

without price. The visible pages of learning, wisdom, science, truth, imagination, ingenious theory, or deep conviction lie open not only to the eyes, but to the hearts and homes of a great people. It is like the overflowing Nile, carrying sweet waters to irrigate many waste places, and clothing the dry dust of common life with the flowers, the fruit, and the sustaining grain, springing from invisible seeds cast by unseen hands into the wide field of the world.

"If," says Lord Bacon, "the invention of ships was thought so noble, which carrieth riches and commodities

from place to place, how much more are letters to be magnified, which, as ships, pass through the vast seas of time, and make ages so distant to participate of the wisdom, illuminations, and inventions, the one of the other!"

NOTE. — Since these pages were written, one who knew how to prize the visible and invisible of books has passed away. The silent library of George Livermore speaks eloquently of him. That collection, gathered with a love which increased as years advanced, includes ancient copies of the Bible of rarest value. His life was a book, written over with good deeds and pure thoughts, illuminated by holy aspirations. That volume is closed, but the spirit which rendered it precious is not withdrawn; living in many hearts, it will continue to be a cherished presence in the world, the home, and the library.

LETTER TO A YOUNG HOUSEKEEPER.

YOU know, dear M., it is said that in times of bankruptcy men go home to get acquainted with their wives; perhaps it should be added that wives then go to get introduced to their kitchens. But your sensible letter is an omen, little friend, that to you and H. this does not apply. You will not wait for poverty to teach you economy, but will learn economy to ward off poverty. So herewith I send a few of the culinary notes of the last two years; but neither of us is to be taken for a bankrupt's wife, for all that. It is simply recognizing that you are alone in new duties, and that cookery is an art which may not be gained even from that fountain of knowledge, named by the Apostle Paul as one's husband. The successes of the art no one knows better than he; but of the processes he will be found sublimely ignorant. There are but two points in which you can defer to him, — punch and lobster-salad. These, like swearing and smoking, are strictly masculine accomplishments.

If you had the thrifty maiden aunt kept in reserve by most families for an emergency, you would kindly offer her a home at your house for a while. But

since you have not, I will be as disagreeable to you as she. So turn your glowing Spanish eyes toward me, instead of looking demurely about, as people do when they are having old letters read to them.

Byron said he hated to see a woman eat; and there is a class of housekeepers who certainly return the compliment upon men. These ethereal beings are forever sighing for life with appetite left out. Like Lord Dundreary's lady-love, they are "so delicate," unless caught in the pantry hastily devouring onions and beefsteak. To be hungry is so vulgar! One should live by nothing grosser than inhalation, and should never have an appetite greater than that of a healthy bumble-bee. But, thanks to the robust, latter-day theory, that the best saints have the best bodies, this puerile class is diminishing. For who can doubt that the senses are entitled to their full blossom? Gustation was meant to be delightful; and cooking is certainly half as good as tasting. At times one may have longed for the old Roman custom of two meals a day, and going to bed at chicken-time, bringing the hour of roast near the hour of roost; but this was

probably in families where there were three repasts, with lunch all the way between, and an incessant buying of cookies from the baker, lest the children should go hungry. After this surfeit one pardons a recoil. Or, in an enervating day of July, one may have longed to dine upon humming-bird, with rose-leaves for dessert. But these are exceptional times; the abiding hope is, that we shall continue to eat, drink, and be merry. For the practical is in the imperative. It is cumulative, and reinforces itself, — a real John Brown power that is always marching on, and we must march beside it with patient, cheery hearts. Is it strange that even the moss-covered Carlisle town, of which the Last Minstrel sang, and where the Scottish Mary tarried in her flight from the cousin queen, is now chiefly remarkable for its cotton-factory and biscuit-bakery?

Indeed, the enthusiasm over biscuits has its place, as well as that over books; and it is not always that there is as much genuine joy in a novel as one may get out of bread-making. This is quite too scientific and interesting to be left to a domestic. It is really among the most exciting experiments. Try it every week for two years, and it seems just as new an enterprise as at the beginning, — but a thousand times more successful, we observe. Working up the light drifts of flour, leaving them at night a heavy pat and nothing more, — waking to find a dish flowing-full of snowy foam. The first thing on rising one's self is, to see if the dough be risen, too; and that is always sure to be early, for every batch of bread sets an alarm in one's brain. After breakfast one will be as expectant as if going to a ball in lieu of a baking. Then to see the difference a little more or less flour will make, and out of what quantity comes perfection! To feminine vision, more precious than "apples of gold in pictures of silver" are loaves of bread in dishes of tin. If one were ever penurious, might it not be of these handsome loaves of hers? The little housewife will be very gentle to the

persecuted man of Scripture who was so reluctant to get up at midnight and give away his bread. She will even be charitable to the stingy merchant scorned by Saadi, of whom it was written, that, "if, instead of his loaf of bread, the orb of the sun had been in his wallet, nobody had seen daylight in the world till the Day of Judgment."

Dr. Kane says, he knows how bread can be raised in three hours without salt, saleratus, or shortening, — knows, but sha'n't tell. This must be another mystery of the Arctic regions. Certainly that bread could not have been raised in the sun. But how one quantity was managed the Doctor is free to say. He kneaded a whole barrel of flour in a pickled-cabbage cask, and baked it at once by firing several volumes of the "Penny Cyclopædia of Useful Knowledge."

After compliments, however, to come in with the cash down of the practical, here is a veritable bread-making recipe, well-tested and voted superior. Take a quart of milk; heat one third and scald with it a half-pint of flour; if skimmed milk, use a small piece of butter. When the batter is cool, add the remainder of the milk, a teacup of hop-yeast, a half-tablespoon of salt, with flour to make it quite stiff. Knead it on the board till it is very fine and smooth; raise over night. It will make two small loaves and a half-dozen biscuits.

This recipe ought to give good bread week in and week out, so saving you from the frequent calamity of soda-biscuits. These may be used for dumplings, or as a sudden extempore, but do not let them be habitual. True, you will occasionally meet people who say that they can eat these, when raised ones are fatal. But some persons find cheese good for dyspepsia, many advocate ice-cream, others can eat only beans, while some are cured by popped corn. Yet these articles are not likely to become staples of diet. They would hardly answer a normal appetite; and any stomach that can steadily withstand the searchingness of soda and tartaric acid

seems ready to go out to pasture and eat the fences. Chemists will say, if bread must be improvised, use soda and muriatic acid. These combined in precise proportions are supposed to evaporate in the baking, and leave common salt. But this acid is such furious stuff! It will come to you from the druggists in a bottle marked "Poison," and it is not pleasant to put into one's mouth a substance that will burn a hole in her apron. It is too much of the Roland for an Oliver,— You eat me and I will eat you. For it is quite difficult to perfectly combine the acid and alkali, and then the bread is streaked with muriatic fire; then one might easily take into the system a thousand streaks a year, and then one would become a fire-eater.

But probably the greatest of all bread wonders are the unleavened Graham cakes. These are worth a special mail and large postage to tell of. I was about to beg that you surprise H. with them at your next breakfast. But no, he won't like them; besides, according to the theory of "Woman and her Era," they're a deal too good for men, they are fit only for women and angels. So just salt and scald some Graham meal into a dough as soft as can be and be handled. Roll it an inch thick, cutting in diamonds, which place on a tin sheet and thrust into the hottest of ovens. (Note this last direction, or the diamonds will be flat leather.) Strange to say, they will rise, and keep rising, till in ten minutes you take them out quite puffed. One would never guess them innocent of yeast. An inch thick is the rule; but there is nothing like an adventurous courage. It is at once suggested, if they are so good at an inch, will they not be twice as good at two inches. And certainly they are. The meal will not be outwitted. It is the liveliest and most buoyant material. Its lightness keeps up with the utmost experiment. Finally, it may be turned into a massive loaf, and with a brisk heat it will refuse to be depressed.

The morning when were produced these charming little miracles remains

a red-letter day in our household. Who ever tasted anything, save a nut, half so sweet, or who ever anything so pure? We ate, lingered, and revelled in them, thus becoming epicures at once. It seemed as if all our lives we had been seeking something really *recherché*, and had just found it. They were as great a revelation to the palate as Bettine or Thoreau might be to the mind. Now all was *couleur de rose*. Here was found, if not the philosopher's stone, the philosopher's bread, that should turn everything into health. Henceforth the strong heroes celebrated by Emerson, who "at rich men's tables eat but bread and pulse," might sit at ours, arising refreshed and glorified. And was not this also coming very near Nature? but two removes from the field, wheat cracked, then ground. (I have since come a degree nearer on cracked wheat at a water-cure!) It sounded altogether wholesome and primitive. I hastened with a sample to my best friend. She, too, tasted, exulted, and passed on the tidings to others. Now, indeed, was the golden age in dawn. Already we saw a community purified and rejuvenated. Before our philosopher-cakes sin and bad blood would disappear, and already the crowns of grateful generations were pressing on our brows. But something went wrong with all the cooks. Either they did n't scald the meal or they did n't heat the oven,— what in one hand was light beaten gold in another became lead. For a while it seemed that I could not go to my friend's without meeting some one who cast scorn on our reformation cakes. All tried them and failed; so sin remains in the world.

But now hope plumes itself anew. You at least will attempt the little wheatens. You have a deft hand, and will succeed. The buoyancy of the meal revives in my blood. Now the world rights itself again, and once more we are all bounding sunward.

But to be honest. For a few weeks I and the radical cakes were as satisfied as young lovers, but soon came temptations to progress from the primitive,— first to add a little sugar. But I vetoed

as resolutely as Andrew Jackson himself, thus putting up the bars between the wheat-field and cane-field, or probably by this time I should have been pouring in spice, eggs, and milk, and at last should have committed the crime of doing just as other people do.

If you would confess it, you have probably found in your new captain-general a susceptibility not only to your charms, but to those of good cooking. Always count these among the young wife's fascinations. Remember how Miss Bremer's Fannie, of "The Neighbors," in a matrimonial quarrel with her Bear, conquered him with fresh-baked patties aimed at his mouth. But be not too conciliatory, — especially towards coffee. If you could be hard-hearted enough to win H. from this bilious beverage, would it not be worth the perils? Entertain him for a few mornings so brilliantly that he won't know what he is drinking, then — But I'll tell you how we will cheat him admirably; and it is n't very cruel either, for merely to gratify the taste make-believes are as good as realities. First, every one knows Taraxacum or dandelion; invalids know crust-coffee, and many with indignation know burnt peas. Also Miss Beecher, whose estimable cook-book you certainly must get, mentions that ochra seeds or gumbo cannot be told from Java; an army correspondent has since reported coffee made at the South from oker seeds, doubtless the same; another found in use the sweet potato, roasted, and flavored with coffee; while a friend has just described the most enticing beverage made from chickory, — the root being stripped and dried under the stove. This is said to be so rich that sometimes it has to be diluted with a trifle of coffee. And still further, there is simple rye, which is cheaper found than either. Jeff. Davis drank it for four years and wrote all *her* grand proclamations out of it. But probably the wholesomer article is wheat coffee. I have lately prepared some by boiling a cup of well-scorched wheat-bran in a pint of water; and although I don't quite know how good coffee tastes,

no doubt this was very like the true Java. It poured clear and rich as wine. Now try this in full strength with your spouse, being very witty when he drinks. And as the mornings pass, oh, weaken it more and more. That is, cheat him pleasantly at first, then worse and worse, till he is glad to take milk or pure water with you. Conspiracies are usually contemptible; but this is one of the very "best water," you see.

Perhaps we who never drink coffee can hardly understand the affection its votaries have for it. To their minds, water seems to be given only for steeping that delicious mud. Said one extravagant Madame Follet, "When I see a coffee-pot, 't is exactly the same as if I saw an angel from heaven." And the Biloxi people, whom General Butler surprised of a morning, were found to be in a very tragic state. One boy exclaimed, "Oh, give me just a handful of coffee, master, an' I'll give you 'lasses, sugar, anything!" while a strong man ejaculated, "My God, we're short of everything! I have n't tasted tea or coffee for four months!" — as grievous as if he had n't seen a human face for a year. According to the "Herald" correspondent, the chief reason that the South rejoices in peace is that "Now we'll be able to get some real coffee!" — perhaps, he adds, in the next breath inquiring, "What are you going to do with our niggers?"

No, we could not, with Ward Beecher, "bless the man who discovered the immortal berry." Nor could we, with De Quincey, apostrophize to a certain other excitant, "O just, subtle, and mighty opium! thou holdest the keys of Paradise!" Yet one must concede the possible uses of a stimulant. Coffee has been priceless to our army, on its cold, wet marches; and benedictions should be ordered in the churches, if need be, to the man who made it into that wondrous pemmican, so that the coffee of a regiment may be carried in a few tin cans. Then, too, it seems good for men who go driving up and down the world on stage-coaches and locomotives; but for stay-at-home,

counting-house mortals, is it not a mere delicious superfluity? Quite as much of one as a cigar, I think.

But henceforth, when Rio is high, drink rye. If one must have either, better the simulant than the stimulant.

Among other things, you have doubtless discovered that one admirable breakfast dish is eggs. If you serve them in the shell, it is quite worth while to follow the English way, keeping them close covered for ten minutes in very hot water without boiling. The yolks are thus left running, and the whites are beautifully jellied. These are convenient to get when relations arrive at night, and there is no meat in the house. Relations always expect meat for breakfast.

In fact, it is just at this point that one's genius is to come in, — when a nice meal must be gotten at short notice, and the larder is empty. None but the woman of resources can do it; and she knows her realm is as full of strategies as was ever the Department of the Potomac. Under her hand, when there was supposed to be nothing for breakfast, I have seen bits of meat snatched from cold soup, and wrought up into the most savory morsels, — one would never guess that the goodness was all boiled out of them; while a cup of yesterday's griddle-cake batter went suddenly into the oven, and came out a breakfast-cake finer than waffles.

One who had the knack of the heroine Fleda, in "Queechy," would be friendly to omelets, and tell of them too. But you must be self-reliant, and put them on the list of experiments. It will probably be some time before you come to that refinement of egg-eating which Mrs. Stowe found at the mansion of the Duke of Sutherland, where she was honored with lunch. Her sylvan spirit was somewhat startled, when a servant brought five little speckled plover eggs, all lying in the nest just as taken from the tree. How they were cooked is unknown; but one would certainly need a recipe to eat them by.

But an American woman can outdo the Duchess of Sutherland. She will

find an egg daintier than the plover's, and not stir from her own door; for, awhile since, some one, fumbling among the secrets of Nature, discovered, not that stones were sermons, but that snow was eggs, and straight made a cookbook to tell it, as we will do on discovering that rain is milk. Of course all things have their limitations; and these new eggs are not just the article for custards, will not do to poach for breakfast, or would hardly keep in brine; but they may be used in any compound that requires lightness without richness. Even our grandmothers made snow pancakes; but, in the present age, to be distinguished is to be venturesome, and in this experiment one need not stop short of veritable loaf-cake. The volatile element in snow makes two table-spoons of it equal to one egg; therefore to a small loaf I should allow ten table-spoons. Cooks always put in as many eggs as they can afford, you know.

Thus, when snow falls every day for four months, as it does in New England, eggs get exceedingly cheap in the prudent household. Then one can smile to think how she circumvents the grocer, and pray the clouds to lay a good nestful every week.

A friend the other day improvised a list of edibles headed, "Poisonous Ps," — pastry, pickles, pork, and preserves. She was pleased to leave out puddings, and hereto we shall say, Amen. Not that one is to indorse such odiously rich ones as cocoa-nut, suet, and English plum; but, bating these, there are enough both nice and wholesome to change the dessert every day for a fortnight, at least. At another time I may give you some recipes, with various items by this writing omitted.

Pastry the physiologists have been shaking their heads about for some time, — especially as many persons use soda with the lard, not being aware that they are making soft soap. This sort of paste one often sees in the country. But it is easy to omit the soap. On the next bread-making day, simply reserve a piece of the well-raised dough, and roll in butter. This gives a palata-

ble and harmless crust. I have also experimented with a shortening of hot, fine-mashed potato and milk, which, if it may not be recommended to an epicure, is really better than it sounds. And does it not sound better than Dr. Trall's proposal of sweet oil? Will not some of these ways satisfy our ardent reformers and physiologists? But about chicken-pie, remember the tradition, that, unless the top crust is punctured, it will make one very ill. (Who knows but this was the secret of the National Hotel sickness?) At least, it is truer than some other traditions, such as that eating burnt crusts will make the cheeks red, or that fried turnip will make the hair curl.

Pickles do not seem so good that they must be eaten, nor so bad that they must not be. But with them comes evermore the vision that Trollope has prepared of all our smart little five-year-old men and women perched at hotel-tables, pale-faced and sedate, with waiters behind their chairs, and ordering chowders and chops with an inevitable "Please don't forget the pickles."

Preserves, aside from the recent luxury of canned fruit, have the happiest substitutes, if we will take what the seasons bring to our hands. Not a month in the year is left wholly barren of these relishes for the tea-table. There are berries all the summer, apples and cranberries in the winter, when, just as the last russet disappears, and with it every one's appetite, up springs the pungent and luxuriant rhubarb. Somewhat curious is it concerning this last article. Forty years ago it was such a pure experiment in England, that a Mr. Myatt, who took seven bundles of it to London, succeeded in selling but three. Still he persisted in keeping it before the people, although he seemed only to lose rhubarb and to gain ridicule, being designated as the man who sold "physic pies."

And besides our own zone, with its fruits fresh or dried, there are the abounding tropics always at the door: Pine-apples, which, if unwholesome, are yet charmingly convenient to help a

luckless housekeeper, and which, by the way, made a better *entrée* in London than pie-plant, being so popular that their salesmen floated flags from the top of their stalls; bananas, those foreign muskmelons of spring; oranges, gilding every street-corner; dates, which do not go meanly with bread and butter, though one is a little fearful of finding a whole straw bed therein; and prunes, which, if soaked several hours and stewed slowly, are luscious enough for a prince.

But pork it appears to be the common impression that man cannot do without. Certainly he must have partaken somewhat of its nature to make him so greedy; and there would seem to be animals enough on land and sea, without devouring the swine. If pork be important anywhere, it is so in the old Puritan dish of baked beans; yet those who have tasted baked beans prepared with fine rich beef instead have voted them quite sumptuous, and possibly rich enough for people who live at restaurants. But so long as fish, bird, and fowl remain, and men even eat turtles and frogs, — so long as sheep do not die of wolves, nor cattle of the county commissioners, — may not the pig be left to his wallowing in the mire?

Thus much for the poisonous *ps*. We do not place among them that popular plant, the potato, though it has the blood of the nightshade in its veins. But these may be made moderately poisonous by putting them into soup. Once taste clear potato-water, and you will not aspire to drink a strong broth from it. And even potatoes one may eat at a dozen tables, and not find nicely served at any. With domestics generally they figure as the article that in cooking takes care of itself, — the convenient vegetable, that may be thrown into the kettle, and taken up when nothing else needs to be. In the end they are either half done and hard, or when done, being left soaking, are watery and soggy; whereas they should be pared, kept boiling in salted water till they break, then drained and shaken over the coals till powdery dry. They need

tossing up with as light a hand as an omelet, you see. If they are not of the nicest variety, they should be mashed with milk, butter, and salt, and placed in the oven to brown. This is a kind of medication which usually makes the poorest article quite palatable, and is resorted to in the early summer, when potatoes are become decidedly an "aged ϕ ." I was once amused to hear a man complaining of a certain potato, because it was "too dry." It is doubtful what he would do in Maine, the land of the famous Jackson whites, which boil to a creamy powder. One must be grateful that our Massachusetts Dovers cannot be dampened by this original potato-taster. He probably would like juicy potatoes and mealy oranges.

But of course none can have studied diet and its varied effects on various persons, without seeing it to be impossible to make up two lists of dishes, one of which shall be voted hurtful and the other harmless. Nor does the healthfulness of food seem to consist wholly in its simplicity, according to old Grahamite theories. There is probably some truth in the saying of Hippocrates, "Whatever pleases the palate nourishes"; but one cannot fail to recognize the wisdom of M. Soyer, that prince of the *cuisine*, who maintains that the digestibility of food depends, not on the number of articles used in its manufacture, but in their proper combination. Says M. Soyer, "I would wager that I could give a first-class indigestion to the greatest *gourmet*, even while using the most *recherché* provisions, without his being able to detect any fault in the preparation of the dishes of which he had partaken, — and this simply by improperly classifying the condiments used in the preparation." This gives a hint of the nicety of the culinary art, the genius required to practise it, and the fine physical effects that hinge upon it. It is no wonder that Vatel committed suicide before the great banquet which he had prepared for his master, the Prince of Condé, because he feared it was to fail. It is certainly enough to alarm ordinary am-

ateurs, — and such are the most of us; for, while Americans place all due stress upon the table, they neglect to emphasize the *cuisine*. Instead of this *nonchalance*, we have yet to discover that cookery belongs to the fine arts; that it is exhaustive alike of chemistry and physiology, and touches upon laws as sure as those which mingle the atmospheric elements, hourly adjusting them to man's nicest needs. And we should count it among the best of the progressive plans of our country, if to the new Industrial College under subscription at Worcester were to be added an elaborate culinary department, with the most accomplished professor that could be obtained. Perhaps, as M. Soyer was philanthropic enough to go to the Crimea, and teach the English to make hospital soup, he would even come here and give our nation a glimpse of those marvellous morsels that have made Paris the envy of epicures the world over.

And if there is a proper harmony to be attained in the combining of various ingredients, making every perfect dish a poem, there is no less harmony in combining the various dishes for a repast, making a poem in every perfect meal. For every leading dish has its kindred and antagonistic ones: as, at dinner, one would not serve cauliflower with fricasseed chicken, nor turnips with boiled salmon, nor, at tea, currants with cream-toast, nor currants with custard. But this is something that cannot be fully taught or learned. It is almost wholly at the mercy of one's instinct, and may be ruled by a tact as delicate as that which conducts a drawing-room.

But we are quite curious to learn, M., if your excellent companion has yet been away from home so long that you have had to go to market. And can you wisely discern roasts, steaks, and fowl? Says one, "The way to select fowl is first to select your butcher"; and away he swings out of intelligence and responsibility with a magnificent air. A lady friend has this charming fashion of frankness: "Now, Mr. —, I don't know one piece of meat from another, and

shall expect you to give me the best"; thus throwing herself directly on her faith and fascinations. But these might grow jejune, nor is it safe to trust the tender mercies of a butcher. Better know what you want, and know if you get it. Therefore you will study the anatomy of animals, as laid down in all modern cook-books. But really it is a little perplexing. I confess I am near concluding that every beef creature is a special creation; for one never finds the same joint twice, and apparently the only things common to all are tongue and liver.

Not long since, having a discussion at the market with an elderly gentleman, he said something pleasant which must be written for the husband of a young housekeeper. We agreed that a rump steak was of more uniform richness than a sirloin, the best of the latter being only that luscious strip underlying the bone. "But," added the kindly man, "I always buy the sirloin, because I give that juicy scrap to my wife." It is worth while, M., to be wedded to the thoughtful heart, who, after forty years, yet wills to give one the single choice bit from the table.

Aside from the ordinary beef-routine, there is another dish which is usually popular. Select a cheap, lean piece of beef, weighing two or three pounds, put it on the stove in cold water soon after breakfast, boiling gently. Half an hour before dinner add a small onion, a sliced parsnip and carrot, a few bits of turnip, and a half-dozen dumplings. When these are done, remove them; season and thicken, serving a dumpling with meat and vegetables to each plate of stew. This may be rather plebeian, but is certainly palatable,—unless there be choice company to dine. We might call it Rainy-Day Stew.

But the toothsome time for beef-eaters was undoubtedly in the days of pleuro-pneumonia. Then the frightened public fled from beef as from the plague, and all the best cuts were left for the bold. One was tempted to pray that such pleuro might last for the season, save that the Commissioners were

so costly, and the dear cattle were having an unusually sanguinary Bull Run. I know what our vegetarian friend, Mr. Alcott, will say; but he must indulge me in a very small mania, even if it seem to him a kind of cannibalism; therefore, whatever rhapsodies are left from bread and potato, let them all be given to good beef. While the quarrel of round, rump, and sirloin goes on, this let us buy and eat and reinforce ourselves. In it are poems, powers, and possessions ineffable. Twenty-five cents a pound, and the strength of the gods in one's veins! Broil it carefully and rare, then go and toss quoits with Hercules. In this, ye disconsolate, behold lands, lovers, and virtues in plenty. It fills and steadies the pulse, and plants the planet plump under one's feet. "My friend is he who makes me do what I can," says the sage. Only beefsteak can come to the rescue. If one were going to a martyr's fire, of this should he eat, lest he die, not sublimely, with a fainting body. He would try this steak, and then that stake.

But there is one event that comes alike to all, and that is a holiday dinner. Even the poor have their plum-pudding days, and all seem to think that on a Christmas or Thanksgiving Nature suspends her laws and lets one eat as much as he can. It is quite in the spirit of the Scottish Lord Cockburn, who, ending a long walk, used to say, "We will eat a profligate supper,—a supper without regard to discretion or digestion." Or after the theory of one who ate whatever he pleased, whenever he pleased, and as much as he pleased, saying, "Oh, if it makes me sick, I can take medicine. What are the doctors for, if 't is n't to cure people?" He did not know how small hope can be gotten from the doctors, and how those who know best get more and more courage to travel into places where they are not. There must have been a poor chance for the Egyptians, who, Herodotus says, had a physician for each part of the body; so that the human frame would seem to have been a sort of university, and each of the organs a vacant professorship. In

case of malady, every officer worked away on his own member without regard to what his medical neighbors were doing. Michelet mentions a fish that has the power of multiplying stomachs to the number of one hundred and twenty. Fortunately that power is not man's. Think of dyspepsia with a hundred and twenty stomachs, and a different doctor for each!

Do not imagine this a plea for the transcendental diet that drove Sydney Smith to that pathetic sigh, "Ah, I wish they would allow me even the wing of a roasted butterfly!" But perhaps it would not be amiss to conjure up a terror-demon from these bodies of ours, so that we should fear to violate laws with such merciless penalties,—should have none but well-cooked food, at sensible and systematic hours. Is it strange that little Miss Bremer, who thought herself of soundest digestion, after three months of American night-dinners with oysters and preserve, is at last seen to grasp Dr. Osgood with both hands, exclaiming, in tears, "Oh, help me!" I want to save you from resembling the great people of the world after the manner of Dr. Beattie, whose title to genius was, "Have I not headaches like Pope, vertigo like Swift, gray hairs like Homer? Do I not wear large shoes for fear of corns like Virgil, and sometimes complain of sore eyes like Horace?"

Therefore I hope that your H. will make the counting-room conform to regular mid-day dinner and early tea-time. And let us trust that it will not have the same fatal result as with King Louis XII., who is said to have died earlier from changing his dinner-hour in compliment to his foreign bride.

One can hardly think of late suppers without turning quite away to those ideal tea-takings of the Wordsworths at Grasmere. "Plain living and high thinking," was the motto of the philosopher-poet, and that table was never crowded with viands. One can well believe, that, as De Quincey said, in the quiet walks after tea the face of the poet "grew solemn and spiritual as any saint's." But

he probably was thinking very high when he drew a knife from the buttered toast and cut the leaves of a new book just lent to him!

Quite sombre are the memories of Rydal Mount; but since we are really alive, let us be lively. Behold me, then, dear M., well turbaned and aproned, and know that this is our churning-day. You give one of your gleeful little shrieks, perhaps; but yes, it is true; we live in the city, take a pint of milk per day, and make butter.

And where is the churn? you suggest. Oh, I extemporize that. It is out of the question to buy every convenient thing, or purse will run dry and house overflow. Dr. Kane hints how few dishes it is possible to use; and the plan is admirable; so one need not buy a churn, but make one out of a bowl and spoon. Into the bowl goes the cream, into the cream the spoon, and then I beat, beat, beat, not as one who beateth the air. This often lasts for two hours or more; it might be said that the cream remains in chrysalis, and refuses to butterfly! Indeed, there is no reason why a small bowl of cream should n't be as refractory as a wooden churnful. But when it "won't come," my distress is not at all proportioned to the size of the bowl.

Still I beat, beat, beat, perspiringly, but resolutely, while it whisks about, spattering over face, bib, and turban. At length there appear within it greasy-looking flecks. These increase till the mass thickens, beats solidly, separates from the milk, and declares itself butter. A limited quantity, certainly, but I will none the less press it dry, salt, and make it into cakes as large as a full-blown tea-rose. Each of these I will stamp, lay on a dapper glass cup-plate, and at tea-time several dear ones in various households will find these astonishing little pats beside them. Think you not they are genuine love-pats?

This would be a pretty way to serve butter always, did it not remind one of cheap hotels kept on the European plan, where those small, slushy, yellow cakes come in with the rolls. A choicer way

is to form it into acorns or strawberries, — though I don't in the least know how it is done, — placing them all together on a plate and serving one to each at the table. This dainty way, however, would hardly make a bad article good, and no one would crave a berry of ancient firkin butter. For, as trivial a matter as it seems, this single condiment of food, one has only to encounter it in a strong, cheesy state to feel it among the most important things in the *cuisine*. Then one suddenly discovers that butter is in everything. Eating becomes intolerable, living dwindles into dyspepsia, and finally one is tempted to exclaim with a certain epicure, "I wish I were under the sod! There 's no lump butter in the market!"

It is related of Apicius, who lived at Rome, that he ate very large shrimps; but hearing that those of Greece were larger, he straightway sailed for that coast without losing a day. He met a great storm and much danger; but on arriving, the fishermen brought him of their best. Apicius shook his head.

"Have you never any larger shrimps?"

"No, Seignior, never!"

At which, rubbing his hands with delight, he ordered the captain to sail back at once, saying, —

"I have left some at home larger than these, and they will be spoiled, if the wind is not in our favor."

We will not carry our diletantism so far as this, nor let it carry us so far; still we are glad not to be driven to the expedient of the Syrians, whose only butter is the fat procured from the tails of

their sheep, — which is literally being reduced to extremities.

By the way, something quite remarkable occurred in my first churning. I began with one cup of cream and ended with a cup of butter and a full cup of buttermilk! This law of expansion is paralleled only by that of contraction, as shown to the farmer who took a brimming pail of dinner to the sty; and after the little pig had eaten it all, the farmer put him into the pail, and had room for another half of a pig beside.

But, dear M., it is hardly two moons since the bridal trunks were taken from our hall, and you went away with the friend. You have scarcely been domesticated long enough to see that bright tins bake badly, and that one must crucify her pride by allowing them to blacken; yet so soon do I overwhelm you with culinary suggestions. I am distressed to remember them. But you must forgive and smile me into peacefulness again. And be not discouraged, little housewife! It may take years of attention to excel in bread-making, some skill even for boiling potatoes, and common-sense for everything; but stand steadily beside your servants, and watch their processes patiently. Take notes, experiment, amend, and if there be failure, discover the reason; then it need not happen again.

And despite the difficulties of the practical, you and H. will not slight the ideal. Love the work you are doing and must do; but when it is done, oh, train the rose-vines over your door!