

its appurtenances; so that to speak across the table, and through the intervening objects, is so inconvenient as to be nearly impracticable. No wonder that such a system produces many a dreary pause, in spite of every effort to the contrary, and that one is obliged, in self-defence, to crumble bread, sip wine, look at the paintings, if there are any, or if there are not, blazon the arms on the plates; or, lastly, retreat into one's self in despair, as I have often done. When dinner is over, there is no peace till each dish in the dessert has made its circuit, after which the wine moves languidly round two or three times, and then settles for the rest of the evening, and coffee and small talk finish the heartless affair. I do not mean to say that such dinner-parties as I have been describing have not frequently many redeeming circumstances. Good breeding, wit, talent, information, and every species of agreeable quality, are to be met with there; but I think these would appear to much greater advantage, and much oftener, under a more simple and unrestrained system. After curiosity has been satisfied, and experience ripened, I imagine most people retire from the majority of formal dinners rather wearied than repaid, and that a feeling of real enjoyment is the exception, and not the rule. In the long run, there is no compensation for ease; and ease is not to be found in state and superabundance, but in having what you want when you want it, and with no temptation to excess.

The legitimate objects of dinner are to refresh the body, to please the palate, and to raise the social humor to the highest point; but these objects, so far from being studied, in general are not even thought of, and display and adherence to fashion are their

meagre substitutes. Hence it is that gentlemen ordinarily understand what pertains to dinner-giving so much better than ladies, and that bachelors' feasts are so popular. Gentlemen keep more in view the real ends, whereas ladies think principally of display and ornament, of form and ceremony—not all, for some have excellent notions of taste and comfort; and the cultivation of them would seem to be the peculiar province of the sex, as one of the chief features in household management. There is one female failing in respect to dinners, which I cannot help here noticing, and that is a very inconvenient love of garnish and flowers, either natural or cut in turnips and carrots, and stuck on dishes, so as greatly to impede carving and helping. This is the true barbarian principle of ornament, and is in no way distinguishable from "the untutored Indian's" fondness for feathers and shells. In both cases the ornament is an encumbrance, and has no relation to the matter on which it is placed.

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A DEAF and dumb person being asked to give his idea of forgiveness, took a pencil and wrote, "It is the sweetness which flowers yield when trampled upon."

It would be unsafe, an exchange says, to say that half the crimes are due to bad digestion; but certainly some are; and there is good historic evidence for the belief that Calvin consigned Servetus to the flames while suffering with a fit of indigestion.

THE New York Medical Times says that by the reduction of the death-rate of that city to that of London, nearly 200,000 lives would be saved annually. The cost of these deaths and of the sickness rate in the community which such a mortality indicates, would amount to about \$14,000,000 annually."