

ruck are backing out. The dessert has been on from the first, to make a show along the middle of the tables—the most common miserable fruit to be found in the market—you may munch an apple; no, the whole feed has ended; all cleared out. You are the last man, and are, evidently, a nuisance to the waiters, so, be off. This they call dining.

But, at these places, to talk of comfort of any kind is laughable; it is no more known, or cared for, than in Paris. They affect, now-a-days, to follow this French fashion, of having nothing to help yourself from at their *tables d'hôte*, till cold, and cut up, and brought you to eat, whether you like it or not. But even this is more tolerable in France for twenty or thirty people at table, than for the two hundreds at the American hotels. I give up dining, but I am not even fed; it is worse than poor Sancho in the island of Barataria. Leisure, converse, wine at dessert—pooh!

Twenty years ago, all the tavern and hotel-tables in the States were twenty times more liberal, served in the good old English way. Brandy was even put on the table to help yourself, till the dessert came on; and the servants were not so evidently in a hurry to get rid of you. Delicacies were not rare nor stinted as now; lobsters, terrapins, peaches, oysters, plums, melons, &c., were in profusion, now you rarely see them. The tables affect show and finery, and are more mean; or, perhaps, the shareholders would divide a less dividend. From whatever cause, they have sadly fallen off, in proportion as they have gone on building their great hotels bigger and bigger.

This, in a rich, cheap country. The markets are admirable; every conceivable good thing at extremely low prices, and in astonishing profusion. I was quite lost in the heaps and loads of things at the great markets—Washington, Fulton, Broad-street, and others I forget the names of—Covent-garden, or Leadenhall, are nothing to them in extent or the luxuriance, not that they can be compared to them, but we have neither so many nor such a variety, even in London, and everything as dear again—I can only except the rarest fruit and flowers with us, but always at extravagant prices. But throughout America, their storekeepers, artists, and others, board by the year at these hotels, at half, or less, than is charged to travellers; thence it is that the tables are bad, to suit their smaller payments, as they form the great body always seated at them.

The breakfasts are a shade better, always excepting the tea and coffee, made in great tin cans, weak as water, and as to taste, very much alike indeed; a decent cup of tea or coffee is not to be had, unless in private apartments up-stairs.

I leave the table in disgust, and up interminable flights of