

## SONNET.

TO H. B.

Good night, although to linger I were fain,  
Here where thou seest not, 'neath a drifting cloud  
Like bridal veil or sadly trailing shroud,  
As my mood changes with the varying strain  
Of music laden rich with joy and pain,  
Borne from thy casement where I see thee bowed  
O'er the dead keys that answer thee aloud,  
As if, beneath, some fettered soul had lain  
In silent expectation of the kiss  
Of thy soul through the touch of finger tips,  
To awake, as did that fair, long slumbering girl,  
By the soft touch of soulful lips, to bliss,  
Methinks thy soul will pass, not from thy lips:  
But from thy magic fingers, like a pearl.

Montreal.

HARRY DANF.

## AFTER DINNER.

We had finished the substantial part of our meal—that part in which conversation is apt to be sporadic at best—and were dalling with the indigestible nuts and raisins, when Schwackheimer, who had been silent for several minutes, broke forth with this observation: the world is held together by love and hunger!

A terse statement of a great truth, said the Rev. Dr. Softley, wiping his mouth carefully with the corner of his napkin.

Yes, I put in; a very neat expression, in our philosopher's best view of condensed thought.

Oh, don't flatter me! exclaimed Schwackheimer, trying to blush, and hardly succeeding. It is not original; only a quotation from Schiller.

Commendable modesty on your part; but call it what you like, it is one of the best things you ever gave us.

Now, please, no sarcasm! said our Xantippe, from behind the urn; (we call her Xantippe on account of her angelic disposition); Sarcasm leads to quarrels; and I am a believer in the doctrine of the great American soldier; let us have peace!

There are many of the same way of thinking, fair mistress. Let us have peace—when we have won the battle.

Nevertheless, said Schwackheimer to go back to my aphorism, no matter who first uttered it—the truth is there in a nutshell. Take away the affections, and the necessity for providing our daily bread and butter, and society would collapse like a balloon when you punch holes in it.

And which of these two factors in social organization shall we consider the chief?

Love! cried Xantippe; love undoubtedly; for love is the lord of all.

Under favour no! Love is powerful; but not all-powerful. The affections may be guided, and sometimes mastered; but hunger must be satisfied. One of the few things we are obliged to do, whether we like it or not, is to eat. Fortunately, there is some compensation in being allowed to make that duty pleasing as well as profitable by consulting our own tastes as to the manner of eating and the articles of food.

Well, said Softley, we have certainly availed ourselves of the privilege. What is there in earth, air or sea that has not disappeared in the omnivorous man of humanity?

If you ask me that question, I said, I must give it up. If everybody does not eat everything, everything is eaten by somebody. An there really are people who seem to have taken Abernethy's advice in the matter of diet. He told an anxious inquirer once that he might eat everything he liked except the poker, which was indigestible, and the bellows which would be conducive to flatulency.

Think of dried insects, cried Schwackheimer; or the baked puppy, which is deemed so dainty a dish in many Eastern countries; or the half-hatched egg which tickles the palate of a Chinaman; or the *rust*—the decayed flesh which the Faroe Islander considers a special relish at the end of a meal!

Well, I asked, can you tell me the difference between the uncivilized Faroese, and the civilized Englishman whose game must be semi-putrid before fashion allows him to eat it?

A conundrum! said Schwackheimer: I have no answer.

I wonder, inquired Xantippe, what was the diet of Adam and Eve?

She looked toward Softley, who is always expected to lead off when the conversation approaches theological confines; and Softley, folding his hands in the epigastric position, as though preparing for a monologue, remarked that the ancient writings did not appear to speak with definiteness on this subject. There could be no doubt that the supply of fruit and vegetables was extensive and varied; and it was Abel's special duty to look after the sheep, it is presumable that mutton found an occasional place on the table—or whatever article of furniture was used for eating purposes by our first parents. It does not seem probable that they were vegetarians.

No! interjected Schwackheimer, giving the nut-cracker a vicious squeeze. About the first man to confine himself to a strictly vegetable diet was Nebuchadnezzar—and he was crazy when he did it; literally went to grass. You have to come down later in history for the purely granivorous man.

Softley paid no attention to the interruption—it is hard to stop him when he is wound up—and went on with his Scriptural references. Abraham it would be remembered provided a collation for some celestial visitors once; and we find on that occasion butter and milk, veal

outlets and hot biscuit—only wanting the Arabian berry to be a modern breakfast. Moses allowed a varied diet for the Israelites, which included grasshoppers and locusts, but forbade turtle and frog, hare and pork.

Here he paused a moment for a sip of tea, and grasping the opportunity, Schwackheimer who thinks more of Hæckel than Moses, turned back to first principles. There is no doubt, he supposed, that the first idea of primeval man in his uncivilized state, would be to take his food just as he found it, and whenever he felt hungry. Then, as the race developed, accident or analogy would discover many ways of improving the food, nature had provided, and of making eating a pleasure as well as a duty. Perhaps like Charles Lamb's savage, who discovered the beauties of roast pig when he applied his mouth to the finger he had scorched in pulling one of these animals out of a burning hut; and then, in process of time, after creating innumerable conflagrations in order to satisfy his appetite struck on the happy thought that it was not necessary to burn down a house every time he wanted a dish of roast pork. Cooking, no doubt, had its origin in the idea of improving the taste of food. But there is a sound philosophy underlying the operation; for it is an established fact in physiology that the manner of preparing the food has much to do with its digestibility; in other words that digestion is facilitated by tickling the palate.

Do you mean that literally? I asked. If so, then those Roman epicures who tickled their palates with a feather after they had filled their stomachs to repletion improved their digestion thereby.

Certainly, for they emptied their stomachs; which was the best thing for them.

You think, I suppose, said Softley, that you can bring your evolution theories to bear on this matter, and can trace with the passing of years a steady improvement in diet and dieting?

No doubt whatever, was the reply. There is a pleasure of eating which we enjoy in common with the brute creation; it merely requires a sense of hunger relieved by a full stomach. Between this eating as an animal gratification, and eating as æsthetic delight—what the French call *gourmandise*—there is an almost immeasurable distance. The first was the condition of primeval men long ages since; the second is the achievement of civilized man, and has been attained only a few centuries ago. Prehistoric man no doubt took his food uncooked. The first cookery of which history takes notice was of the simplest kind—consisting only of the direct application of fire to the article. A broil seems to have been the favourite preparation of meat in the Homeric age; from which it has been inferred that the Greeks of that time had not discovered the mode of making vessels that would bear the fire. This invention probably reached them from Egypt, and they soon turned it to good account; for the later Athenians, as they were the most cultured people of their day in science and philosophy, showed also their high state of development by the progress they made in gastronomy, in which they excelled the ancient world as much as the French do the modern.

You give the Greeks the palm over the Romans do you?

Of course, outside the profession of arms the Romans were only imitators of the Greeks. When they conquered Greece they tried to take possession of its knowledge and culture as well as of its gold and silver; and when the poets and philosophers flocked to Rome the Athenian cooks went with them. But Roman gastronomy was more noted for extravagance than taste. Vast sums were spent in eating by those who could afford it, as well as by those who could not. It cost \$35,000,000 to supply the table of the Emperor Vitellius for four months, Assicus Cælius, in the days of Trajan spent a fortune on his palate; and finding he had only some \$250,000 left, turned misanthrope, wrote a book, and killed himself for fear he should die of hunger. The merit of some of the most noted Roman dishes—such as one composed of the brains of 500 peacocks or the tongues of 500 nightingales—could only have been in their cost.

Here Xantippe suggested that if the object of eating was simply to swallow money or money's worth, she would be satisfied with the plan of the English sailor, who placed a ten-pound note between two pieces of bread and butter, and make his lady-love eat it, and she looked over to me, as if she rather expected I would take the hint, and make up a sailor's sandwich for her. Instead of trying to satisfy her depraved appetite, however, I asked, Schwackheimer what he thought of cookery in the dark ages.

Just what might be expected. A cultivated, intellect and cultivated palate go together. "The destiny of nations depends upon their manner of nourishment," is one of the aphorisms of that superb literary *gourmand*, Brillat-Savarin. The taste of the Roman people had never been of the highest order; and when their Empire fell they were powerless to exert any ennobling influence upon their conquerors through the medium of the palate. The best of civilization lived on in Christian nations; but the asceticism of early Christianity was not favourable to the æsthetics of dining. Modern theologians differ somewhat from the Apostolic Fathers in their estimate of gastronomy; and here Schwackheimer's upper eye-lid dropped slightly on the side nearest Softley, whose face showed that look of calm content, borne only by those who have spent sixty minutes at the table and enjoyed every one of them. Our philosopher

went on: With the downfall of Rome there ensued a season of darkness for all the arts and sciences—including gastronomy. This great civilizing influence was in a feeble state, but as the race developed, it developed, and in turn helped to develop the race. A revival came at last in the same country—where darkness had fallen. The scene of the *renaissance* was in Italy, and Franco received the rudiments of the science from the Italian cooks who accompanied Catharine de Medicis to Paris. Here it found congenial soil among an æsthetic people; and the history of modern France may be written in the lives of its cooks—great professors, whose talents were devoted to inventing new dishes and improving old ones; artists whose love of their avocation was a sublime passion—like Vatel, who committed suicide because the fish required for a great feast he was preparing had not arrived at the expected time. Said a learned French jurist: "I consider the discovery of a dish as a far more interesting event than the discovery of a star; we have always enough stars, but we can never have too many dishes." There was a man who appreciated gastronomy at its proper value, and France is full of such men. Pity we could not import a few.

To hear him, said Softley, one would think that the palate was the chief organ of civilized humanity. The soul of the licentiate Pedro Garcias lay buried in his money-bags; where would you seek the soul of the gourmand?

Don't exaggerate! Preachers labour under the disadvantage of too little contradiction; and, always saying what they have a mind to, they sometimes say too much. Do not make me out more of a gourmand than I am.

No danger of my being able to say too much in your company; or of my saying much without contradiction.

Quite true. We try to preserve you as much as possible from the dangers that beset the cloth. Now, while I do not consider eating the chief object of man's life, I do consider it a very important means of life. Without due regard to this matter perfect health of mind and body is impossible. The diet of the brute creation may do for the savage; and his body may grow strong upon it. But civilized man requires to pay attention to the quality of his food, as well as its quantity: to the mode of preparation, and to the manner of eating. Is it not so?

This last question being addressed to me, offered an opening for the ventilation of my ideas on diet. So I intimated to them that in my opinion there could be no doubt the practical questions involved in this matter are what to eat, and how to eat! And the answers are about as varied as the people who answer. It seems to narrow itself down to a question of personal taste. The proper diet is the diet I approve—or, rather, that I recommend. And I don't know but that the world would get on just as well if people would confine themselves to eating what they wanted, and cease recommending their diet to others. But there is nothing in regard to which people are so ready to give advice as in matters of hygiene. The world is full of self-constituted advisers, many of whom are more ready to point out the right way than to walk in it themselves. And many others point out a road which is not right; or, if right for themselves is not right for others. They seldom appear to think that there is such a thing as individuality; and rashly conclude that what is good for them is good for everybody else—a senseless idea. But it is the aggressiveness of these health advisers or diet reformers that makes them such a nuisance. If there were only one or two of these people, society would hang them and thus escape being bored. But they are as thick as raindrops in a storm, and they nearly all have different schemes. Every little while we hear of some new bobby-horse trotted out, on which to perch all the ills that flesh is heir to; and when the poor beast is well laden his rider drives him off to the country where the proverbial "beggar on horseback" went. Sometimes animal food is the great bugbear. Every one, we are told, should live on vegetables alone; oblivious of the fact, that while the food provided for man in his infancy is exclusively animal, the construction of his digestive apparatus in maturer years shows that his food should be of a mixed character, embracing both animal and vegetable. Sometimes a great hue and cry is raised against bread made from fine flour; but very few people confine themselves to white bread alone; and even if they did the probabilities are that they could sustain life longer on that than any other single article. Brown bread certainly contains all the nutritive elements of wheat; but there are many conditions of the stomach which make it a poor article of diet. The best diet is not necessarily that which contains the most nutriment, but that which will be best digested. Sometimes our reformers abuse sugar; and I have read the opinion of some voluminous author to the effect that among other evils it causes a lack of charity in those who use it. And yet a healthy person cannot keep his system free from sugar; for even though he should swallow none, his digestive apparatus would manufacture it out of his bread and potatoes. I remember some time ago, hearing a learned society ostracise butter. But there is such a universal craving for fat that while the Esquimaux in their ice-houses delight in blubber, the Hindoos under a tropical sun cannot enjoy their daily meal of rice without seasoning it with "ghee," or rancid butter. The inference to be drawn is that there is perhaps less reason for alarm in the matter of diet than some peo-

ple imagine. "Every moving thing that liveth shall be meat for you," was the post-diluvian announcement, according to Moses. That covers a pretty wide range. Experience teaches that certain articles are more nutritious and digestible than others, and sensible people will, as a rule, give these the preference. But every one has to learn from his own experience, as well as from the experience of the mass; and it does not take long to find out, if any particular article disagrees with us, and then if a person has not common sense enough to quit eating what he knows is injuring him, all the advice of his neighbours will be wasted. The chief danger with our modern habits is that of eating too fast and too much. People who look on eating simply as a task to be hurried over as quickly as possible are pretty certain to suffer from this error. Eating should be made a pleasure as well as a profit; a recreation as well as a task. Let us have our food of the best quality and flavour that our circumstances will permit; let us spend over the meal all the time we can possibly spare, and let agreeable conversation enliven the proceedings, instead of that sombre silence which so often gives our tables the appearance of having been furnished only with the "funeral baked meats." In eating fast we seldom know when we have got enough until we have got too much. By diluting our food with conversation the time is unconsciously stretched out; and the agreeable sense of satisfaction will come early enough to prevent the disagreeable sense of satiety. As to the theory that makes general culture and gastronomy marks *parvo passu*, there is no doubt it has considerable truth in it—flavoured with a little fancy, gourmands may be a very cultured class; but the brain which is the seat of the highest intellect is frequently nourished from a stomach which is not made the subject of any special care by its proprietor.

You are all ready to give your opinions, exclaims Xantippe, but my opinion is that "enough is as good as a feast," even in the matter of lectures on diet. It surely cannot be said that at this table the preachers do all the talking.

No! struck in Softley; not the professional preachers. But the worst kind of preacher is the lay-preacher; he never knows when he has said enough until his audience gives him a hint.

Be thankful, said Schwackheimer, that you have had to listen to lay-preachers; had the preacher being a professional, the audience would not have dared to give a hint.

And as Xantippe rises, we all follow.

C. T. C.

London, November, 1886.

## THE GLEANER.

A STATUE of the elder Dumas, by Chapu, is to be erected in the Place Malesherbes, near which he lived.

GAMBALDI wants his resignation accepted, and renews it in a letter to the President of the Roman Chamber of Deputies.

A PERFUMER in the Faubourg St. Germain has just compounded a new perfume. It is having a great sale. He calls it "The O'hour of Sanctity."

CHARLES READE, the English novelist, has sent over to be planted in Central Park, New York, cuttings from a mulberry tree at the grave of Snake-speare.

MR. SPURGEON'S state of health is giving his friends the most serious anxiety. His illness is not of the typical rheumatic gout character, and it has taken a more serious turn.

A WORK destined no doubt to excite some further discussion on questions of faith will appear in Paris next spring under the title of *Le Christ*. It is now being completed by Father Dillon, the former orator of the Trinity Church, in his Corsican retreat.

MR. CHARLES KEENE is about to publish a volume of his contributions to *Punch*, containing 400 of his favourite productions. It will be called "Our People," and will add something to the fame which already encircles Charles Keene, the true successor to Leech.

A YOUNG woman, rather prepossessing in appearance, but possessed of a considerable growth of beard, is once a week a visitor to a barber shop at Clinton, Ga. She takes her seat in a chair, just like a man, and quietly submits her face to the lather brush and razor. Showmen have tried to induce her to travel as a bearded woman, but she scornfully rejected their offers.

Not a few of the peers who possess extensive estates in Ireland are believed to have formed themselves, with certain English lords, under the leadership of a member of the late Government, into a party determined to fight to the bitter end any measure which may propose to deal with the existing state of landholding in the state. It is to be that a Government Bill is defeated or unnecessarily delayed, cogent reasons for reforming the House of Lords will then be added to those already so forcibly urged.

GEORGE ELIOT (now Mrs. Cross) appears to be in excellent health. She and her husband have been visiting English country houses, including her own in Surrey. She will now take up her residence at Chelsea, London. Prince Leopold called on George Eliot recently and said he had read "Middlemarch" nine times.

## Ladies, Delicate and Feeble.

Those languid, tiresome sensations, causing you to feel scarcely able to be on your feet; that constant drain that is taking from your system all its former elasticity; driving the bloom from your cheeks; that continual strain upon your vital forces, rendering you irritable and fretful, can easily be removed by the use of that marvellous remedy, Hop Bitters. Irregularities and obstructions of your system are relieved at once, while the special cause of periodical pain is permanently removed. Will you heed this? See "Truths."