

stir up a jaded appetite or to take away the flat taste, or to vary the monotony of diet.

It would seem impossible in any of our large cities, for a person with a fair digestive system, and moderately well supplied with money, to suffer from monotony of diet. If, after being shown the long list of different good things to eat, one were told that many people live exclusively on bread, meat, potatoes and sugar, with coffee, whiskey, and pepper, one would be surprised. Nevertheless, such is the case. With us this state of affairs would seem especially strange, with a bay and river system that is richer in food than Delaware Bay, and surrounded by the most fertile valleys the world possesses.

The character of our population, too, should prevent sameness in eating. The Southern European, with his liking for garnishes and vegetables, should correct the heavy, monotonous menu of the Anglo-Saxon. The German Israelites are good eaters and bring us many fine dishes. The Italian market gardeners furnish us with a number of vegetables that in the Eastern States are high-priced novelties, and the proprietors of Italian vegetable stalls know many a secret of good cooking, especially in the way of soups and salads. In California, therefore, there is no excuse for the deadly round of bread, meat and potatoes that is the curse of the Middle and Eastern States.

Our very early ancestors, like the other carnivorous animals, ate their food as they killed it, while it still had its warmth, and before the myosine had set. The meat was, therefore, warm and tender. We have learned to keep meat until the myosine again liquefies, and we cook it to restore the volatility of the flavors. In a savage state man's food consists of so few articles, and the cooking is so badly done that the longing for new sensations to the palate must become intense. The demand for strong spices and alcohols becomes a passion that civilized peoples hardly realize, as, for instance, among Indians, who will drink a diarrhoea mixture loaded with cayenne pepper as a beverage. In this view one can get the attitude of the barbarians toward ancient Rome, and can understand why Alaric, on conquering the Eternal City, demanded an annual contribution of pepper. It is said that the Huns, in order to make their meat tender, would ride on it all day. Between the odors acquired from the rider and from the horse such a piece of meat would go down better for a liberal peppering.

The active overland trade between the Orient and Europe was in spices and other drugs that contained great value in small bulk. It was this Oriental trade that made the commercial pre-