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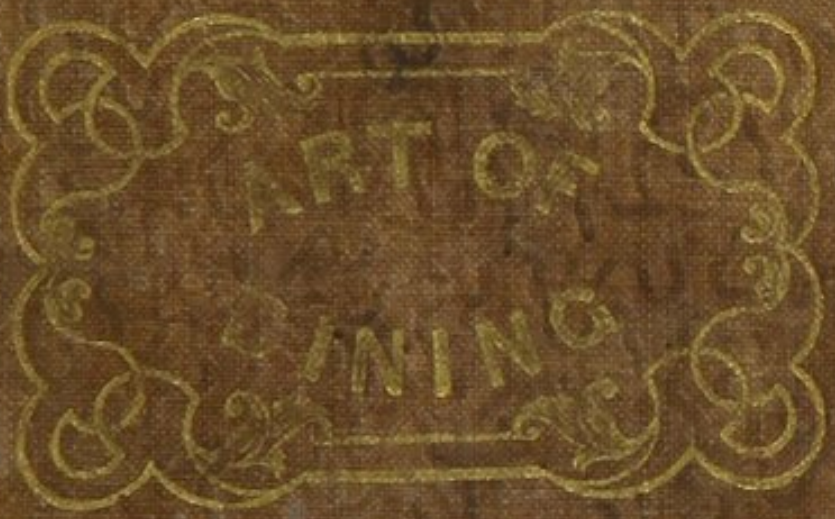
ART OF
MINING

The Art of Dining.

THE

ART OF DINING;

AND THE

ART OF ATTAINING HIGH HEALTH.

WITH

A FEW HINTS ON SUPPERS.

BY

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THE

ART OF DINING.

CHAPTER I.

According to the Lexicons, the Greek for dinner is Ariston, and therefore, for the convenience of the terms, and without entering into any inquiry, critical or antiquarian, I call the art of dining Aristology, and those who study it, Aristologists. The maxim, that practice makes perfect, does not apply to our daily habits; for, so far as they are concerned, we are ordinarily content with the standard of mediocrity, or something rather below. Where study is not absolutely necessary, it is by most

people altogether dispensed with; but it is only by an union of study and practice, that we can attain any thing like perfection. Anybody can dine, but very few know how to dine, so as to ensure the greatest quantity of health and enjoyment —indeed many people contrive to destroy their health; and as to enjoyment, I shudder when I think how often I have been doomed to only a solemn mockery of it; how often I have sat in durance stately, to go through the ceremony of dinner, the essence of which is to be without ceremony, and how often in this land of liberty I have felt myself a slave!

There are three kinds of dinners—solitary dinners, every-day social dinners, and set dinners; all three involving the consideration of cheer, and the last two of

society also. Solitary dinners, I think, ought to be avoided as much as possible, because solitude tends to produce thought, and thought tends to the suspension of the digestive powers. When however, dining alone is necessary, the mind should be disposed to cheerfulness by a previous interval of relaxation from whatever has seriously occupied the attention, and by directing it to some agreeable object. As contentment ought to be an accompaniment to every meal, punctuality is essential, and the diner and the dinner should be ready at the same time. A chief maxim in dining with comfort is, to have what you want when you want it. It is ruinous to have to wait for first one thing and then another, and to have the little additions brought, when what they belong to is half or entirely

finished. To avoid this a little foresight is good, and, by way of instance, it is sound practical philosophy to have mustard upon the table before the arrival of toasted cheese. This very omission has caused as many small vexations in the world, as would by this time make a mountain of misery. Indeed, I recommend an habitual consideration of what adjuncts will be required to the main matters; and I think an attention to this, on the part of females, might often be preventive of sour looks and cross words, and their anti-conjugal consequences. There are not only the usual adjuncts, but to those who have any thing of a genius for dinners, little additions will sometimes suggest themselves, which give a sort of poetry to a repast, and please the palate to the promotion of health. As

our senses were made for our enjoyment, and as the vast variety of good things in the world were designed for the same end, it seems a sort of impiety not to put them to their best uses, provided it does not cause us to neglect higher considerations. The different products of the different seasons, and of the different parts of the earth, afford endless proofs of bounty, which it is as unreasonable to reject, as it is to abuse. It has happened, that those who have made the gratification of the appetite a study, have generally done so to excess, and to the exclusion of nobler pursuits; whilst, on the other hand, such study has been held to be incompatible with moral refinement and elevation. But there is a happy mean, and as upon the due regulation of the appetite assuredly depends our physical

well-being, and upon that, in a great measure, our mental energies, it seems to me that the subject is worthy of attention, for reasons of more importance than is ordinarily supposed.

CHAPTER II.

THERE is in the art of dining a matter of special importance,—I mean attendance —the real end of which is to do that for you which you cannot so well do for yourself. Unfortunately this end is generally lost sight of, and the effect of attendance is to prevent you from doing that which you could do much better for yourself. The cause of this perversion is to be found in the practice and example of the rich and ostentatious, who constantly keep up a sort of war-establishment, or establishment, adapted to extraordinary, instead of ordinary occasions, and the consequence is, that, like all potentates who

follow the same policy, they never really taste the sweets of peace; they are in a constant state of invasion by their own troops. It is a rule at dinners not to allow you to do any thing for yourself, and I have never been able to understand how even salt, except it be from some superstition, has so long maintained its place on table. I am always in dread, that, like the rest of its fellows, it will be banished to the sideboard, to be had only on special application. I am rather a bold man at table, and set form very much at defiance, so that if a salad happens to be within my reach, I make no scruple to take it to me; but the moment I am espied, it is nipped up from the most convenient into the most inconvenient position. That such absurdity should exist among rational beings, and

in] a civilized country, is extraordinary! See a small party with a dish of fish at each end of the table, and four silver covers unmeaningly starving at the sides, while every thing pertaining to the fish comes, even with the best attendance, provokingly lagging, one thing after another, so that contentment is out of the question; and all this is done under pretence that it is the most convenient plan. This is an utter fallacy. The only convenient plan is to have every thing actually upon the table that is wanted at the same time, and nothing else; as for example, for a party of eight, turbot and salmon, with doubles of each of the adjuncts, lobster-sauce, cucumber, young potatoes, cayenne, and Chili vinegar, and let the guests assist one another, which, with such an arrangement,

they could do with perfect ease. This is undisturbed and visible comfort. I am speaking now only with reference to small parties. As to large ones, they have long been to me scenes of despair in the way of convivial enjoyment. A system of simple attendance would induce a system of simple dinners, which are the only dinners to be desired. The present system I consider strongly tainted with barbarism and vulgarity, and far removed from real and refined enjoyment. As tables are now arranged, one is never at peace from an arm continually taking off, or setting on a side dish, or reaching over to a wine-cooler in the centre. Then comes the more laborious changing of courses, with the leanings right and left, to admit a host of dishes, that are set only to be taken off

again, after being declined in succession by each of the guests, to whom they are handed round. Yet this is fashion, and not to be departed from. With respect to wine, it is often offered when not wanted; and when wanted, is perhaps not to be had till long waited for. It is dreary to observe two guests, glass in hand, waiting the butler's leisure to be able to take wine together, and then perchance being helped in despair to what they did not ask for; and it is still more dreary to be one of the two yourself. How different, where you can put your hand upon a decanter at the moment you want it! I could enlarge upon and particularize these miseries at great length; but they must be only too familiar to those who dine out, and those who do not may congratulate themselves

on their escape. I have been speaking hitherto of attendance in its most perfect state: but then comes the greater inconvenience, and the monstrous absurdity of the same forms with inadequate establishments. Those who are overwhelmed with an establishment, are, as it were, obliged in self-defence to devise work for their attendants, while those who have no such reason ape an example which, under the most appropriate circumstances, is a state of restraint and discomfort, but which, when followed merely for fashion's sake, becomes absolutely intolerable. I remember once receiving a severe frown from a lady at the head of her table, next to whom I was sitting, because I offered to take some fish from her, to which she had helped me, instead of waiting till it could be handed

to me by her one servant: and she was not deficient either in sense or good breeding; but when people give in to such follies they know no mean. It is one of the evils of the present day, that every body strives after the same dull syle—so that where comfort might be expected, it is often least to be found. State, without the machinery of state, is of all states the worst. In conclusion of this part of my subject, I will observe, that I think the affluent would render themselves and their country an essential service if they were to fall into the simple, refined style of living, discarding every thing incompatible with real enjoyment; and I believe, that if the history of overgrown luxury were traced, it has always had its origin from the vulgar rich—the very last class worthy of imita-

tion. Although I think a reduction of establishment would often conduce to the enjoyment of life, I am very far from wishing to see any class curtailed in their means of earning their bread; but it appears to me, that the rich might easily find more profitable and agreeable modes of employing the industrious, than in ministering to pomp and parade.

I will now give you, dear reader, an account of a dinner I have ordered this very day at Lovegrove's, at Blackwall, where if you never dined, so much the worse for you. This account will serve as an illustration of my doctrines on dinner-giving better than a long abstract discourse. The party will consist of seven men besides myself, and every guest is asked for some reason—upon which good

fellowship mainly depends, for people, brought together unconnectedly, had, in my opinion, better be kept separate. Eight I hold to be the golden number, never to be exceeded without weakening the efficacy of concentration. The dinner is to consist of turtle, followed by no other fish but white bait, which is to be followed by no other meat but grouse, which are to be succeeded simply by apple fritters and jelly ; pastry on such occasions being quite out of place. With the turtle, of course there will be punch, with the white bait champaign, and with the grouse claret : the two former I have ordered to be particularly well iced, and they will all be placed in succession upon the table, so that we can help ourselves as we please. I shall permit no other wines, unless, per-

chance, a bottle or two of port, if particularly wanted, as I hold variety of wines a great mistake. With respect to the adjuncts, I shall take care that there is cayenne, with lemons cut in halves, not in quarters, within reach of every one, for the turtle, and that brown bread and butter in abundance is set upon the table for the white bait. It is no trouble to think of these little matters beforehand, but they make a vast difference in convivial contentment. The dinner will be followed by ices, and a good dessert, after which coffee and one glass of liqueur each, and no more; so that the present may be enjoyed rationally without inducing retrospective regrets. If the master of a feast wishes his party to succeed, he must know how to command, and not let his guests

run riot, each according to his own wild fancy. Such, reader, is my idea of a dinner, of which I hope you approve; and I cannot help thinking that if parliament were to grant me 10,000*l.* a year, in trust, to entertain a series of worthy persons, it would promote trade and increase the revenue more than any hugger-mugger measure ever devised.

CHAPTER III.

I SHALL begin this chapter with stating that the dinner at Blackwall, mentioned before, was served according to my directions, both as to the principal dishes and the adjuncts, with perfect exactness, and went off with corresponding success. The turtle and white bait were excellent; the grouse not quite of equal merit; and the apple fritters so much relished, that they were entirely cleared, and the jelly left untouched. The only wines were champaign and claret, and they both gave great satisfaction. As soon as the liqueurs were handed round once, I ordered them out of the room; and the only heresy

committed was by one of the guests asking for a glass of bottled porter, which I had not the presence of mind instantly to forbid. There was an opinion broached that some flounders water-zoutcheed, between the turtle and white bait, would have been an improvement,—and perhaps they would. I dined again yesterday at Blackwall as a guest, and I observed that my theory as to adjuncts was carefully put in practice, so that I hope the public will be a gainer.

In order to bring the dinner system to perfection according to my idea, it would be necessary to have a room contrived on the best possible plan for eight persons, as the greatest number. I almost think six even more desirable than eight; but beyond eight, as far as my experience goes, there is always a division into parties, or a

partial languor, or sort of paralysis either of the extremities or centre, which has more or less effect upon the whole. For complete enjoyment a company ought to be one; sympathizing and drawing together, listening and talking in due proportions—no monopolists, nor any ciphers. With the best arrangements much will depend upon the chief of the feast giving the tone, and keeping it up. Paulus Æmilius, who was the most successful general, and best entertainer of his time, seems to have understood this well; for he said that it required the same sort of spirit to manage a banquet as a battle, with this difference, that the one should be made as pleasant to friends, and the other as formidable to enemies, as possible. I often think of this excellent saying at large

dinner parties, where the master and mistress preside as if they were the humblest of the guests, or as if they were overwhelmed with anxiety respecting their cumbrous and pleasure-destroying arrangements. They appear not to have the most distant idea of the duties of commanders, and instead of bringing their troops regularly into action, they leave the whole army in reserve. They should at least now and then address each of their guests by name, and, if possible, say something by which it may be guessed who and what each person is. I have witnessed some ridiculous and almost incredible instances of these defects. I remember once at a large dinner party at a great house, the lion of the day not being called out once, and going away without the

majority of the company suspecting who he was. On a similar occasion, as a very distinguished man left the drawing-room, a scarcely less distinguished lady inquired who that gentleman was, who had been talking so long to her,—though she had sat opposite to him at dinner. It appears to me that nothing can be better contrived to defeat its legitimate end, than a large dinner party in the London season—sixteen, for instance. The names of the guests are generally so announced that it is difficult to hear them, and in the earlier part of the year, the assembling takes place in such obscurity, that it is impossible to see. Then there is often a tedious and stupifying interval of waiting, caused perhaps by some affected fashionable, some important politician, or some gor-

geously-decked matron, or it may be by some culinary accident. At last comes the formal business of descending into the dining-room, where the blaze of light produces by degrees sundry recognitions; but many a slight acquaintance is prevented from being renewed by the chilling mode of assembling. In the long days the light is more favourable, but the waiting is generally more tedious, and half the guests are perhaps leaving the park, when they ought to be sitting down to dinner. At table, intercourse is prevented as much as possible by a huge centre-piece of plate and flowers, which cuts off about one half the company from the other, and some very awkward mistakes have taken place in consequence, from guests having made personal observations upon those who were

actually opposite to them. It seems strange that people should be invited, to be hidden from one another. Besides the centre-piece, there are usually massive branches, to assist in interrupting communication; and perhaps you are placed between two persons with whom you are not acquainted, and have no community of interest to induce you to become so, for in the present overgrown state of society, a new acquaintance, except for some particular reason, is an encumbrance to be avoided. When the company is arranged, then comes the perpetual motion of the attendants, the perpetual declining of what you do not want, and the perpetual waiting for what you do, or a silent resignation to your fate. To desire a potato, and to see the dish handed to your next neighbour, and taking its

course in a direction from you, round an immense table, with occasional retrograde movements, and digressions, is one of the unsatisfactory occurrences which frequently take place; but perhaps the most distressing incident in a grand dinner is, to be asked to take champaign, and, after much delay, to see the butler extract the bottle from a cooler, and hold it nearly parallel to the horizon, in order to calculate how much he is to put into the first glass to leave any for the second. To relieve him and yourself from the chilling difficulty, the only alternative is to change your mind, and prefer sherry, which, under the circumstances, has rather an awkward effect. These and an infinity of minor evils are constantly experienced amid the greatest displays, and they have

from sad experience made me come to the conclusion, that a combination of state and calculation is the horror of horrors. Some good bread and cheese, and a jug of ale, comfortably set before me, and heartily given, are heaven on earth in comparison. I must not omit to mention, among other obstacles to sociability, the present excessive breadth of fashionable tables for the purpose of holding, first, the cumbrous ornaments and lights before spoken of; secondly, in some cases, the dessert, at the same time with the other side dishes; and lastly, each person's cover, with its appurtenances; so that to speak across the table, and through the intervening objects, is so inconvenient, as to be nearly impracticable. To crown all, is the ignorance of what you have to eat, and the impossi-

bility of duly regulating your appetite. To be sure, in many particulars you may form a tolerably accurate guess, as that, at one season, there will be partridges in the third course, and at another, pigeons, in dull routine. 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 oneself in despair, as I have often and 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 legiti-

mate objects of dinner are to refresh the body, to please the palate, and to raise the social humour to the highest point; but these objects, so far from being studied, in general are not even thought of, and display and an 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 re-

spect 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. But there is a still worse practice, and that is pouring sauce over certain dishes to prevent them from looking too plain, as parsley and butter, or white sauce over boiled chickens. I cannot distinguish this taste from that of the Hottentot besmearing himself with grease, or the Indian with red paint, who, I suppose,

have both the same reason for their practice. To my mind, good meat well cooked, the plainer it looks the better it looks, and it certainly is better with the accessories kept separate till used, unless they form a part of the dish.

CHAPTER IV.

In my last chapter, I promised to give my ideas of what dinners ought to be. I shall begin with repeating a preceding passage.

"In order to bring the dinner system to perfection according to my idea, it would be necessary to have a room contrived on the best possible plan for eight persons, as the greatest number. I almost think six even more desirable than eight; but beyond eight, as far as my experience goes, there is always a division into parties, or a partial languor, or a sort of paralysis either of the extremities or centre,

which has more or less effect upon the whole. For complete enjoyment, a company ought to be one; sympathizing and drawing together, listening and talking in due proportions—no monopolists, nor any ciphers."—I am now supposing the whole object to be the perfection of dinner parties, without reference to number of family or acquaintance, and without reference to display or any other consideration: but I suppose every other consideration postponed to convivial enjoyment alone. Spacious and lofty rooms destroy, or at least weaken, that feeling of concentration which is essential to perfect fellowship. There is a sort of evaporation of oneself, or flying off into the void, which impairs that force of attention necessary to give and receive complete enjoyment. A

party, to use a familiar phrase, should be, as it were, boxed up, comfortably packed, with room enough, but not to spare, or, as the French revolutionists used to have it, should be "one and indivisible." Those who have dined in the very small rooms, called *cabinets particuliers*, at the restaurateurs at Paris, must have remarked the beneficial influence of compactness in promoting hilarity, and banishing abstraction and restraint; but those rooms have no other desirable qualification but their smallness, which is often extreme, and they have not been originally contrived for the purpose for which they are used, yet they have a capability of producing more of a festive disposition than is to be found amid space and display. Dining-rooms in London are in general, I think, very

tasteless and uninspiring in themselves, and, when set out, they are decorated after the barbarian style, rather for display, than with reference to their use.

From the architect to the table decorator, there seems to be a total absence of genius for the real objects to be aimed at. Justness of proportion, harmony of colouring, and disposition of light, are the most desirable qualities in any room, but especially in a dining-room, without any individual ornaments or objects to distract the attention; so that the moment one enters, there may be a feeling of fitness, which is productive of undisturbed satisfaction, and disposes the mind to the best state for enjoyment. Attention should be directed to produce an effect from the whole, and not by the parts. For this

reason light should be thrown in the least observable manner, and not ostentatiously from ornamental objects. There should be the pleasing effect of good light, with the least perception whence it comes. There is no art in lighting a table by cumbrous branches; but there is in throwing a light upon it, like some of Rembrandt's paintings, and the effect is accordingly. The first is vulgar; the latter refined. In the same manner light from windows should be admitted only with reference to the table; and during dinner the view should be shut out to prevent distraction. With respect to the proportions of a room, they should be studied with reference to the table, which, as I have said, should in my opinion be of the size to accommodate not more than eight per-

sons. In point of width, I would not have more space than necessary for the convenient circulation of the least possible number of attendants. In point of length there should be room for a sideboard at one end, and a sufficient space from the fireplace at the other; so that the length of the room would be somewhat greater than the width. In respect to height, it should be proportioned to the length and width, and therefore the height would not be considerable. A high room is certainly not favourable to conversation, because it is contrary to the principal of concentration; and the prejudice in favour of height arises from its effect considered with respect to large parties, and to overloaded tables. I would have the door in the side, at the end near the sideboard,

and the windows on the side opposite. As to colouring, the same rule ought to be observed as in every thing else, that is, to study general effect. To suit all seasons best, I think the walls ought to be of rather a sober colour, with drapery of a warm appearance for cold weather, and the contrary for hot. Perhaps it may be thought by many, that all these particulars are very immaterial, and that the consideration of them is very trifling; but my opinion is, that in all our actions, whether with reference to business or pleasure, it is a main point, in the first place, to produce a suitable disposition; and as dining is an occurrence of every day of our lives, or nearly so, and as our health and spirits depend in a great measure upon our vivid enjoyment of this our chief meal, it seems

to me a more worthy object of study than those unreal occupations about which so many busy themselves in vain. But I am forgetting an important matter in the dining-room; I mean the due regulation of the temperature, upon which comfort so much depends, and from want of attention to which, there is annually so much suffering both from heat and cold. In hot weather the difficulty is the greatest, and is best to be overcome by attention to ventilation and blinds. In winter there is little difficulty, with due care and no stinginess, which latter is apt to appear both in having the fire only lighted just before dinner, and in not keeping it up properly to the end of the party; and I do here protest against the practice I have often witnessed, of letting the fire actually go out in cold weather

before the guests. There is nothing more cheerless or of more inhospitable appearance. On the other hand, a bright blazing fire has a very inspiring effect on entering the dining-room, and is an object worthy of special attention to those who wish their parties to succeed. Moreover, in such a room as I have described, the opening after dinner on a dreary day to admit a cheerful fire would be a very inspiring moment with an agreeable party brought into perfect unison by a well-imagined, well-executed repast—a scene to kindle equally attachment to one's friends, and love of one's country. The cultivation of the fireside is one of the greatest import, public and private.

Having said, I think, every thing I have to say as to the arrangement of the dining-

room till I come to the table, I will here dedicate a word or two to its necessary appendage, the kitchen, which I would have literally an appendage, and not, as at present, a distant and unconnected establishment. As I said before, I am now supposing the whole object to be the perfection of dinner parties, without reference to any other consideration, and therefore, I put aside custom, fashion, and prejudice, as enemies to the true theory and practice, and I boldly advance my own opinions. I must beg the reader to bear in mind, that I am speaking with reference to small parties, and that I am an advocate for dinners which, as nearly as can be calculated, are just enough, and no more. I speak not of the bustle of preparation for twelve, sixteen or twenty people, with about four

times as much as they can possibly consume, and with a combination of overpowering heat and disagreeable scents. I have in view a quiet, little kitchen without noise, or annoying heat, or odour, save some simple savory one, provocative of the appetite, and incapable of offending the most fastidious. Such an establishment would I have immediately adjoining my dining-room, and communicating with it by an entrance close to the sideboard, closed during the process of dinner by a curtain only, so that the dishes could be brought in without noise, or current of air, or constant opening or shutting of a door. As Matthew Bramble, in Humphrey Clinker, talks in his delights of the country, of eating trout struggling from the stream, I would have my dishes served

glowing, or steaming, from the kitchen-stoves—a luxury not to be compensated, and a quality which gives a relish, otherwise unattainable, to the simplest, as well as the most highly finished dishes. Let those who have sense and taste conceive a compact dinner, quietly served in simple succession according to such an arrangement, with every thing at hand, and in the best possible state, and compare it with a three-course repast, imported under cover, in tedious processsion, from under ground.

CHAPTER V.

To those who are the slaves of custom or fashion, or who have never thought for themselves, the doctrines on the art of dining laid down in the last chapter must appear startling, absurd, or impossible to be carried into practice, except in a very limited number of cases. The simple style I propose is as different from the ornamented and cumbrous one now in vogue, as the present cropped, unpowdered, trousered mode of dress is from that of a gentleman's in the middle of the last century, when bags, swords, buckles, and gold lace were universally in use; and I might be thought as much out of the

way in my notions by some, as any one would have been in the year 1750, who should have advocated the dress of 1835. But simplicity and convenience have triumphed in our dress, and I have no doubt they will equally do so in time in our dinners. With respect to the practicability of my system, I lay down rules which I think the sound ones, with a view to their being approached as nearly as circumstances will permit. For instance, I am of opinion a party, to be the most satisfactory, should not exceed eight persons, and therefore I would keep as near that number as possible. I think it is a very material point to have a dinner served up quite hot, and therefore I would have a kitchen as close to the dining-room as conveniently it could be. I differ from those

who like large parties, and who think the kitchen ought to be remote, and I frame my rules accordingly, and would bring my practice as near my rules as circumstances would allow. I should prefer two small parties simply regaled, to one large one with an overloaded repast, and I would make all my arrangements with reference to the style I think best, and keep to it as strictly as I could. As it appears to me that the more intent we are upon what we are doing, the greater is our enjoyment, I have dwelt in the article in my last chapter upon the means of preventing distraction at the dinner-table—not that I mean all that I have said always to be adhered to, but I give it by way of guide and specimen. I endeavour to exhibit the true philosophy of dining, leaving the practice to be modi-

fied according to tastes and circumstances, and as I am decidedly of opinion that the true philosophy of dining would have great influence upon our well being, bodily and mental, and upon the good ordering of our social habits, I think it well worth serious attention. The above observations apply as well to what I am going to say as to what I have said; the application of my rules must depend upon circumstances.

I concluded the article on dining in my last chapter with promising to treat, in the present, of the table, the dinner, and the mode of conducting it. A great deal of the pleasure of the party depends upon the size of the table being proportioned to the number of those sitting at it. The other day, when dining alone with a friend of mine, I could not help being constantly

sensible of the unsocial influence of too large a table. The circular form seems to me to be the most desirable, and as tables are now made with tops of different sizes, to put on as occasion requires, those who think it worth while can adapt their table to their party with what precision they please. According to my system of serving the dishes in succession, the only thing to be considered in the size of the table, is convenient room for sitting, so as neither to be crowded nor to be too far apart. For any number not exceeding four, I think a square or oblong table quite as comfortable as a round one. With respect to setting out a table, every thing should be brilliantly clean, and nothing should be placed upon it except what is wanted; and every thing wanted, which

can conveniently be upon the table, should be there, so as to dispense as much as possible with attendance, and thereby avoid the trouble of asking for things, and the frequent occurrence, even with the best arrangements, of having to wait. I rather think the best mode of lighting a table has not yet been discovered. I think it desirable not to have the lights upon it, nor indeed any thing which can interrupt the freest communication between the guests, upon which sociability greatly depends. The art of throwing the most agreeable light upon a table is well worth cultivating. Instead of those inconvenient and useless centre-pieces which I have already denounced, I would have a basket of beautiful bread, white and brown, in the middle of the table, with a silver fork on each side, so

that the guests could help themselves, which would be perfectly easy with a party not exceeding eight, which limit I understand in all I say. I would have the wine placed upon the table in such manner as to be as much as possible within the reach of each person, and I hold stands for the decanters to be impediments, and coolers also, except, perhaps, in very hot weather. If the wine is served at a proper temperature, it will in general remain so, as long as ought to be necessary ; but it is often set upon the table before it is wanted, for show. As I am an enemy to a variety of wines, I think one wine glass only most convenient at dinner, nor do I think in general that water glasses for the wine glasses are of much use. I like to simplify as much as possible ; and instead of the supernumera-

ries we now see, I would have one or more sets of cruets upon the table, according to the size of the party, and containing those things which are continually wanted, and which it is desirable to have at hand. When they are to be asked for, they are not used half so much as when they are within reach. Whatever dish is placed upon the table, it ought to be preceded by all its minor adjuncts, and accompanied by the proper vegetables quite hot, so that it may be enjoyed entirely, and at once. How very seldom this is fully experienced, for want of previous attention, or from the custom of sacrificing comfort to state and form! I suppose I hardly need add that I am an advocate for the use of dumb waiters; and the smaller the party is, the more they are desirable, because attendants

are a restraint upon conversation and upon one's ease in general, in proportion to the limited number at table. I will conclude this part of my subject with recommending, in the arrangements of the dining-room, and the setting out of the table, Madame de Staël's description of Corinne's drawing-room, which she says, was "simply furnished, and with every thing contrived to make conversation easy and the circle compact," as nearly as possible the reverse of what is aimed at in English dinners of the present day.

With respect to the dinner itself, there are two kinds of dinners—one simple, consisting of few dishes, the other embracing a variety. Both kinds are good in their way, and both deserving attention; but for constancy, I greatly prefer the simple

style. As it is not my purpose to give a series of bills of fare, after the manner of the authors of books on cookery, I shall perhaps find it difficult to make my notions on dinners sufficiently comprehended. I mean only to lay down a few general rules, and leave the application to the genius of those who read them. In the first place, it is neceesary not to be afraid of not having enough, and so to go into the other extreme, and have a great deal too much, as is almost invariably the practice. It is also necessary not to be afraid of the table looking bare, and so to crowd it with dishes not wanted, or before they are wanted, whereby they become cold and sodden. "Enough is as good as a feast," is a sound maxim as well in providing as in eating. The advantages of having only

enough are these ; it saves expense, trouble, and attendance ; it removes temptation and induces contentment. and it affords the best chance of having a well-dressed dinner, by concentrating the attention of the cook. The having too much, and setting dishes on the table merely for appearance, are practices arising out of prejudices, which, if once broken through, would be looked upon, and deservedly, as the height of vulgarity. The excessive system is a great preventive of hospitality, by adding to the expense and trouble of entertaining, while it has no one advantage. It is only pursued by the majority of people for fear of being unlike the rest of the world. In proportion to the smallness of dinner ought to be its excellence, both as to quality of materials and the cooking. In order to en-

sure the best quality of materials, it is necessary to have some intercourse with the tradesmen who provide them, that they may feel an interest in pointing out and furnishing whatever happens to be most desirable; and judicious criticisms on the cooking, whether in blaming or commending, are essential to keeping up a proper degree of zeal. There is a mean in these things between too much meddling and total negligence, and I think it is to be lamented on many accounts, that there is so much of the latter on the part of the higher classes toward those with whom they deal. Both parties would find their account in a mutual good understanding. To order dinner well is a matter of invention and combination. It involves novelty, simplicity, and taste; whereas, in the

generality of dinners, there is no character but that of dull routine, according to the season. The same things are seen everywhere at the same periods; and as the rules for providing limit the range very much, there are a great many good things which never make their appearance at all, and a great many others, which, being served in a fixed order, are seldom half enjoyed; as, for instance, game in the third course. This reminds me of a dinner I ordered last Christmas-day for two persons besides myself, and which we enjoyed very much. It consisted of crimped cod, woodcocks, and plum-pudding, just as much of each as we wanted, and accompanied by champaign. Now this dinner was both very agreeable and very wholesome from its moderation; but the ordinary course

would have been to have preceded the woodcocks by some substantial dish, thereby taking away from their relish, and at the same time overloading the appetite. Delicacies are scarcely ever brought till they are quite superfluous, which is unsatisfactory if they are not eaten, and pernicious if they are. When the materials and the cooking are both of the best, and the dinner is served according to the most approved rules of comfort, the plainest, cheapest food has attractions which are seldom to be found in the most laboured attempts. Herrings and hashed mutton, to those who like them, are capable of affording as much enjoyment, when skilfully dressed, as rare and costly dishes. I think it would be a great improvement to introduce, as a mode of enjoying easy

society, small parties to plain savoury dinners, without state or ceremony. They need not supersede more expensive repasts, but might be adopted as a variety and a relief. At present such a thing is scarcely heard of as asking half a dozen people to a dinner, unless it be an affair of trouble and expense. If people can dine alone in a plain manner, they could do so in society much more agreeably.

CHAPTER VI.

Suppose a party of eight assembled in a room and at a table arranged according to what I have said in the preceding chapter, to a dinner, either plain or costly, and, in the latter case, either of few dishes or of considerable variety; I would have every dish served in succession, with its proper accompaniments, and between each dish there should be a short interval, to be filled up with conversation and wine, so as to prolong the repast as much as possible, without inducing excess, and to give time to the digestive powers. By means of such intervals, time would be given to the cook, and to the attendants, so that nothing

would have to wait for the guests, nor would the guests have to wait for any thing, due preparation being made for each dish before its arrival, without bustle or omissions. In dinners of few dishes they ought to be of rather a substantial kind; but, when composed of variety, the dishes should be of a lighter nature, and in the French style. It must be confessed that a French dinner, when well dressed, is extremely attractive, and, from the lightness felt after a great variety of dishes, it cannot be unwholesome; though I do not think, from my own experience and observation, that the French mode of cookery is so favourable to physical power as the English. If I might have my choice, I should adopt the simple English style for my regular diet, diversifying it occasionally

with the more complicated French style. Although I like, as a rule, to abstain from much variety at the same meal, I think it both wholesome and agreeable to vary the food on different days, both as to the materials and the mode of dressing them. The palate is better pleased, and the digestion more active, and the food, I believe, assimilates in a greater degree with the system. The productions of the different seasons and of different climates point out to us unerringly that it is proper to vary our food; and one good general rule I take to be, to select those things which are most in season, and to abandon them as soon as they begin to deteriorate in quality. Most people mistake the doctrine of variety in their mode of living. They have great variety at the same meals, and great sameness at

different meals. Let me here mention, what I forgot before, that after the dinner on Christmas-day, we drank mulled claret —an excellent thing, and very suitable to the season. These agreeable varieties are never met with, or even thought of, in the formal routine of society, though they contribute much, when appropriately devised, to the enjoyment of a party, and they admit scope for invention. I think, in general, there is far too little attention paid to varying the mode of dining according to the temperature of the seasons. Summer dinners are for the most part as heavy and as hot as those in winter, and the consequence is, they are frequently very oppressive, both in themselves and from their effect on the room. In hot weather they ought to be light, and of a cooling nature, and accom-

panied with agreeable beverages well iced, rather than with pure wine, especially of the stronger kinds. I cannot think there is any danger from such diet to those who use it moderately. The danger, I apprehend, lies in excess from the pleasure felt in allaying thirst and heat. The season in which nature produces fruit and vegetables in the greatest perfection and abundance, is surely that in which they ought to be most used. During the summer that cholera was the most prevalent, I sometimes dined upon pickled salmon, salad, and cider, and nothing else; and I always found they agreed with me perfectly, besides being very agreeable. Probably, if I had taken them in addition to more substantial food, so as to overload my appetite, it might have been otherwise, and yet that course would

have been adopted by many people by way of precaution. In hot weather the chief thing to be aimed at is, to produce a light and cool feeling, both by the management of the room and the nature of the repast. In winter, warmth and substantial diet afford the most satisfaction. In damp weather, when the digestion is the weakest, the diet ought to be most moderate in quantity, but rather of a warm and stimulating nature; and in bracing weather, I think plain, substantial food the most appropriate. By studying to suit the repast to the temperature, the greatest satisfaction may be given at the cheapest rate. Iced water is often more coveted than the richest wine.

One of the greatest luxuries, to my mind, in dining, is to be able to command plenty

of good vegetables, well served up. But this is a luxury vainly hoped for at set parties. The vegetables are made to figure in a very secondary way, except, indeed, while they are considered as great delicacies, which is generally before they are at their best, and then, like other delicacies, they are introduced after the appetite has been satisfied; and the manner of handing vegetables round is most unsatisfactory and uncertain. Excellent potatoes, smoking hot, and accompanied by melted butter of the first quality, would alone stamp merit on any dinner; but they are as rare on state occasions, so served, as if they were of the cost of pearls. Every body of genuine taste is delighted with a display of vegetables of a superior order; and if great attention was bestowed upon that part

of dinners instead of upon the many other dishes, dinners would be at once more wholesome and more satisfactory to the palate, and often less expensive. I have observed, that whenever the vegetables are distinguished for their excellence, the dinner is always particularly enjoyed; and if they were served, as I have already recommended, with each dish, as they are most appropriate and fresh from the dressing, it would be a great improvement on the present style. With some meats something of the kind is practised, as pease with ducks, and beans with bacon, and such combinations are generally favourites; but the system might be much extended, and with great advantage, by due attention. With respect to variety of vegetables, I think the same rule applies as to other

dishes. I would not have many sorts on the same occasion, but would study appropriateness and particular excellence. There is something very refreshing in the mere look of fine vegetables, and the entrance of a well-dressed dish of meat, properly accompanied by them and all their adjuncts, would excite a disposition to enjoyment much greater than can the unmeaning and unconnected courses now placed before our eyes. This is a matter of study and combination, and a field for genius. It is a reasonable object of attention, inasmuch as it is conducive to real enjoyment, and has nothing to do with mere display. In French cookery, vegetables meet with attention much more proportionate to their importance than in ours,

and appropriateness in serving them is much more studied.

I think I have now said all I had to say respecting dinners. My object has been to point out what I consider to be the true philosophy, and to put people upon the right scent of what ought to be done, rather than to particularize it. Those who wish to succeed, can only do so to much extent, by first getting into the right course, and then thinking for themselves, with such aids as they can derive from observation, and the best treatises on cookery. The chief point to be aimed at, is to acquire a habit of thinking only of the real object of dining, and to discard all wish for state and display in a matter which concerns our daily enjoyment of health and pleasure. I consider my ob-

servations on the art of dining as part of what I had to say on attainment of high health, from the necessary dependence of our health upon the judicious and satisfactory manner in which we make our principal meal. I think the art of dining, properly understood, is especially worthy the attention of females of all classes, according to their respective means. It comes peculiarly within the province of domestic economy, and is indeed one of its most important features. But females ought to be especially on their guard, in this essential affair, not to divert their views from realities to show, to which they have a strong propensity. There are many things in which they can indulge their taste for ornament, provided it is not carried too far, with advantage to themselves and to

the satisfaction of others; but in the article of dinners it is misplaced, because destructive of something of much more importance; and the realities, when in full force, have quite sufficient attractions without any attempt to heighten them by "foreign aid." In conformity with my dislike to show or display in every thing connected with dinners, I prefer a service of plain white ware—the French manufacture, I believe, or an imitation of it—to plate or ornamented china. There is a simplicity in white ware, and an appearance of cleanliness and purity, which are to me particularly pleasing, besides which it is, I always think, indicative of a proper feeling, and a due attention in the right direction. As to desserts, I am no great friend to them. I enjoy fruit much more at any

other time of the day, and at any other meal; besides which, I think they are unwholesome from being unnecessary. At any rate, I would have them in great moderation, and confined to a few kinds of ripe fruit. Preserved fruits are in my opinion cloying after dinner, and I believe injurious to the digestion of a substantial meal, and confectionary I think still worse. Desserts are made instruments of show as much or more than dinners, and though, unlike dinners, they cannot well be spoiled by it, yet it makes them a perpetual source of temptation to excess. It is most unphilosophical to set things before people, and to tell them they need not take them unless they please. Contentment and safety mainly depend upon having nothing before us except what we ought to take.

I purpose in my next chapter coming to a conclusion on the subject of the art of dining. My remaining topics are, wine, the means of limiting dinners to small parties, and the effect of such limit upon the mode of carrying on society in the most convenient and agreeable manner. It seems to me, that great improvements are practicable, at least with those who prefer real enjoyment to mock, and who like ease and liberty better than state and restraint.

CHAPTER VII.

Before I proceed to the topics I proposed to discuss in this chapter, I wish just to add one observation to what I have said in a former one, on the introductiou of delicacies at dinner. I have there observed that "delicacies are scarcely ever brought till they are quite superfluous, which is unsatisfactory if they are not eaten, and pernicious if they are." Frequently when I have expressed my sentiments on this subject in conversation, the objection made has been, that it would be difficult, or too expensive, if delicacies were introduced in the early part of dinner to provide enough. The answer is,

that it is not necessary to have a sufficient supply for each guest to make a dinner upon, but enough to afford each a reasonable portion before the appetite is palled. For instance, at a party of six persons, if the dinner consisted of soup, fish, a joint, and three woodcocks, I maintain it would be much better to serve the woodcocks before the joint, both on the score of enjoyment and of health—of enjoyment, because a delicacy, when the appetite is nearly satisfied, loses a great part of its relish, and is reduced to the level of plainer food while the appetite is keen—of health, because it is much more easy to regulate the appetite when the least tempting dishes are brought last. By serving delicacies first, people would dine both more satisfactorily and more moderately, and enter-

tainments would be less costly and less troublesome. I have often seen a course of game taken away, nearly or quite untouched, which would almost have dined the party, and much more agreeably than on the preceding dishes. The truth is, and a melancholy one too, that set dinners are managed more with a view to the pageant than the repast, and almost in every particular, besides that of delicacies, there is a sacrifice of enjoyment to an unmeaning and vulgar-minded style. Let us hope that some daring and refined spirits will emancipate us from such barbarous thraldom, and that we may see a rivalry of inventive genius instead of the present one of cumbrous pomp. Simplicity, ease, and sound sense are making progress in many things relating to our

way of living; and surely they will not be excluded from one of the most important of our temporal concerns.

A matter suggests itself to me here, which it is expedient not to pass over; I mean the practice of persons in different stations of life, or enjoying different degrees of affluence, in their intercourse with each other, all adopting, as far as they are able, the same style of entertainment. The formal, stately style is certainly not that of the greatest enjoyment, but it is tolerable only when it is adequately kept up, and with a disciplined establishment. Those who maintain large establishments, feel a necessity to find them employment to prevent greater inconveniences, but for those who have only a moderate household to go out of their way for the purpose of

badly imitating what is rather to be avoided altogether, is the height of folly. I do not know any thing more unsatisfactory than a state occasion, where the usual mode of living is free from all state. It excites my pity, and wearies me; and I cannot be at my ease while I am conscious that the entertainers are giving themselves trouble, and suffering anxiety to a greater degree than it is probable they can be recompensed, and are perhaps incurring expense which is inconvenient, and for which some comfort is to be sacrificed. In whatever style people live, provided it is good in its kind, they will always have attractions to offer by means of a little extra exertion well directed within their own bounds, but when they pass those bounds, they forego the advantages of variety and ease. It is

almost always practicable to provide something out of the common way, or something common better than common; and people in different situations are the most likely to be able to produce an agreeable variety. The rule generally followed is to think what the guests are accustomed to, whereas it should be reversed, and what they are not accustomed to should rather be set before them, especially where the situation of the entertainer, or his place of residence, affords any thing peculiar. By adopting such a course, persons of moderate income may entertain their superiors in wealth without inconvenience to themselves, and very much to the satisfaction of their guests—much better than by laboured imitations of their own style. Contrast should be aimed at, and men used

to state and luxury are most likely to be pleased with comfort and simplicity. We all laugh at the idea of a Frenchman in his own country, thinking it necessary to treat an Englishman with roast beef; but it is the same principle to think it necessary to entertain as we have been entertained, under different circumstances. There are people in remote parts of the country, who, having the best trout at hand, and for nothing, send for turbot at a great expense to entertain their London guests; and instances of the like want of judgment are innumerable. In general it is best to give strangers the best of the place; they are then the most sure to be pleased. In entertaining those who are in a different class from ourselves, it is expedient to provide for them what they are not used to,

and that which we are most in the way of procuring of superior quality. Many people, from their connexion with foreign countries, or with different parts of their own, are enabled to command with ease to themselves what are interesting rarities to others, and one sure way to entertain with effect is, as I have before recommended, to cultivate a good understanding with those with whom we deal for the supply of the table. By way of illustration of what I have said, on the subject of choice plain dinners, I will give an account of one I once gave in the chambers of a friend of mine in the Temple, to a party of six, all of whom were accustomed to good living, and one of whom was bred at one of the most celebrated tables in London. The dinner consisted of the following dishes,

served in succession, and with their respective adjuncts carefully attended to, First, spring soup from Birch's on Cornhill, which, to those who have never tasted it, I particularly recommend in the season, as being quite delicious; then a moderate sized turbot, bought in the city, beautifully boiled, with first-rate lobster-sauce, cucumber, and new potatoes; after that, ribs of beef from Leadenhall market, roasted to a turn, and smoking from the spit, with French beans and salad; then a very fine dressed crab; and lastly, some jelly. The owner of the chambers was connected with the city, and he undertook specially to order the different articles, which it would have been impossible to exceed in quality; and though the fish and beef were dressed by a Temple laundress,

they could not have been better served, I suppose principally from the kitchen being close at hand, and her attention not being distracted; and here I must remark that the proximity of the kitchen was not the least annoyance to us in any way, or indeed perceptible, except in the excellence of the serving up. The beef deservedly met with the highest praise, and certainly I never saw even venison more enjoyed. The crab was considered particularly well introduced, and was eaten with peculiar zest, and the simplicity of the jelly met with approval. The dessert, I think, consisted only of oranges and biscuits, followed by occasional introductions of anchovy toast. The wines were champaign, port, and claret. I have had much experience in the dinner way, both at large and at

small parties, but I never saw such a vividness of conviviality, either at or after dinner, which I attribute principally to the real object of a dinner being the only one studied; state, ornament, and superfluity being utterly excluded. I hold this up as an example of the plain, easy style of entertaining. There was nothing which any body may not have with the most moderate establishment and the smallest house, perhaps not always in exactly the same perfection as to quality of materials, but still sufficiently good, with a little trouble and judgment.

It is the mode of dinner that I wish to recommend, and not any particular dishes or wines. Common soup made at home, fish of little cost, any joint, the cheapest vegetables, some happy and inexpensive

introduction, like the crab, and a pudding, with sherry and port, provided every thing is good in quality, and the dishes are well dressed, and served hot and in succession, with their adjuncts, will ensure a quantity of enjoyment, which no one need be afraid to offer, and so it will be with any combination in the same style; but then it is absolutely necessary not to overdo the thing on the one hand, and on the other, to direct the attention entirely in the right course; to think nothing of display or fashion, but only of realities, and to dispose every thing for comfort and ease. Such dinners admit of an endless variety of combination, and by more or less additional expense, often very trifling, may be made greatly sought after. There is one precaution which I would recommend to

those who step out of the common way in entertaining, and that is to make some mention of what they mean to do at the time they give their invitation, otherwise a sort of disappointment may be sometimes felt, which is destructive of that disposition to be pleased, which guests ought to feel. For instance, speaking from my own experience, I greatly prefer small parties to large ones, and simple dinners to overloaded ones; but it has happened to me, that if, from the style of the invitation, I have made up my mind to a state party, I have been disappointed at finding a small one, though I should have preferred it in the first instance; and so it might be to invite any one to a simple dinner, however excellent, without giving some notice. There is often a little art in giving an invi-

tation, not only so as to prevent disappointment, but to prepare the invited for any particular circumstance, in order that they may come with the proper disposition, created by anticipation. I recollect at the dinner I have above described, I stated, in my invitations, verbal and written, what I meant to attempt, and the names of the party. As the success of it so strongly illustrates my positions in favour of compactness of dining-room, of proximity of kitchen, of smallness of party, of absence of state and show, of undivided attention to excellence of dishes, and to mode of serving them in single succession, I am tempted to add the names here by way of authentication, and to show that my guests were competent judges, not to be led away from want of experience.

The party consisted of Lord Abinger, then Sir James Scarlett, Sir John Johnstone, the present member for Scarborough, Mr. Young, private secretary to Lord Melbourne, Mr. R. Bell, of the firm of Bell Brothers, who occupied the chambers and acted as caterer, and lastly, my excellent friend, the late Honourable George Lamb, whose good humoured convivial qualities were held in high estimation by all who knew him, and who on this occasion outshone himself. I had seen him on many and many a festive and joyous occasion, both amid the revelries of the northern circuit and in private society, but I never saw him, or any other man, in such height of glee. Such a scene could not take place at a table set out, however well, in the customary style. There could not be the

same ease and inspiration, the same satisfaction, and concentration of mind on what is to be done, the same sympathetic bringing together of a party over one thing at once. What is there in state and show to compensate for this enjoyment? They are the resources by which dulness seeks to distinguish itself, and it is pity that those who are capable of better things, should submit to such trammels. In proportion as the set-out is brilliant, I have observed the company is generally dull, and every ornament seems to me an impediment in the way of good fellowship. I must add a word or two to what I have said respecting the mode of giving invitations, upon which, I think, more depends than at first sight appears. If a formal invitation on a large card requesting the honour, &c., at

three weeks' notice, were to be received, and the party should prove to be a small, familiar one to a simple dinner, however good, some disappointment would almost unavoidably be felt, partly because the mind would have been made up to something different, and partly on account of the more laboured preparation. It is in general, I think, advisable to give some idea to the invited what it is they are to expect, if there is to be any thing out of the common way, either as to company or repast; at any rate, it is expedient not to mislead, as some people are very much in the habit of doing, and then receiving their company with an apology, which throws a damp over the affair in the very outset. Now, instead of a formal invitation, let us suppose one to such a dinner as the under-

mentioned, couched in these words: "Can you dine with me to-morrow?—I shall have herrings, hashed mutton, and cranberry tart. My fishmonger sends me word herrings are just in perfection, and I have some delicious mutton, in hashing which I shall direct my cook to exercise all her art. I intend the party not to exceed six, and, observe, we shall sit down to table at half-past seven. I am asking as follows." Now I should greatly prefer such an invitation to a formal one in general terms, and I suppose most other people would do the same. It would show an intentness and right understanding on the matter in hand, from which the happiest results might be expected, and the guests would go filled with the most favourable predispositions, which is starting at an advan-

tage; for at parties in general, it requires some time before they can be raised to any thing like the proper tone of fellowship. Such a style puts dinner-giving within almost every body's reach, and would induce a constant flow of easy hospitality, instead of a system of formal parties, "few and far between." The same mode is equally desirable in invitations to simple dinners of the most costly, or rarest dishes, and in some respects more so, as the anticipations would be more vivid. I have heard it frequently objected to the simple style that some of the guests, when there is little or no choice, may not be able to make a dinner; but this objection is entirely obviated by particularizing, as above, what the dinner is to consist of, and those whom it does not please, can then decline

the invitation. A simple dinner, well served, to a party of a similarity of taste, cannot fail to have peculiar success; it makes perfect the union. These snug little parties, I must confess, have very much the air of being confined to bachelor ones, but I think them equally applicable to a mixture of the sexes. Ladies are very apt to suppose that men enjoy themselves the most when they are not present. They are in a great measure right, but for a wrong reason. It is not that men prefer their own to a mixture of female society, but that females delight in a number of observances, and in forms, upon some of which I have already touched, and upon a certain display and undeviating order, which conspire to destroy that enjoyment, which they seem to think they are debarred from.

The fault is their own. If they will study my doctrines, and fall a little into the herring-and-hashed-mutton system, they will soon find a difference in their favour. In their management of dinners, let them think only of what contributes to real enjoyment. Such a system will afford them plenty of scope for the display of their taste in realities, instead of in vanities, which have no charms for men in the article of conviviality. If they wish to witness any thing like the enjoyment I have described to have taken place at my dinner in the Temple, they must adopt something of the same course to ensure it. Side-dishes, centre-pieces filled with flowers, and such encumbrances and impediments, are fatal to it. They may make their election, but they cannot have both.

I rather believe they think their system necessary to keep up a proper degree of respect to themselves, and that without it men would become too careless and uncivilized; but this I apprehend to be a mistake. There may be well-regulated ease without running into disorder and brutality, and whatever facilitates the social intercourse between the sexes, will of course increase refinement on the part of the men. I think it would be a vast improvement in society if the practice of familiar dining were introduced—parties not exceeding eight, without the trouble of dressing beyond being neat and clean, with simple repasts, costly or otherwise, according to the means or inclinations of the givers, and calculated to please the palate, and to promote sociability and health. I will ex-

plain myself further on this head in my next chapter, till which I must defer the consideration of my remaining topics on the art of dining.

CHAPTER VIII.

As the season for fires is approaching, or rather, from the wet weather, is arrived, I must make an observation or two upon that important head. A cheerful fire is our household sun, which I, for one, like to have ever shining upon me, especially in the coming months of November and December, when the contrast between that and the external fogs and mud is most striking and agreeable. A good fire is the next best substitute for a summer sun, and, as our summer sun is none of the brightest, we are wise to make the most of its successor. An Englishman's fireside has, time out of mind, been proverbial; and it shows

something of a degenerate spirit not to keep up its glories. There is an unfortunate race, who labour under a constant pyrophobia, or dread of fire, and who cannot bear the sight of it, or even the feel, except from a distance, or through a screen. When we have to do with such, we must compromise as well as we can between comfort and consideration; but I am speaking to the real enjoyers of the goods of life, without any morbid infirmity about them. A bright, lively fire I reckon a most excellent dinner companion, and in proper fire weather I would always have it, if I may so say, one of the party. For instance, two or three at each side of the table, one at the top, and the fire at the bottom, with the lights on the mantelpiece; but then, to have this disposition in perfec-

tion, the room should be something after the plan I have recommended in my fourth chapter. Under such circumstances, I think if melancholy herself were one of the guests, she could not but forget her state. A fire is an auxiliary at dinner, which diffuses its genial influence, without causing distraction. As Shakspeare says of beauty, "it is the sun that maketh all things shine;" and as Dryden sings after Horace,

"With well-heap'd logs dissolve the cold,
And feed the genial hearth with fires;
Produce the wine that makes us bold,
And sprightly wit and love inspires."

It might be supposed, from the way in which the fire is ordinarily treated during dinner, that it was a disagreeable object, or a common enemy. One or more per-

sons are made to turn their backs upon it, and in that position screens are obliged to be added to prevent fainting. This is a perverse mode of proceeding, arising partly from the ill-adaptation of dining-rooms to their use, partly from the custom of crowding tables, and partly from the risk of oppressiveness, where there are large numbers and overloaded dinners; so that in this, as in most instances, one abuse engenders another, and the expediency of adhering to a rational system is clearly manifested. We are the creatures of habit, and too seldom think of changing according to circumstances. It was but the other day I dined where the top of the table was unoccupied; but though the weather was cold and wet, the master of the house maintained his position at the

bottom with his back to the fire, protected by a screen. If I could have wheeled him round, "the winter of my discontent" would have been made "glorious summer," and I should have dined with complete satisfaction.

The conservancy of fires ought principally to fall within the superintendence of the female part of a family, because they are least seldom out of the way, and it is a subject of very great importance in the maintenance of domestic comfort, especially where the males, either from pleasure or business, are exposed to the vicissitudes of weather. Let any one call to mind the difference between two houses where good and bad fires are kept. To the labouring classes a good fire at meals is the greatest source of health and enjoy-

ment; and at public houses a cheerful blaze seen through the windows, is a bait well understood to catch the labourer returning from his work to a comfortless home. If he once gets

> ....."planted unco right,
> Fast by an ingle, bleezing finely,"

there is no chance of his quitting, till, like Tam O'Shanter, he is compelled by necessity. The essential quality of a fire is to be bright without being too hot, and the best and quickest mode of restoring a neglected fire is to stir out the ashes, and with the tongs to fill up the spaces between the bars with cinders. If carefully done, it is surprising how soon this process will produce an effective and glowing fire.

While I was writing the above, a friend

of mine called to propose that we should dine together at the Athenæum, and he would send a brace of grouse he had just received. We dined very satisfactorily, but agreed that a perfect edition of our dinner would have been as follows :—First, a dozen and a half of small oysters, not pampered, but fresh from their native bed, eaten simply, after the French fashion, with lemon-juice, to give an edge to the appetite. In about twenty minutes, the time necessary for dressing them, three fine flounders water-zoutcheed, with brown bread and butter—a dish which is better served at the Athenæum than any where I know. At a short interval after the flounders, the grouse, not sent up together, but one after the other, hot and hot, like mutton chops, each accompanied by a

plate of French beans. With the flounders half a pint of sherry, and with the grouse a bottle of genuine claret, which we get for three and sixpence a bottle; after which, a cup each of strong hot coffee. This is a style of dining, which made us think of the gorgeous, encumbered style with pity and contempt, and I give these particulars by way of study, and as a step toward emancipation. After my desultory manner I must here mention an instance of barbaric ornament I witnessed a short time since at a dinner which, substantially, was excellent. I had to carve a tongue, and found my operations somewhat impeded by a couple of ranunculuses stuck into it, sculptured one in turnips, and the other in carrot. It was surrounded by a thin layer of spinach, studded with small

stars, also cut in carrot. What have ranunculuses and stars to do with tongue and spinach? To my mind, if they had been on separate and neighbouring dishes, and unadorned, it would have been much more to the purpose.

At length I am come to the consideration of that important accompaniment to dinner—wine, in the management of which there is ordinarily a lamentable want of judgment, or rather a total absence of it. Besides an actual want of judgment, there is frequently a parsimonious calculation on the one hand, or an ostentatious profusion and mixture on the other, both destructive in their different ways, of true enjoyment. The art in using wine is to produce the greatest possible quantity of present gladness, without any future depression. To

this end, a certain degree of simplicity is essential, with due attention to seasons and kinds of food, and particularly to the rate of filling the glass. Too many sorts of wines confuse the palate and derange digestion. The stronger wines, unless very sparingly used, are apt to heat in hot weather, and the smaller kinds are unsatisfactory when it is cold. The rate at which to take wine is a matter of great nicety and importance, and depends upon different circumstances at different times. Care and observation can alone enable any one to succeed in this point. The same quantity of wine, drunk judiciously or injudiciously, will produce the best or the worst effects. Drinking too quick is much more to be avoided than drinking too slow. The former is positively, the latter nega-

tively, evil. Drinking too quick confuses both the stomach and the brain; drinking too slow disappoints them. After long fasting, begin slowly and after a solid foundation, and quicken by degrees. After exhaustion from other causes than fasting, reverse this order. Small wines may be drunk with less caution as to rate than the fuller bodied. As soon as the spirits are a little raised, slacken the pace, contrary to the usual practice, which is to quicken it. When the proper point of elevation is attained, so use the glass as just to keep there, whereby enjoyment is prolonged without alloy. The moment the palate begins to pall, leave off. Continuation after that will often produce a renewed desire, the gratification of which is pernicious. This state is rather an unfitness for leaving

off than a fitness for going on. In respect to simplicity, I think four kinds of wine the very utmost ever to be taken at one time, and with observance of what wines go well together; as sherry, champaign, port, and claret; but they should be drunk in uniform order, and not first one and then another, and then back again, which is a senseless and pernicious confusion. For my own part, I rather like one kind of wine at a time, or at most two; and I think more is lost than gained by variety. I should lay down the same rules as to wines, as I have already done as to meats; that is simplicity on the same day, and variety on different days. Port only, taken with or without a little water, at dinner, is excellent; and the same of claret. I think on ordinary occasions, such a system

is by far the most agreeable. Claret, I mean genuine, undoctored claret, which, in my opinion, is the true taste, is particularly good as a dinner wine, and is now to be had at a very reasonable price. I would not wish better than that given at the Athenæum at three and sixpence a bottle. Rhenish wines are very wholesome and agreeable, drunk simply without other wines; I do not think they harmonize well with champaign. As to seasons, the distinction is obvious that light wines are the best in summer: but then care should be taken, for the sake of health, that they are sound; and with much fruit, perhaps, a little of stronger wine is advisable. In winter generous wine is to be preferred, and it is a pleasant variety to have it occasionally spiced or mulled, especially in

very dreary weather, or after severe exposure. In hot weather, beverages of various kinds, having wine for their foundation, and well iced, are very grateful. There is scarcely any luxury greater in summer than wine and water, cooled with a lump of ice put into it, though it is seldom practised in this country. In Italy, a plate of pure ice is regularly served during the hot season. In England, unfortunately, a great deal of money is wasted on excess, while simple luxuries are almost altogether neglected. The adaptation of wines to different kinds of food is a matter not to be neglected. The general rule is to drink white wine with white meats, and red with brown, to which may be added, that light wines are most suitable to light dishes, or to the French style,

and the stronger to substantial dishes, or the English style; but this latter rule has many exceptions. I must not here pass over altogether the excellencies of malt liquor, though it is rather difficult to unite the use of it judiciously with that of wine. When taken together, it should be in great moderation, but I rather prefer a malt liquor day exclusively now and then, by way of variety, or to take it at luncheon. There is something extremely grateful in the very best table beer, and it is to be lamented it is so rarely to be met with in the perfection of which it is capable. That beverage at dinner, and two or three glasses of first rate ale after, constitute real luxury, and I believe are a most wholesome variety. Good porter needs no praise, and bottled porter iced, is, in hot weather, most re-

freshing. Cider cup, lemonade, and iced punch in summer, and hot in winter, are all worthy of their turns; but I do not think their turns come as often as they ought to do. We go on in the beaten track, without profiting by the varieties which are to be found on every side.

What I have hitherto said has been with a view principally to individual guidance in the use of wine, though much of it may be applied to the management of parties. In the management of parties, so far as relates to wine, judgment, liberality, attention, and courage are necessary; and calculation, inattention, ostentation, profusion, and excess, are the vices to be guarded against. I always take for granted, that whatever wine is produced, it is to be good of its kind. Judgment is necessary in

knowing what wines are suitable to the season, the food, and the description of guests; in what order to serve them, at what rate to drink, and when to stop. Liberality is necessary to furnish promptly and cheerfully the requisite supply; attention is necessary to execute what the judgment suggests; and courage is necessary to keep the erring, either from ignorance or refractoriness, in the right path, and to stop at the right point. The master of a feast should be master in deed as well as in name, and on his judicious and confident control depends for the most part real convivial enjoyment; but he should govern rather by imperceptible influence than by any outward demonstration, or appearance of interference. He should set the wine in circulation at the earliest fitting moment,

for want of attention to which there is often a flagging at the outset. He should go on rather briskly at first, and should then contrive to regulate its pace according to the spirits of the party. He should cause the wines to be served in their proper order, and should preserve that order as much as in him lies, both by his own example, and by good humoured recommendation. He should let his guests know what he intends, so that they may have an opportunity of regulating themselves accordingly; as, if he thinks proper to produce only a certain quantity of any particular wine, he should say so. Uncertainty is fatal to convivial ease, and the reintroduction of any kind of wine, after other wines have intervened, is specially to be avoided. This error arises either from

want of courage in allowing a violation of propriety, or from a calculation that there would be enough, when there turns out not to be enough, and then hesitating to supply the deficiency at the proper moment. He should be liberal as long as liberality is beneficial, and as soon as he perceives that the proper point to stop at is arrived, he should fearlessly act upon his perception. There is a liberal, hearty manner, which prevents suspicion, and enables the possessor to exercise his judgment not only without offence, but with approbation. Calculation, however studiously concealed, sheds a baneful influence over conviviality, what nothing can counteract. Inattention causes things either to go on wrong, or not to go on at all. Ostentation excites disgust or contempt, and destroys enjoyment for

the sake of display, by introducing variety without reference to reason. Profusion produces the same effect from ignorance or mistaken liberality. There may be excess without variety, though it is not so probable. It is much more often the result of want of courage in the master of the feast, than of inclination on the part of the guests, and good government in the beginning is the surest guarantee of a temperate termination. In what I have said, I have supposed the giver of an entertainment to have means at his command; but where it is not so, the plainest wines, provided they are sound, and are heartily and judiciously given according to the rules I have laid down, cannot fail to give satisfaction to the reasonable, and more satisfaction too than the most costly, with the many draw-

backs which usually accompany them. They are for the most part exposed to the same fate that I have already described to await delicacies in food; that is, they are so mixed up and encumbered with other things, as to be deprived of their relish, and reduced to the level of their inferiors, or even below. It is to be wished that those who are not in the way of giving costly wines, would never attempt it; because they are only putting themselves to inconvenience, and their guests to greater. It is a very serious tax upon one's palate and veracity, to be obliged to drink and pronounce upon compounds with names to which they have not the most remote pretension. What I have said heretofore about dinners applies equally to wines. Let people keep to their own proper style,

and endeavour to excel in what is within their ordinary reach. A little extra attention and a little extra expense are then productive of satisfactory results, and they are sure to please others without any sacrifice of what is due to themselves. I have yet to make some particular observations on the use of champagne, which I must defer, with two or three other topics, to my next chapter.

CHAPTER IX.

I CONCLUDED my last chapter with promising to make some observations on the use of champagne. Of whatever materials composed, I never knew a party that could be said to go off ill, where there was a judiciously liberal supply of good champagne. I say judiciously liberal, because there may be too much, as well as too little, though the error, comparatively speaking, is seldom on the side of excess ; but I have seen, when a party has been raised to what I call the champagne point of conviviality, that an extra quantity has caused a retrograde movement, by clogging the

digestive powers. In this, as in all other matters relating to the table, but here especially, much must depend upon the eye, the judgment, and the resolution of the master. He must have liberality to give, attention and skill to regulate, and courage to stop. There are two classes of dinner-givers to whom I do not address myself on this subject, because I know it would be in vain. The first is that class who began their career, and had their habits formed, during the war, when champagne was double the price it is now. They gave it then like drops of blood, and I have never yet seen an instance of liberalization. The second class is that who merely give it as a part of their state, and deal it out to the state prisoners round their table only to tantalize them. I have no hope, then,

of producing any effect except upon those who date their assumption of table government on this side the battle of Waterloo, and who have, or are capable of acquiring, the same contempt of show that I myself have.

To give champagne fair play, it ought to be produced at the very beginning of dinner, or at any rate after one glass of sherry or Madeira. Any other wines rather unfit the palate for it. The usual mode is, as with other delicacies, to produce it after the appetite is somewhat palled, and I have often thought it particularly ungallant and ungracious, where there are ladies, to keep it back till a late period of dinner; and such a practice often presents an absurd contrast of calculation and display. According to my doctrines, the champagne

should be placed upon the table, so that all may take what they like, when they like, till the presiding genius pronounces in his own mind that there has been enough, which is not difficult to a practised eye. This supposes a supply at discretion up to the champagne point, which is very agreeable on particular occasions, or now and then without any particular occasion, but would not be convenient to most people, or even desirable, if convenient. I am far from objecting to a limited supply, even the most limited—that is, one glass round; but I do object to the period when it is usually served, and to the uncertainty with which it is served. Where it is handed round, and meant to be so only once, twice, or any greater fixed number of times, to which limits there can be no

objection, the rule I would lay down is, that it should be handed round after the first glass of sherry, and if more than once, without any other wine between, and that it should be contrived to notify beforehand what the supply will be. It might be thought rather awkward to make the communication. That, I think, would depend on custom and tact. I am sure I should have no hesitation in making it, and, at any rate, the awkward effects often arising from uncertainty would be much greater. What can exceed the awkwardness of two persons who are going to take wine together, beating about the bush to get each the other to propose champagne—a scene I have frequently witnessed between the best bred people? What can exceed the awkwardness of asking for it when

there is no more, or of waiting till a fresh supply is brought, contrary to the original intention? All these awkwardnesses are the consequences of uncertainty, and are much at variance with the ease that is essential to conviviality. An annunciation that there is champagne without limit, or that it will be handed round once, or twice, or oftener, saves these embarrassments. If it is placed upon the table, I would make a similar annunciation, as indeed I always do, that there is to be one bottle, two, or more, or at discretion. Then people know what they are about, and are at their ease, for want of which there is no compensation. By means of previous annunciation even the entertainers of the old school, and the men of state, might make their calculation available to a satisfactory

purpose. The advantages of giving champagne, with whatever limit, at the beginning of dinner, are these: that it has the greatest relish, that its exhilarating quality serves to start the guests, after which they seldom flag, and that it disposes people to take less of other wines after, which is a relative, and sometimes even an absolute, saving to the pocket of the host, and it is undoubtedly a saving to the constitutions of his guests. With wines as with meats, serving the most delicate first, diminishes consumption,—a desirable effect in all respects. I know that a couple of glasses round of champagne at the beginning of dinner, will cause a less consumption, and with better effect, than the same quantity, or more, at a later period; and where there are ladies, the portion they choose to

take, is most grateful to them upon this plan, and often the only wine they wish to accept. At the present price of champagne, if it is judiciously given, I believe it is on many occasions little or no additional expense, and its effect is always contributive of exhilaration. By promoting exhilaration it promotes digestion, and by diminishing the consumption of other and perhaps stronger wines, is consequently favourable to health. No other wine produces an equal effect in increasing the success of a party; and a judicious champagne giver is sure to win the good-will and respect even of those who can command it at pleasure, because a great deal depends upon the mode of dispensing it. If it is handed round often, it should not be handed round quick, at least after the

second glass, but at such intervals as the host points out. If it is placed upon the table within every one's reach, his nicely regulating power is necessary to give it sufficient, but to restrain over circulation. As the only anxiety of many, who give parties regardless of expense, is that they should go off well, I must repeat that they cannot fail, if there is a liberal supply of good champagne, heartily given. Of course there will be various degrees of success depending upon various circumstances, but champagne can always turn the balance to the favourable side, and heartiness in giving will compensate for many defects in other particulars. I must here add, that in little *fêtes champêtres* champagne has great efficacy, and is a specific against that want of spirit that not

unfrequently occurs ; also on any convivial occasion, where there is an absence of something desirable in the way of comfort or convenience, or where any disappointment has happened, champagne is the most powerful auxiliary in remedying the omission, and making it forgotten. In short, where champagne goes right nothing can well go wrong. I think it quite a waste to produce it unless it is iced, or at least of the temperature of cold spring water, and in hot weather its coldness is one of its most effective qualities. The less it is mixed with other wines, the better it agrees with any one, and the objectionable effects attributed to it are often in reality the result of too much combination with other liquids. Taken simply and in due quantity, I think there are few constitutions to which it

would not be beneficial, and I have frequently seen invalids who I have thought would have been all the better for an alterative course of it.

With respect to the kind of champagne to be preferred, that depends, I think, upon the occasion. The kind I have been alluding to throughout this chapter is the sparkling. I know many people affect to hold it in utter contempt in comparison with the still; but I suspect not a few of them do so to show their grandeur and their learning, rather than from their real taste. Undoubtedly still champagne, generally speaking, is a higher class of wine, and in a more perfect state than the sparkling; but it is almost as difficult to compare the two, as it would be to compare champagne with port. Still champagne is suitable to

a grave party, talking over matters of state. But the sparkling is much better adapted to give brilliancy and joyousness, and for that purpose I believe would be preferred by almost every body. Its very appearance is inspiring. In wines there is about the same difference between these two, that in poetry exists between Paradise Lost and the Rape of the Lock. When sparkling champagne is opened, the cork should not fly out as from a bottle of soda water: when it does, it marks that the wine is in too crude a state, and has not been sufficiently fermented. I think its good qualities are the most effective, when it is somewhat more active than merely creaming; when it has a certain liveliness, combined with flavour and coldness, which makes it, according to my taste, delight-

fully grateful. I believe I am now come to the end of the observations I had to make upon the use of champagne. I will here supply a slight omission in the proper place, on the subject of desserts. I have stated that I was no great friend to them, but I must mention that the most eligible mode I ever saw of serving them was by grouping the fruit upon a low, wooden plateau, which was placed in the middle of the table. It was the least trouble in setting on, it left the greatest space, and had the richest and most tasteful appearance. I doubt whether after dinner is a proper time to serve ice, that is, if dinners are arranged, as I have recommended in a former chapter, according to the season. I am rather inclined to think that ice would be better alone, and later in the evening.

It certainly spoils the palate for a time for wine, and is principally grateful, before the dessert, in counteracting the heating and oppressive effects of over-grown repasts.

My next topic is the means of limiting dinners to small parties, and the effect of such limit in carrying on society in the most convenient and agreeable manner. The apparent impediments to small parties are large families and numerous acquaintance. I shall here assume that small parties are the most desirable, if attainable, and that the system I advocate of moderate repasts, whether simple as to the number of dishes, or varied, and totally free from state and ostentation, is the best. In such a system the trouble of cooking and serving would be much less than in the present

mode of entertaining company, and the whole business less complicated and anxious, and as far as acquaintance are concerned, one party might be divided into two without any increase of household care, but the reverse. If it is considered necessary to have a numerous company on the same day, I should think it advisable to divide them into two or more tables; because, as it is impossible there should be a unity of party at a table above a certain size, there is the best chance of it by such divisions as may each secure a unity. By a unity I mean where there is general conversation only, instead of particular or partial. It is absurd to call that one party which is broken into many, but which sits at one table. Sociability would be much promoted by at once forming it into divi-

sions at different tables. I have heard of this being practised at ball suppers with the greatest success, and I do not see why there should not be equal success at dinners. It is alway to be borne in mind that setting out a dinner-table is a far less operose business according to my doctrines, than according to prevailing custom, and that setting out and serving two tables for eight persons each, would not be so much trouble as it now is to set out and serve one table for sixteen; whereas, in the former case, there would be two agreeable parties, instead of one dull one in the latter. The same principle applies most strongly where there is a large family. Division of tables on occasion of entertaining company would then in my opinion be particularly convenient and advantageous; and I should think

that often dinners at different hours of the day, according to the avocations or inclinations of a large family, and their intimacies, would greatly promote its well-being. It might suit some to dine at one hour and some at another, and to entertain their particular friends in an easy way, with a reunion of the whole in the evening, when numbers may meet advantageously. A free, simple style of living would admit of this without difficulty. Suppose, for instance, one part of a large family dining at four o'clock, with or without any strangers, and another at seven, according to their previous arrangements, and all meeting in the drawing-room, or disposing of themselves according to their different pursuits. One of the great advantages of a simple, stately style of living is, that it

admits of so much liberty in various ways, and allows of many enjoyments, which the cumbrous style totally prevents. I think it would be the perfection of society if there were a constant current of small dinner parties for the purpose of enjoyment only, and a general mixing up on easy terms in the evening, according to each person's circle of acquaintance. I have heard people say that they have tried to get evening society, according to the French manner of droppers-in, but that they have never been able to succeed. The truth is, that no individual, or small number of individuals, will ever make such a plan succeed for long together. It must be the general custom in order to have permanent and complete success. I have frequented houses in that way at times,

but always found it more irksome than agreeable, simply from the uncertainty of finding the inmates at home, and the repeated disappointments of finding them out. These objections would vanish if the custom of receiving in an evening were general, because if one family was not at home, another would be, and a person in search of society would be sure to find it somewhere, instead of returning unsuccessful. It is an annoyance to prepare, and make up one's mind, for society, and then not to meet with it. The temptation to remain at home is too strong to venture upon a speculation, where there are so many chances against success. But if any one had a number of acquaintances in the same quarter, who received in an evening, an inclination for society might always

be gratified with sufficient certainty to induce the attempt. Some visible sign, indicating whether they received at any house on any given evening, or whether the number was full, would save trouble to visiters, and would ensure complete privacy, whenever desired, or society to the extent desired, and not beyond. It would be a great improvement in the world, and a great advantage to the rich, if they would spend that portion of their means, which they dedicate to social intercourse, in procuring real enjoyment for their visitants, rather than in that state and display, for which no reasonable person cares, or which, it may be more truly said, every reasonable person dislikes and despises. If, for instance, a rich man were to give simply excellent dinners, and provide his

guests with accommodation at places of public amusement, he would give them more satisfaction than by inviting them to the most sumptuous entertainments, and would most likely much increase his own enjoyment. Such a practice would tend greatly to improve public amusements, and would add to their interest by giving brilliancy to the scene. There are many ways in which those who have a command of means, have opportunities of rendering social intercourse with them peculiarly advantageous and interesting to persons of smaller fortunes; but, as it is, in general, the richer the host the duller the entertainment, principally because expense is lavished in the wrong direction, without taste, or invention, or rational end.

In order to make a dinner go off well, a

good deal often depends upon the giver's mode of receiving his company. In the first place, he should always be ready ; he should receive cordially, so as to let his guests feel inspired by an air of welcome ; and he should set them well off together by the introduction of suitable topics. It is usually seen that the host receives his guests almost as if they were strangers to him, and after a word or two leaves them to manage for themselves as well as they can, by wandering about, or turning over books, or some resource of that sort, if they happen not to be well known to some of the company ; and even persons who are in the habit of meeting, often seem to be actuated by a feeling of mutual reserve for want of being well started by the host. It frequently requires some time after the

dinner has commenced, to take off the chill of the first assembling, and in respect to individuals, it sometimes never is taken off during the whole party. During dinner it is expedient for the head of the feast to keep his eye upon every thing around him, and not to occupy himself exclusively, as many do, with those immediately near, or, what is worse, to sink into fits of abstraction or anxiety. The alacrity and general attention of the host furnish the spring from which the guests usually take their tone, and where they are not well known to each other, it is good to address each frequently by name, and to mention subjects on which they have some common interest. There is also much tact required in calling into play diffident or reserved merit, and in preventing too

much individual monopoly of conversation, however good. In order to have perfect success, the guests must be capable of being well mixed up together, and the host must be capable of mixing them, which unfortunately few are; but many are much more capable than they appear to be, if they would turn their attention to the subject. These latter observations are more applicable to large parties than to small ones, but they do apply to both.

I have now come to the conclusion of what occurs to me on the subject of Aristology, or the Art of Dining and giving dinners, which subject the reader will perceive I have treated in the most familiar and perhaps in too careless a way. I have written off-hand, as matter suggested itself from the stores of experience. I have always

advanced what I thought to be right, without the slightest fear of being sometimes wrong; and I have given myself no thought as to exposure to ridicule, or any thing else. My object is in this, as in every other subject on which I touch, to set my readers to think in the right track, and to direct them in their way as well as I can.

THE ART OF

Attaining High Health.

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THE ART

OF

ATTAINING HIGH HEALTH.

CHAPTER I.

If my readers are like myself, it will be satisfactory to them to know what authority I have for treating on the subject of attaining high health, and what is my experience. My acquaintance of later years are accustomed to treat my precepts as theoretical, and to maintain that I am indebted for the health they see me enjoy, to an originally very strong constitution; with what truth the following statement will show.

Some months before I was born, my

mother lost a favourite child from illness, owing, as she accused herself, to her own temporary absence ; and that circumstance preyed upon her spirits and affected her health to such a degree, that I was brought into the world in a very weakly and wretched state. It was supposed I could not survive long, and nothing, I believe, but the greatest maternal tenderness and care preserved my life. During childhood I was very frequently and seriously ill—often thought to be dying, and once pronounced to be dead. I was ten years old before it was judged safe to trust me from home at all, and my father's wishes to place me at a public school were uniformly opposed by various medical advisers, on the ground that it would be my certain destruction. Besides continual bilious

and inflammatory attacks, for several years I was grievously troubled with an affection of the trachea, and many times, after any excess in diet or exertion, or in particular states of the weather, or where there was new hay or decayed timber, my difficulty of breathing was so great, that life was miserable to me. On one occasion at Cambridge I was obliged to send for a surgeon in the middle of the night, and he told me the next morning he thought I should have died before he could open a vein. I well remember the relief it afforded my agony, and I only recovered by living for six weeks in a rigidly abstemious and most careful manner. During these years, and for a long time after, I felt no security of my health. At last, one day when I had shut myself up in the country, and was

reading with great attention Cicero's treatise De Oratore, some passage, I quite forget what, suggested to me the expediency of making the improvement of my health my study. I rose from my book, stood bolt upright, and determined to be well. In pursuance of my resolution, I tried many extremes, was guilty of many absurdities, and committed many errors, amidst the remonstrances and ridicule of those around me. I persevered nevertheless, and it is now, I believe, full sixteen years since I have had any medical advice, or taken any medicine, or any thing whatever by way of medicine. During that period I have lived constantly in the world, for the last six years in London without ever being absent during any one whole week, and I have never foregone a single engage-

ment of business or pleasure, or been confined one hour, with the exception of two days in the country from over exertion. For nine years I have worn neither great-coat nor cloak, though I ride and walk at all hours and in all weathers. My dress has been the same in summer and winter, my under garments being single and only of cotton, and I am always lightly shod. The only inconvenience I suffer is occasionally from colds; but with a little more care I could entirely prevent them, or, if I took the trouble, I could remove the most severe in four-and-twenty hours. I do not mean it to be understood, that the same simple means would produce so rapid a cure in all persons, but only in those who may have acquired the same tendency to health that I have—a tendency of which I

believe all persons are much more capable than they suppose.

In the course of my pursuit after health, I once brought myself to a pure and buoyant state, of which previously I had no conception, and which I shall hereafter describe. Having attained so great a blessing, I afterwards fell off to be content with that negative condition, which I call the condition of not being ill, rather than of being well. Real health produces an elasticity and vigour of body and mind, which makes the possessors of it, in the characteristic words of the Ploughman poet,

"O'er all the ills of life victorious."

And now having, I hope, excited the curiosity of my readers, and inspired them

with some degree of confidence as to my qualifications for the task I have undertaken, I shall in my next chapter proceed to details.

CHAPTER II.

After making many blunders in my endeavours to improve my health, I discovered that I had fallen into the great, but, I believe, common error of thinking how much food I could take in order to make myself strong, rather than how much I could digest to make myself well. I found that my vessels were overcharged, and my whole frame encumbered with superfluities, in consequence of which I was liable to be out of order from the slightest exciting causes. I began to take less sleep and more exercise, particularly before breakfast, at which meal I confined myself to half a cup of tea and a very

moderate quantity of eatables. I dined at one o'clock from one dish of meat and one of vegetables, abstaining from every thing else, and I drank no wine, and only half a pint of table-beer. At seven I had tea, observing the same moderation as at breakfast, and at half past nine a very light supper. If I was ever hungry during any other part of the day, I took a crust of bread or some fruit. My care was neither to anticipate my appetite, nor to overload it, nor to disappoint it—in fact, to keep it in the best possible humour. I continued this course almost invariably for several months. It was now the middle of a very fine summer, and I was residing at home in the country, alone with my mother, who was a remarkably easy and accommodating person, and to the contentment she inspired

me with, I attribute a good deal of the ex traordinary state I arrived at. She used frequently to say she could not help looking at me, my features were so changed. Indeed, I felt a different being, light and vigorous, with all my senses sharpened. I enjoyed an absolutely glowing existence. I cannot help mentioning two or three instances in proof of my state, though I dare say they will appear almost ridiculous, but they are nevertheless true. It seems that from the surface of an animal in perfect health, there is an active exhalation going on, which repels impurity; for when I walked on the dustiest roads, not only my feet, but even my stockings, remained free from dust. By way of experiment, I did not wash my face for a week, nor did any one see, nor I feel, any difference.

One day I took hold of the branch of a tree to raise myself from the ground, when I was astonished to feel such a buoyancy as to have scarcely any sense of weight. In this state all my sensations were the real and marked indications of my wants. No faintness, or craving, but a pleasurable keenness of appetite told me when to eat. I was in no uncertainty as to when I ought to leave off, for I ate heartily to a certain point, and then felt distinctly satisfied, without any feeling of oppression. No heaviness, but a pleasing composure preceded my desire for rest, and I woke from one sound, glowing sleep, completely refreshed. Exercise was delightful to me, and enough of it was indicated by a quiescent tendency, without any harassing sensation of fatigue. I felt, and believe I was inacces-

sible to disease; and all this I attribute to the state of my digestion, on which it seems to me entirely depends the state of man. Being in health, it is easy to keep so, at least where there are facilities of living rationally; but to get into health while living in the world, and after a long course of ignorance or imprudence, is of difficult attainment.

I do not consider it at all necessary, or even desirable, to be strict in diet, when the constitution is once put into good order; but to accomplish that end, it is certainly essential. It also requires great observation and attention to know what to practise and what to avoid in our habits of life; and I see people constantly doing what is precisely the most prejudicial to them, without the least consciousness of

their errors. It is now so long since I was in the same state myself, that I find some difficulty in recollecting with sufficient exactness what I might have thought it necessary to lay down for the benefit of valetudinarians. I will, however, in my next chapter give some of the most important particulars.

CHAPTER III.

This is the golden rule—Content the stomach, and the stomach will content you. But it is often no easy matter to know how; for like a spoiled child, or a wayward wife, it does not always know its own wants. It will cry for food when it wants none—will not say when it has had enough, and then be indignant for being indulged—will crave what it ought to reject, and reject what it ought to desire; but all this is because you have allowed it to form bad habits, and then you ignorantly lay upon poor nature your own folly. Rational discipline is as necessary for the stomach, as for the aforesaid child, or the aforesaid

wife, and if you have not the sense or the resolution to enforce it, you must take the consequences; but do not lay the fault upon another, and especially one generally so kind, if you would but follow her simple dictates. "I am always obliged to breakfast before I rise—my constitution requires it," drawls out some fair votary of fashion. "Unless I take a bottle of port after dinner," cries the pampered merchant, "I am never well." "Without my brandy and water before I go to bed, I cannot sleep a wink," says the comfortable shopkeeper; and all suppose they are following nature; but sooner or later the offended goddess sends her avenging ministers in the shape of vapours, gout, or dropsy.

Having long gone wrong, you must get

right by degrees; there is no summary process. Medicine may assist or give temporary relief; but you have a habit to alter—a tendency to change—from a tendency to being ill to a tendency to being well. First study to acquire a composure of mind and body. Avoid agitation or hurry of one or the other, especially just before and after meals, and while the process of digestion is going on. To this end, govern your temper—endeavour to look at the bright side of things—keep down as much as possible the unruly passions—discard envy, hatred, and malice, and lay your head upon your pillow in charity with all mankind. Let not your wants outrun your means. Whatever difficulties you have to encounter, be not perplexed, but think only what it is right to do in the

sight of Him who seeth all things, and bear without repining the result. When your meals are solitary, let your thoughts be cheerful; when they are social, which is better, avoid disputes, or serious argument, or unpleasant topics. "Unquiet meals," says Shakspeare, "make ill digestions;" and the contrary is produced by easy conversation, a pleasant project, welcome news, or a lively companion. I advise wives not to entertain their husbands with domestic grievances about children or servants, nor to ask for money, nor produce unpaid bills, nor propound unseasonable or provoking questions; and I advise husbands to keep the cares and vexations of the world to themselves, but to be communicative of whatever is comfortable, and cheerful, and amusing.

With respect to composure of body, it is highly expedient not to be heated by exercise, either when beginning a meal, or immediately after one. In both cases fermentation precedes digestion, and the food, taken into the stomach, becomes more or less corrupted. I will mention two strong instances. A pig in high health was driven violently just after a full meal; it dropped down dead, and at the desire of some labourers, who thought it was too good to be lost, a butcher forthwith proceeded to dress it. When the hair was scalded off, the skin presented in some places a somewhat livid hue, and when the stomach was opened, the contents were so extremely offensive, that all present, of whom I was one, were obliged to fly, and the carcass almost immediately

became a mass of putridity. The second case was that of a man in the service of a relation of mine, who, after a harvest supper, and a hot day's labour, was thrown in a wrestling match, by which he instantly died, and decomposition took place so rapidly, that it was with difficulty his body within four and twenty hours could be placed in a coffin. While I was subject to the affection of the trachea before mentioned, I frequently brought on the most distressing attacks, and sometimes instantaneously, by heating myself just before or after meals. Even dressing in a hurry ought to be avoided previously to a meal, and I should advise all, especially invalids, to be ready a little beforehand, as the mind is also often in a state of hurry prejudicial to digestion. After meals, stooping, lean-

ing against the chest, going quick up stairs, opening or shutting a tight drawer, pulling off boots, packing up, or even any single contortion or forced position of the body, has each a tendency to cause fermentation, and thereby produce bile, heartburn, difficulty of breathing, and other derangements. I have often experienced ill effects from washing my feet at night instead of in the morning, fasting, which is decidedly the safest time. Of course, persons in high health may allow themselves liberties, but those who are at all liable to indigestion, cannot be too observant of even their most trifling actions. In my next chapter I shall take up the subject of diet.

CHAPTER IV.

I MUST begin with a few remarks on my last chapter. I have there dwelt on the ill consequences of being heated by exercise just before or after meals. There is one case which seems to be almost an exception; I mean that of dancing immediately before or after supper—at least, I never suffered any inconvenience from it in my ailing days, though I cannot speak from much experience. But further, I do not call to mind any instances in other persons, and at any rate they cannot be so common as would be the case from any other mode of equal exertion under similar circumstances. The reason I take to be this—

that from the enlivening effect upon the spirits, the digestive powers are able to overcome any tendency to fermentation; and if that be so, it proves the extreme healthfulness of the exercise, when taken rationally and for its own sake, instead of, as it usually is, as an exhibition, in over-crowded and over-heated rooms at the most unseasonable hours.

I particularly recommended in my last chapter attention to the state of the mind, because the effect of the spirits is very great and often even instantaneous in accelerating or retarding the digestive powers; and upon the digestive powers immediately depends whatever happens to our physical being. Whenever food is taken into the stomach, it begins directly to undergo a change, either from the action of the gas-

tric juice, which is the desirable one, or from that of the natural heat. In the latter case, a sensation of fulness and weight is first produced, and then of more active uneasiness, as fermentation proceeds; and at last, when digestion commences, it is upon a mass more or less corrupted, according to the quantity and nature of the food, the time it has remained, the heat of the body, and perhaps other circumstances. The mind will frequently regulate all this, as I have repeatedly experienced; for a feeling of lightness or oppression, of fermentation or quiescence, will come or go as the spirits rise or fall, and the effect is generally immediately perceptible in the countenance, and felt throughout the whole frame. Such influence has the mind on the digestive powers, and the digestive

powers on the body; and when we speak of a light or heavy heart, we confound it with a less romantic organ. The heart, it is true, will beat quicker or slower, but the lightness or heaviness we feel, is not there. There is no sickness of the heart; it needs no cordial; and the swain who places his hand in front, whatever the polite may think, is the right marksman. There lies our courage, and thence proceed our doubts and fears. These truths should make us careful how we live; for upon the digestive organ mainly depend beauty and strength of person, and beauty and strength of mind. Even the most eminently gifted have never been proof against its derangement. It is through the digestion that grief and all the brooding affections of the mind, affect the frame, and make the countenance

fallen, pale, and liny, which causes Shakspeare to call it "hard-favoured grief," and to say that "grief is beauty's canker." On the other hand, joy, or any pleasurable affection of the mind, which promotes digestion, at the same time fills and lights up the countenance. Often when I have been taking a solitary meal, the appearance of an agreeable companion, or reading any good news, has produced an instantaneous effect upon my digestive organs, and, through them, upon my whole frame. In the same way a judicious medical attendant will, in many cases, by talking his patient into an appetite, or raising his spirits, do him more good than by any medicines. That all this is through the stomach, I will prove by two instances. First, no one will doubt that the scurvy

proceeds from the state of that organ, and that through that organ alone it can be cured. Now, I have read in medical writers, that after a tedious voyage sailors, grievously afflicted, have repeatedly been know to have instantaneously experienced a turn in the disorder on the sight of land, and that soldiers besieged have been affected in like manner, on the appearance of succour; that is, the spirits have produced the same effect that medicine or proper food would have produced, which must have been through the same organ. The second instance is what I have several times observed in my own person. When I have had any local inflammation from hurts, however remotely situated, what has affected my digestion, has at the same moment affected the inflammation.

Fasting too long, eating too soon, taking too much wine, or having my spirits lowered, have instantly been unpleasantly perceptible in the seat of the inflammation; while taking food or wine when wanted, or having my spirits raised, have produced the direct contrary effect. How this is effected anatomically, I leave to the scientific to explain. I only know it from observation; but I do know it, and how to profit by it, and I tell it to my readers that they may profit by it too, which brings me to a repetition of my rule—Content the stomach, and the stomach will content you.

To the caution I gave against stooping, after meals, I should add that it is particularly to be avoided with any thing tight round the body, and the same may be said

of all the actions I have enumerated. They are also pernicious in proportion as the meal has been full or rich. Any thing greasy or strong, especially the skin of the fat of roast meat, when disturbed by exertion, will produce the most disagreeable effects, or perhaps bring on a regular bilious attack. Packing up, preparatory to a long journey by a public vehicle, used often to be a cause of serious inconvenience to my health from my mode of doing it. First of all laying in a hearty meal, because I had a great distance to go, the very reason why I ought to have been abstemious; then having to finish packing after eating, with more things than room for them, the hurry, vexation and exertion of arranging which, together with the fear of being too late, and bustling off, caused such a fer-

mentation as not only made my journey most uncomfortable, but made me generally out of sorts for some time after. When I had brought myself into a regular state of health, and took care always to be beforehand with my arrangements, eating sparingly, and setting off composedly, I found an immense difference, particularly in the absence of any feeling of being cramped in my limbs, which feeling was always annoying in proportion to my improper living.

CHAPTER V.

WHAT I have said in preceding chapters respecting the state of health I once attained, is not, I find, easily credited by those who have not had similar experience. I subjoin a passage from high professional authority—that of Dr. James Gregory, late Professor of Medicine in Edinburgh—confirmatory of my positions; and those who will take the trouble to make the comparison, will find how fully I am borne out. The passage was pointed out to me many years since by a physician, and I extracted it at the time, but had forgotten its contents till I had the curiosity to refer

to it the other day, and I now give an abbreviated translation from the original Latin. I believe it is principally taken from Celsus. My most staggering assertion I take to be this: "It seems that from the surface of an animal in perfect health there is an active exhalation going on, which repels impurity; for when I walked on the dustiest roads, not only my feet, but even my stockings, remained free from dust." Dr. Gregory says of a person in high health--"the exhalation from the skin is free and constant, but without amounting to perspiration,"--*exhalatio per cutem libera et constans, citra vero sudorem,* which answers with remarkable precision to "my active exhalation," and the repulsion of impurity is a necessary consequence. In fact it is perspiration so active

as to fly from the skin, instead of remaining upon it, or suffering any thing else to remain; just as we see an animal in high health roll in the mire, and directly after appear as clean as if it had been washed. I enter into these particulars, not to justify myself, but to gain the confidence of my readers, not only on this particular subject, but generally—more especially as I shall have frequently occasion to advance things out of the common way, though in the way of truth. I have before remarked that well-grounded faith has great virtue in other things besides religion. The want of it is an insuperable bar to improvement in things temporal, as well as in things spiritual, and is the reverse of St. Paul's "rejoiceth in the truth, believeth all things, hopeth all things;" for it believes nothing

and hopes nothing. It is the rule of an unfortunate sect of skeptics in excellence, who at the mention of any thing sound, look wonderfully wise, and shake their heads, and smile inwardly--infallible symptoms of a hopeless condition of half-knowledge and self-conceit. But to return to the passage, which is as follows:

"When a man is in perfect health, his mind is not only equal to the ordinary occasions of life, but is able easily to accommodate itself to all sorts of situations and pursuits; his perception, understanding and memory, are correct, clear, and retentive; he is firm and composed, whether in a grave or a lively humour—is always himself, and never the sport of inordinate affections or external accidents; he commands his passions instead of obeying

them; he enjoys prosperity with moderation, and adversity with fortitude, and is roused, not overwhelmed by extraordinary emergencies. These are not only the signs of a healthy mind, but of a healthy body also; and indeed they do not a little contribute to health of body; for as long as the mind is shut up within it, they will mutually and much affect each other. . . .

"The muscles are full and firm, the skin soft, almost moist, and never dry, the colour, especially of the face, fresh and constant, and, whether fair or dark, never approaching to pale or yellow; the countenance animated and cheerful; the eyes bright and lively; the teeth sound and strong; the step firm; the limbs well supporting the body; the carriage erect; every sort of exercise easy; and labour, though

long and hard, borne without inconvenience ; all the organs of sense acute, neither torpid nor too sensitive ; sleep light and long, not easily disturbed, refreshing, and either without dreams, or at least without unpleasant ones, steeping the senses in sweet forgetfulness, or filling the mind with pleasant images. Other signs of a healthy body are the temperate circulation of the blood, the pulse strong, full, soft, equal, neither too quick nor too slow, nor easily raised beyond the ordinary rate ; the respiration full, easy, slow, scarcely apparent, and not much accelerated by exercise ; the voice strong and sonorous, and in men deep, not easily made hoarse ; the breath sweet, at least without any thing to the contrary ; the mouth moist ; the tongue bright, and not too red ; the appetite strong, and

requiring no stimulants; the thirst moderate; the digestion of all sorts of food easy, without any fermentation, or sensation of oppression; and the exhalation from the skin free and constant, but without amounting to perspiration, except from the concurrence of strong causes."

There is one very important conclusion to be drawn from the above description, and that is, that a high state of health is a high moral state, which is the reverse of what would be generally supposed. Dr. Gregory says that a man in perfect health is not the sport of inordinate affections, and that he commands his passions, instead of obeying them, which means, that there is no physical excess to make the affections and passions unruly, but that, like temperate gales, they waft him on his course,

instead of driving him out of it. What is generally called high health, is a pampered state, the result of luxurious or excessive feeling, accompanied by hard or exciting exercise, and such a state is ever on the borders of disease. It is rather the madness or intoxication of health, than health itself, and it has a tincture of many of the dangerous qualities of madness and intoxication.

CHAPTER VI.

Of diet.—Health depends on diet, exercise, sleep, the state of the mind, and the state of the atmosphere, and on nothing else that I am aware of. I have been accustomed, for many years, to take the air before I eat, or even drink a drop of liquid, and at whatever time I rise, or whatever the weather is. Sometimes I am only out for a few minutes; but even a few draughts of the open air, when taken regularly as part of a system, produce a tonic effect; and I attribute my constant health more to this practice, than to any other individual thing. Sometimes I walk or ride a considerable distance, or transact

business for some hours ; and twice I have ridden thirty miles, and sat magisterially for a couple of hours, before breaking my fast, or feeling the slightest inconvenience. This strength arises from habit, and I observe my rule so religiously, that I should have the greatest repugnance to break it, from a thorough conviction of its efficacy. To those who are not in a situation, or have not the resolution, to adopt my practice, I recommend as near an approach to it as possible. I recommend them before taking any thing, either solid or liquid, to perform their ablutions, and to dress completely, and to breathe for a time the freshest air they can find, either in doors or out. I also recommend them to engage themselves in some little employment agreeable to the mind, so as not to

breakfast till at least an hour and a half or two hours after rising. This enables the stomach to disburden itself and prepare for a fresh supply, and gives it a vigorous tone. I am aware that those who have weak digestions, either constitutionally or from bad habits, would suffer great inconvenience from following my rules all at once. I remember the faintness and painful cravings I used to feel after rising, and like others I mistook weakness for appetite ; but appetite is a very different thing —a pleasurable sensation of keenness. Appetite supplied with food produces digestion—not so faintness or craving. The best means—and I always found it effectual—of removing the latter sensations, is to take a little spirit of lavender dropped upon a lump of sugar. After

that, a wholesome appetite may be waited for without inconvenience, and by degrees a healthy habit will be formed. It is to be observed, that nothing produces a faintness or craving of the stomach in the morning more surely than overloading it overnight, or any unpleasant affection of the mind, which stops digestion;—and this shows the impropriety of adding more food as a palliative. With respect to the proper food for breakfast, that must depend much upon constitution and way of life, and like most other matters pertaining to health, can best be learnt by diligent observation. I think, as a general rule, abstinence from meat is advisable, reserving that species of food till the middle of the day, when the appetite of a healthy person is the strongest. But at breakfast, as at all meals, it is

expedient to select what is agreeable to the palate; being then, as always, specially careful not to let that circumstance lead to excess, even in the slightest degree, but, on the contrary, to observe the often laid down rule of leaving off with an appetite. Some people swallow their food in lumps, washing it down with large and frequent gulps of liquid—an affront to the stomach, which it is sure to resent with all the evils of indigestion, as it is impossible for the gastric juice to act, especially if the body is under the influence of motion. Even the motion of the easiest carriage on the smoothest road in such case tends to produce fermentation, and fever, and drinking more, the usual remedy with the ignorant, aggravates the inconvenience; the only plan is to wait till the stomach is

drained, and digestion can commence. Mastication is good in two ways; first, to break the food into small pieces, upon which the gastric juice can sooner act; and secondly, to mix it well with saliva, which is the great facilitator of digestion. This subject of saliva is of great importance. When the salival glands are dry, it is impossible digestion can go on well. They are much affected by the mind; and joy and grief will produce an instantaneous change, and whatever partakes of joy or grief acts in a corresponding degree. It is for this reason that I have remarked, in a former chapter, that it is expedient at meals to avoid all unpleasant, or even serious topics. Light, agreeable conversation, with moderate mirth and laughter,

promote digestion, and principally, I believe, by stimulating the salival glands. Hence the wholesomeness of food that is fancied to such a degree as to make the mouth water. Hence the benefit of talking invalids into an appetite; and frequently, the first symptoms of recovery, after a dangerous or even hopeless illness, manifest themselves by desiring some particular food grateful to the palate;—so persons, who have been given up and left to eat what they chose, have recovered from that very circumstance, when medicine and prescribed diet have failed. All this is from stimulus to the salival glands; and from it I infer the expediency of allowing invalids, except in things manifestly detrimental, to follow their fancy,

and, for the same reason, it is desirable to make their meals as cheerful as possible, by the presence of some one agreeable to them, or by any other means.

CHAPTER VII.

It is observable that animals, accustomed to feed in company, almost always fall off, if placed alone; and with men in training to fight or run, it is of great importance to have some one constantly present, to keep their spirits in a pleasing state of excitement. I will here mention two instances of the effect of the want of mastication. One is in horses; when any derangement in the teeth prevents them from chewing their food, the hide becomes hard and dry, more like the covering of a hair trunk than of a living being. The other instance is of a young lady, who was subject to dreadful fits, for which no remedy could

be discovered, till a physician found out that her teeth were in such a state as effectually to prevent mastication. He adopted the strong measure of causing all her teeth to be drawn, and a fresh set put in, from which time she completely recovered. A skilful dentist once told me that there were people so ignorant, especially ladies, as to avoid mastication in order to save their teeth; whereas the very act is beneficial to them, but still more the effect upon the digestion, upon which the soundness of the teeth depends. Instead then of swallowing the food whole and drowning it in liquid, which many think harmless provided it is not strong, the proper course is to masticate thoroughly, in a cheerful, composed humour, and to drink in sips, rather than in large draughts, so as

to reduce what is taken into the stomach into a pulpy state, easily and speedily acted upon by the gastric juice. If more liquid is required, it is better to take it in moderation an hour or two after eating, when it facilitates instead of impeding digestion; and by this course exercise, at least of a gentle kind, is allowable, almost without restriction as to time, after meals.

A good preventive against a habit of taking large draughts, is to use small cups and glasses till a contrary habit is formed; and in general I find a wine glass a very good regulator in drinking malt liquor, and that it makes a smaller quantity suffice without the danger of forgetting the rule. With moderation in liquids it is much more easy to measure the appetite, and there is very little danger of taking too

much solid food. When the appetite is weak, it is difficult to know where is the proper limit in supplying it, as there is no marked sensation. When it is vigorous, we eat heartily to a certain point, and then feel distinctly satisfied without any oppression. This is a sort of first appetite, and the moment it is satisfied we ought to leave off. If we go on, the stomach seems to suffer a sudden extension, which enables us to eat, without inconvenience at the time, a great deal more than the body requires. Sometimes the extension is longer delayed, and only produced by the action of quantity, or some particular stimulant; and accordingly we see people refuse to eat more in the first instance, and then go on with great willingness. But all this is pernicious, and produces

that superfluity in the system, which creates a disposition to disease, and which, when carried far, renders disease dangerous or fatal. How common it is to hear people remark that they have dined after the first dish, and then to see them go on for an hour, sacrificed to the absurdity of the repast! Pressing to eat or drink, especially children, is a species of civility more honoured in the breach than in the observance. The appetite ought to be in such a state of vigour, that, when satisfied, the solid food seems immediately to identify itself with the system; and we ought to feel the liquid we take, instantly, to use Falstaff's phrase, "course from the inwards to the parts extreme." Then we rise from meals refreshed, not encumbered. The signs of this desirable state, as exhi-

bited in the countenance, are clearness and smoothness of complexion, thinness of lips and nose, no wrinkles under the eyes, the eyes bright, the mouth inclined to a smile, not drawn down with a sour look, as is the case with an overcharged digestion. There should be no fulness in the under lip, or uneasy sensation when pressed, which is a sure sign of derangement of the stomach. Most especially, the lower part of the nose should have a clear, healthy appearance, not thickened and full of dark dots and inflammatory impurities, as is so frequently to be observed. The difference between a pure state and that of irregular living is so great, as to produce in many persons an almost complete change of appearance in expression of countenance and personal

attraction; and attention to diet is of the first consequence to those who wish to improve or retain their looks, as well as to enjoy the perfect possession of their faculties.

As a proof of the efficiency of diet, I will here mention what I experienced from attention to it on a particular occasion. In the middle of August, 1822, I travelled in a private carriage from Stutgard to Paris without stopping, except for an hour and a half each morning to breakfast, being on the road four days and three nights. The course my companion and myself pursued was this. We had a basket, which we kept constantly replenished with poultry or game, and bread, and fruit. We ate sparingly whenever we felt inclined. We never drank when we ate, but took a little

fruit instead. About a couple of hours after a meal, if we felt at all thirsty, we took a little water at the first post-house we came to. By this plan the motion of the carriage did not at all disturb digestion; and notwithstanding the time of year we were entirely without fever or feverishness. We arrived at Paris perfectly fresh, and after taking a warm bath, supped in the Palais Royal. I afterward walked on the Boulevards till past midnight, and rose the next morning at six, in as composed a state as I ever was in my life.

When we left England in the preceding November, my companion felt heated and much inconvenienced by travelling, even so late as ten at night, and we were obliged to remain three days at Lyons to give him time to recover. Between Stutgard and

Paris he enjoyed perfect composure, and on our arrival I observed that, notwithstanding he wore a pair of tight boots all the way, his ankles were not in the least affected with swelling; whereas the courier, who did not understand passing through Champagne without tasting the wine, though he was comfortably seated behind the carriage, had his legs so much swelled, that he had some difficulty in getting up stairs. By the same course I believe I could travel indefinitely as to time, not only without inconvenience, but in high health.

The precaution of drinking little, and particularly at a sufficient interval after eating, I take to be essential. I also think it very beneficial to have the opportunity of taking food in moderation as soon as it

is desired, by which the irritation of fasting too long is avoided, and the stomach is kept in perpetual good humour. The plan of eating and drinking beforehand, instead of carrying provisions in the carriage, is a very pernicious one, as the food becomes corrupted before it is wanted, and in the mean time produces the uncomforts of fermentation.

CHAPTER VIII.

Before I resume my remarks on diet, I have a few desultory observations to make. I have frequently had occasion to remark on the very different state of my feet, that sometimes they were not at all inconvenienced by exercise, and at others liable to blister, or to a sensation of fulness or heat—that at one time I was annoyed by corns, at another perfectly free from them—that the same shoes would be sometimes easy, and at others much too tight—that at some seasons I walked with perfect freedom and alacrity, at others with a difficulty amounting almost to lameness. All these variations, I have long since ascertained, depend

entirely upon the state of the digestion, though I have heard my remarks to that effect turned into ridicule by the unthinking. I have now a pair of shoes rather smaller than usual, which have given me an opportunity of making my observations with great accuracy, and I find that by excess of diet, which I have purposely tried, they become so painful that I am obliged to take them off, and even that does not afford instant relief; while they are perfectly easy as long as I take only the requisite quantity of food, and at proper times,—for I have proved that so soon as I have fasted too long, uneasiness commences, not to the same extent as from excess, but still that there arises a certain degree of irritability upon which the pressure acts. Eating moderately, I find,

affords instant relief,—that is, Content the stomach, and every other part will be content. Moreover, provided the digestion is in a perfect state, any inconvenience from external causes, such as from the pressure of shoes actually too small, only lasts as long as the external cause acts. The moment the cause is removed, the effect ceases; but it is otherwise where the frame is out of order from deranged digestion. Then it takes some time for the part affected to recover its tone, or it may be that actual disease is the consequence, according to the force of the cause acting, or the tendency to disease. People die from a wound in the foot, or a cut finger, on account of their previously improper living, which has disposed their bodies to disease, and the wound or cut is the excit-

ing cause; but with those in perfect health, cure commences immediately after the injury, whether the injury be great or small, provided it is not in a vital part. Hence, in accidents, it is necessary with most people that they should submit to the influence of diet and medicine before a cure can be effected; and the same course is generally pursued before an operation, the only reason being that there are very few who live as they ought to do. The difference in the state of health is so great, that the same blow, which would cause death in one man, would not even produce discoloration in another.

Once when I was riding at Rome, my horse suddenly ran up a steep bank, and threw me off behind with great force on my head upon a hard road. I felt a violent

shake and a very unpleasant sensation for the moment, but experienced no bad consequences whatever. For some time previously I had been living very carefully as to diet, and had taken a great deal of exercise, otherwise I am confident I should have suffered greatly, if not fatally; as it was, I had no occasion even to take any precaution, and I felt nothing beyond the one shock. Had my vessels been overcharged, the effect must have been very different.

But to return to tight shoes. Every body must have observed that they are more inconvenient at the end of the day than at the beginning, and most of all, after a full dinner, though they may not have been aware that over-fasting will produce something of the same effect, and that con-

sequently the whole is referable to the state of the digestion; for even the fatigue of the day does not act directly upon the limbs, but first upon the powers of the stomach. Restore them, and the sensation of fatigue disappears. Labour and exercise, when the stomach is too full, or too empty, especially the former, cause great uneasiness; and as soon as the stomach is relieved, the weariness is relieved also. Even that fatigue of the limbs, which seems only removable by rest or sleep, I believe equally depends upon the same cause, and that it is the stomach first which requires repose. Where it only requires food, as I have just remarked, the fatigue of the limbs will disappear without rest; when it has received too much food, the fatigue will in like manner be relieved

as digestion proceeds. I recollect once, when walking a long distance before breakfast, I became at length so wearied, as only to be prevented by my companion from lying down in the road; and when I had breakfasted, I was immediately fresher than when I started. After eating too heartily, I have experienced still more distressing weariness, which has gradually disappeared, without any cessation of exercise, as digestion has proceeded. This is something the same as what is called second wind in boxing or running. It may be said, that when the feet are inconveniently affected by exercise, they are relieved by placing them in a horizontal position; but I apprehend that position is chiefly beneficial as affecting the connexion with the stomach, and that for any other

reason, it would be nearly useless--in short, it appears to me, that in the stomach is the spring, upon which entirely depends every other function and every other affection of the frame.

With respect to corns, I have been treated with great ridicule for asserting that they are dependent upon the digestion; but I have observed these things, and the ridiculers have not. With me, when I am in the best health, they disappear, and only come, or inconvenience me, in proportion as I am careless. This I have ascertained over and over again. Of course they are made better or worse by different kinds of boots or shoes; but no kind of boot or shoe will bring them, unless there is a tendency from improper living. Pressure would only affect as long as it lasted, but would

cause no formation, without some superfluity to work upon. The reason why corns shoot on the approach of rain is, that the change in the atmosphere more or less deranges the digestion, which causes a throbbing sensation. I have made these remarks because the state of the feet is of so much importance to our comfort and activity, and because I think they are applicable to the general management of ourselves, and may be useful to those who are subject to gout, rheumatism, cramp, and other diseases of the limbs. My principal aim is to furnish my readers, from my own observation and experience, with sufficient hints to induce them to think, and to notice what happens to themselves. If I am not always perfectly right in what I lay down, I do not much mind that, pro-

vided I enable others to get right in detecting my errors. I am sure I am not very far from the truth in my principal positions.

I believe that species of health is the best, and certainly the most prized, which is the result of study and observation, and which is preserved by constant watchfulness and resolution. Anxiety and quackery are destructive of health, but a reasonable attention is absolutely necessary. Those who constitutionally enjoy robust health, seldom know how sufficiently to value it; besides which, for want of discipline, they are not often so well as they think themselves. They frequently mistake strength for health, though they are very different things—as different as St. Paul's clock from a chronometer. The weaker mechanism often goes the best.

I think that those who are so constituted as to be well with care, have on the whole the most reason to be thankful, as being most likely to enjoy permanent well-being of body and mind; there is often a recklessness about constitutional health which is dangerous to both.

CHAPTER IX.

It requires a great deal of attention, and when living in the world, a great deal of resolution, to observe a proper diet; and it is only a knowledge of its powerful effect both upon body and mind that is likely to induce sufficient care. When taking meals alone it is most easy to regulate them; but I believe meals were meant to be social, and that a little irregularity in agreeable company is better than the best observance in solitude. They who can unite the advantages of the two states are sure to enjoy the easiest digestion. In diet, as in most of our habits, we are apt to be content with too low a standard,

instead of continually striving to approach the highest point of improvement; and certainly no study can be more interesting in its progress or more important in its effects. Eating and drinking, reasonably used, are not only extremely pleasant in act, but in their consequences; and a healthy appetite, duly ministered to, would be a source of constant enjoyment without alloy. As we must take nourishment, it appears to me wise to draw as much gratification from it as possible. Epicurism has rather an ill name, but I think very undeservedly, if it does not lead to gluttony, or occupy too great a share of attention. A dainty meal is something pleasant to look forward to, and the expectation of it gives a wholesome edge to the appetite, and makes business be despatched with alacrity. Let any

of my readers call to mind their anticipations in journeying towards a bespoken repast at a favourite inn, and that will put them in the way of appreciating the value in the journey through life of daily anticipations of satisfactory cheer. To come to particulars: and first of breakfast.—As to this meal, much depends upon constitution and manner of life. Those who are weakly, and those who do not take much exercise, will do well to be rather abstemious at breakfast, lest they anticipate digestion. Those who take exercise before breakfast and rest after, may safely give themselves more latitude than they who observe an opposite course. Moderation in all cases is the safest. I have often remarked that people who make it their

boast that they always eat a hearty breakfast are rather of a full than a healthy habit; and I should not think, as a rule, that the practice is favourable to long life. As digestion is liable to be deranged by the various occupations of the morning, it is expedient to be careful both as to quality and quantity of food. To that end I hold it desirable to avoid much liquid, the fat or skin of meat, much crumb of untoasted bread, especially newly baked bread, all spongy substances, and whatever has a tendency to create thirst. Coffee, unless in a small quantity and diluted with milk, is rather heating: tea, before exercise, or in travelling, I think preferable. In my own case, I find it best to adhere to one moderate sized cup of liquid, whether tea,

coffee, or cocoa. I prefer brown bread toasted to any other preparation of flour, and if any addition is wanted, I recommend only one on the same occasion, such as eggs, a little meat, bacon, broiled fish, water cresses, or fruit. Variety I think good, but not on the same day, especially as it makes it more difficult to measure the appetite. If any thing is required between breakfast and dinner, something simple and in moderation should by all means be taken, as disappointing the appetite, I believe is much more prejudicial than is generally supposed. Bread and fruit I find very grateful in the middle of the day, and if meat is taken, good table beer, I think, is the most refreshing beverage, or where that is not liked, wine and water. As to

dinner, I am of opinion that the consideration of that important meal may most conveniently be referred to my article on the art of dining.

CHAPTER X.

I now proceed to the few remaining topics I mean to touch upon. The first I shall take is exercise. Upon this depends vigour of body, and if the mind can be vigorous without, it can be much more so with it. The efficacy of exercise depends upon the time, the quantity, and the manner. The most invigorating time, I should say from experience, is decidedly that during the freshness of the morning air, and before breakfast; but this will not do for invalids, or persons of very weak constitutions, though many underrate their own powers, and think that that is weakness which is only the effect of habit. They

should try their strength by degrees, taking moderate doses of exercise at first, and after a small quantity of food, or, what I have before recommended, a few drops of the spirit of lavender on a lump of sugar, the efficacy of which, in preventing faintness or a distressing craving, is great. A few drops of lavender, and a short walk or gentle ride on a fine morning, will give a real appetite to beginners, which may tempt them to persevere till they can perform with ease and pleasure what would have distressed them exceedingly, or been wholly impracticable in the first instance. I always observe, that being well braced by morning exercise produces an effect that lasts the whole day, and it gives a bloom to the countenance, and causes a general glow, which exercise at no other

time can. I have heretofore spoken at large of taking exercise with reference to meals, both before and after. As to the other parts of the day besides morning, the time most fit for exercise must depend greatly upon the season. In the depth of winter it is good to catch as much sun as possible, and in the heat of summer to pursue the opposite course. The coldest parts of the day, as a rule, are just before sunrise and sunset, especially the former, and I believe they are the most unwholesome to take exercise in. The French, who observe rules respecting health more strictly than we do, are particularly cautious about sunset, on account of the vapour which usually rises at that time, and which they call *le serein*. The morning air just before sunrise is often, even in warm weather,

dreadfully chilly and raw, but there is no great danger of people in general exposing themselves to it. It is different at sunset, and it is then well to be on one's guard, especially if there is any feeling of damp, and particular care should be taken not to rest after exercise, or do any thing to check perspiration at that time, from which the most dangerous, and often fatal, maladies originate. Though I think the fresh morning air is the most invigorating in its effects, there is no period when I have felt actually so much alacrity and energy, as when taking exercise, either on foot or horseback, at the dead of night, provided the night is clear and dry, and most especially during a fine frost. The body and mind seem to me to be more in unison under such circumstances than at any other

time ; and I suppose from such effects that exercise must then be wholesome, but I think it should be after a generous meal, taken some time before. I have mentioned this effect of the night air in a former chapter, when speaking of digestion. Persons of different constitutions must judge for themselves at what periods of the day exercise best suits them, but taking care, I must repeat, not to confound the nature of the constitution with the force of habit. The best tests that they are right, will be keenness of appetite, lightness of digestion, and consequent buoyancy of spirits.

CHAPTER XI.

HAVING treated in my last chapter of the times for taking exercise, I proceed to the consideration of the proper quantity. The quantity of exercise desirable depends upon constitution, time of life, occupation, season, and kind and degree. I am unable to say with precision what kinds of constitution require the most exercise. Persons in health, of compact or light frame, seem the best adapted to take a great deal with benefit to themselves. Weakly and heavy people are generally distressed by much exertion; but then it is difficult to distinguish what is the effect of habit, and what of natural constitution. Those who

appear to be weak, often make themselves strong by a judicious course of management, and the heavy frequently improve astonishingly in activity by good training. One thing may be taken as certain, and that is, that it is wise to go on by degrees, and to increase the quantity of exercise as it is found to be beneficial; the best tests of which are keenness of appetite and soundness of sleep. Over exercise ought always to be avoided; but that often depends more upon the manner than the quantity. The same quantity may distress, or benefit, as it is taken judiciously or the contrary. Condition also makes an immense difference in the same person. I remember when I entered Switzerland after the full living of Germany, I was as different from what I was when I left it, as lead

from feathers. In the first case the ascent of an ordinary hill distressed me, and at last I enjoyed a buoyancy which seemed quite insensible to fatigue. Females appear to require a much less quantity of exercise than men; and it ought to be gentle and agreeable, instead of violent or long continued. With them, also, much depends upon circumstances; and, in Switzerland, delicate women can take as much exercise without inconvenience, as would distress the strongest of the sex in less invigorating countries. With respect to time of life, the most vigorous periods of course demand the most exercise; but habit has always a great effect, and it is expedient not to relax from indolence instead of inability. As decay comes on, exercise should become moderate, and of short con-

tinuance at a time, and should be taken during the most genial periods of the day. Active occupations either altogether supersede, or diminish the necessity of exercise, for exercise' sake; but sedentary or confined employments require a regular course, in order to ensure any thing like permanent good health; and the better the air, the more efficacious will be the exercise. As to seasons, in hot weather the least exercise seems necessary, and that of a gentle kind; in a moderate temperature, the most may be taken with advantage; and when it is cold exercise should be brisk, and then, from its bracing quality, a little goes a great way. Quantity of exercise depends very greatly upon kind and degree. That which moderately increases the circulation of the blood, so as to cause

a glow on this side perspiration, the soonest suffices. Walking or riding at a brisk pace in a bracing air, or not over-strained exertion in some game, which agreeably occupies the mind, will soon produce a sufficient effect. Where the mind is not engaged, much more exercise is required than where it is; and a small quantity of violent exercise is not so beneficial as a greater quantity of moderate. On the other hand, a greater quantity of sluggish exertion does not possess the efficacy of a smaller quantity of an animating kind. Less of varied exertion, which brings the different muscles into play, will suffice, than of exertion all of the same kind; as walking over hill and dale promotes circulation more than walking over a flat surface, and different paces in riding are better than a uni-

form one. Unless exercise produces a glow, it falls short of its proper effect, and it will do this in the shortest time, when it is moderate, varied, and pleasing, and in an invigorating atmosphere. Violent exercise produces temporary strength, but with a wear and tear of the constitution, and it often induces a tendency to disease, besides the danger of bodily injury from many causes.

As to manner of exercising, there is every degree from the easiest carriage to the roughest horse. Carriage exercise is of a very inferior kind in an invigorating point of view, and to the robust is scarcely exercise at all ; but to others it is very beneficial, though perhaps rather in the way of taking air than taking exercise, and it has the effect of diverting the mind. To this

end it is most efficacious amidst new scenes. The most effective mode of all of taking exercise is, I believe, on horseback, and if it will not put those who can bear it into high health, I think nothing else will. For effect on the health and spirits I know nothing like a brisk ride on a good horse, through a pleasant country, with an agreeable companion, on a beautiful day. The exercise is thoroughly efficient, without either labour or fatigue, the mind is entirely in unison with the body, and the constant current of pure air produces the most vigorous tone. I have frequently heard of journeys on horseback restoring health, when every thing else has failed. A solitary ride on an unwilling horse, over well known ground, for the mere sake of the ride, produces, compara-

tively speaking, very little benefit; and care should be taken to make this kind of exercise, as well as every other, as attractive as possible. Exercise on foot has many advantages. It is the most independent mode, is within every body's reach, is the least trouble, and can be taken when other modes are not practicable, and is very efficacious. The feeling of independence is by no means the least of its advantages, and those who have the free use of their limbs, have no occasion to envy their superiors in wealth their command of carriages and horses, about which there are constant drawbacks. Although I delight in a horse at times, yet I often think that on the whole the balance is against him on the score of freedom and independence. I have made many jour-

neys on foot, and I do not know that, with good management, there is any mode of travelling which is capable of so much enjoyment with so little alloy. Horse exercise on particular occasions, is certainly the most animating and delightful, but at other times it is attended with greater inconveniences. Exercise on foot derives much of its efficacy from being made attractive. A walk for a walk's sake is only half beneficial, and, if possible, there should be some object in view, something to engage and satisfy the mind. Exercise in games, dancing, fencing, and such accomplishments, derive a great deal of their benefit from the pleasure taken in them; and in contested games, care should be taken to avoid anxiety and over-ardent exertion. There is a middle state of the

mind between indifference and too much eagerness, which is the most favourable to health ; as there is a middle circulation of the blood between languor and a state of fever. In taking exercise, this rule should always be observed, to begin and end gently. Beginning violently hurries the circulation, and ending violently is very apt to induce colds and fever, and besides, causes a stiffness in the joints and muscles. The blood should have time gradually to resume its ordinary current, or it has a tendency to settle in the small vessels, which is a cause of great inconvenience. Cooling gradually will prevent this.

The next thing I have to consider is sleep, upon the quantity and quality of which health mainly depends. I believe the general custom is to take too much

sleep. What quantity is really necessary must depend upon various constitutions, and various circumstances in the same constitution; but the rule is, as I think, that we should have one sound sleep, from which we should wake perfectly refreshed, without any heavy or drowsy sensation or any wish to fall asleep again. The length of this sleep will depend upon way of living, quantity of exertion, mental or bodily, state of the atmosphere, and other causes; but still the one sound sleep is the true measure. Falling short of this, or exceeding it, are both prejudicial. The first produces fever, the second languor. Our energy depends in a very great degree upon taking no more than the due quantity of sleep. In order to ensure its quality, we should lie down free from care, and

have no anxiety about waking, which is destructive of perfect soundness. Our waking should be entirely voluntary, the result of the complete restoration of the powers. The quality of sleep depends upon attention to diet, exercise, and state of the mind, and in a great measure upon going to bed in a properly prepared state, neither feverish nor chilly, neither hungry nor overloaded, but in an agreeable composure and state of satisfaction of both body and mind. It is better to retire to rest from society than from solitude, and from cheerful relaxation than from immediate labour and study. The practice, which some people have, of sitting their fire out, and going to bed starved, with their mind fatigued with study, is the reverse of what is expedient; and sleep under such cir-

cumstances is of a very unsatisfactory nature. It is rather productive of what Milton calls unrest than rest. Sleep, to enjoy it perfectly, requires observation and attention, and all who wish for high health, will do well to keep the subject in their minds, because upon themselves chiefly depends the attainment of this, one of the greatest blessings of life.

CHAPTER XII.

STATE OF THE MIND.—Attention to health has a powerful influence on the state of the mind, and the state of the mind has a powerful influence on health. There is one state of the mind which depends upon the health, and another which depends partly upon external circumstances. This latter state, though it cannot be altogether regulated by attention to health, may be materially affected by it, and depression may be diminished and buoyancy increased in a very considerable degree. Where there is nothing particularly to affect the mind in the way of good fortune or of bad, of annoyance or of pleasure, its state depends

almost, if not entirely, upon the state of the health, and the same individual will be happy or miserable in the proportion that the health is regulated. I have known cases of people, who laboured under depression to a most distressing degree, restored to high spirits merely by a long journey on horseback; and universally, exertion which is productive of interest to the mind, where there is no external cause of annoyance, raises the spirits to a state of positive enjoyment, which may be still further increased by attention to temperance, cleanliness, and moderation in sleep. Where the state of the mind depends entirely upon attention to health, I can only refer to what I have recommended in the different chapters I have already given on the subject of health. Where it depends upon the influ-

ence of external circumstances, I shall also request attention to the tone which pervades all that I have written with reference to habits of living and modes of thinking; because I have throughout endeavoured to enforce doctrines founded on reasonableness and the spirit of contentment. It is good not to seek after those things, the disappointment of missing which is greater than the pleasure of attaining: and such is the case with all the vanities of the world. The irksomeness of pursuing, and the emptiness of enjoyment, I think, are generally about equal; while the mortification of failure is ever most bitter with respect to things in themselves worthless or troublesome. The greatest of all arts to prevent unhappiness is not to place too much value on the opinion of others. Here

is the grand source of all anxiety, the thinking what others will think; and that is the feeling which is most unfavourable to real health. It suspends and deranges the functions to a most prejudicial extent, even about trifles, when serious calamity, which does not touch the pride, is met with calmness and resignation. Pride is mixed up with almost all human feeling, and in proportion as reason and religion can clear it away, the feelings will be sound and healthy, and will contribute to the soundness and health of the body. To desire nothing but what is worth attaining, to proportion our wants to our means of satisfying them without too much sacrifice, to value what we gain or lose as it affects ourselves only, and not as weighed in the balance of others, is the state of mind which will most con-

duce to our health. I have heretofore enlarged in several places upon the great, and often sudden effects, the state of the mind has upon that of the body, both to good and ill; and it is only by constant mental discipline, and by observation, that that tone can be acquired, which gives due smoothness, and regularity, and activity, to physical action.

The state of the atmosphere has influence upon the health in various degrees. No one is entirely independent of such influence; but the more we attend to the due regulation of our health, the less we feel outward changes. Persons who have contracted habits of indolence and indulgence, are the most subject to be affected by atmospheric influences, and they are often wretched martyrs to them. With

vessels overcharged and nerves unbraced, the slightest change causes the most distressing sensations. I believe that moderation in liquids is one of the best preservatives against such evils—I mean liquids of all kinds, for some people think that it is only the strength of liquids that is prejudicial, whereas quantity is to be guarded against as well as quality, by those who wish to enjoy good health. Water, tea, and all sorts of slops, ought to be used with great moderation, or it is in vain to hope for a vigorous tone. A dry, cool atmosphere seems to be the most favourable to a high state of health, though it may not best suit many morbid constitutions, and persons labouring under particular diseases. Temperance and activity will render the constitution almost proof against

any baneful influence of the atmosphere, but attention to diet and dress are also advisable, as well as caution as to exposure to the outward air. Besides the ordinary changes in the atmosphere, a great deal depends upon situation, and therefore those who are able, do well to avail themselves of choosing those situations, which either for temporary reasons, or permanently, agree with them best. A good choice of situation will often produce health, or continue it, more effectually than any thing else. Discrimination is necessary in this: for those situations which are the most favourable to a high state of health, may be dangerous to those who are only making their approaches to it. An invalid or person of delicate constitution, by beginning in the valley, may perhaps end a

hardy mountaineer. The influence of the atmosphere is a fit subject for constant observation, and can only be well understood by that process; I mean reasonable observation, and not that of hypochondriacal and nervous people.

The last subject I have to touch upon in respect to health, is cleanliness. It is of great importance, and requires much attention and considerable labour in the advancement towards health, especially in particular kinds of morbid affections: but in an actual state of high health, it is not only easy of attainment, but it is hardly possible to be avoided. There is an activity, which prevents impurity from within, and repels it from without. There are all degrees, from a sluggish, impure perspiration to an imperceptible radiation. In the first case,

continual efforts of cleanliness can still not produce it in a high degree; and in the second, it is there without any effort at all. People who are laboriously clean, are never very clean; that is, they are not pure. Purity is a sort of self-acting cleanliness; it arises from attention to system, and cleanliness is a mere outward operation. There are many people, who think themselves very clean, who are only whitened sepulchres; and, however they labour, will never succeed, unless by attention to something more than soap and water. What I have said in a former chapter on an extreme state of cleanliness, though difficult to be comprehended, or believed by those who have not put themselves into a high state of health, is yet literally true. Cleanliness contri-

butes to health, and health contributes to cleanliness; and I cannot too strongly recommend attention to it, at the same time repeating that the outward operation alone, without attention to the system, will prove very inefficient.

I have now come to a conclusion of my chapters on the art of attaining high health. I could have said a great deal more on many of the heads, and may hereafter touch upon some of them occasionally; but as my principal aim has been to put my readers in the right way, and to set them to think for themselves, I have thought it better not to enter more into detail. Where I am right, I hope they will follow me, to their own advantage; and where I am wrong, it may perhaps lead some of them to discover what is

right, for the sake of detecting my errors. If the truth is only discovered between us, I do not much care by which side.

Hints on Suppers.

HINTS ON SUPPERS.

CHAPTER I.

I DO not know how I came to dismiss the subject of the art of dining without saying a few words in favour of that agreeeable, but now neglected meal, supper. The two repasts used to hold divided empire, but dinners have in later years obtained all but an exclusive monopoly, to the decay, I am afraid, of wit, and brilliancy, and ease. Supper has been in all times the meal peculiarly consecrated to mental enjoyment, and it is not possible that any other meal should be so well

adapted to that object. Dinner may be considered the meal of the body, and supper that of the mind. The first has for its proper object the maintenance or restoration of the corporeal powers; the second is intended in the hours of relaxation from the cares and business of the day, to light up and invigorate the mind. It comes after every thing else is over, and all distraction and interruption have ceased, as a pleasing prelude and preparation for the hour of rest, and has a tendency to fill the mind with agreeable images as the last impressions of the day. Compared with dinner, it is in its nature light, and free from state. Dinner is a business; supper an amusement. It is inexpensive, and free from trouble. The attempt to unite the two meals in one, in the manner now

practised, is a miserable failure, unfavourable to health and to the play of the mind. Nothing places sociability on so good a footing, and so much within the reach of all, as the custom of supping. There is an objection made to suppers, that they are unwholesome. Nothing, I think, can be more unfounded; indeed, I believe them, if properly used, to be most wholesome, and quite in accordance with the dictates of nature. Undoubtedly, large suppers are unwholesome after large dinners; but not so, light suppers after moderate dinners. I think, if I were to choose, my ordinary course of living would be a simple, well-conceived dinner, instead of the luncheon now in vogue; then tea, with that excellent adjunct, scarcely ever enjoyed in these days, buttered toast, about

the present dinner hour, and a savoury little supper about half past nine or ten o'clock, with a bowl of negus, or some other grateful diluted potation after. I am of opinion there is no system so favourable to vigorous and joyous health as the moderate indulgence of a moderate appetite about a couple of hours before retiring to rest,—those hours filled up with the enjoyment of agreeable society. In the colder months I have great faith in finishing the day with a warm and nourishing potation. It is the best preparation for one's daily end, sleep, or, as Shakspeare calls it, "the death of each day's life;" and those with whom it does not agree, may be sure it is not the drink's fault, but their own, in not having pursued the proper course previously. A good drink over a cheerful fire,

with a cheerful friend or two, is a good finish, much better than the unsatisfactory ending of a modern dinner party. Here I must mention that, in order to have good negus, it is necessary to use good wine, and not, as some people seem to think, any sort of stuff, in any condition. Port negus is delicious, if it is made thus:— Pour boiling water upon a sufficient quantity of sugar; stir it well; then pour some excellent port, not what has been opened two or three days, into the water, the wine having been heated in a saucepan. Stir the wine and water well together as the wine is poured in, and add a little grated nutmeg. A slice of lemon put in with the sugar, and a little of the yellow rind scraped with it, make the negus perfect; but it is very good without, though then,

properly speaking, it should be called wine and water. Supper is an excellent time to enjoy game, and all meats of a delicate nature, and many other little things, which are never introduced at dinners. I am far from wishing to explode dinners as a social meal, but I object to their enjoying a monopoly, and the adoption of the two meals on different occasions would furnish opportunities for an agreeable variety. One frequently hears people object to dining early, on the ground that they feel themselves disinclined to do any thing after dinner; but this is a false mode of reasoning. After a late dinner there is a disinclination to action, especially if it is an overloaded repast; but the reason of this is, that the powers have become exhausted, which is a solid argument against late dining with

reference to health and spirits. But a moderate dinner in the middle of the day, when the digestive powers are the strongest, instead of unfitting for action, has the very contrary effect, and a person rises from table refreshed, and more actively inclined than before. No one, whose digestion is in good order, complains of the incapacitating effects of luncheon, which is in reality a dinner without its pleasures. Luncheon may be said to be a joyless dinner, and dinner a cumbrous supper, and between the two, they utterly exclude that refreshing little meal, tea. We live in a strange state of perversion, from which many emancipate themselves as much as they can, when the eye of the world is not upon them ; and if every body dared to do as every body would like,

strange changes would soon appear. If the state prisons were thrown open, and the fetters of fashion cast off, what inward rejoicing there would be among rich and poor, male and female! What struggles, what pangs, what restraints would be avoided! What enjoyments, what pleasures would present themselves, and what elasticity would be given to the different bents of the human mind? If reason and virtue alone dictated the rules of life, how much more of real freedom would be enjoyed than under the present worn-out dynasty of fashion!

CHAPTER II.

In my last chapter, I expressed an inclination to the adoption, on ordinary occasions, of a simple, substantial dinner in the middle of the day, then to tea about the present hour of dinner, and lastly, to a light supper about a couple of hours before retiring to rest; but I omitted to enlarge, as much as I think the subject deserves, upon the advantages of such a course to men who are engaged in active occupation away from their homes. To fast from breakfast to a late dinner is unquestionably prejudicial to the great majority of constitutions, though habit may prevent present

sensations of inconvenience. Luncheon is an unsatisfactory, unsettled meal as to society, and awkward as to the appetite, which being about that time in the most vigorous state, it is difficult and disappointing to restrain it, and inconvenient, with reference to dinner, to satisfy it. Now a simple dinner at or near the place of business, and in the way of society made subservient to business, is free from these disadvantages. If a meal is taken when the appetite is at the most healthy point of keenness, and no more is eaten than nature just requires, business may be resumed pleasantly, and without deranging the digestive powers. Then, instead of hurrying over business, dread of interruption, and anxiety to reach home, there is

a feeling of satisfaction and a composure which ought always to be aimed at. He who keeps dinner waiting, or is afraid of doing so, is in a constant state of annoyance; and those about him live in almost daily uncertainty, productive of any thing but real comfort. A man on his arrival at home hastens over his toilette, sits down to table hurried and exhausted, overloads his appetite, and soon feels heavy, or sinks to sleep, neither enjoying, nor adding to the enjoyment of society, and destroying the invigorating soundness of his night's rest. But tea is a meal that can be prepared quickly and at any time; it causes no anxiety or hurry: there is little danger of excess; and, instead of oppressing, it is the very best restorative of the strength

and spirits. After tea, the most exhausted become lively and clear for the remainder of the evening; the supper hour is subject to no uncertainty, and an inclination to sleep is induced at the desirable period, and not before. To those who return into the country, especially in the summer time, this system, I apprehend, would be found to possess many advantages; and, in general, I think it would conduce much to improve domestic society. I do not hold it out as a fixed rule to supersede later dinners, which on many occasions are the most convenient meals for social intercourse, but as a practice which might be frequently, or even ordinarily, adopted with advantage. To those who have always been accustomed to look upon a

good dinner as the conclusion of their day's labours, any other system appears very meagre and unsatisfactory; but habit would soon reconcile persons of sense to a change, provided it is a change in which there is really a balance of advantages. On the score of alacrity and vigour of body and mind, I have little doubt but that the system of early dinners and light suppers is much preferable to the system now in force; but then it must be pursued with due attention to the rules of temperance, otherwise the evils of excess would be greater than they are now. The advantages of the system in respect to facility and clearness in mental application, I know from experience to be great. An early dinner prevents exhaustion, without

producing oppression. Tea, as a substantial meal, is a most powerful and agreeable auxiliary to the labour of the mind, and supper the most grateful restorative, when the labour is over. On the whole, I think, for ordinary occasions, early dining is much more favourable to smoothness of life than late.

When on the subject of salads, in a former chapter, I forgot to protest against the vulgar practice of chopping lettuce small, more like food for turkeys than human beings. One of the best and most elegant salads at this season of the year is composed of well blanched endive, red beet-root, and fine celery, and it should be

dressed in the manner I have already mentioned. Salad is a luxury, in general, very inadequately enjoyed at great dinners; first, because it is seldom dressed with much skill, and secondly, because it is not sufficiently within reach.

THE END.