase the revenue more than any huggier-muggier measure ever devised."

The success of the Blackwall dinner is subsequently described :—

"It was served according to my directions, with perfect exactness, and went off with corresponding success. The turtle and whitebait were excellent; the grouse not quite of equal merit; and the apple-fritters so much relished that they were entirely cleared, and the jelly left untouched. The only wines were champagne and claret, and they both gave great satisfaction. As soon as the liqueurs were handed round once, I ordered them out of the room, and the only heresy committed was by one of the guests asking for a glass of bottled porter, which I had not the presence of mind instantly to forbid. There was an opinion broached that some flounders water-zoutched between the turtle and white-bait would have been an improvement,—and perhaps they would. I dined again yesterday at Blackwall, as a guest, and I observed that my theory as to adjuncts was carefully put into practice, so that I hope the public will be a gainer."

Turtle, in our opinion, is out of place at a Blackwall or Greenwich dinner, and would have been most advantageously replaced by a course, or two courses, of fish. It appears, from the grouse, that Mr. Walker's dinner took place after the 12th August, which is too late to eat whitebait in perfection. They are then large, and without their characteristic delicacy.

Two *menus* of first-rate fish dinners will be found in the Appendix, but it may be doubted whether the "Dinner for the Pope" would not be best executed in London, where every variety of fish may be procured. The peculiar attraction of a Blackwall or Greenwich dinner consists in the trip, the locality, the fresh air, and perhaps the whitebait—for, although served at most of the leading clubs, it loses in delicacy by transportation, and is seldom so well dressed as in the immediate proximity of its haunts. At Greenwich or Blackwall nothing more solid than ducklings, or chicken with broiled ham, need follow the fish courses.

The duties of the master of the house as to introducing his guests to each other, and bringing their various talents of the convivial order into play, are specified in the 'Original;' and the use of centre-pieces (*épergnes*, &c.) is vehemently decried. The popularity of bachelors' dinners is accounted for by the absence of form, and the fondness of females for garnish is compared to "the untutored Indian's fondness for feathers and shells." Then come sundry sound observations on the form, size, lighting,* warming, and decorations of dining-rooms, well meriting the attention of the epicure, but we pass them over to come to another of Mr. Walker's highly interesting experiences:—

* "Il lume grande, ed alto, e non troppo potente, sarà quello, che renderà le particole dei corpi molto grate."—*Leonardo da Vinci*. This quotation is borrowed from Mr. Rogers, whose dinner-table is lighted by sconces placed in such a manner as to reflect the light from the finest pictures. No lights are placed on or over the table.

“ To order dinner well is a matter of invention and combination. It involves novelty, simplicity, and taste; whereas, in the generality of dinners, there is no character but that of dull routine, according to the season. The same things are seen everywhere at the same periods, and, as the rules for providing limit the range very much, there are a great many good things which never make their appearance at all, and a great many others which, being served in a fixed order, are seldom half enjoyed; as, for instance, game in the third course. This reminds me of a dinner I ordered last *Christmas-day* for two persons besides myself, and which we enjoyed very much. It consisted of crimped cod, woodcocks, and plum-pudding, just as much of each as we wanted, and accompanied by champagne. Now this dinner was both very agreeable and very wholesome, from its moderation; but the ordinary course would have been to have preceded the woodcocks by some substantial dish, thereby taking away from their relish, at the same time overloading the appetite. Delicacies are scarcely ever brought till they are quite superfluous, which is unsatisfactory if they are not eaten, and pernicious if they are.”

This is a good plan enough when you are well acquainted with your guests' appetites, and know that they will be satisfied with a woodcock a-piece; but we have seen eaters who would experience very little difficulty in despatching single-handed the dinner ordered by Mr. Walker for three. The lord-lieutenant of one of the western counties ate a covey of partridges for breakfast every day during the season; and there is another nobleman who would eat a covey of partridges, as the Scotchman

ate a Solan goose, for a whet, and feel like him astonished if his appetite was not sharpened by the circumstance. Most people must have seen or heard of a caricature representing a man at dinner upon a round of beef, with the landlord looking on,—“Capital beef, landlord,” says the gentleman, “a man may cut and come again here.” “You may cut, Sir,” responds Boniface; “but I’ll be blowed if you shall come again.” The person represented was the nobleman in question; and the sketch was founded upon fact. He had occasion to stay late in the City, and turned into the celebrated Old Bailey beef-shop on his return, where, according to the landlord’s computation, he demolished about seven pounds and a half of solid meat, with a proportionate allowance of greens. The exploits of a well-known literary and political character at Crockford’s were such, that the founder of that singular institution more than once had serious thoughts of offering him a guinea to sup elsewhere, and was only prevented by the fear of meeting with a rebuff similar to that mentioned in ‘Roderick Random’ as received by the master of an ordinary, who, on proposing to buy off an ugly customer, was informed by him that he had been already bought off by all the other ordinaries in town, and was consequently under the absolute necessity of continuing to patronise the establishment.

Another unanswerable objection to the above dinner is its palpable want of harmony with the season. Roast beef and roast turkey are indispensable on Christmas-day. The truth is, Mr. Walker is some-

what wanting in discrimination, and his dishes are by no means uniformly well chosen. His essential merit consists in being the first who publicly advocated the principle of simplicity.

The important topic of vegetables receives a due share of attention in its turn:—

“One of the greatest luxuries to my mind in dining is to be able to command plenty of good vegetables, well served. But this is a luxury vainly hoped for at set parties. The vegetables are made to figure in a very secondary way, except indeed whilst they are considered as great delicacies, which is generally before they are at the best; and then, like other delicacies, they are introduced after the appetite has been satisfied; and the manner of handing vegetables round is most unsatisfactory and uncertain. Excellent potatoes, smoking hot, and accompanied by melted butter of the first quality, would alone stamp merit on any dinner; but they are as rare on state occasions, so served, as if they were of the cost of pearls.”

The remark of a late Q.C. and M.P. on the late Baron Hullock was—“He was a good man, an excellent man. He had the best melted butter I ever tasted in my life.” A distinguished connoisseur, still spared to the world, contends that the moral qualities of a hostess may in like manner be tested by the potatoes. If this test be accepted, the palm of superior morality must be awarded to Mr. (the Hon. Edmund) Byng, of Clarges Street. The importance attached by another equally unimpeachable authority to the point, was sufficiently shown by what took place at the meeting of a club-committee specially called for the selection of a cook. The candidates were an Eng-

lishman from the Albion, and a Frenchman recommended by Ude; the eminent divine to whom we allude was deputed to examine them, and the first question he put to each was,—“Can you boil a potato?”

We have already given two of Mr. Walker's practical illustrations. We now come to a third, which will be found equally replete with interest:—

“In entertaining those who are in a different class from ourselves, it is expedient to provide for them what they are not used to—and that which we are most in the way of procuring of superior quality. Many people, from their connexion with foreign countries, or with different parts of their own, are enabled to command with ease to themselves what are interesting rarities to others; and one sure way to entertain with effect is, to cultivate a good understanding with those with whom we deal for the supply of the table. By way of illustration of what I have said on the subject of choice plain dinners, I will give an account of one I once gave in the chambers of a friend of mine in the Temple to a party of six—all of whom were accustomed to good living, and one of whom was bred at one of the most celebrated tables in London. The dinner consisted of the following dishes, served in succession, and, with their respective adjuncts, carefully attended to. First, spring soup from Birch's on Cornhill, which, to those who have never tasted it, I particularly recommend in the season as being quite delicious; then a moderate-sized turbot, bought in the city, beautifully boiled, with first-rate lobster sauce, cucumber, and new potatoes; after that ribs of beef from Leadenhall market, roasted to a turn, and smoking from the spit, with French beans and salad; then a very fine dressed crab; and, lastly, some jelly. The owner of

the chambers was connected with the city, and he undertook specially to order the different articles, which it would have been impossible to exceed in quality; and, though the fish and beef were dressed by a Temple laundress, they could not have been better served, I suppose principally from the kitchen being close at hand and her attention not being distracted. And here I must remark that the proximity of the kitchen was not the least annoyance to us in any way, or indeed perceptible, except in the excellence of the serving up. The beef deservedly met with the highest praise; and certainly I never saw even venison more enjoyed. The crab was considered particularly well introduced, and was eaten with peculiar zest; and the simplicity of the jelly met with approval. The dessert, I think, consisted only of oranges and biscuits, followed by occasional introductions of anchovy toast. The wines were champagne, port, and claret. I have had much experience in the dinner way, both at large and at small parties, but I never saw such a vividness of conviviality either at or after dinner; which I attribute principally to the real object of a dinner being the only one studied; state, ornament, and superfluity being utterly excluded. I hold this up as an example of the plain, easy style of entertaining.

“As the success of this dinner so strongly illustrates my positions in favour of compactness of dining-room, of proximity of kitchen, of smallness of party, of absence of state and show, of undivided attention to excellence of dishes, and the mode of serving them in single succession, I am tempted to add the names here by way of authentication, and to show that my guests were competent judges, not to be led away by want of experience. The party consisted of Lord Abinger, then Sir James Scarlett; Sir John Johnstone, the present member for Scarborough; Mr.

Young, private Secretary to Lord Melbourne; Mr. R. Bell, of the firm of Bell, Brothers, and Co., who occupied the chambers, and acted as caterer; and, lastly, my excellent friend the late Honourable George Lamb, whose good-humoured convivial qualities were held in high estimation by all who knew him, and who on this occasion outshone himself.

“It is the mode that I wish to recommend, and not any particular dishes or wines. Common soup made at home, fish of little cost, any joints, the cheapest vegetables, some happy and unexpensive introduction like the crab, and a pudding,—provided everything is good in quality, and the dishes are well dressed, and served hot and in succession, with their adjuncts—will ensure a quantity of enjoyment which no one need be afraid to offer.”

The principle here propounded hardly admits of a cavil—for it is not merely the expense, but the trouble and fuss of dinner-giving on the present system, that checks the extended practice of “the Art,” and imposes a galling restraint on sociability. Many a man, to whom a few pounds are a matter of indifference, is rationally alarmed at the prospect of having the lower part of his premises converted into a laboratory for a week. We shall, therefore, endeavour to facilitate the adoption of the simple method, by adding a useful rule or two to Mr. Walker’s, and by enumerating some of the many excellent things to be found within the precincts of our own country by those who know when and where to look for them.

Turtle-soup, from Painter’s in Leadenhall-street,

is decidedly the best thing in the shape of soup that can be had in this, or perhaps in any country. "The first judge in Europe" asserts that Painter is the *only* turtle artist in Europe. The chief rule to be observed in making the ordinary soups is to use none but the very best meat and vegetables, and carefully to clear the meat of fat. The grouse-soup at Hamilton Palace is made on the principle of a young grouse to each of the party, in addition to six or seven brace stewed down for stock. It has very recently been asserted in *Blackwood* that Scotland stands pre-eminent in soups, and the boast is not entirely without plausibility.

Fish richly merits a book to itself; but we must confine ourselves to a limited number of hints. Our first relates to the prevalent mode of serving, which is wrong. The fish should never be covered up, or it will suffer fatally from the condensation of the steam. Moreover, the practice of putting boiled and fried fish on the same dish cannot be too much reprobated; and covering hot fish with cold green parsley is abominable. Sometimes one sees all these barbarities committed at once; and the removal of the cover exhibits boiled and fried fish, both covered with parsley; the fried fish deprived of all its crispness from contact with the boiled, and both made sodden by the fall of the condensed steam from the cover: so the only merit the fish has is being hot, which it might have just as well if it followed instead of accompanying the soup. It is commonly made an object to have *fine large slices* of cod, as

they are called. There is no error greater than this. Cod ought to be crimped in thin slices, and you will then have the whole of your fish boiled equally, whilst in thick slices the thin or belly part is overdone before the thick part is half boiled. Another advantage is, that you need not put your fish into the kettle (it ought always to be put into *boiling* water) until your guests are arrived. Of sauces, Dutch sauce is applicable to all white-fleshed fish, except perhaps cod, when oyster sauce may be allowed. There is little mystery in the composition of oyster sauce; but lobster sauce is not so generally understood.* The Christchurch and Severn salmon are decidedly the best in England; for the Thames salmon may now almost be considered extinct. The salmon at Killarney, broiled, toasted, or roasted on arbutus skewers, is a thing apart, and unfortunately inimitable. The Dublin haddock is another delicacy peculiar to the sister island; but to prevent Scotland from becoming jealous, we will venture to place the fresh herring of Loch Fyne alongside of it. The Hampshire trout enjoy a prescriptive celebrity; but we incline to give the Colne and the Carshalton river the preference, with the exception of the genuine and indigenous Thames trout, which must not be confounded with all trout caught in the Thames. The Clyde trout, above the Falls in the part of the river belonging to Mr. Baillie Cochrane's estate of Lamington, are excellent. Perch (Thames) and tench are also very good with Dutch sauce. Perch are best

* See Appendix.

water-zoutched, or fried in batter, as they used to be at Staines. The abundant introduction of sea-fish has unduly lowered the character of carp; a fat river carp is a dish for a prince. Pond carp acquire a muddy taste; to counteract which a learned monk suggests the prudence of giving them for companions a few small pike, who nibble at their fins when they are half sunk in the mud, and compel them to take exercise. He had probably meditated on the analogical case of the hunted hare, which is much improved by a long run. Pike (Dutch sauce again) are capital if bled in the tail and gills as soon as caught; they die much whiter, and look better at table. Pike is capitally dressed at the White Hart at Salisbury. London is principally supplied with eels from Holland; and whole cargoes are daily sent up the river to be eaten as Thames eels at Richmond, Eel-pie Island, &c. Pope's well-known line—

“The Kennet swift, for silver eels renown'd,”

were alone enough to bring poetical authority into discredit. The Kennet is a slow river; there are no eels at all in the upper part, and those in the lower part are too large. The silver eel, from a running stream with a gravelly bottom, may be eaten in perfection at Salisbury, Anderton, or Overton. He is best spatch-cooked. The best lampreys and lamperns are from Worcester.

The late Duke of Portland was in the habit of going to Weymouth during the summer months, for the sake of the red mullet which formerly abounded

there. The largest used to be had for three-pence or four-pence a piece; but he has been known to give two guineas for one weighing a pound and a half. His Grace's custom was to put all the livers together into a butter-boat, to avoid the chances of inequality; very properly considering that, to be helped to a mullet in the condition of an East Indian nabob, would be too severe a shock for the nerves or spirits of any man. The mullet have now nearly deserted Weymouth for the coast of Cornwall, whither we recommend the connoisseur to repair in the dog-days, taking care to pay his respects to the dories of Plymouth on the way,—and he will have the pleasure of following the example of Quin. London, however, is now tolerably well supplied with mullet from Hastings. There are epicures who combine these luxuries, eating the flesh of the dory with the liver of the mullet; but though the flesh of the mullet be poor, it is exactly adapted to the sauce which nature has provided for it, and we consequently denounce all combinations of this description as heterodox. The Brighton dories are also very fine, and the Jersey mullet are splendid, weighing often three or four pounds a-piece.

We shall next set down a few specialities regarding birds. The greatest novelty, perhaps, is the poachard or dun-bird, a species of wild fowl, supposed to come from the Caspian Sea, and caught only in a single decoy on the Misley Hall estate, Essex, in the month of January in the coldest years. Their flesh is exquisitely tender and delicate, and may

almost be said to melt in the mouth, like what is told of the celebrated canvas-back duck of America; but they have little of the common wild-duck flavour, and are best eaten in their own gravy, which is plentiful, without either cayenne or lemon-juice. Their size is about that of a fine widgeon. The dotterel is also highly and deservedly valued by the epicure.

Ruffs and reeves are little known to the public at large, though honourable mention of them is made by Bewick. The season for them is August and September. They are found in fenny counties (those from Whittlesea Meer, in Lincolnshire, are best), and must be taken alive and fattened on boiled wheat or bread and milk mixed with hemp-seed for about a fortnight, taking good care never to put two males to feed together, or they will fight *à l'outrance*. These birds are worth nothing in their wild state; and the art of fattening them is traditionally said to have been discovered by the monks in Yorkshire, where they are still in high favour with the clerical profession, as a current anecdote will show. At a grand dinner at Bishopthorpe (in Archbishop Markham's time) a dish of ruffs and reeves chanced to be placed immediately in front of a young divine who had come up to be examined for priest's orders, and was considerately (or, as it turned out, inconsiderately) asked to dinner by his grace. Out of sheer modesty the clerical tyro confined himself exclusively to the dish before him, and persevered in his indiscriminating attentions to it till one of the resident dignitaries (all of whom were waiting only the proper moment

to participate) observed him, and called the attention of the company by a loud exclamation of alarm. But the warning came too late: the ruffs and reeves had vanished to a bird, and with them, we are concerned to add, all the candidate's hopes of Yorkshire preferment are said to have vanished too.

A similar anecdote is current touching wheatears, which, in our opinion, are a greater delicacy. A Scotch officer was dining with the late Lord George Lennox, then commandant at Portsmouth, and was placed near a dish of wheatears, which was rapidly disappearing under his repeated attacks. Lady Louisa Lennox tried to divert his attention to another dish. "Na, na, my leddy," was the reply, "these wee birdies will do verra weel." We have heard that some canvas-back ducks, sent by Mr. Prescott the historian to an English friend, were accidentally forwarded to Melton, and eaten by a select party as common ducks. Due honour, however, was paid to a similar present from the same illustrious quarter at Lady Morgan's.*

Prince Talleyrand was extremely fond of ruffs and reeves, his regular allowance during the season being two a-day: they are dressed like woodcocks. Dunstable larks should properly be eaten in Dunstable; but the late Lord Sefton imported them in tin boxes (in a state requiring merely to be warmed before the fire) with considerable success. Larks

* The first canvas-back ducks that arrived in England were a present from Mr. Featherstonehaugh, the well-known author and diplomatist, to Sir Roderic Murchison, the eminent geologist. Mr. Ford, also, has received them in high order from Mr. Prescott.

are best in January. Surrey and Sussex are the counties for the capon, and also for the same animal in his more natural though less aristological condition; Norfolk and Suffolk, for turkeys and geese. These counties are also renowned for partridges, which are worth nothing in a grass district. A Leicestershire partridge is never dressed at Belvoir Castle. A pheasant, sent by Fisher to Lord William Bentinck at Paris, weighed four pounds, wanting an ounce; but we are not aware in what county it was killed. It is a singular fact, with regard to woodcocks, that the average weight is full fifteen ounces, yet the largest invariably falls below sixteen. The largest common grouse ever known weighed twenty-eight ounces. A cock of the woods, weighing very nearly ten pounds, was sent to Lord Balcarres, by Fisher, of Duke-street, St. James's, confessedly the best poulterer in London. These magnificent birds have been naturalized in the Highlands by Lord Breadalbane. Fisher certainly defies comparison in one particular—having actually discovered the art of sending fowls with two liver wings to his friends. He enjoyed the unlimited confidence of Lord Sefton, which is one of the highest compliments that can be paid to any man directly or indirectly connected with gastronomy; and he is, we believe, the sole purveyor to the royal table. He has, by dint of diligent study, acquired the art of fattening ortolans, which he sells at a tenth of the price they used to fetch in London. He recently sent a fine bustard to Windsor, price $7\frac{1}{2}$ guineas. Morell of Piccadilly once

sold a Norfolk turkey, weighing thirty pounds, and filled with French truffles, for eighteen guineas. A well-conditioned snipe, or a fresh landrail, is as good a bird as can be eaten, either in or out of Great Britain.

Most people know that a roast leg of four or five year-old mutton (it were superfluous to expatiate upon the haunch) with laver *served in the saucepan* is a dish of high merit, but it ought never to be profaned by the spit, which lets out the gravy, and shocks the sight with an unseemly perforation. Neither is a boiled leg of mutton and turnips, with caper sauce, to be despised. Besides, it gave rise to a fair enough *mot* of Charles Lamb's. A farmer, his chance companion in a coach, kept boring him to death with questions, in the jargon of agriculturists, about crops. At length he put a poser—"And pray, Sir, how are turnips t' year?" "Why, that, Sir (stammered out Lamb), will depend upon the boiled legs of mutton."

The capabilities of a boiled edgebone of beef may be estimated from what happened to Pope, the actor, well known for his devotion to the culinary art. He received an invitation to dinner, accompanied by an apology for the simplicity of the intended fare,—a small turbot and a boiled edgebone of beef. "The very thing of all others that I like," exclaimed Pope; "I will come with the greatest pleasure;" and come he did, and eat he did, till he could literally eat no longer; when the word was given, and a haunch of venison was brought in, fit to be made the subject of a new poetical epistle,—

“for finer or fatter

Never ranged in a forest, or smoked in a platter;
The haunch was a picture for painters to study;
The fat was so white, and the lean was so ruddy.”

Poor Pope divined at a glance the nature of the trap that had been laid for him, but he was fairly caught; and, after a puny effort at trifling with a slice of fat, he laid down his knife and fork, and gave way to an hysterical burst of tears, exclaiming—“A friend of twenty years’ standing, and to be served in this manner!” The late Duke of Devonshire’s passion was a broiled bladebone of mutton, which was every night got ready for him at Brookes’s. The late Duke of Norfolk was accustomed to declare that there was as marked a difference between beefsteaks as between faces; and that a man of taste would find as much variety in a dinner at the Beefsteak Club (where he himself never missed a meeting) as at the most plentifully served table in town. An excellent beefsteak may be had at the Blue Posts, in Cork-street.

It may encourage many a would-be Amphitryon to learn by what simple expedients the prosperity of a dinner may be ensured.

We have seen Painter’s turtle prepare the way for a success which was crowned by a lark pudding. We have seen a kidney dumpling perform wonders; and a noble-looking shield of Canterbury brawn from Groves’s diffuse a sensation of unmitigated delight. One of Morell’s Montanches hams, or a woodcock pie from Bavier’s of Boulogne, would be a sure card; but a home-made partridge pie would be more likely to come upon your company by

surprise, provided a beefsteak be put over as well as under the birds, and the birds be placed with their breasts downwards in the dish. Game, or wildfowl, is never better than broiled; and a boiled shoulder of mutton, or boiled duck or pheasant, might alone found a reputation. A still more original notion was struck out by a party of eminent connoisseurs who entertained the Right Hon. Sir Henry Ellis at Fricœur's, just before he started on his Persian embassy. They actually ordered a roasted turbot, and were boasting loudly of the success of the invention, when a friend of ours had the curiosity to ask M. Fricœur in what manner he set about the dressing of the fish. "Why, Sare, you no tell; we no roast him at all; we put him in oven and bake him."

Marrowbones are always popular. So is a well-made devil, or a broil. When a picture of the Dutch school, representing a tradesman in a passion with his wife for bringing up an underdone leg of mutton, was shown to the late Lord Hertford, his Lordship's first remark was, "What a fool that fellow is not to see that he may have a capital broil!" A genuine *hure de sanglier*, or wild boar's head, from the Black Forest, would elevate the plainest dinner into dignity. The late King of Hanover used to send one to each of his most esteemed friends in England every Christmas; and it was a test of political consistency to remain long upon his list, for all who abandoned his Majesty's somewhat rigid creed of orthodoxy in Church and State were periodically weeded out.

On the subject of roast-pig it would be profanation to appeal to any one but Charles Lamb:—

“Of all the delicacies in the whole *mundus edibilis*, I will maintain it to be the most delicate—*princeps obsoniorum*.

“I speak not of your grown porkers—things between pig and pork—these hobbydehoys—but a young and tender suckling—under a moon old—guiltless as yet of the sty—with no original speck of the *amor immunditiæ*, the hereditary failing of the first parent yet manifest—his voice as yet not broken, but something between a childish treble and a grumble—the mild forerunner or præludium of a grunt.

“Behold him while he is doing—it seemeth rather a refreshing warmth than a scorching heat that he is so passive to. How equably he twirleth round the string! Now he is just done. To see the extreme sensibility of that tender age, he hath wept out his pretty eyes—radiant jellies—shooting stars.

“See him in the dish, his second cradle, how meek he lieth! Wouldst thou have had this innocent grow up to the grossness and indocility which too often accompany maturer swinehood? Ten to one he would have proved a glutton, a sloven, an obstinate, disagreeable animal—wallowing in all manner of filthy conversation—from these sins he is happily snatched away.

Ere sin could blight, or sorrow fade,
Death came with timely care—

his memory is odoriferous—no clown curseth while his stomach half rejecteth the rank bacon—no coalheaver bolteth him in reeking sausages—he hath a fair sepulchre in the grateful stomach of a judicious epicure—and for such a tomb might be content to die.

“Our ancestors were nice in their method of sacrificing

these tender victims. We read of pigs whipped to death with something of a shock, as we hear of any other obsolete custom. The age of discipline is gone by, or it would be curious to inquire (in a philosophical light merely) what effect this process might have towards intenerating and dulcifying a substance naturally so mild and dulcet as the flesh of young pigs. It looks like refining a violet. Yet we should be cautious, while we condemn the inhumanity, how we censure the wisdom of the practice. It might impart a gusto.

“I remember an hypothesis argued upon by the young students when I was at St. Omer’s, and maintained with much learning and pleasantry on both sides, ‘whether, supposing that the flavour of a pig who obtained his death by whipping (*per flagellationem extremam*) superadded a pleasure upon the palate of a man more intense than any possible suffering we can conceive in the animal, is man justified in using that method of putting the animal to death?’ I forget the decision.”*

A true gastronome is as insensible to suffering as a conqueror. Ude discourses thus on the skinning of eels:—

“Take one or two live eels; throw them into the fire; as they are twisting about on all sides, lay hold of them with a towel in your hand, and skin them from head to tail. This method is the best, as it is the only method of drawing out all the oil, which is unpalatable and indigestible. Cut the eel in pieces without ripping the belly, then run your knife into the hollow part, and turn it round to take out the inside.

“Several reviewers” (he adds in a note to his second edition) “have accused me of cruelty because I recommend

* Dissertation on Roast Pig, ‘Essays of Elia,’ First Series.

in this work that eels should be burnt alive. As my knowledge in cookery is entirely devoted to the gratification of taste and the preservation of health, I consider it my duty to attend to what is essential to both. The blue skin and oil which remain, when the eels are skinned, render them highly indigestible. If any of these reviewers would make trial of both methods, they would find that the burnt eels are much healthier; but it is, after all, left to their choice whether to burn or skin."

The *argumentum ad gulam* is here very logically applied; but M. Ude might have taken higher ground, and urged not merely that the eel was used to skinning,* but gloried in it. It was only necessary for him to endow the eel with the same noble spirit of endurance that has been attributed to the goose. "To obtain these livers (the *foies gras* of Strasbourg) of the size required, it is necessary," says a writer in the 'Almanach,' "to sacrifice the person of the animal. Crammed with food, deprived of drink, and fixed near a great fire, before which it is nailed by its feet upon a plank, this goose passes, it must be owned, an uncomfortable life. The torment would indeed be altogether intolerable if the idea of the lot which awaits him did not serve as a consolation. But this perspective makes him endure his sufferings with courage; and when he reflects that

* One of the most important services rendered by Mr. Bentham and his disciples to the world is a formal refutation of the common fallacy as to eels. "No eel is used to be skinned successively by several persons; but one and the same person is used successively to skin several eels." So says the sage in the last of his works, the pamphlet entitled 'Boa Constrictor.'

his liver, bigger than himself, larded with truffles, and clothed in a scientific pâté, will, through the instrumentality of M. Corcellet, diffuse all over Europe the glory of his name, he resigns himself to his destiny, and suffers not a tear to flow."

Should it, notwithstanding, be thought that the theory of C. Lamb, M. Ude, or M. Corcellet, as regards pigs, eels, or geese, is indefensible, we may still say of them as Berchoux says of Nero:—

"Je sais qu'il fut cruel, assassin, suborneur,
Mais de son estomac je distingue son cœur."

When climbing-boys first became the object of popular sympathy, a distinguished member of the Humane Society suggested that a chimney might be swept by dragging a live goose from the bottom to the top. To the obvious objection on the score of humanity, he replied that, if it was thought wrong to impose this curious imitation of keel-hauling on the goose, a couple of ducks might do as well. Identically the same line of argument has been opened to the gastronomer by the discovery that the liver of the Toulouse duck is even better than that of the Strasbourg goose. *Revenons à nos cochons.* The late Duke of Cambridge, being on a visit at Belvoir Castle for the celebration of its popular and munificent owner's birthday on the 4th of January, was shown the bill of fare for the day, admirably imagined by an admirable *chef*, and was asked whether there was anything else that he fancied. "Yes," answered his Royal Highness; "a roast pig and an apple dumpling." Messengers were de-

spatched in all directions, and at length a pig was found, notwithstanding the season.

The delicacy of a roasting pig, except in the case of flagellation, depends on his being nurtured exclusively on mother's milk from his birth to his dying day. The delicacy of pork is ineffably enhanced by giving the pig the full enjoyment of fresh air, combined with moderate warmth and strict cleanliness. It is therefore fortunate that the nurture and education of this animal have become a fashionable rural pursuit with the fair sex. An acquaintance of ours actually placed a pig of more than ordinary promise under the exclusive care of a female attendant, with directions to give him a warm bath every day, and the result was eminently prosperous. Diet, of course, is of primary importance. According to Mr. Ford, the animals which produce the famous Montanches hams, manage to exist in summer-time on the snakes which abound in the district—*Mons anguis*—and fatten rapidly in the autumn on the sweet acorns—those magnificent acorns, a parcel of which was deemed by Sancho's wife a becoming present for her husband's friend, the Duchess. The Montanches hams are *les petits jambons vermeils*, commemorated by St. Simon (who describes them as fattened exclusively upon vipers), and they must be carefully distinguished from the Gallician and Catalan hams. Our familiarity with them, as with whatever else is worth imitating in the Spanish cuisine, is derived from Mr. Ford.*

* See his *Spanish Handbook*, vol. i. p. 68; or his dinner-table, at 7h. 30m. P.M.

The only place at which we ever saw the genuine Montanches ham for sale in this country is Morell's.

Mr. Morell is a man of cultivated taste, well read in the *Physiologie du Goût*, and imbued with much of its spirit. He knows, and will say at once, whether he can supply the genuine article or not. The late Mr. Beckford sent for him one Sunday at midday, and set him down to lunch on Westphalia ham and Silleri champagne, desiring him, if they turned out to be of first-rate quality, to buy up all the hams and wine of the same kind which he could find on sale. The decision was not favourable; indeed, Mr. Morell is of opinion that Silleri is greatly over-estimated in England, and that Westphalia hams have deteriorated since the demand for them has increased. He says that the dressing of a ham is one of the most difficult and trying of culinary operations, and is seldom well performed except by those who have made it their special study. Mr. Ford rightly contends that a Montanches ham is best hot; but we have somewhere read or heard that a man who would eat hot ham, would kill a pig with his own hand.

We turn, by an unforced transition, from hams to salads, which have taxed the ingenuity of the wisest and the wittiest. Sydney Smith's poetical recipe will be found in the Appendix. According to the Spanish proverb, four persons are wanted to make a good salad: a spendthrift for oil, a miser for vinegar, a counsellor for salt, and a madman to stir all up. The sauce should be kept in a sepa-

rate bowl, and not be poured over the rest of the materials until the moment before the salad is to be eaten. It is surprising that such a proficient as Mr. Walker, when talking of excellence in salad, should mention "*drying* the leaves of the lettuce." It is, to use his own words, "abandoning the principle and adopting some expedient." Lettuces ought never to be wetted; they thus lose their crispness, and are *pro tanto* destroyed. If you can get nothing but wet lettuces, you had certainly better dry them; but if you wish for a good salad, cut your lettuce fresh from the garden, take off the outside leaves, cut or rather break it into a salad bowl, and then mix.

The comparative merits of pies and puddings present a problem which it is no easy matter to decide. On the whole, we give the preference to puddings, as affording more scope to the inventive genius of the cook; but we must insist on a little more precaution in preparing them. A plum-pudding, for instance, our national dish, is hardly ever boiled enough; and we have sometimes found ourselves, in England, in the same distressing predicament in which Lord Byron once found himself in Italy. He had made up his mind to have a plum-pudding on his birthday, and busied himself a whole morning in giving minute directions to prevent the chance of a mishap; yet, after all the pains he had taken, and the anxiety he must have undergone, it appeared in a tureen, and about the consistency of soup. "Upon this failure in the production (says our authority) he was fre-

quently quizzed, and betrayed all the petulance of a child, and more than a child's curiosity to learn who had reported the circumstance"—as if the loss of a whole day's thought and labour was not enough to excite the petulance of any man, let alone his belonging to the *genus irritabile!*

A green apricot tart is commonly considered the best tart that is made; but a green apricot pudding is a much better thing. A cherry dumpling is better than a cherry tart. A rhubarb pie is greatly improved by a slight infusion of lemon when eaten. A beefsteak pudding, again, is better than the corresponding pie; but oysters and mushrooms are essential to its success. A mutton-chop pudding, with oysters, but without mushrooms, is excellent.

The late Lord Dudley could not dine comfortably without an apple-*pie*, as he insisted on calling it, contending that the term *tart* only applied to open pastry. Dining, when Foreign Secretary, at a grand dinner at Prince Esterhazy's, he was terribly put out on finding that his favourite delicacy was wanting, and kept on murmuring pretty audibly, in his absent way, "God bless my soul! no apple-*pie!*"

Jekyll was dining at Holland House with the late Duke of York, and, knowing his Royal Highness's taste, requested the honour of taking cognac with him. Wonderful to say, there was none in the house, and Lady Holland accused Jekyll of having called for it with full knowledge of the fact. "Really, Lady Holland," was the reply, "I

thought that, if I had called for a slice of broiled rhinoceros in Holland House, it would have been handed to me without a moment's delay."

With regard to drinkables, the same attention to unity and simplicity is to be enforced :—

"I should lay down the same rules as to wines as I have already done as to meats, that is, simplicity on the same and variety on different days. Port only, taken with or without a little water at dinner, is excellent, and the same of claret. I think, on ordinary occasions, such a system is by far the most agreeable. Claret, I mean genuine, undoctored claret, which, in my opinion, is the true taste, is particularly good as a dinner wine, and is now to be had at a very reasonable price. I would not wish better than that given at the Athenæum at three and sixpence a bottle. Rhenish wines are very wholesome and agreeable, drunk simply without other wines. I must not here pass over altogether the excellences of malt liquor, though it is rather difficult to unite the use of it judiciously with that of wine. When taken together, it should be in great moderation; but I rather prefer a malt-liquor day exclusively now and then by way of variety, or to take it at luncheon. There is something extremely grateful in the very best table-beer, and it is to be lamented it is so rarely to be met with in the perfection of which it is capable. That beverage at dinner, and two or three glasses of first-rate ale after, constitute real luxury, and I believe are a most wholesome variety. Good porter needs no praise; and bottled porter iced is in hot weather most refreshing. Cider cup lemonade, and iced punch in summer, and hot in winter, are all worthy of their turns; but I do not think turns come so often as they ought to do. We go on the beaten track without profiting by the varieties which are to be found on every side."

Instead of icing punch, the preferable mode is to make it with iced soda-water.* The gin-punch made on this principle at the Garrick Club is one of the best things we know. It was the favourite beverage of the late Theodore Hook. One hot evening in July he strolled into the Garrick in that equivocal state of thirstiness which it requires something more than common to quench. On describing the sensation, he was recommended to make trial of the punch, and a jug was compounded immediately, under the personal inspection of the inventor, the late Stephen Price. A second followed—a third, with the accompaniment of some chops—a fourth—a fifth—a sixth—at the expiration of which Mr. Hook went away to keep a dinner engagement at Lord Canterbury's. He always ate little; on this occasion he ate less; and a friend inquired in a fitting tone of anxiety if he was ill. "Not exactly," was the reply; "but my stomach won't bear trifling with, and I was tempted to take a biscuit and a glass of sherry about three."

The wines which may be deemed indispensable at a complete English dinner, and which consequently it is of paramount importance to have good, are sherry, champagne, port, and claret. The palate is confused and made indiscriminating by a greater number; although anything supremely good of its kind will always be welcome as a variety. Age is

* Pour half-a-pint of gin on the outer peel of a lemon, then a little lemon-juice, sugar, a glass of Maraschino, about a pint and a quarter of water, and two bottles of iced soda-water. The result will be three pints of the punch in question.

not a merit abstractedly and in itself, although the richest and fullest-bodied wines will keep longest, and the best vintages are most carefully preserved. The Comte de Cossé, who succeeded the Duc d'Escars as maître d'hôtel to Louis XVIII., possessed some port which was more than a hundred years old, bought originally for his royal master. It had lost its colour, and its flavour was by no means fine. On the other hand, competent judges are agreed that about the finest port ever known was found at Wootton, in 1824, in some cellars that had been bricked up not later, and perhaps much earlier, than the time of George Grenville, the minister, who died in 1770. The sherry produced at the City banquet given to the Queen and Prince Albert was as remarkable for its quality as for its age. The Rhenish wines are no exception to the rule; and what is produced as "old hock" in this country is commonly thin and acid. It is the year, or vintage—not the mere lapse of time—which stamps the value. Thus, hock of 1811 (the comet year) is more valuable than hock of 1801, and claret of 1834 than claret of 1824.

Canning used to say that any sane person who affected to prefer dry Champagne to sweet, lied. The illustrious statesman had probably never tasted the original Stock's dry champagne, the memory of which is still dear to the connoisseur. It used to be drunk at Crockford's at 7s. a bottle. It subsequently sold for a guinea a bottle. Lord Lichfield, Lord Donegall, and Mr. Orby Hunter, bought a

great deal of it. To the best of our information, this was the very wine of which four Irish members drank fifteen bottles at a sitting, at a celebrated club, in the worst year of Irish distress.

The portentous growth of London has astonished and puzzled many who have not duly reflected on the causes of this phenomenon. Amongst these, the increased and daily increasing facilities for social enjoyment must not be lost sight of. One effect of steam communication, by land and water, has been to concentrate in the metropolis a vast variety of formerly untransportable luxuries, which have consequently ceased, in a great measure, to give local distinction to the localities in which they are respectively produced. It is no longer necessary to travel to the coast of Devonshire to enjoy John dory, or to Worcester to taste lampreys in perfection; and Charles, of Pimlico (as the frequenters of the Carlton Club can testify), contrives that Severn and Christchurch salmon, caught in the morning, shall be served at a seven o'clock dinner in Pall-Mall.

But the improvement and multiplication of Clubs is the grand feature of metropolitan progress. There are between twenty and thirty of these admirable establishments, at which a man of moderate habits can dine more comfortably for three or four shillings (including half a pint of wine) than he could have dined for four or five times that amount at the coffee-houses and hotels, which were the habitual resort of the bachelor class in the

corresponding rank of life during the first quarter of the century. At some of the clubs—the *Travelers'*, the *Coventry*, and the *Carlton*, for example—the most finished luxury may be enjoyed at a very moderate cost. The best judges are agreed that it is utterly impossible to dine better than at the *Carlton*, when the cook has fair notice, and is not hurried, or confused by a multitude of orders. But great allowances must be made when a simultaneous rush occurs from both Houses of Parliament; and the caprices of individual members of such institutions are sometimes extremely trying to the temper and reputation of a *chef*. During Ude's presidency over the Crockford *cuisine*, one ground of complaint formally addressed to the Committee was, that there was an admixture of onion in the *soubise*.

Colonel Damer, happening to enter Crockford's one evening to dine early, found Ude walking up and down in a towering passion, and naturally inquired what was the matter. "The matter, Monsieur le Colonel! Did you see that man who has just gone out? Well, he ordered a red mullet for his dinner. I made him a delicious little sauce with my own hands. The price of the mullet marked on the *carte* was 2s.; I added 6d. for the sauce. He refuses to pay the 6d. That *imbécille* apparently believes that the red mullets come out of the sea with my sauce in their pockets!" The *imbécille* might have retorted that they do come out of the sea with their appropriate sauce in their pockets; but this forms no excuse for damping the genius of a Ude.

Having now glanced over the whole of Mr. Walker's contributions to the art of dining, we shall endeavour to convey some notion, however faint, of the varied and extended interests which the subject may be fairly considered to comprise:—

“I have already,” he says, “alluded to the importance of the city being well provisioned; and although city feasting is often a subject of joke, and is no doubt sometimes carried to excess, yet I am of opinion that a great deal of English spirit is owing to it, and that, as long as men are so often emboldened by good cheer, they are in no danger of becoming slaves. The city halls, with their feasts, their music, and their inspiring associations, are so many temples of liberty; and I only wish that they could be dispersed through the metropolis, and have each a local government attached in proportion to the means of the establishment. Then would there be objects worthy of the highest intelligence united with social attractions, and improvement in government might be expected to become steadily progressive.”

One class of City dinners are or were altogether peculiar of their kind, namely, the dinners given by the Sheriffs, during the Old Bailey sittings, to the judges and aldermen in attendance, the recorder, common-serjeant, city pleaders, and occasionally a few members of the bar. The first course was rather miscellaneous, and varied with the season, though marrow puddings always formed a part of it; the second never varied, and consisted exclusively of beefsteaks. The custom was to serve two dinners (exact duplicates) a-day, the first at three o'clock,

the second at five. As the judges relieved each other, it was impracticable for them to partake of both; but the aldermen often did so; and a late chaplain, whose duty it was to preside at the lower end of the table, was never absent from his post. This invaluable public servant persevered from a sheer sense of duty till he had acquired the habit of eating two dinners a-day, and practised it for nearly ten years without any perceptible injury to his health. We had the pleasure of witnessing his performances at one of the five o'clock dinners, and can assert with confidence that the vigour of his attack on the beefsteaks was wholly unimpaired by the effective execution a friend assured us he had done on them two hours before. The occasion to which we allude was so remarkable for other reasons, that we have the most distinct recollection of the circumstances. It was the first trial of the late St. John Long for rubbing a young lady into her grave. The presiding judges were the late Mr. Justice Park and the late Mr. Baron Garrow, who retired to dinner about five, having first desired the jury, amongst whom there was a difference of opinion, to be locked up. The dinner proceeded merrily; the beefsteaks were renewed again and again, and received the solemn sanction of judicial approbation repeatedly. Mr. Adolphus told some of his best stories, and the chaplain was on the point of complying with a challenge for a song, when the court-keeper appeared with a face of consternation to announce that the jury, after being very noisy for an hour or so, had sunk into a

dead lull, which, to the experienced in such matters, augurs the longest period of deliberation which the heads, or rather stomachs, of the jurymen can endure. The trial had unfortunately taken place upon a Saturday; and it became a serious question in what manner they were to be dealt with. Mr. Baron Garrow proposed waiting till within a few minutes of twelve, and then discharging them. Mr. Justice Park, the senior judge, and a warm admirer of the times when refractory juries were carried round the country in a cart, would hear of no expedient of the kind. He said a judge was not bound to wait beyond a reasonable hour at night, nor to attend before a reasonable hour in the morning; that Sunday was a *dies non* in law; and that a verdict must be delivered in the presence of the judge: he consequently declared his intention of waiting till what he deemed a reasonable hour, namely, about ten, and then informing the jury that, if they were not agreed, they must be locked up without fire or candle until a reasonable hour (about nine) on the Monday, by which time he trusted they would be unanimous. The effect of such an intimation was not put to the test, for Mr. St. John Long was found guilty about nine.

We must add a few words as to the use that may be made of dinner-giving in creating or extending political influence.

Tenez bonne table et soignez les femmes, was the sum of Napoleon's instructions to the Abbé de Pradt, when despatched to gain over Poland to his cause.

From Sir Robert Walpole's time downwards, the Whigs have acted on Napoleon's maxim with singular and well-merited success; and no one who knows anything of human nature will deny, that it is of the last importance to a party to have a few noble or highly distinguished houses, where all its rank and beauty, wit, eloquence, accomplishment, and agreeability may congregate; where, above all, each young recruit of promise may be received on an apparent footing of equality, his feelings taken captive by kindness, or his vanity conciliated by flattery. Many a time has the successful *débutant* in parliament, or the author just rising into note, repaired to Holland or Lansdowne House with unsettled views and wavering expectations, fixed in nothing but to attach himself for a time to no party. He is received with that cordial welcome which, as the Rev. Sydney Smith has very truly observed, warms more than dinner or wine:* he is presented to a host of literary, social, and political celebrities, with whom it has been for years his fondest ambition to be associated: it is gently insinuated that he may become an actual member of that brilliant circle by willing it, or his acquiescence is tacitly and imperceptibly assumed; till, thrown off his guard in the intoxication of the moment, he finds or thinks himself irrecoverably committed, and, suppressing any lurking inclination towards Toryism, becomes deeply and definitively Whig. Far be it from us to say or insinuate that the hospitality of these noble houses was ever calcu-

* 'Life of Mackintosh,' vol. ii. p. 503.

lated with direct reference to such an end; for we believe the late Lord Holland and Lord Lansdowne to have been actuated by a genuine sympathy with intellectual excellence, and a praiseworthy desire to raise it to that position in society which is its due. Our observation applies merely to the effects—as to which, it would appear from their imitative zeal, the noble or wealthy leaders of most of the parties, or sections of parties, which now divide the political world, agree with us. Dinner-giving, in short, has become one of the received modes of gaining or conciliating political adherents. Need more be added to enhance the dignity and importance of the subject, which has been discussed in these pages with the more humble object of facilitating convivial enjoyment and promoting sociability?

A P P E N D I X.

No. I.

COPIES OF TWO OF THE LATE KING OF HANOVER'S BILLS OF
FARE, AS PRINTED.

N.B. The copies placed by the plates of the lady guests were
printed on rose-coloured paper.

Dîner le 11 Septembre, 1845.

- Girof.* Un potage à la Princesse.
Girof. Un potage en hoche-pot aux queues de bœuf.
Huitres au naturel.
Verclas. Truites au bleu au beurre fondu, sauce de cavice.
Jlsen. Longe de veau à la broche au jus, garnie de
croquets de pommes de terre.
Girof. Purée de coqs de bruyères, garnie de petites
bouchées.
Girof. Epinards, garnis de côtelettes d'agneau glacées.
Verclas. Filets de sandats à la marinière à l'aspic.
Jlsen. Poulets rôtis.
Verclas. Une compote de poires.
Verclas. Ris anglo-française à l'ananas.
Robby. Glaces de fraises.

Dîner le 27 Septembre, 1845.

- Girof.* Un potage de perdreaux au chasseur.
Girof. Un potage clair à la printanière.
Huitres au naturel.
Körtling. Sandats bouillis au beurre fondu, sauce à l'es-
sence d'anchois.
Girof. Une culotte de bœuf à la Flamande.
Girof. Filets de poulets à la Marengo.
Körtling. Haricots nains, garnis d'escalops de mouton
grillés.
Ebeling. Lievreaux rôtis à la gelée de groseilles.
Körtling. Une compote de pommes à la Strélitz.
Körtling. Une fanchonette aux amandes.
Robby. Glaces de pêches.

No. II.

FISH DINNER AT BLACKWALL OR GREENWICH.

La tortue à l'Anglaise.

La bisque d'écrevisses.

Le consommé aux quenelles de merlan.

De tortue claire.

Les casseroles de green fat feront le tour de la table.

Les tranches de saumon (crimped).

Le poisson de St. Pierre à la crème.

Le zoutchet de perches.

„ de truites.

„ de flottons.

„ de soles (crimped)

„ de saumon.

„ d'anguilles.

Les lamproies à la Worcester.

Les croques en bouches de laitances de maquereau.

Les boudins de merlans à la reine.

Garnis de persil frit. { Les soles menues frites.
 { Les petits carrelets „
 { Croquettes d'homard.
 { Les filets d'anguilles.

La truite saumonée à la Tartare.

Le white bait : *id.* à la diable.

Second Service.

Les petits poulets au cresson—le jambonneau aux épinards.

La Mayonnaise de filets de soles—les filets de merlans à l'Arpin.

Les petits pois à l'Anglaise—les artichauds à la Barigoule.

La gelée de Marasquin aux fraises—les pets de Nonnes.

Les tartelettes aux cerises—les célestines à la fleur d'orange.

Le baba à la compôte d'abricots—le fromage plombière.

No. III.

A FISH DINNER FOR THE POPE, IN CASE HE SHOULD VISIT ENGLAND.

4 Potages.

À la tortue claire—de filets de soles à la Bagration.
Les perches en souchet—les petites limandes en souchet.

4 Relevés.

Le saumon à la régence.
Le turbot à la Parisienne.
L'esturgeon à la royale.
Le brochet à la Chambord.

4 Hors-d'œuvres.

Les white bait—le curry de homards.
Les gougeons frits—les laitances de maquereaux frites.

8 Entrées.

Les lamproies à la Beauchamp.
Le vol-au-vent de Bonne morue, à la Béchamel.
Les filets de truites au velouté d'écrevisses.
Le pâté-chaud de filets de merlans à l'ancienne.
Les filets de maquereaux, sauce ravigotte verte.
Les filets de rougets à la Beaufort.
La matelote de carpe et d'anguille au vin de Bourgogne.
Les escalopes de filets de soles à la Hollandaise.

Second Service.

4 Rôts.

Les bandelettes de saumon fumé, grillées—les moules au gratin.

Les Finnan haddies grillées—les huitres au gratin.

12 Entremets.

Les écrevisses en buisson.
Les prawns en buisson.
Les truffes au vin de Champagne.
Les croutes de champignons.
La mayonnaise de thon mariné.
La salade de homards.
La croute de pêches à la Chantilly.
Les poires coquettes au riz.
La gelée de fraises.
Le pain d'ananas.
Le savarin au sirop d'oranges.
Le pudding de pommes vertes glacé.

No. IV.

SPECIMENS OF BILLS OF FARE OF A RECHERCHÉ CHARACTER
FOR EACH OF THE FOUR SEASONS.

SPRING.

2 Potages.

Potage printanier—purée de volaille à la reine.

2 Poissons.

Les truites à la Génévoise—les filets de maquereau, sauce ravigotte verte.

2 Assiettes volantes.

Les petits pâtés à la Monglas—les kromeskÿs de homards.

2 Relevés.

Le jambon au Madère—les petits poulets à la Macédoine.

4 Entrées.

Les côtelettes d'agneau panées aux pointes d'asperges.

Le suprême de volaille aux concombres.

Les bouchées de lapreau à la Pompadour.

Les filets de pigeons à la de Luynes.

Second Service.

2 Rôts.

Le chapon du cresson—les combattants à colerettes.

2 Relevés.

Les bouchées au parmesan—le savarin aux cerises.

6 Entremets.

Les asperges à la sauce blanche.

L'aspic d'œufs de pluviers.

La crème Bavaoise en surprise.

Le Châteaubriand à l'ananas.

La gelée au marasquin garnie de fraises.

Le pudding à la maréchale.

SUMMER.

2 Potages.

Purée de pois verts aux croutons — consommé de volaille à la royale.

2 Poissons.

Les filets de soles à la Vénitienne — Christchurch salmon, lobster and Dutch sauce.

White Bait.

2 Assiettes volantes, *or* hors-d'œuvres.

Les niochi au parmésan — les petites croustades de laitances de maquereaux.

2 Relevés.

Le filet de bœuf piqué, garni de laitues farcies, sauce Madère.
Les poulardes à l'ivoire, sauce suprême.

4 Entrées.

Les boudins à la reine, à la purée de champignons.
Les côtelettes de cailles à la duchesse, aux pois verts.
Les escalopes de levrauts aux truffes, sauce demie-poivrade.
Les côtelettes de mouton à la Dreux, garnies d'une niver-naise.

Second Service.

2 Rôts.

L'oisillon — les ortolans.

2 Relevés.

Le soufflé glacé au marasquin — le gâteau de Compiègne à l'abricot.

6 Entremets.

La salade de prawns à la Bellevue.
L'aspic à la royale.
La grosse meringue à la Parisienne.
Les pêches au riz à la Condé.
La gelée de fraises au jus de groseilles.
La Charlotte à la crème d'amandes.

Table de côté, asperges, petits pois, pommes de terre nouvelles.

AUTUMN.

2 Potages.

À la purée de choux-fleurs à la crème—à la Julienne, essence de faisán.

2 Poissons.

Le moyen turbot à la Normande—les rougets aux fines herbes.

2 Hors-d'œuvres.

Les yaprakî—les rissolettes d'huitres.

2 Relevés.

Le carré de venaison piqué à la crème à l'Allemande.

Les petits poulets poêlés au velouté d'écrevisses, garnis de bouquets de queues d'écrevisse et truffes.

4 Entrées.

Les noisettes de veau à la Villeroi, garnies d'une soubise.

Le salmis de perdreaux à l'ancienne, aux champignons.

Les quenelles de levrauts, saucées d'une espagnole au fumet.

Les filets de volaille à la maréchale, aux haricots verts.

Second Service.

2 Rôts.

Les vanneaux—les grouse.

2 Relevés.

Le soufflé de pommes à la Parisienne—le gâteau de nocés Cobourgeois.

6 Entremets.

Les quartiers d'artichauts à la Lyonnaise.

Les concombres farcis, garnis de croutes à la moëlle.

La macédoine de fruits au noyau.

La charlotte de reine-chaude.

Le bavarois à la Vanille.

Le pudding à la Londonderry.

WINTER.

2 Potages.

À la jardinière, essence de volaille—à la purée de grouse aux croutons.

2 Poissons.

Les filets de merlans à la Dieppaise—les tranches de Cabillaud à la sauce aux huitres.

2 Hors-d'œuvres.

Les amourettes de bœuf marinées frites — les rissoles à la Milanaise.

2 Relevés.

La dinde truffée, à la sauce Périgueux.

Le jambon de Galice, garni de céleris braisés.

4 Entrées.

Les filets de faisans piqués, à la financière.

Le pâté-chaud de mauviettes farcies, garni de champignons.

Les côtelettes de mouton, demie-provençale, purée de carottes.

Les boudins de volaille à la Richelieu, garnis de rognons de coqs.

Second Service.

2 Rôts.

Les canards sauvages—les bécassines.

2 Relevés.

Les ramequins en caisses—le pudding soufflé, garni de cerises de conserve.

6 Entremets.

Les cardons d'Espagne, à la moëlle.

Les moules en coquilles au gratin.

La gelée d'oranges transparente.

La crème au café vierge.

Les croutes de Compiègne aux pommes.

Le gâteau de châtaignes, garni d'abricots

Recipe for Dutch Sauce.

Yolks of two eggs.

One quarter pint of rich cream.

Two and a quarter table-spoonfuls of elder-flower vinegar.

A small quantity of the best fresh butter.

One blade of mace.

Flour enough to render the sauce the consistency of a custard, which it should nearly resemble.

Recipe for Lobster Sauce.

The lobster should be chopped much smaller than ordinarily; and the sauce should be composed of three parts cream to one of butter, a little salt, and a slight infusion of cayenne. The whole of the inside and coral of the lobster should be beaten up with the cream and butter, and the meat then cut in.

Sauce for Wild Ducks, roasted.

1 salt-spoon	salt.
$\frac{1}{2}$ to $\frac{3}{4}$ "	cayenne.
1 dessert-spoon	lemon-juice.
1 "	pounded sugar.
1 "	ketchup.
2 "	Harvey.
3 "	port wine.

To be well mixed, heated, and poured over the bird, it having been previously sliced, so that the sauce may mix with its own gravy. The duck must not be too much roasted, and must be put in the dish without *anything*.

Salad Sauce.

Rub with a fork the yolks of two eggs boiled hard, and cold, in a salad-bowl, with fresh mustard and a little salt; four table-spoonfuls of oil to one and a half of tarragon, mixing it into a cream. Cut in the whites of six lettuces well blanched; some tarragon, chervil, a few young onions and burnet, and

stir it well. The sauce should be kept in a separate bowl, and not be mixed with the salad until the moment before it is to be eaten, or it may lose its crispness and freshness.

Recipe for a Winter Salad, by the late Rev. Sydney Smith.

Two large potatoes, passed through kitchen sieve,
Unwonted softness to the salad give.
Of mordent mustard add a single spoon ;
Distrust the condiment which bites so soon ;
But deem it not, thou man of herbs, a fault
To add a double quantity of salt.
Three times the spoon with oil of Lucca crown,
And once with vinegar procured from town.
True flavour needs it, and your poet begs,
The pounded yellow of two well-boiled eggs.
Let onion atoms lurk within the bowl,
And, scarce suspected, animate the whole ;
And lastly, on the flavoured compound toss
A magic teaspoon of anchovy sauce.
Then, though green turtle fail, though venison 's tough,
And ham and turkey are not boiled enough,
Serenely full the Epicure may say—
Fate cannot harm me—I have dined to-day !

Murray, Eustace Clare Grenveller
" COOKERY MADE EASY.

Now Ready, with illustrative Woodcuts, Post 8vo.,

MODERN DOMESTIC COOKERY,

Founded upon principles of ECONOMY and PRACTICAL KNOWLEDGE, and adapted for PRIVATE FAMILIES.

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From the Literary Gazette.

"Good Mrs. Rundell is no more. The basting-ladle of our arch-cook, the sceptre of the gastronomic art, is henceforth to be wielded by Mr. Murray. After having ministered to our appetites and bodily comfort to the extent of 200,000 copies, Mrs. Rundell's labours, notwithstanding that they have been revised and re-revised again and again, to meet the enlightened palate of the age, now require to be remodelled. 'Mrs. Rundell's Cookery Book' is now and for ever to be known as 'Murray's Cookery Book,' and its claim to rank as a new work is supported by the following summary of 'novel features,'—'the great increase in the number and variety of receipts, set forth in a clearer type than before; a greater simplification of language, in order to render the receipts more easy of comprehension; the illustrative woodcuts which adorn the present volume; the new system of numbering every separate receipt, to facilitate reference; the mode of printing in figures all numbers and quantities for the sake of clearness; and lastly, the tables for computing household accounts.' The cover of the book, moreover, is stamped in bold relief with a number of useful kitchen utensils, including a significant gilded clock, to denote that punctuality is the soul of cookery.

"These multitudinous improvements appear to have been made with care, and the substantial bulk of the volume, numbering 650 pages, is a proof that the 'additional receipts,' 880 in number, unlike the 'additional lamps' at Vauxhall, are really given.

"The value of 'Murray's Modern Domestic Cookery' consists in its plainness and practicability. The experimental and impracticable character of the fashionable modern cookery-books had led us to fear that a great deal too much of the national time would be wasted in culinary trifling, and that we were about to exchange the roast beef of Old England for the *pâte de fève gras* of our volatile neighbours. For the honour of British cooks, and for the comfort of British digestion, Mr. Murray comes forward to the rescue.

"Then let not Soyer's treacherous
skill,
Nor Verey's, try thy peptic forces;
One comes to swallow many a pill
Where many a course is!

He dines unscathed who dines alone!
Or shuns abroad those corner
dishes;
No Roman garlies make him groan,
Nor matelotte fishes.

With mushroomed dishes cease to
strive;
Nor for that truffled crime inquire,
Which nails the hapless goose alive
At Strasburg's fire.

Sound sleep renounces sugared pease!
No nightmares haunt the modest
ration
Of tender steak that yields with ease
To mastication!

From stews and steams that round them
play,
How many a tempting dish would
floor us,
Had nature made no toll to pay
At the Pylorus!

Happy the man whose prudent care
Plain meat affects, at most a curry,
Content to live on homely fare,
As cooked by Murray."

JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE STREET.

F. B. M. 1948-4-20

The glidesome oyster does not possess a tuneful shell, and yet is he set in the almanac to the impossible musical note of *R*, or two octaves and a quarter above the beginning of the scale. Nevertheless, if not tuneful himself like the god Apollo, who also sometimes carried a shell, the oyster is a great cause of harmony in others and is a good friend to poets, who in their turn reciprocate. Henry S. Leigh, an approved London lyricist, in a collection which was only issued last month, thus begins some stanzas that are entitled "September in Town":

"Summer is ended, and autumn is here,
Though for the present we're not very far in it;
Oysters are back again—awfully dear;
Still they are back, for the month has an *R* in it."

His rhymes are as applicable to the American as to the British metropolis; and to-day (albeit a Sunday) the "gents" who wear bags at times and call them trousers and at other times wear clinging chevots for continuations, but always precisely as fashion dictates, will rush to practically respect the bard's finishing couplet—only the lovers of oysters in New York who observe the *R* as a devotee does a red-letter day in a saintly anniversary will not find them "awfully dear" but reasonably cheap.

Now that the "*R*" note has been sounded by Father Time, and now that the oyster is legitimately here, what shall we do with him? This is an epicurean conundrum that finds as many answers as Mrs. Jenks had for General Butler. One disciple of the "*R*" mysteries will contend for eating the oyster as he lies fresh in his own tiled abode, and will ask only a grain of polite salt as introducer to the titillated epiglottis. Another disciple will beard the oyster in his pearly den and slaughter his flavor with those barbarous decoctions of the nasturtium and tomato that cunning oystermen originally contrived as selling-sauce for any suspicious bivalve. A third disciple, who affects his club-supper about midnight, will demand a double feast of the oyster by hauling him over the coals, and will grow ecstatic over the feasting—first upon the delicious odor of the roasted shell and next upon the positively gamey taste which the roasted oyster possesses, and especially if after he has lingered bodily upon the palate he be washed down with a gurgle of Barsac wine. Still another disciple will clamor to have the oyster broiled or fried and clad in a patriotic *robe d'estomac* of Indian meal, little thinking—deceived disciple—that in such a case the eater might as palatably be allaying the pangs of hunger with the more economical salsify prepared in the same way. A barbarian disciple may tell you that to fritter the oyster and egg him to your digestive repose is the best mode in which to treat him. The truly gastronomic disciple will contend for the privilege of stewing the oyster in a chafing-dish that is half filled with champagne or Sauterne wine, or for "scalloping" him in his native shell or in the sweet depths of a fragile *paté* as incrustated with crumbs of the old-fashioned Boston cracker that have been previously soaked in sherry, but more than all for steaming him in a colander placed over a kettle of surely boiling water, so that the oyster cannot shrivel nor dilute his flavor into any liquid contact, and then serving him immersed in warmed cream and consoled with sips of Château Yquem. Perhaps the disciple, if a lady, will insist upon making a rice flour *purée* of the oyster, straining through silver and flavoring with a fairy's portion of a peach-leaf. But as for the oyster disciple who shall hint of peppering the oyster in any form, or agonizing him with draughts of spirits of any kind, or acidulating him with claret, let that Judas be condemned to perpetual oyster-raking. Nor will the honest oyster disciple ever allow his idol to form acquaintance with lager-beer, but he will permit the amalgamation of malt ale unless the companion oysters are roasted, steamed or scalloped. Nor will that honest disciple, without protest, allow the oyster to be preliminarily frozen under huge blocks of ice; and the disciple will insist that the oyster-opener violates Hoyle, and when in doubt over the timid mollusk shall peremptorily refuse the trick; since every faithful oyster disciple knows that the suspicious oyster should share the verdict of the generous cook upon an egg that will not swim nor poach, and that the oyster always in a culinary way should take rank beside Cæsar's wife.

Whenever Squeers put conundrums to his pupils he ordered them to carry the answers into practical effect. The same result ought henceforth, until the Queen of the May waves her sceptre, to be awarded to the oyster conundrum that September puts. Wherefore THE WORLD states the various answers of disciples, and can only advise the latter that as now the "*R*" reappears in the calendar, and the oyster is everywhere at hand sanctioned in his immediate use by tradition and by the good President Chandler, the hesitating oyster-lover may safely take refuge under cover of that most elastic of sayings—*Chacun a son gout*.

days with the regularity of clockwork. On Tuesdays and Fridays the tile-paved corridors were scrubbed by preternaturally skinny and ancient negresses wearing faded turbans upon their heads and exhibiting as they knelt at their work the soles of their naked feet, from which the native color was worn, like the prostrate worshippers in an Oriental mosque. The fruit women from the neighboring mountains with trays upon their heads, heaped with their bright and fragrant burden, came at certain appointed seasons, and the old gardener was discharged for incapacity regularly every Saturday night and as punctually reinstated every Monday morning. The maids had their holidays on alternate weeks, departing and returning at specified hours, and Pedro, the young negro page, eruptive with buttons and but partially visible behind a spacious and habitual grin, was spanked regularly by his mother the cook every evening at the going down of the sun for his wanton interference with the parrots. They were fed at that hour, and resented intrusion upon their repast with discordant clamor. Everything in the house went on like clockwork, and it was worthy of the distinguished repute which its methodical and precise mistress had acquired for it.

It had been the palace of a viceroy and still retained a kind of fading splendor which bore testimony of the greatness of its former estate. The gateway which led to its massive porch, with its stone stairway and rusting iron rails, was high and arched, and bore the Braganza arms sculptured in yellowing marble, worn with weather and dimmed with the alternating vicissitudes of storm and sun. The gardens were broad and terraced, and through a portion of the domain ran a bright rivulet shadowed with plantains and palm-trees, and slender clusters of bamboo, amid the coverts of which a multitude of birds, plumed with gold and fire, found twittering refuge. Separated from it by a high yellow brick wall, shaded by a line of towering fig trees, heavy with ripening fruit, was the legation, with its wide trellised verandas embroidered with clustering vines over the honey-eyed flowers, whereof the humming birds, upheld on whirring invisible wing, hovered like wisps of flame. At a distance appeared the spacious and stately façade of the imperial summer palace, rising above the foliage of its surrounding gardens and outlined against the steep and wooded slope of the mountains which towered behind it. Down in the narrow valley near at hand lay the village, built along the walled banks of a stream spanned with light wooden foot-bridges, the framework of which was painted in vivid red. A paved thoroughfare ran on either side, along which there were little shops where nobody ever came to buy anything, hotels which never seemed to have any guests, and narrow, walled inclosures folding in villas with tiled roofs and odd little windows, and balconies surrounded by foliage of the mimosa, the acacia and the palm, where nobody seemed to live; groups of negroes clustered in bits of shade, who never seemed to have anything to do, and an occasional wayside mule tethered to a tree or post, with drooping head and down-hanging ears, which it seemed an extravagant flight of fancy to imagine he could ever have the energy to erect. Morning and evening, it is true, the streets took on a transient aspect of life and activity, but through the long, burning, tropical days they were as vacant as those of the little town by river or sea-shore or mountain built with peaceful citadel, emptied of its folk to furnish forth the sculptured and unreturning procession upon the marble rim of the Grecian urn.

My rooms looked out upon the garden, in the middle of which rose a gigantic cactus, four sullen green shafts springing from a central root, along the outer spines of which at night-fall a myriad of pale, transient flowers unfolded their delicate leaves and flooded the evening air with intense and penetrating odors. It towered above all the surrounding growths, even overtopping the slender palms which spread their fantastic capitals above the engirdling wall and the stone urns of the terrace, and seemed to look down on its humbler neighbors with haughty, imperial disdain. Its flowers and its fragrance were gone in the morning. It would only offer its incense to the dark and unveil its delicate beauties to the moon. It seemed the chaste, inviolate bride of night, which the sun with all its ardors wooed and solicited in vain. It would not cast forth to his advances a single flower-token of encouragement, but it was imperially arrayed and garlanded for the oncoming of its sombre bridegroom, arrayed in sable robe and starry frontlet, who followed on the turning of the world. It was planted by the old Viceroy, I have heard, and if so it was a deed which smells sweet and blossoms in his dust, though I think if he could have foreboded that it would sometime have shaken forth its evening odors only to delight the sense of the unroyal wayfarers of a mountain inn, he might have deemed that he was planting to little purpose. A fine Lusitanian frenzy would doubtless have possessed him if some Merlin or Nostradamus had shown him in a magic mirror, or shadowed against some sorcerer's screen of prophecy, to what his palace and fairy realm of *pleasaunce* would sometime come. The portly image of Mme. McDowell, her ruddy visage overshadowed with cap and curls; our *maitre d'hotel*, with his measured, pompous stride and air of authority; the white-aproned waiters, with napkins over their arms; Pedro pursuing flies through the regal corridors or submitting to chastisement in the archive room; the guests who came unbidden and lounged at will in the state apartments or laid irreverent heels upon the railing of the balcony what time they smoked and chatted and laughed and drank their cooling cups—these dread foreshadowings would have gone far, it may be, to drive the royal gentleman out of his mind and cause him to decree the overthrow of his mountain abode and the laying waste of his gardens to protect them from such desecration. Luckily for the occasional sojourner, there were no intermeddling seers or soothsayers to darken his spirit with their shadows of prophecy, and so garden and habitation remain, offering welcome shelter and fragrant and enchanting environment to anybody who adventures thither with proper outward signs and certifications of worthiness to share its hospitality and money enough in his pouch to meet the not very extravagant or exacting demands of the hostess.

Through the town runs a broad, smooth thoroughfare which winds and zigzags up the steep mountain slopes and stretches away into the interior for a hundred miles. It affords a good opportunity for equestrian exercise, of which I availed myself morning and evening with much constancy. Sometimes I met long trains of coffee-wagons coming from the interior drawn by many mules wearing scarlet tags and tassels depending from their head-gear and a multitude of tinkling bells. But with these exceptions the broad, magnificent road was quite vacant. There seemed no equestrians in the little mountain commune, no drivers of gigs or tilburies, or vehicles of statelier pretension. I did, indeed, occasionally meet the heavy landau of the Duc d'Saxe and the lighter phaeton of the Comte d'Eu, receiving a somewhat sarly salutation from the German noble and a graciously polite one from the Prince, but these were almost the only exceptions. The narrower mountain roads which wound away in every direction were equally solitary. Beside them at intervals were ruined houses, the spaces around them choked with brambles and wild vines overrunning their naked or desolate walls. The German colony brought thither by the Viceroy did not altogether thrive. Many went back to the fatherland, many died, some drifted away into other portions of the empire; none came to take the places left vacant, and they thus fell on decay. Mournful blots of ruin

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Presented by A. W. Bitting

October 8, 1889

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