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THE STIMULANTS USED IN COOKING.*

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The table as a piece of furniture should be held in great esteem. By turns it is loaded with learned books and succulent meats, which serve for nourishment for mind and body. No one who loves his fellow-man wishes to see the pleasures of the table curtailed, for it is here that some of the most delightful intercourse of human beings takes place. As Rudyard Kipling puts it, we can here praise Allah, who has not terminated the delights nor separated the companions. While conversation is the chief pleasurable feature at table, yet the general surroundings and the manner of preparing and serving the food are all contributory to the charm of a convivial gathering.

But good and evil are born at a whelping, and, while the table brings us much good, it also brings us much evil. Remonstrance is especially needed against the misuse of spices and pepper.

In preparing food, seasoning is important, and when delicately done adds much to our pleasure. Take salt, for instance, of which it is said it is something that, being left out, makes food taste bad. No matter how carefully the cooking is done, if salt is omitted, the dish will taste flat. The ancients considered salt so necessary a seasoning in all cooking, and held it in such favor, that metaphorically they applied the term salt to the witty sayings that give zest to conversation.

Stimulating drugs, such as pepper, are added to food to either

* Read before the Sacramento Society for Medical Improvement, March 17, 1908.