

dominance of every empire from the Babylonian down through the Assyrian, Greek, Alexandrian, and Roman to the Venetian. It was the spice trade and the desire to reach the Orient by sea to conveniently get at these condiments, that led to the discovery of America and to the rounding of the Cape of Good Hope. Then came the commercial rise of Portugal, Holland and England, and now this Oriental trade has begun to build up the west coast of the United States and San Francisco. The fundamental reason for all this striving is that spices give the human being pleasure, and for pleasure he is willing to go any length, and to endure all hardships, even those of ill-health.

In Nuremberg they keep the old home of Albrecht Durer as a revered monument, and it is furnished as nearly as possible in the way it was in the lifetime of the artist. The kitchen is small and inconvenient. The cooking utensils are few, unhandy and clumsily made, and the stove is a primitive, inconvenient affair. No wonder Albrecht died of intestinal cancer, seeing the kind of food his bowels must have been given to elaborate as nourishment for his august brain. As I looked at the kitchen outfit I saw the material evidence of poor cooking, with its natural consequence of longing for pepper and over-seasoning, necessitating in its turn the long, expensive, risky camel-freight across the Mesopotamian deserts, through a country controlled by the stupid Turk. The obtuseness of the Turk in commercial matters is proverbial, and he barred the way. No wonder America was discovered, and it was particularly fitting that a lady should give her jewelry to have the matter brought about. The whole of Rabelais, that incarnation of the Middle Ages, who lived in the time of Isabella, is one long expression of the desire to relieve the flatness of ill-cooked food by means of vinegar, salt, mustard, pepper, and by the smoking and salting of meats. These foods were to be washed down with great quantities of strong drink, on the principle never to spare liquor to those who are at hot work.

In the memory of those now living, the people of the United States were rural. Even the urban populations were countrified in life and thought. It is only of recent years that commerce has so developed as to change the life of the nation. In a rural population the food is bread, and meat and potatoes, and nothing else, and the castor is always on the table. Pork is about the only meat used, and it is frequently badly cured. We all of us remember the rusty pork of the farmhouses. The bad quality of the meat on the farms led to the consumption of large quantities of starchy foods, as breads, pies, cakes, and heavy pastries. As sugar grew cheaper it also came more into use. This heavy