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JEAN ANTHELME BRILLAT-SAVARIN (1755–1826) was mayor of Belley, France, until he fled the Revolution in 1793. After a brief exile in the United States, he was appointed a judge in Paris, where he spent the last years of his life writing The Physiology of Taste.

M. F. K. FISHER (1908–1992), author of Consider the Oyster, How to Cook a Wolf, *and more than twenty other books about the art of eating well, was a pioneer of food writing as a literary genre.*

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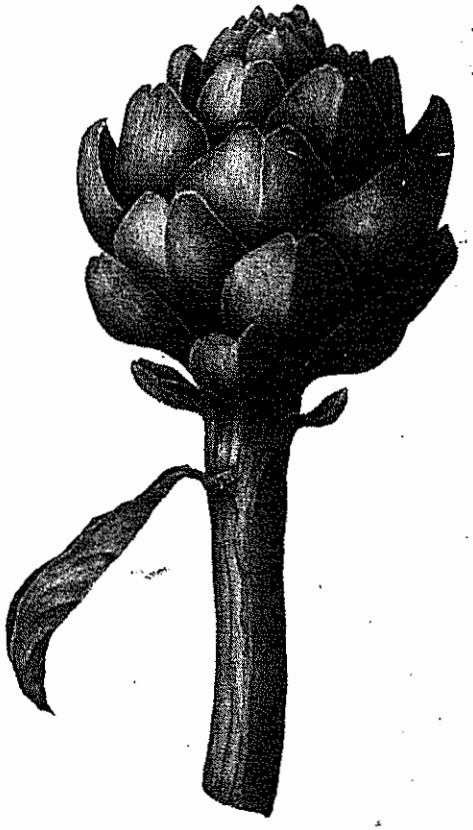
Jean Anthelme Brillat-Savarin

THE PHYSIOLOGY OF TASTE

Or Meditations on Transcendental Gastronomy



TRANSLATED BY M. F. K. FISHER

INTRODUCTION BY BILL BUFORD

MEDITATION 27

PHILOSOPHICAL HISTORY OF COOKING

123: COOKING IS THE oldest of all arts: Adam was born hungry, and every new child, almost before he is actually in the world, utters cries which only his wet nurse's breast can quiet.

Cooking is also of all the arts the one which has done most to advance our civilization, for the needs of the kitchen were what first taught us to use fire, and it is by fire that man has tamed Nature itself.

If we take a broad view, we can count up to three different kinds of *cooking*:

The first, which applies to the preparation of food, retains its original name;

The second concerns itself with the analysis of foods and the classification of their basic elements, and it has been given the name *chemistry*;

Finally, the third, which can be called restorative cooking, is best known by the name *pharmacy*.

Even though their purposes are different, these three are alike in the way they use fire and stoves, and in the employ of corresponding kinds of vessels.

Thus, the same piece of beef which the cook turns into soup and *pot-au-feu* the chemist will use to discover how many kinds of matter it consists of, and the pharmacist will dislodge violently from our stomachs if by chance it happens to prove indigestible.

Alimentary Progress

124: Man is an omnivorous animal: he has incisor teeth for cutting into fruits, molars for crushing seeds, and canines for tearing

flesh, and of these last it has been observed that the nearer he comes to the savage state, the stronger and more prominent they will be.

It is very probable that the human race was for a long time and of necessity frugivorous:[1] man was the clumsiest of the ancient world's inhabitants, and his means of attack were extremely limited as long as he was unarmed. But the instinct for self-improvement which was a part of his nature was not long in developing; the very realization of his weakness led him to find ways of making weapons, toward which he was also pushed by the carnivorous yearnings already revealed by his canine teeth. Once armed, he made of all the creatures who surrounded him his prey and his nourishment.

This murderous instinct still exists in him: children usually kill whatever little animals are abandoned to their mercies, and would doubtless eat them if they were hungry enough.

It is not surprising that man from the beginning wanted to feed upon flesh: his stomach is too little and fruits have too few nourishing substances in them to be able to replenish sufficiently his bodily losses. He would have done better to live upon vegetables, but this diet demands culinary skills which did not develop for many centuries.

The first weapons must have been the branches of trees, and later came bows and arrows.

It is worthwhile to notice that wherever man has been discovered, in every climate, in every part of the globe, he has always been found armed with these bows and arrows. This uniformity is hard to explain. We cannot well see how the same series of ideas has occurred to individuals subjected to such differing circumstances; it must spring from a cause hidden from us by the veil of time.

Raw flesh has but one inconvenience: its viscous nature makes it stick to the teeth. Aside from this, it is not at all disagreeable to eat. It digests easily, seasoned with a little salt, and must be more nourishing thus than in any other form.

"MEIN GOD," a captain from a Croat regiment whom I had invited to dinner said to me in 1815, "all this fuss isn't necessary for a good meal! When we are in the field and are hungry we kill

the first beast we come upon; we cut ourselves a good meaty slice of it, sprinkle it with some of the salt which we always carry with us in our *sabre-tasche*,* put it between our saddle and the back of the horse, and give it a good gallop. Then (and here he growled like a creature tearing meat apart with his teeth) *gnian, gnian, gnian*, we feast as well as any prince."

When sportsmen in the Dauphiné hunt in September, they too are armed with salt and with pepper. If one of them happens to bag a plump, perfect figpecker[2] he plucks it, seasons it, carries it for a time in the crown of his hat, and eats it. Such gourmands[3] insist that this is much more delicious than the bird when roasted.

It is plain that we have not completely lost our thrice-removed ancestors' predilection for raw flesh. The most fastidious palates manage to enjoy sausages from Arles and Bologna, smoked beef from Hamburg, salted anchovies and herrings, and other such delicacies which have never been near fire and which still arouse our appetites.

Discovery of Fire

125: After a long enough time of feasting in the Croatian fashion, men discovered fire, and this was once more a thing of chance, for fire does not happen by itself: the natives of the Marianas are said not to have known that such a thing existed.

Cooking

126: Once fire was recognized, man's instinct for self-improvement led him to subject meat to it, at first to dry out the flesh and finally to place it upon the embers to cook.

Meat thus treated was found to taste much better; it takes on more firmness, is chewed much more easily, and its osmazome as it browns becomes savorous and gives the flesh an aroma which has never ceased to tempt us.[4]

*The SABRE-TASCHE or saber-pouch is a kind of bag protected by a shield, which hangs from the shoulder strap where the light troops wear their sabers; it plays an important role in the tales which the soldiers tell among themselves.

However, it soon became obvious that meat cooked upon live coals is not free from dirt: it always picks up little bits of ash or charcoal which are difficult to get rid of. This inconvenience was remedied by impaling the morsels of flesh on sticks which were then placed above the glowing fire, their ends resting upon stones of the proper height.

It is thus that men hit upon the various methods of grilling, which is a process as simple as it is delicious: any grilled meat has a concentrated flavor, since it is, in part at least, smoked.

Things had not progressed much further than this in Homer's day, and I hope that my readers will enjoy seeing here how Achilles entertained in his own tent three of the most important of the Greeks, of whom one was a king.

I dedicate the following excerpt to the ladies, because Achilles was the handsomest of all the Greeks, and because even his manly pride did not keep him from weeping when Briseis was torn from his arms. It is also for this reason that I shall use the elegant translation of M. Dugas-Montbel, a pleasant, charming writer who is fairly gourmand for a Greek scholar:

Majorem jam craterem, Moenetii fili, appone,
Meraci usque misce, poculum autem para unicuique;
Charissimi enim isti viri meo sub tecto.
Sic dixit: Patroclus dilecto obedivit socio;
Sed cacabum ingentem posuit ad ignis jubar;
Tergum in ipso posuit ovis et pinguis caprae.
Apposuit et suis saginati scapulum abundantem pinguedine.
Huic tenebat carnes Automedon, secabatque nobilis Achilles,
Eas quidem minute secabat, et verubus affigebat.
Ignem Moenetiades accendebat magnum, deo similis vir;
Sed postquam ignis deflagravit, et flamma extincta est,
Prunas sternens, verua desuper extendit.
Inspersit autem sale sacro, a lapidibus elevans.
At postquam assavit et in mensas culinarias fudit,
Patroclus quidem, panem accipiens, distribuit in mensas
Pulchris in canistris, sed carnem distribuit Achilles.
Ipse autem adversus sedit Ulyssi divino,
Ad parietem alterum. Diis autem sacrificare jussit
Patroclum suum socium. Is in ignem jecit libamenta.
Hi in cibos paratos appositos manus immiserunt;

Sed Postquam potus et cibi desiderium exemerunt,
Innuit Ajax Phoenici: intellexit autem divinus Ulysses,
Implensque vino poculum, propinavit Achilli,* etc.
Il. IX, 202.

"Straightway Patroclus obeys the instructions of his faithful companion. Meanwhile Achilles puts near the sparkling flame a pot which holds the shoulders of a ewe and of a fat goat, and the broad back of a succulent porker. Automedon holds this meat while the divine Achilles carves it into morsels, and sticks them through with pointed iron needles.

"Patroclus, who is himself godlike, lights a great fire. As soon as the burning wood throws out no more than a dying flame he puts over the bed of coals two long skewers upheld upon two stones, and sprinkles the sacred salt.

"When the meats are done, and when the feast is ready, Patroclus passes bread around the table in fine baskets, but Achilles himself chooses to serve the roasts. Finally he sits down facing Ulysses who is at the other end of the table, and bids his companion make the customary offering to the gods.

"Patroclus throws into the flames the first tidbits from the meal, and then everyone reaches for the feast which has been prepared and served. When they have routed thirst and hunger with the abundance of good things, Ajax signals Phoenix, and Ulysses seeing this fills his large cup with wine, and to the hero says, 'Salutations, my friend Achilles'..."

Thus it was that a king, a king's son, and three Greek generals feasted right well upon bread, wine, and grilled meat.

It must be understood that if Achilles and Patroclus themselves took care of the preparations for the banquet, it was something out of the ordinary, to pay all the more homage to the distinguished guests they entertained, for ordinarily the duties of the kitchen were left to slaves and to women: Homer tells us so in the Odyssey, in singing of the feasts of the suitors.

*I have not used the original text, since few people would be able to follow it; instead I have decided to give the Latin version, for this more widely understood language, which follows perfectly the Greek, lends itself better to the details and to the simplicity of the heroic feast.

In those days the guts of animals, stuffed with fat and blood, were highly thought of as a dish (this was nothing more than our blood pudding).[5]

Then, and doubtless for a long time before, poetry and music were considered a part of the delights of feasting. Renowned minstrels vaunted the marvels of Nature, the loves of the immortals, and the great deeds of warriors; they functioned as a kind of priesthood, and it is probable that the divine Homer himself was the pupil of some of these chosen men, for he could never have risen so high if his poetical studies had not begun early in his childhood.

Madame Dacier[6] has said that Homer never mentions boiled meat in any of his works. The Hebrews were more advanced, because of the time they spent in Egypt: they had pots which could be placed on the fire, and it is in one of these that the soup was made which Jacob sold so dearly to his brother Esau.

It is truly difficult to guess how man came to work with metals; legend has it that Tubal-Cain was the first to try it. . . .

In the present state of our knowledge, it is metals that enable us to work with other metals: we bend them with iron tongs and beat them upon the forge with iron hammers and shape them with files of steel, but I have yet to meet anyone who could explain to me how the first tongs were made, or how the first hammer was forged.

Feasts of the Orientals—of the Greeks

127: Cooking made great progress as soon as heat resistant vessels of brass or clay became common. Meats could then be seasoned and vegetables prepared; there were soups, gravies, jellies, and all such things which develop one from another.

The oldest books still remaining to us speak with high praise of the banquets of Eastern kings. It is not hard to see that rulers of lands so rich in everything, and especially in spices and perfumes, would naturally enjoy the most sumptuous of tables; but details of them are lacking. All we know is that Cadmus, who brought the art of writing to Greece, was once cook to the king of Sidon.

It was among these soft and voluptuous people that there arose the habit of placing couches around the banquet tables, and of lying upon them to eat and drink.

This refinement, which smacks of decadence, was not equally popular everywhere. Nations which made a boast of their strength and courage, and a virtue of their frugality, avoided it for a long time. It was finally adopted by the Athenians, however, and for a great many years was common throughout the civilized world.

Cooking and its amenities were in high favor among the inhabitants of Athens, an elegant people and hungry for whatever was new and exciting. Princes, rich private citizens, poets, and scholars set the example, and even the philosophers believed that they should not spurn pleasures which flowed from Nature's own breast.

From what we can read in old writings, it is plain that the feasts of the ancients were feasts indeed.

Hunting, fishing, and trade provided most of the commodities which are still considered excellent, and competition caused them to be very expensive.

All the arts combined to ornament the banquet boards, around which the guests lay upon couches richly hung with purple.

Each one strove to give even more worth to the feast by his agreeable conversation, and table talk became a science.

The minstrels' songs, which were heard toward the third part of the meal, lost their antique severity, and were no longer sung exclusively in celebration of the gods, heroes, and great historical happenings: instead they sang of friendship, and of pleasure and of love, with a grace and harmony which our own hard dry tongues can never match.

The Grecian wines, which we still find good, were studied and classified by the ancient gourmets, from the gentlest liquids to the headiest; at certain banquets the whole gamut was run, and contrary to our present-day habit, the glasses grew larger in proportion to the excellency of the wines they held.

The loveliest women came to make still more beautiful these voluptuous gatherings: dances, games, and all kinds of amusements prolonged the evening's pleasure. Sensual delight was in

the very air to breathe, and more than one Aristippus who arrived under Plato's banner made his final retreat under that of Epicurus.

Scholars outdid themselves to write praises of an art which could bestow such sweet enjoyment. Plato, Athenaeus, and many others are still known to us, but alas, their works are lost! If any one of them must be singled out for our especial regret, it is the poem *Gastronomy* by Archestratus, the friend of one of the sons of Pericles.

"This great writer," said Theotimus, "traveled to the ends of the earth and the seas, to find out for himself whatever was best that came from them. He learned much in his travels, but not from the morals of the people he met, for they are unchangeable; rather he went into the workrooms where were being prepared the delicacies of their various tables, and he associated only with such men as could satisfy his curiosity. His poem is a scientific treasure-house, and every line is in itself a precept."

Such was the state of cooking in Greece;[7] it rested thus until a handful of men, who had come to settle along the banks of the Tiber, spread their domination over the neighboring people, and ended by invading the whole world.

Roman Banqueting

128: Good living was unknown to the Romans as long as they must fight to keep their own independence or subjugate their neighbors, who were quite as badly off as they. Even their generals walked behind the plow, and lived on vegetables. Frugivorous historians never fail to laud these primitive days, when thrift was still a reigning virtue. But when the Roman conquests had spread through Africa, through Sicily, through Greece; when the conquerors had feasted upon the spoils of countries far more advanced than their own; then they brought back to Rome all the preparations that had so charmed them abroad, and everything leads us to believe that they were far from frowned upon at home.

The early Romans had sent to Athens a deputation to report back to them on the laws; they continued to go there to study literature and philosophy. And as they polished their manners,

they learned the pleasures of the table: cooks came back to Rome, along with the orators and philosophers, the rhetoricians and the poets.

With time and the series of triumphs which made all the riches of the world flow into Rome, the prodigality in feasting reached almost incredible lengths.

Everything was tasted, from grasshopper to ostrich, from dormouse to wild boar;* whatever might stimulate the appetite was tried as a seasoning, and as such the cooks used substances which we cannot conceive of, like asafoetida and rue.

The whole known world was put to gastronomical use, by both soldiers and travelers. Guinea fowl and truffles were brought from Africa, and rabbits from Spain and pheasants from Greece, where they had migrated from the banks of the Phasis, and peacocks from the farthest edge of Asia.

The most important of the Romans prided themselves on their beautiful gardens, where they not only raised the fruits that had always been known, like pears, apples, figs, and grapes, but also those which had been brought in from other lands: the apricot from Armenia, the peach from Persia, the Sidonian quince, the raspberry from the deep slopes of Mount Ida, and the cherry, one of Lucullus' spoils from the kingdom of Pontus. These importations, which necessarily came about in a variety of ways, at least prove that the interest in them was general, and that every Roman felt it a glory and a duty to contribute to the pleasures of the people-sovereign.

The fish was the highest prized among all edibles. Preferences

* Glires farsi.—Glires isicio porcino, item pulpis ex omni glirium membro tritis, cum pipere, nucleis, lasere, liquamine, farcies glires, et sutos in tegula positos, mittes in furnum, an farsos in clibano coques.[8]

Dormice were considered a real delicacy: sometimes scales were brought to the table to verify their weight. And there is this well-known epigram by Martial on the subject of dormice, XIII, 59.

Tota mihi dormitur hiems, et pinguior illo
Tempore sum, quo me nil nisi somnus alit.

Lister, sensual doctor to a very sensual queen (Queen Anne),[9] while studying the advantages of the use of scales in cooking, observed that if twelve larks do not weigh twelve ounces they are barely edible, and that they are passable if they weigh exactly twelve, but that if they weigh thirteen, they are fat and excellent.

were soon established for certain kinds of it, and went so far as to be shown for certain fish caught in certain latitudes. The catch from far countries was sent back to Rome in jars filled with honey, and when the creatures were unusually large they were sold at lofty prices because of the competition among the citizens who bid for them, some of whom were wealthier than kings.

What was drunk was no less the object of earnest attention and attentive care. Wines from Greece and Sicily and Italy were the joy of Rome, and since they drew their price either from the region of their pressing or the year they had been produced, a kind of birth certificate was written on each amphora.

O nata mecum consule Manlio. HORACE.

And this was not all. Thanks to that desire to intensify sensations which we have already mentioned, the Romans did what they could to make their wines more piquant and perfumed: they steeped them with flowers and aromatics, and with drugs of various kinds, and the concoctions which contemporary authors have told us about under the name of *condita* must have scorched their tongues and violently irritated their insides.

It is thus that the Romans, so long ago, tried to find the dream of alcohol, which was not realized for another fifteen centuries or so.

But it is above all toward the appurtenances of the feasts that this monstrous luxury hurled most of its energy.

All furnishings necessary to a banquet were prepared with careful study, whether in material or workmanship. The number of courses gradually increased to twenty and more, and at each new course everything which had been used in the preceding one was removed from sight.

Slaves were especially trained to assist at each part of the ceremony of a banquet, and these ritual roles were rigorously held to. The most precious scents embalmed the air of the dining hall. A kind of herald announced the merits of such dishes as were worthy of special attention, and told of the titles which had been bestowed upon them because of their distinction: in truth, nothing was neglected which could sharpen the appetite, hold the attention, and prolong the pleasures of the table.

This sensual extravagance had also its aberrations and its perversions. Such were the feasts where the fishes and birds which were served were counted in the thousands, and the dishes which had no other merit than their exorbitant cost, like one which was made of the brains of five hundred ostriches, and another where were used the tongues of five thousand birds which had first been trained to speak.

From all this it seems to me that it is easy to understand the enormous sums Lucullus must have spent on his table and the expenses of the banquets which he gave in his Room of Apollo, where it was the rule to exhaust all known methods to flatter the sensuality of his guests.

The Second Coming of Lucullus

129: These glorious days could well come again in our own time, and to see them once more it is only necessary to produce a Lucullus for them. Let us suppose, for example, that a man known to be powerfully rich would like to celebrate a great political or financial event, and give in its honor a memorable banquet, without bothering himself in any way with what it would cost;[10]

Let us suppose that he calls on all the arts to decorate every corner of the place chosen for the festival, and that he orders his stewards to use every artifice in the feast itself and whatever is best in his cellars to refresh his guests;[11]

That he have two plays presented by the greatest actors during this luxurious occasion;

That, during the repast, music be heard, executed by the most renowned artists not only of the voice but of instruments;

That he has planned, between the dinner and the coffee, a ballet performed by everything that is lightest and loveliest among the Opera's dancers;

That the evening end with a ball attended by two hundred of the most beautiful ladies, and four hundred of the most elegant gentlemen in existence;

That the buffet be constantly replenished with whatever is known to be peerless among hot, cool, and iced drinks;

That, toward the middle of the night, an artful supper be served to give everyone new enthusiasm;

That the servants be handsome and finely uniformed, and the lighting perfect; and, to forget nothing, that the host see to it that each guest be fetched and carried in a way proper to his social importance.

Given this feast, thus well conceived and planned, thus well prepared and well executed, anyone who knows Parisian life will agree with me that the next day's reckonings would make even the cashier of Lucullus tremble.

In my exposition of what we would have to do today to imitate one of this magnificent Roman's feasts, I have given enough hints to my reader of what was necessary for the obligatory accessories of such a celebration, where there must always be actors, singers, mimes, clowns, and everything that could add to the pleasure of people who had been invited together for the sole purpose of being amused.

What was first done by the Athenians, then by the Romans, still later in our own land during the Middle Ages, and finally by us today, springs equally from the basic nature of man, who awaits with impatience the end of his life work, and from a kind of inquietude which tortures him, so long as the sum total of the life that is remaining to him is not filled to the brimming point with conscious enjoyment.

Lectisternium et Incubitatium

130: Romans, like the Athenians, ate lying down, but they did not come to do so without following a somewhat devious route.

First of all they used couches for the sacred meals which they offered to their gods; the foremost magistrates and the most powerful citizens took up the custom, and in a short time it became general and was followed until almost the beginning of the fourth century in the Christian era.

These couches, which were at the beginning no more than a kind of bench softened with straw and covered over with skins, soon became a vital part of the luxury which crept into everything having to do with banqueting. They were constructed of

the most precious woods, inlaid with ivory and gold and even gems; they were formed of cushions of incredible softness, and the covers thrown over them were encrusted with magnificent embroideries.

Guests lay upon their left sides, leaning upon that elbow; and usually one couch held three people.

This way of lying at table, which the Romans called *lectisternium*: was it more convenient, was it more comfortable than the one we have adopted, or rather resumed? I do not think so.

From a physical point of view, leaning upon one elbow demands a certain apportioning of strength in order to stay balanced, and it is not without discomfort that the weight of one part of the entire body rests upon a single joint in the arm.

There is also something to be said from a physiological viewpoint: food is put into the mouth in an unnatural way, and flows with some difficulty toward the stomach, where it collects less evenly.

The absorption of liquids, or rather the act of swallowing them, is even more difficult: it must have demanded a very special skill not to spill the wine held in those great goblets which gleamed upon the tables of the wealthy Romans, and it is doubtless during the reign of the *lectisternium* that was born the proverb which says that *there's many a slip 'twixt the cup and the lip.*

It could not have been any easier to eat decently when lying down, especially when one remembers that many of the guests wore long beards and that they all ate with their fingers, or at best a knife to carry the morsels to the mouth, since the use of forks is modern; not one was found in the ruins of Herculaneum, although many spoons were uncovered there.

It must also be assumed that there were, here and there and now and then, some assaults on common modesty, in celebrations which frequently depassed the limits of moderation, on couches where both sexes lay together and where it was not rare to see a group of slumbering guests.

Nam pransus jaceo, et satur supinus
Pertundo tunicamque, palliumque.

And thus it is man's moral sense which first protested.

As soon as the Christian faith, released from the persecutions which bloodied its cradle, had gained some power, its ministers raised their voices against the sin of intemperance. They cried out against the length of banquets, where all their precepts were violated while all the fleshly pleasures were enjoyed. Themselves pledged to an austere regimen, they placed gourmandism among the capital sins, sourly criticized the promiscuity of the sexes, and above all attacked the custom of dining upon couches, one which seemed to them the result of a shameful softness and the principal cause of all the habits they deplored.

Their doomful cry was heard; couches ceased to ornament the banquet halls, and people went back to the old way of eating in a seated position; and by a happy accident this stricture based upon morality did nothing to hinder man's enjoyment.

Poetry

131: In the Roman period which we are discussing, convivial poetry underwent a change and took on, in the mouths of Horace, Tibullus, and other fairly contemporary writers, a languorous soft character which the Greek muses never knew.

Dulce ridentem Lalagem amabo,
Dulce loquentem.
HORACE.

Quaeris quot mihi basiationes
Tuae, Lesbia, sint satis superque.
CATULLUS.

Pande, puella, pande capillulos
Flavos, lucentes ut aurum lilidum.
Pande, puella, collum candidum
Productum bene candidus humeris.
GALLUS.[12]

Barbarian Invasion

132: The five or six hundred years which we have run through in the past few pages were happy times for cookery, as well as for those who nurtured and enjoyed it, but the arrival or rather the invasion of the Northerners changed everything, upset everything: those days of glory were followed by a long and terrible darkness.

The art of eating disappeared, at the first sight of these foreigners, with all the other arts of which it is the companion and solace. Most of the great cooks were murdered in their masters' palaces; others fled rather than prepare feasts for the oppressors of their country; the small number who remained to offer their services had the humiliation of finding them refused. Those snarling mouths, those leathery gullets, were insensible to the subtleties of refined cookery. Enormous quarters of beef and venison, quantities beyond measure of the strongest drink, were enough to charm them; and since the invaders were always armed, most of their banquets degenerated into orgies, and their dining halls often ran with blood.

However, it is in the nature of things that what is excessive does not last long. The conquerors finally grew bored with their own cruelty: they mingled with the conquered, took on a tinge of civilization, and began to know the pleasures of a social existence.

Meals showed the influence of this alleviation. Guests were invited to them less to be stuffed than to be delighted, and some even began to understand that a certain attempt was being made to please them; a more amiable pleasure affected everyone, and the duties of hospitality had something gentler about them than before.

These betterments, which emerged toward the fifth century of our era, became even stronger under Charlemagne, and we can read in his Capitularies that this great king gave his own attention to making his lands furnish their best for the fine fare of his table.

Under him and his successors, the banquet halls took on an air at once gallant and chivalrous; ladies were present to add their beauty and to distribute the prizes won in tourney, and there could be seen the pheasant with gilded claws and the spread-tailed peacock, carried to the princes' tables by page boys gaudy with gold and by lovely virgins whose innocence did not always preclude their desire to please.

It should be noticed here that this makes the third time that women, sequestered by the Greeks, the Romans, and then the Franks, were brought in again to add their beauty to the banquet hall. The Turks alone have resisted this seduction. But dreadful storms menace that unsociable race, and before another thirty years have passed the powerful voice of the cannon will have proclaimed the emancipation of their odalisks.[13]

Once this movement was inaugurated it has lasted until our own times, growing stronger with every generation.

Women, even the highest-born, busied themselves in their homes with the preparation of foods, and considered it a part of the duties of hospitality, especially as understood and practiced in France toward the end of the seventeenth century.

Under their pretty fingers some dishes suffered amazing changes; an eel grew the tongue of a serpent, a hare was served wearing cat's ears, and like whimsicalities. They made great use of the spices which the Venetians were beginning to bring from the Orient, as well as the perfumes which came from Arabia, so that now and then a fish appeared cooked in rose water.[14] Luxury at table consisted mainly in the quantity of the dishes served, and things went so far that our kings felt obliged to put a brake on them by imposing sumptuary laws. These, needless to say, met the same fate as the ones written by the Greek and Roman legislators: they were laughed at, evaded, and forgotten, and survived in books only as historical monuments.

People continued, of course, to dine as well as they could, especially in the abbeys and convents and other religious retreats, for the wealth attached to these houses was less exposed to the hazards and dangers of the civil wars which for so long have ravaged France.

Since it is very plain that Frenchwomen have always taken more or less of a hand in whatever went on in their kitchens, it must be concluded that it is due to them that our cookery has reigned supreme in Europe, mainly because it contains an immense quantity of dishes so subtle and light and tempting that only the ladies could have invented them.

I have said that our ancestors continued to dine *as well as they could.* Often they could not. The suppers of our very kings were

sometimes a matter of luck, and we know that they were far from certain during the civil wars: Henry IV would have had a thin meal of it once, if he had not had the good sense to invite to his table the humble but happy owner of the only turkey in a town where the king must spend the night.

Nevertheless the science of cookery advanced little by little: the Crusaders enriched it with the shallot, plucked from the plains of Ascalon; parsley was brought from Italy; and, long before the time of Louis IX, our butchers and sausagemakers had based on their artfulness with pork the hope of making their fortunes, of which to this very day we can see memorable examples.

Pastry cooks were no less successful, and the products of their industry were an honorable part of every feast. Since before the reign of Charles IX they have been an important guild, and that ruler gave them a charter into which was written the right to make all bread used in Holy Communion.

Toward the middle of the seventeenth century, the Dutch imported coffee into Europe.* Soliman Aga, the Turkish diplomat who so flustered the hearts of our great-great-grandmothers, served them their first cups of the beverage in 1660; an American hawked it openly at the Saint-Germain Fair in 1670; and the Rue Saint-André-des-Arts had the first café decorated with mirrors and marble-topped tables, much as is the fashion today.

Sugar began to appear about then, too;† and Scarron,[15] when he complained that his stingy sister had made the holes of her sugar sieve smaller, at least let us know that this utensil was in use in his day.

It is also in the seventeenth century that brandy began to be

*The Dutch were the first among Europeans to transplant from Arabia some coffee bushes, which they took first to Batavia, and then to their own country.

M. de Reissout, lieutenant-general of artillery, had a root of it brought from Amsterdam and presented it to the Jardin-du-Roi; it was the first one ever seen in Paris. This plant, of which M. de Jussie has left us a description, was in 1613 one inch in diameter and five feet high: the fruit is pretty, and somewhat resembles a cherry.

†No matter what Lucretius has written, the ancients did not have sugar. It is a product of art, and without crystallization the cane gives but a useless and insipid liquid.

more commonly known. Distiling, whose basic principles had been brought back by the Crusaders, had remained a mystery known to only a few adepts. Toward the beginning of the reign of Louis XIV, stills became better understood, but it was not until Louis XV's time that brandy was really popular, and it is only a few years ago that we succeeded, after countless minute experiments, in making alcohol in a single operation.

It was still in the same period that the use of tobacco started, with the result that sugar, coffee, brandy, and tobacco, those four things so important both to trade and to national revenue, have existed as such for barely two centuries.

Periods of Louis XIV and Louis XV

133: It was under these auspices that the period of Louis XIV began, and under his brilliant reign that the science of banqueting obeyed the instinct for progress which was advancing all the other arts.

We have not yet forgotten those feasts which attracted the whole of Europe to them, nor those tournaments where for the last time gleamed the spears so completely replaced now by our bayonets, and the knightly armor which proved such a feeble bulwark against the brutality of modern cannon.

All the tournaments ended with sumptuous banquets, which were in reality their peak, for man's constitution is such that he cannot be fully happy as long as his taste remains unsatisfied: this imperious need has even influenced our language, so that to say that something has been done with perfection, we say that it has been done with taste.

By a natural consequence, those who presided over the preparations for these great feasts became men of note, which was reasonable enough, for they needed to combine within themselves a variety of qualities: inventive genius, the knowledge of organization, a sense of proportion, the ability to search out the sources of their supplies, firmness enough to exact obedience from their helpers, and unfailing promptness in every detail, so that nothing might be late.

It was at these great festivals that were first paraded the

magnificence of the *surtouts*,[16] a new art which, combining painting with sculpture, presented an attractive scene and sometimes even the correct setting for the circumstances of the banquet or of the most honored guest.

Here was indeed all that was admirable and perhaps somewhat fantastic in the cook's art! But soon less crowded gatherings and more delicate repasts began to demand from them a more thoughtful kind of attention and more exacting care.

It was in the extremely exclusive dinner parties of royalty,[17] in the apartments of the court *favorites*, and in the subtle suppers of the bankers and courtesans, that culinary artists now displayed their skill and, driven by a praiseworthy spirit of rivalry, sought to outdo one another.

Toward the end of this period, the name of any renowned chef was almost always placed next to his patron's, and the latter was proud to have it there. The twin merits of birth and skills were thus united, and the most famous historical names are linked in our cook books with recipes which they had first patronized or invented or evolved.

This partnership no longer exists: we are no less gourmands than our forebears, and indeed quite the contrary, but we pay much less attention to the name of whoever rules our kitchen regions. The gastronomical applause of tipping our heads to the left is the only sign of admiration we give to the artist who enchants us, and the restaurant chefs, which is to say the public cooks, are the only ones who are shown a recognition which immediately places them among the ranks of our great capitalists. *Utile dulci.*

It was for Louis XIV that the prickly pear, which he called *la bonne poire*, was brought from the Echelles of the Levant, and it is thanks to his old age that we now have liqueurs.

This king was at times overcome by the weakness and vital fatigue which often show themselves after the age of sixty, and various combinations of brandy with sugar and essences were made into tonics for him, which according to the usage of the day were called *potions cordiales*. And such is the origin of the art of making liqueurs.

It is noteworthy that during more or less the same period the

art of cookery was flourishing in the English court. Queen Anne was a great lover of the pleasures of the table; she did not disdain to discuss pertinent affairs with her chef, and English recipe books contain many preparations designated (AFTER QUEEN ANN'S FASHION), "according to Queen Anne's method."

Culinary science, which was stationary during the domination of Madame de Maintenon, continued its mounting progress under the Regency.

The Duke of Orléans, a sensitive witty prince and one worthy of having true friends, shared many meals with them which were as choice as they were well-planned. I have been told by unimpeachable authorities that they were especially distinguished by their extremely subtle sauces, by matelottes as delicious as if they came from the river banks, and by superbly truffled turkeys.

Truffled turkeys!!! Their reputation mounts almost as fast as their cost! They are like lucky stars, whose very appearance makes gourmands of every category twinkle, gleam, and caper with pleasure.[18]

The reign of Louis XV was no less happy for gastronomy. Eighteen years of peace healed painlessly the wounds made by more than sixty years of war; wealth created by industry, and either spread out by commerce or acquired by its tradesmen, made former financial inequalities disappear, and the spirit of conviviality invaded every class of society.

It is during this period* that there was generally established more orderliness in the meals, more cleanliness and elegance, and those various refinements of service which, having increased

*According to information which I have gleaned from the inhabitants of several districts, a dinner about 1740 for ten persons would be made up as follows:

1st course: the bouilli (meat and its broth); an entrée of veal cooked in its own juice; an hors d'oeuvre.

2nd course: a turkey; a plate of vegetables; a salad; a creamy pudding (sometimes).

Dessert: some cheese; some fruit; a jar of preserves.

Plates were changed only three times, after the soup, at the second course, and for dessert. Coffee was very rarely served, but quite often there was a cordial made from cherries or garden pink, still something of a novelty then.

steadily until our own time, threaten now to overstep all limits and lead us to the point of ridicule.

It was during this period, too, that cooks employed in luxurious brothels and by the most fashionable kept-women outdid themselves to add to the progress of culinary science.

There are numberless facilities when it is a question of providing for a large number of people with hearty appetites: with domestic meat, wild fowl, game, and a few large orders of fish, a meal for sixty people can be turned out in no time.

But in order to gratify mouths which never open wider than a simper, to tempt vaporous nervous ladies, to awaken stomachs made of papier-mâché, to rouse thin fanciful dyspeptics in whom appetite is like a whim always on the point of vanishing: to do this takes more genius, more deep thought, and more hard work than it would to resolve one of the most difficult problems in the geometry of the Infinite.

Louis XVI

134: Since we have now reached the reign of Louis XVI and the days of the Revolution, we shall not drag out too carefully all the details of the changes which we have witnessed, but instead be content to outline in bold strokes the various betterments which, since 1774, have come about in the science of banqueting.

These have had for their object both the natural adjuncts of the art of gastronomy and the moral and social institutions which are a part of them; and in spite of the fact that these two divisions influence each other with a continuous reciprocity, we have felt it best, for reasons of clarity, to consider them separately.

Ameliorations from the Point of View of Art

135: All professions whose end result is to prepare or sell nourishment, like those of our cooks, caterers, and pastry- and candy-makers, our grocery store owners and such, have steadily grown more numerous; and a proof that this increase has only followed a real need for it is that it has done nothing to lessen the prosperity of its practitioners.

Physics and chemistry have been called to the aid of alimentary art: leading scholars have not felt it beneath their dignity to study our basic needs, and as a result there are improvements in everything from the simple *pot-au-feu* of a working man to the most extraordinarily complex and delicate foodstuffs ever to be served from gold and crystal.

New crafts have sprung up, as, for example, that of the *petit-four* bakers, who stand somewhere between the true cake-bakers and the candymakers. They control in their profession all those preparations which blend butter with sugar, eggs, and fine flour, like sponge cakes, macaroons, decorated cakes, meringues, and comparable delicacies.

The art of preserving foods has also become a skill in itself, whose purpose is to offer us at any season of the year those aliments which are peculiar to a single one.

Horticulture has made enormous progress, and hothouses offer to our view the most exotic fruits; various new kinds of vegetables have been acquired either through breeding or importation, and among them is a kind of cantaloup which, since it produces only fine melons, give the lie daily to the old proverb.*

We have cultivated, imported, and presented in regular order the wines of every country: Madeira to make the first assault on the gullet, French wines to continue through the dinner courses, and those of Spain and Africa to crown the whole.

French cookery has appropriated many foreign dishes like curry[19] and BEEFSTEAK, and seasonings like caviar and soy,[20] and drinks like punch, negus,[21] and so on.

Coffee has become popular, in the morning as a food and after dinner as a stimulating and tonic drink. A great number of receptacles, utensils, and other accessories have been invented to give to a meal a more or less pronounced aspect of luxury and festivity, so that foreigners who arrive in Paris find upon our tables many

*Fifty at least you'll have to try,
Before you find one fit to buy.

It seems that melons as we grow them today were unknown to the Romans; what they referred to as MELO and PEPO were only a kind of cucumber, which they ate with extremely spicy sauces. APICIUS, DE RE COQUINARIA.

objects whose names they do not know and which they are often too shy to ask about.

And from all these facts we can draw the general conclusion that, at least at this very moment of writing, everything that precedes, accompanies, or follows a banquet is treated with an orderliness, a method, and an address which shows a desire to please which should delight any guest.

Final Refinements

136: The use of the Greek word *gastronomy* has been revived: it sounded sweetly in our French ears, and although barely understood it is but necessary to pronounce it to bring a smile of good fellowship to every face.

We have begun to separate gourmandism from voracity and gluttony. We have begun to consider it as a desirable penchant which we might even boast about as a social quality, pleasant in a host, profitable to a guest, and useful to science, and we have begun to classify gourmands with those other enthusiasts whose predilections are admitted and recognized.

A general feeling of conviviality has spread throughout all classes of society, festive gatherings have greatly increased, and every individual, as he entertains his friends, outdoes himself to offer them whatever he has chosen as the best dish served to him as a guest in social levels above his own.

As a result of the pleasure which we have come to feel in other people's company, we have evolved a new division of our time, so that we devote to business the hours between morning and nightfall, and give up the rest to the delights which accompany and follow our festivities.

We have instituted the late breakfast party, a meal which has a special character because of its traditional dishes, and the gaiety which is always a part of it, and the unconventional garb which is permissible at it.

We have in the same way invented formal teas, a type of entertainment which is really extraordinary in that it is always offered to people who have already dined well and therefore feel neither thirst nor hunger, so that its purpose is solely one

of passing the time and its foundation is no more than a display of dainties.

We have, also, created political banquets, which have recurred incessantly during the past thirty years whenever it has been necessary to exercise a particular influence over a great number of individuals. It is a type of meal which demands great lavishness, to which no one pays any heed, and the enjoyment of which is only felt in retrospect.

Finally, restaurants have become a part of our life: they are completely new as an institution, something which is often forgotten, and their effect is that any fellow with three or four gold-pieces in his pocket can immediately, unfailingly, and without any more bother than the mere wishing, buy himself all the earthy pleasures which his taste buds may dictate.

THE TRANSLATOR'S GLOSSES

1. This word is so Latin, and so little used, that it sounds very much like a Professorial invention. But according to the Concise Oxford Dictionary (1942), it does actually mean just what it seems to: fruit-eating.

2. Escoffier says sadly that these birds are not met with in American markets and it is therefore useless to give any recipes for them. The simplest French cook book I own says to put them plentifully upon a brochette, with a little piece of bacon between each one, and roast them over a very hot fire for eight or ten minutes. It says with gravity: "Figpeckers must never be emptied of their guts."

3. One of these may have been the Canon Charcot mentioned in "Meditation 6" (page 96), whose recipe for eating small birds continues to titillate the Professor's readers. He himself manages to endow only other people with a true taste for uncooked meat, and reports its virtues by hearsay, although a rumor has it that he used to embarrass his legal colleagues by appearing all too often in court with a brace of wild birds tucked into his coat-tails, to hasten with his own heat their race toward that gamy disintegration known as "highness." While it cannot be thought that he prepared all high birds with the Lucullan care he prescribed

for pheasant ("Varieties," XII, page 378), it is probable from his cautious approach to the subject that he preferred to let other gastronomers enjoy game in the raw, and that he at least grilled the meat he carried with such odoriferous nonchalance in his pockets.

I myself have never yet been reduced by stark hunger to the ability to tear flesh from a carcass and devour it, but a peckish gourmandism has often enabled me to relish a plate of raw beef, finely chopped, served forth with toasted sourdough bread and some watercress. And rawboned fish, cut into thin strips and marinated for an hour or two in lime or lemon juice, is finicky enough for any self-styled gourmet.

4. One of the most overquoted things in the English language is Charles Lamb's nicely foolish story of the discovery of roast pig, and of how Bo-bo the idiot Chinese boy and his almost equally silly father kept burning down their buildings so that they might taste the poor little grilled porkers within. The Professorial word *osmazome* is never mentioned, of course, but Lamb writes: "There is no flavor comparable, I will contend, to that of the crisp, tawny, well-watched, not over-roasted *crackling*, as it is well called—the very teeth are invited to their share of the pleasure at this banquet in overcoming the coy, brittle resistance—" This plump little literary classic is as much fun to reread as some by Dickens, and is a sure proof of the connection between our sentiments and our salivary glands.

5. *Boudin* in France is a kind of sausage, a kind of custard really. It used to be part of any Parisian Christmas Eve feast, incongruous sometimes amongst the truffles, very forthright and vulgar. I would like to taste *Kokoretzi* in Greece, any time at all but especially at Easter, when the young lambs, when there *are* any young lambs, are broiled on long pine branches over open fires and beside them spit and sizzle all the entrails, chopped and highly seasoned and either tied together or stuffed into the gut-casings. It sounds good. It sounds a little less darkly disagreeably smooth than *boudin*.

6. Anne-Lefèvre Dacier (1654–1720) was an early French bluestocking, daughter of one famous classical scholar and wife of another. She translated THE ILIAD, among many other Greek

and Latin works. In ANTIQUITATES CULINARIAE, which was written and published in London in 1791 by Richard Warner, it says that Madame Dacier was mistaken, for in the Fifth Book of THE ILIAD there is a mention of boiling meat. Few readers can or will dispute this only faintly portentous point.

7. In my 1870 edition of THE PHYSIOLOGY OF TASTE there is a footnote here signed by the Marquis de Cussy, who had a rather poor opinion of the Professor's gourmandism. It is probably taken from L'ART CULINAIRE: "In spite of these successful attempts, Athens never knew *great cookery*, for the sole reason that she sacrificed too much to her love of sweet dishes and fruits and flowers; what is more, she never had the fine wheat bread of the Caesarian Romans, nor their Italian spices, nor their subtle sauces and their white Rhine wines."

8. This Apician recipe for stuffed and roasted dormice reminds me of a pleasantly drunken American called Big Boy, mentioned in LAST MAN AROUND THE WORLD by Stephen Longstreet (1941), who downed a great deal of hot wine once in China and then ate six newborn mice fried alive, thinking them some kind of crisp radish. His outlandish gourmandism was unconscious, but other men since the Romans have battened on the mouse family, as witness this quotation from the IRISH QUARTERLY REVIEW of the mid-nineteenth century: "We ourselves once betted five shillings, that a certain dear friend of ours would not eat a mouse-pie—and lost. In short, *chacun à son goût*. (He got through the task with great ease, and offered, when the pie was done, to eat a mouse roasted in the fur with butter, and oat crumb-cakes, for the same sum—but we declined indulging in any more such experiments.)"

9. This lusty and "unfeminine" ruler, reputedly an habitual tippler of champagne, could have been no more eccentric than a certain Mrs. Jeffreys, "the sister of Wilkes," as Dr. Doran tells of her in TABLE TRAITS (London, 1854). At Bath she slept the year 'round with open windows, crazy enough! A dozen clocks chimed unevenly in her chilly bedroom. And "... she breakfasted frugally enough on chocolate and dry toast, but proceeded daily in a sedan chair, with a bottle of Madeira at her side, to a boarding-house to dine. She invariably sat between

two gentlemen, men having more sinew in mind and body than women, and with these she shared her London Particular... some mighty joint that was especially well-covered with fat... She was served with slices of this fat, which she swallowed alternately with pieces of chalk, procured for her especial enjoyment. Neutralizing the *subacid* of the fat with the alkaline principle of the chalk, she amalgamated, diluted, and assimilated the delicious compound with half-a-dozen glasses of her delicious wine. The diet agreed well with the old lady, and she maintained that such a test authorized use."

10. Once before the First World War, Isadora Duncan gaily spent more than 200 of her Lohengrin's many thousands of dollars, to give a summer festival as she felt it should be given. It began at four in the afternoon, in the park at Versailles, where marquees filled with everything from caviar to tea cakes tempted her horde of real and self-styled friends, and where the whole Colonne orchestra, directed by Pierné, played Wagner. Then there was a magnificent banquet. It lasted until midnight, when lights sprang up everywhere in the park, and a Viennese orchestra made lively until dawn the worshippers of Siegfried and Lucullus. Duncan, gently sarcastic, wrote that if a rich man *must* spend money to entertain his friends, that was her idea of how it should be done!

11. Some time after the First World War, a financier in Paris wanted to celebrate one or another of his portentous deals, and invited ten polyglot and gastronomical colleagues to dine with him at the Ritz. "Money doesn't count," he said, handing over some twelve thousand francs. "I only want the foods and wines to be perfect ..." And the gentlemen ate some twelve courses of Lucullan fare, floated downward on the following incredible flood: Sherry Carta Oro Viejo, Meursault Goutte d'Or 1915, Magnum de Château Léonville Barton 1878, Jeroboam de Château Lafitte 1870, Pommery 1911, Grand Chambertin 1906, Romanée 1881, Giesler 1906, Château Yquem 1869, Cognac Hennessy (Reservée Privée). This is by no means the most princely wine list to hand. But it will do.

12. There is no light Latin verse attributed to any Gallus, and I suspect this is one of the Professor's little Gallic tricks.

13. It took nearer a hundred than thirty years to emancipate the concubines in Turkey, to unveil them and let them hold public office, and forget the blunt title they had worn, made from the Turkish words *odah*, chamber, and *liq*, function.

14. In spite of the Professor's straight face in mentioning this culinary atrocity, it manages to sound almost as funny as some of the things suggested in "women's magazines," or even in the more solemn quarterlies devoted solely to *la gourmandise*. The former lard their recipes heavily with love stories, and the latter with truffled anecdotes of gastronomical tours through France, or The Old South, or even Alaska. They both have a weakness for spices and one form or another of rose water, figuratively speaking, for they comfort uncountable hungers of the soul as well as the body.

15. Paul Scarron (1610–1660) was a writer of realistic novels and high-comedy burlesque plays. At one time he was married to the pretty woman who later became Madame de Maintenon, but perhaps a surer claim to immortality is the influence he had on Molière and Beaumarchais and many another French playwright.

16. These gastronomical pipe dreams appeared in England long before they did in France, according to the Professor's dates, and they were a necessary part of any great celebration at table. They were made, it is true, of pastry and spun sugar, but so many feathers and furbelows went into them that it was inconceivable that they be eaten... although it is not known what happened to them once they had been displayed at the banquet table. Many years later the Britons were more sensible, and saw to it that their great cooks made *edible* "removes," as they were called by then. Here are a few of Soyer's directions, in THE GASTRONOMIC REGENERATOR (London, 1847), for "A British Admiral's Cake": "Make a sponge-cake of twenty eggs as directed, have a tin mould in the shape of a vessel... (... 18 inches in length, 6 in breadth, and high in proportion); paper, butter, and lightly flour the interior, into which pour the mixture, which bake an hour and a half a day or two before using; mask the exterior with chocolate icing to imitate a ship, when quite dry partly empty the interior, leaving a piece across the centre, to fix

the mast upon, which you have made of pâté d'office, as also the ladders, riggings, and guns; mask the guns with chocolate icing, and form the muzzles with small rings of puff paste, place them judiciously at the sides, place the vessel upon a dish rather upon one side, lay rolls of gelée à la bacchante round, over which lay thin slices of the same to form waves, make the sails of wafer or rice-paper, fix them to the mast as if filled with wind, also have a flag made of the same and painted with a little water-colour which place at the stern; well soak the interior with wine or brandy, mixed with apricot marmalade, just before serving, and when ready fill with a delicate vanilla ice; you have previously formed some ropes of spun sugar, which affix to the rigging at the moment of serving. This dish has a pleasing effect..." and the directions go on and on, until finally Soyer ends by confessing: "The remains and trimmings are very good made into cabinet pudding!"

17. The phrase *petit couvert*, which Brillat-Savarin uses here, applied only to the meals which French royalty enjoyed in complete intimacy, with a few trusted friends.

18. In this amusing description the Professor uses one of his own words, TRIPUDIER, which has not yet shown itself in any French dictionary and is probably from the Latin *tripudiare*, to caper or dance.

19. Here Brillat-Savarin used the word *karik*, which is to *curry* exactly what *bif-teck* is to *beef-steak* in international gastronomy. He meant the powder of bruised spices which gives even the worst curry dishes, and there are many of them, their distinctive flavor. There are almost as many recipes for the powder as there are Indians to blend it, of course. Its chief virtue, which is unknown to almost all Americans who must buy it bottled or tinned, lies in the fact that it should be ground freshly every day, but there may still be a few "peppery old colonels" in the British Empire's outposts who can follow some such recipe as this, and make it up in $2\frac{1}{2}$ pound lots:

Grind in a mortar to a fine powder,
of cloves, mustard, and poppy seeds,
1 ounce each;
of cardamom, fennel, chillies, and mace,

2 ounces each;
of dry ginger and pepper,
4 ounces each;
of turmeric, cumin, and coriander seeds,
8 ounces each.

20. This is almost surely soy sauce, a blackish liquid either thick or thin, which every cook from the old Countess Morphy to young Mrs. John Doe will admit "reigns supreme in Japan—*shoyu*... made from the Soya bean seeds, wheat, and pure salt, with a pleasant and distinctive flavor, unlike that of any of our European bottled sauces."

Once a cook has started to use soy, it becomes a kind of game to play, for there is perhaps no other condiment which can be added to so many things with so little potential damage, such small risk of gastronomical mayhem.

One of the best uses I have ever found for it, besides as a marinade for steaks being prepared for the barbecue, is as covering for fish which cannot be used at once and must be held over in a cold place for a day. It is patted generously onto every surface, to form an ominous dry dark skin. Then no fishy odors creep from it to other food, and when the ordinary preparation takes place there seems nothing but an added delicacy. It is mysterious.

21. Negus is a mixture of hot water with wine, usually sherry or port, and sugar, lemon, spices. It is a pleasant tipple on a cold day, but can soon grow tiresome. I used to drink it on winter market days, in France in a small bar on the ground floor of a house named La Coupole and inevitably misnamed La Copule. If the delicate care that the barman gave to my drink was any indication of his feelings, my discreet and well-chaperoned mid-morning visits were a pleasant break in his sex-ridden routine, and the negus was a fine potion indeed.