

**The spoon: with upwards of one hundred illustrations, primitive, Egyptian, Roman, mediaeval, and modern / By Habbakuk O. Westman. Being a part of the Trans. Society of Literary and Scientific Chiffoniers, illustrating the primitive arts in domestic life.**

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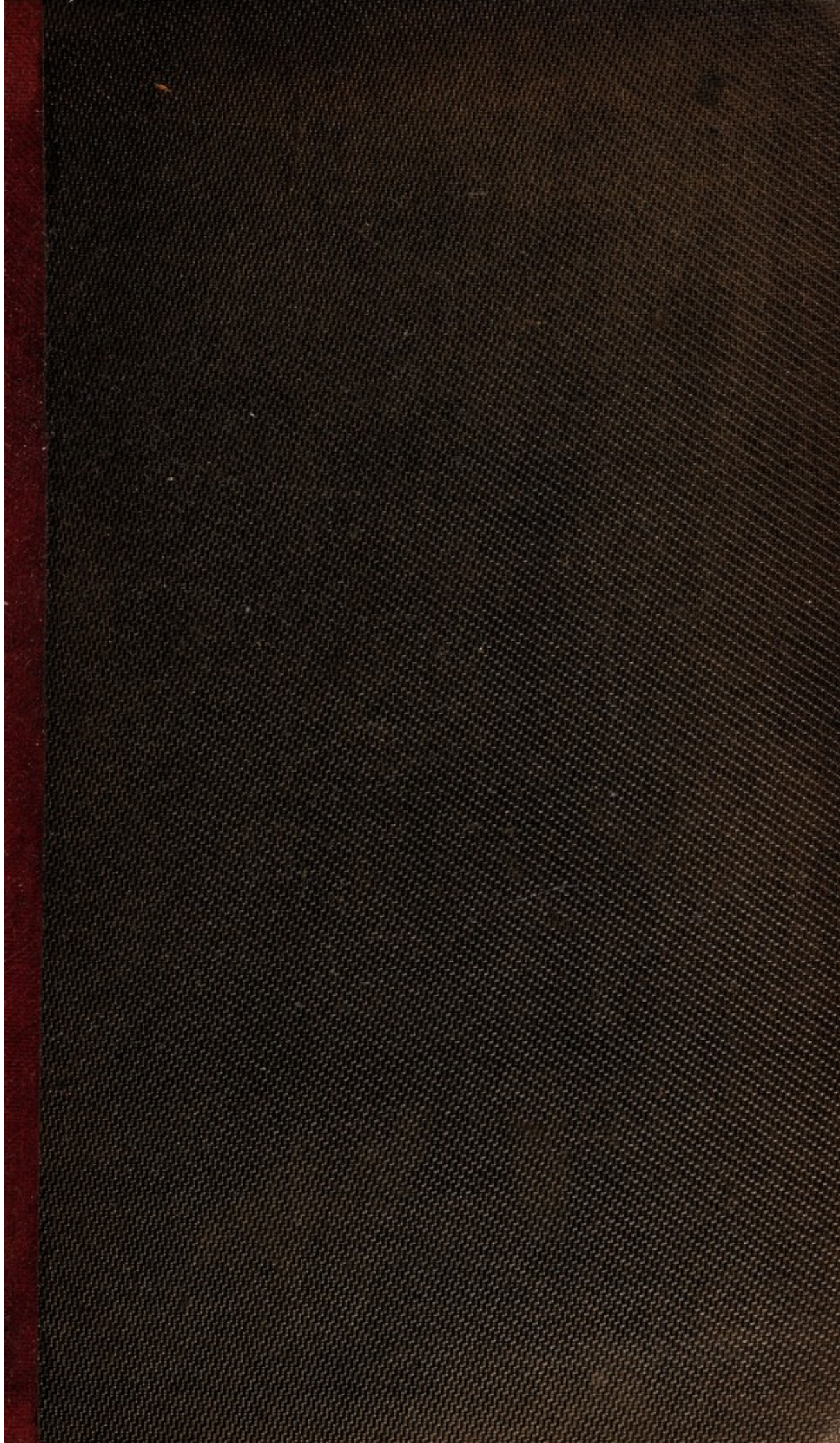
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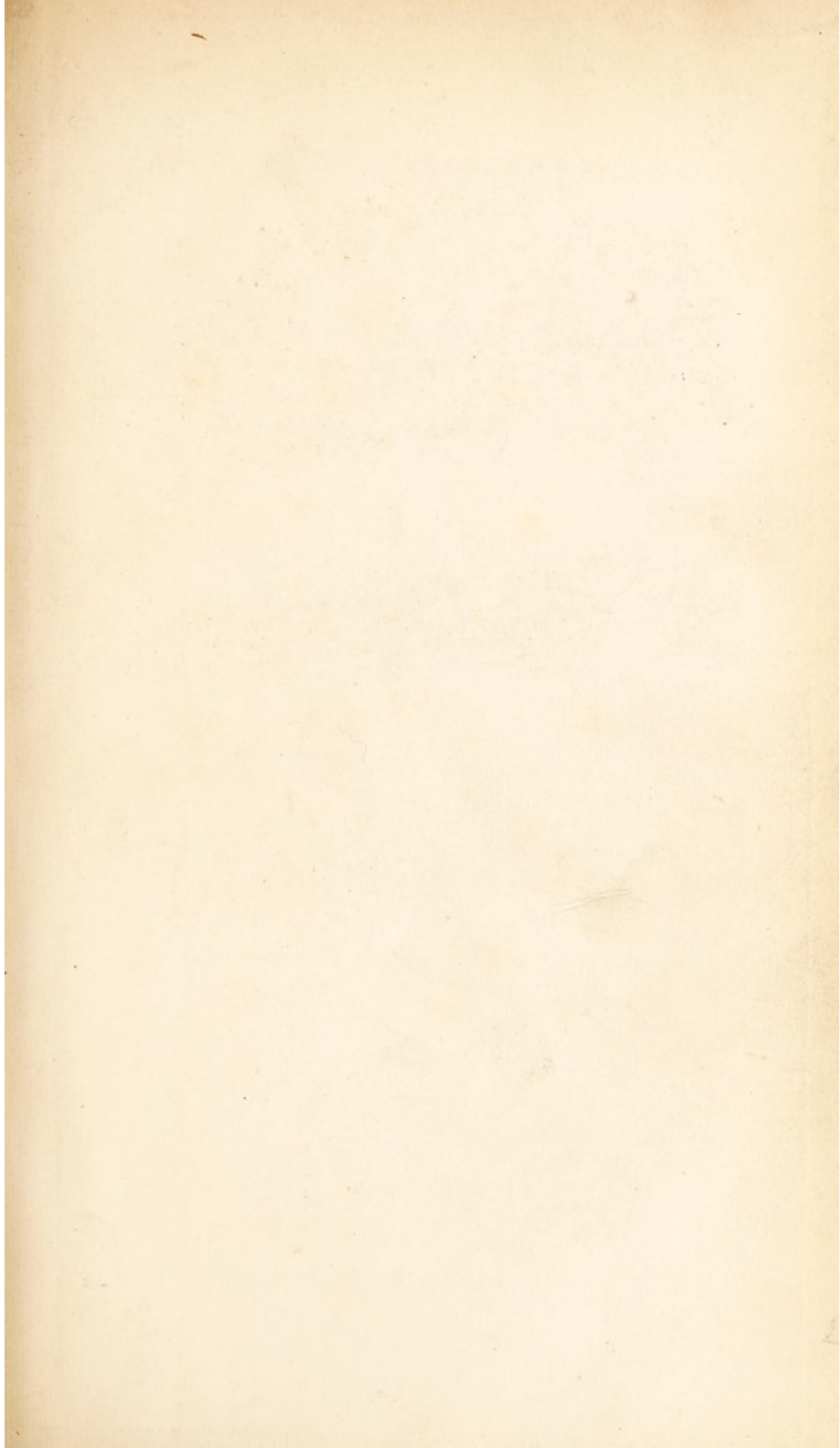
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*Wm. George*  
*June 24/73*

# THE SPOON:

WITH  
UPWARDS OF ONE HUNDRED ILLUSTRATIONS,

PRIMITIVE, EGYPTIAN, ROMAN, MEDIÆVAL,  
AND MODERN.

*[i.e. Thomas E. W. Bank]*  
BY HABBAKUK O. WESTMAN,

OF THE GLOBE TAVERN;  
FORMERLY TEACHER OF A PUBLIC SCHOOL.

BEING A PART OF  
THE TRANSACTIONS OF THE SOCIETY OF LITERARY AND  
SCIENTIFIC CHIFFONIERS,

ILLUSTRATING THE PRIMITIVE ARTS IN DOMESTIC LIFE.

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LONDON:  
WILEY & PUTNAM, 6, WATERLOO PLACE.

1845.






## ADVERTISEMENT.

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‘THE SPOON’ is the first of a series of papers designed to elucidate the origin, history, and value of several primitive devices, which, from their apparent insignificance, have been overlooked by writers on the useful arts; but which have not been without their influence on the progress of civilization. As it was out of the question to treat every subject with the gravity due to historical research—to do so a writer must be the personification of melancholy herself—the idea was adopted of embracing them under the ‘Transactions’ of a Society, whose name should indicate their miscellaneous character, and relative value among literary merchandize. Small as this value may be, there are persons simple enough to suppose the annals of the shuttle and needle, of bellows and boilers, &c. possess higher claims on the attention of the moralist, philosopher, and historian, than many dignified tomes of acknowledged history; for what are these, when divested of extraneous matters, but records of the club, sword and bayonet, the musket, cannon, and scaffold?

THE PUBLISHERS.





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## PREFACE.

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A TURKISH shepherd tending his flocks in the vicinity of Adrianople, bethought of solacing himself with a few whiffs of tobacco. Seated on the ground, under the shade of a tree, he drew from a pouch his apparatus for striking fire, but found the piece of flint missing. He therefore arose, looked about for a stone, and at length picked up a pebble, which answered the purpose so well that he used it daily for a year or more. It came to pass that a Jewish pedlar one morning approached as the boor was lighting his pipe. The Israelite took a fancy to the stone, and bought it for a few aspers—soon after which, it shone the largest and brightest gem in the turban of Mahomet IV:—Now every reader of this book will either resemble the disciple of Moses or the Mahomedan keeper of sheep. It is true, diamonds are not concealed within the leaves; yet he who has wit to detect, *aurum e stercore*, gold from dirt—will certainly meet with something more than materials to light a cigar.

New-York, February, 1844.





## INTRODUCTION:

*Embracing a Sketch of the Origin and Organization of the  
Society of Chiffonniers.*

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### COURTEOUS READER :

In the character of an author I beg leave to salute thee as my reader ; and, as host of "The Globe," as my guest. Having for some time kept an establishment for the accommodation of travellers—that is, for supplying at moderate charges such conveniences and refreshments as are necessary to comfort and strengthen the body or outer man, I have lately been induced, indeed in a manner compelled, by the rage of competition, to add a new branch to the business ; a department for providing various cates and delicious dainties to cheer and invigorate the spirit or inner man—to the end that both the mental and material palates of my patrons may be gratified at my table.

This, it is suspected, will become a general practice. As libraries are expelling decanters from steamers, sojourners at hotels will next require landlords to furnish literary as well as culinary food—books as well as butcher's meat ; philosophical essays and fashionable novels as well as pasties and beef à la mode. A change is passing over the world, and none feel it more than those in my line. Temperance has already turned bar-rooms out of doors ; while,



from the efforts made by new doctors on diet, it is likely kitchens will soon have to follow. So far as I am concerned, the change will not be disagreeable, for I still prefer Horace to Kitchiner, and Tully to Mrs. Glasse. I can have no objection to imitate Phædo, who kept a victualing shop, and entertained those whom he fed ; for like him I may peradventure have a Socrates for a boarder. May I hope, gentle guest, our acquaintance will be as agreeable to thyself as to me—that the fare to be set before thee will be to thy taste, and that I and my family may often have the prof—I mean the pleasure of thy company.

Ahem—It never was my wont to make excuses when my stock of viands was low ; yet, sooth to say, the pantry is at present bare of fresh meats and of game. Vegetable and other watery aliments have been so much cried up in these parts, that old dealers in sirloins and haunches have been driven from the trade ; some have taken stands in the fish-market, others opened stores for the sale of garden-truck, and not a few have begun to vend “cookies and candies,” which last, strange to say, are found the most profitable. All I can therefore promise thee on the present occasion is a simple dish, or rather a wholesome bowl of spoon-meat—*un déjeuner à la cuiller*. I pray thee let not thine anger kindle at this announcement, for, on my veracity and hopes of public favor, it is a pleasant and not an unsubstantial food—a rather thick, but still an agreeable, acidulous fluid—one in which thou wilt find (what Englishmen erroneously attribute to beer) both meat and drink—though certainly not washing and mending, which Irishmen, it is said, formerly ascribed to their whiskey.

Its appearance may not be enticing to “queasy” appetites, but I have seldom known a customer who, after once tasting it, did not lick the dish clean. Pray excuse me : I am oblivious in bringing into the parlor expressions belong-

ing to the kitchen. But I scorn to take advantage of any one—to decoy customers by false colors; *i. e.* by hanging out signboards which promise what I cannot supply. Thou hast seen my *signum* on the title page, where it honestly indicates, as honest signs should do, the entertainment to be had within; and to convince thee of the liberal principles on which I am determined to build up my business, I ask not a doit for the meal of which thou art about to partake—all that is required of thee is to meet the small charge of the publisher for this “bill of fare.” Having done that—there is a seat—here comes thy food—now sit thee down, and in the language of mine ancient brethren of the spigot and spit, “much good may it do thee.”

There is one thing it behooves me to say, since it will, I trust, assist in making our acquaintance more lasting than from a temporary visit it otherwise might be. People of my profession are natural judges of character. Without knowing how, we become practical physiognomists—comprehending at a glance a stranger’s disposition, his station in society, and often the state of his purse—not that the latter excites my curiosity as it does that of unworthy members of the craft—men whose attentions are graduated by their ideas of the répletion or collapsion of a customer’s pockets. Now there are traits in thy countenance of a cultivated and ingenuous mind—marks stamped by Nature on her favorite offspring. Hence it is not less my duty than my desire to make thy short stay with me agreeable.

It was formerly a custom of respectable hosts to entertain an esteemed guest during his first refection with pleasant stories, traditions, local news, or other matters; on which account, chiefly, inns or taverns became known as “houses of entertainment.” Attached as I am to the good old ways of our forefathers, I will take this chair and relate some particulars which will not be distasteful to so



amiable a spirit as thine. They will prepare thee for the company of a number of gentlemen, whom I hope to have the honor of introducing to thee, members of a society whose meetings are held once a week in my house. If I have not misjudged thy character, thou wilt be amused with their conversation; and wilt moreover learn the names of some new dishes, which, with their assistance, I hope shortly to serve to my customers.

I have here an abridged history of the association, drawn up by the secretary. It commences thus:

“The society was organized by a few plain individuals whose time was taken up during the day with the current occupations of life. Men of moderate capacities and attainments, they united to a little general knowledge a pretty large amount of ambition, for they determined not to be overlooked in the general herd of the living, and *not* to sink into instant oblivion at death. They had no idea of having their individualities amalgamated with the myriads travelling with them to the grave—like drops of rain in a shower, undistinguishable from each other while falling, and never to be identified afterwards. They therefore cast about for the means of making some noise in the world, or of so performing their parts on its theatre, that if they could not secure the applause conferred on first rate actors, they would try to avoid the silence of contempt, that attends the entrance of poor ones, and the momentary shrug conferred on the exit of quiet ones.

“Impressed with these views, they concluded to form themselves into some kind of literary or philosophical society, this appearing the most promising mode of acquiring notoriety. They hoped in this way to accomplish jointly what they could not do individually, viz. get up something in the shape of a book, which should make them known while they lived, and remain a memorial of them after their



decease. It signified little how poor the performance might be, or how unfit they were to perform it, for they were aware that the more incapable an author is the more likely he is sometimes to be remembered; his unfitness being the very cause of his notoriety. They instanced the case of W. READ, an English baronet, who published a work on optics, and could neither write a line of it nor peruse one; or even tell when his book was upside down—a circumstance by which alone he is still remembered, and his name renewed in print.

“Then, as for the number of copies sold—should they be many or few—some stray ones would be almost sure to wander through a century, if not a longer period; and suppose the leaves *then* distributed by grocers, as envelopes of tea, cheese, or soap; or pasted as linings in trunks; they might perchance call up some recollections of, or enquiries about, the authors. Nay, if a dozen copies only were printed, future bibliomaniacs would certainly treasure them up like Queen Anne’s farthings—or like the twenty-six volumes of sermons by WILLIAM DAVY, a Devonshire clergyman, of the last century, of which the first and only edition consisted of fourteen copies. A bookworm prizes one of these as a treasure; and hence, the members of the proposed association hoped some bookworms of the twentieth century would cluck over a few impressions of their work, as brooding hens over their callow young.

“The first thing was to agree on a plan, as success would depend principally upon the wisdom with which it was drawn up, and the energy and prudence with which it was carried out. Several meetings were held, and numerous measures suggested. Mr. Delf thought it would not be amiss to run over a host of institutions already established. Perhaps, (said he,) by modifying or by joining one of them, our objects might be attained. The idea was

acted on, but none were found to be precisely what was wanted. Mr. Digwell remarked, that it would not answer at all to unite with any. We are (he observed) men of ordinary abilities, of humble pretensions, and never can attain distinction among abler persons. Instead of seeking initiation into Lyceums, Academies, and other bodies of the learned, among whom we can only be hewers of wood and drawers of water, lighters of lamps and riddlers of ashes—‘helps,’ not members of the family—we ought to establish ourselves on independent, unoccupied ground. Let us have a field of our own, however small it may be—one that borders on no other people’s property. [‘A pretty large field, that,’ observed Dr. Swallow.] I beg pardon; I meant one so clearly defined, so well enclosed, that there might be no danger of us trespassing on our neighbor’s grounds, or they hunting on ours.

“I am not prepared at this moment to say where such a field is, but I am persuaded it is to be had. One to which other associations have no claim—to which their ‘tracks’ do not lead. It would indeed be unworthy of us to attempt a location where the title might be disputed; and sure I am we could not start a new settlement in the vicinity of our predecessors without being abused as intruders, if not served with writs of ejectment.

“Look at the hosts of regular associations for the promotion of *science* in general, and others to extend its separate departments; the world is full of them; they swarm every where. It is the same with *literary* societies: these are as common as ‘Common Schools,’ and excite about the same amount of interest. Academies of the *fine arts*, and institutions for *agricultural* and *mechanic arts*, abound in every village. Their name is legion. So it is with *religious*, *moral*, and *active benevolent* societies. The best, at any rate the most attractive, sites are all taken up—not a yard is left be-









tween those cultivated by national institutes, and such as are covered by parish associations for the gratuitous distribution of soup."

[These sentiments were evidently approved, but as the evening was far advanced, a proposal was made to adjourn; when Mr. Jacob Christener rose and begged leave to say a few words.]

"The gentleman is right, Mr. Chairman, and I thank him for so clearly opening the way for a motion I have to make. He has strengthened my convictions of its propriety, and given me the confidence I lacked to bring it forward. It seems to me, sir, the only plan open to us is the one I am about to propose, and if we don't lay hold of it, others will. It has hitherto been unthought of, but cannot long remain concealed. Reject it, and farewell to the happiness anticipated from our union while we live, and to the odor that is to exhale from our names after death. Adopt it, and this night we become the parents of a society whose auxiliaries will rise up in every land. In twelve months, we shall want a travelling agent, a foreign sec—"

[Here the speaker was interrupted with cries of "What is it?" "There's no time for a preface to-night!" "Order!" &c.]

"Well, gentlemen, to be short, then: I propose that we organize ourselves into '*The Society of Literary and Scientific Chiffonniers*.' [On this announcement, an explosion burst forth simultaneously from every mouth, except the speaker's, and some good humored remarks were exchanged. When the excitement had a little subsided, he continued:] I was prepared for this; I expected as much; but hear me out, and then be as merry as you please. If a better plan be not brought forward—one equally original, and less open to objections—why, then it will be my turn to laugh.



"Here have we been engaged this evening five mortal hours, without agreeing on the character of the proposed association, chiefly from the difficulty of steering clear of those already established. We admit the latter are too numerous to allow an additional one of the same kind any chance of success. Why, then, excite a competition we lack means to carry on? It would be folly to attempt it; besides, we are agreed that no modification of any old institution can meet our wants. Now, the plan I propose is derived from and indebted to none. It crowds on and interferes with none, but gives to all a wide berth. There is no danger of our ever being amalgamated with any. Our identity will be preserved, for none will be in a hurry to adopt our designation or infringe on our labors.

"Let us be candid, at least among ourselves. We are, then, philosophical mendicants. We have no property of our own—not a scrap—and we confess inability to originate any. Whatever we get must come from other people; hence, as members of established societies, we could not succeed, or even be respected, for we have nothing to command respect; and I risk little in saying, if we made application for admission, nine-tenths of us would be black-balled. As well expect Chambers of Commerce to offer scavengers seats and votes at their boards; or extensive dealers in dry goods to receive the owners of apple stands into their firms. There are but two ways to realize anything—honestly and roguishly; or, as the saying is, 'by hook or by crook.' Now, as we disavow all ideas of hooks, (except the small and harmless ones by which chiffonniers raise moist matters into their baskets or bags,) we must, to succeed in any other society, give value for the property we acquire—but this we cannot do—or receive it as alms—which we won't do. What, then, is left for us, but to pick up what others throw away? From my experience, gen-



lemen, I assert there is more to be thus got, than you are aware of. With industry, we can acquire wealth—a local habitation and a name—wealth that none will dispute with us; for it will consist of a mass of minute matters, which, individually considered, the owners will be ashamed to claim. If we cannot deal in webs and wholesale packages of fresh goods, we shall become extensive jobbers in fragments of old goods.

“Pray, who can interfere with our ranging the bye-paths and alleys, the cellars and garrets of science, in search of lumber—to pick up, as it were, bits of rags, bones, and glass, with other small matters, which the wealthy throw out, and the proud step over? None. On the contrary, we can rake at our leisure the kennels, and stir up heaps of cinders and street sweepings, without let or hindrance; and, depend upon it, we shall every now and then meet with a godsend, (as our prototypes often do, in the shape of a silver spoon or fork, thrown out in slops by slipshod scullions.) Yes, industrious chiffonniers, we shall bring many rare and lost things to light—things singularly *recherché*—curious and useful as those found in historical and antiquarian collections. If we are true to ourselves, the ‘Chiffonniers’ Repository’ will soon equal in interest any other.

“Our labors will be pleasant; we can carry off what we fancy, and leave what is disagreeable. They will be profitable. Many a chiffonnier has purchased the house in front of which he once looked out for chiffons, has changed conditions with its owner, thrown off his professional garb and stepped into the parlor, lounged as a gentleman on his own sofa, and listened to the warblings of his daughters at the piano! And who knows, Mr. Chairman, but we shall do so too—shall hold our meetings in stately buildings now belonging to other societies, compete with the wealthy Nestors of knowledge in their own halls, and perhaps at last

turn them out of their own doors! [Cries of 'Hear!' 'Hear!' interrupted the speaker.]

"Think, gentlemen, how interesting our meetings will be. When a member brings in his budget and displays his gatherings, who can sit still? Who can restrain his curiosity? Verily, not one of us! Then what original, erudite, and racy remarks will be made! Here, a speaker descanting on the value of spoons, or the history of grid-irons; there, another relating the adventures of a stocking foot, which he proves once had a place in Queen Elizabeth's or Madame Maintenon's wardrobe. This member gives a lecture on the value of many simple and primitive devices which the world never thinks of; and that, shows the claims which the trammel and tinder-box have on the gratitude of mankind!

"Another word, and I have done: We shall have a jubilee once a year; for I propose that we offer a collection of chiffons at public sale, every spring or fall. Then will buyers of miscellanies crowd our marts, and bring us their wealth in exchange for our wares! We shall make a kind of Leipsic Fair of it! Gentlemen, our prospects are glorious; they brighten as we gaze at them. I feel animated by anticipations of success. I see that as Chiffonniers we shall ascend the rugged mount on which stands the temple of Fame, and get there before others who are now half way up. Bless us! what a welcome the old lady will give us to her abode! What a blast she will blow in honor of chiffon-niering!—in praise of a new set of men who have cut a new path to her dwelling!"

[The speaker sat down amidst much acclamation.]

"The discussion here closed for the evening, and was resumed on the following one, when an extended and animated debate was kept up to a late hour. Various slight modifications of the plan suggested were brought forward. They



will be understood from the style or title by which each speaker proposed to designate the body. The most striking were: 'Odds and Ends Association,' 'Literary Rag Society,' 'Scientific Scrap ditto,' 'Miscellany Club,' 'Chiffonniers' Institute,' 'Society for reviving the claims and preserving memorials of sundry Primitive Inventions,' 'Emporium of Philosophical Small Wares.' The general feeling settled on the fourth and fifth. At the first ballot, the votes stood equally in favor of the Miscellanarians and the Chiffonniers—but on the second, the street rovers and rag pickers were triumphant.

"The Chiffonniers admitted 'The Miscellany Club' would be a more respectable designation; and the Miscellanarians conceded that 'The Chiffonniers' Institute' was characteristic and select. By a subsequent and unanimous vote, the latter was changed to '*The Society of Literary and Scientific Chiffonniers*,' as at first proposed.

"A constitution was next agreed on. It declares the objects of the society to be, the picking up of literary, philosophical, mechanical, or other fragments, from unusual or neglected sources, and to revive the claims of simple, and what are generally deemed insignificant, devices. It is the duty of each member to visit odd and out of the way places, open to him, in search of chiffons. Common subjects of discussion are excluded at the meetings. A paper on matches or walking-sticks would be applauded, while one on the strength or other properties of timber would be a signal for the author's expulsion. A communication on costume would be received perhaps with indifference, but if confined to a single article of apparel, or to a fragment of one, would be hailed with acclamation. A lecture on any regular manufacture, as glass making, iron founding, earthen ware, the furniture of a parlor or kitchen, &c. would hardly be admissible; but one on a bottle, or part of one, on a cal-



dron, a pipkin, a broken chair, or a cheese grater, would rejoice the hearts of the members. Every chiffonnier to prepare a paper or lecture on a chiffon, in his turn.

"At the first meeting under the constitution, the expressive apothegm '*Vive la Bagatelle*' was selected as the Society's motto. The author of the plan adopted was chosen President, but as Mr. Christener persisted in declining the chair, to which he was entitled, the late Dr. Nathan Swallow was elected, though not by a unanimous vote. No other member possessed such varied qualifications. His experience with men and matters was extensive, for he had dabbled in almost every thing, but succeeded in few.

"Had been every thing by starts, but nothing long."

"How he came by his title is a vexed question, as he was never known to have studied medicine, nor to have dealt in drugs, except one which no longer holds a place in the pharmacopia. Alchemy was his favorite study, and he is said to have made a near approach to projection; *i. e.* to the composition of a powder which, thrown into certain ingredients, transmutes them to gold. Certain it is, he realized money by a secret of this kind, while others who tried it were ruined. One person of property lost his all in two years; and another was beggared in less time, and consigned, a hopeless maniac, to a lunatic asylum; but the history of modern as well as ancient alchemy is full of such things.

"He talked on all subjects, practical or theoretical, physical or metaphysical; on the properties of iron and whiskey, colors and calicoes, filial obedience and the philosopher's stone; on the evils of theatres, and the performance of crack actors. He occasionally performed Falstaff, and without stuffing, for he was what the French call *chargé de cuisine*. Columbus himself was not more embued with the spirit of adventure. Within a fortnight of first hearing the

terms geognosy, hornblende, serpentine, trilobite, and madrepore, in a conversation between two geologists, he had a person at work labeling a basket of minerals; and getting the names of a dozen by heart, boldly proposed to undertake the survey of a state. An extraordinary chiffonnier, he dashed without hesitancy into every opening where chiffons were likely to be had—he was not one of those who confine themselves to street sweepings, but was ever on the *qui vive* for wholesale speculations. Dryden certainly must have dreamt of him when describing Buckingham, for

He was often in the course of one revolving moon,  
Author, actor, artist, cook, chemist, and buffoon :

And in another month as many more.

“Rich in Apician lore, he could enumerate the famous dishes of old, from those placed on the table of Heliogabalus to Spartan broth and Athenian porridge, and could name the ingredients of all. In modern cookery, he was more at home; nothing escaped his observation, and but little his palate. His taste was equal to Pollio’s; his knowledge of the mysteries of the kitchen surpassed that of M. Beaujeu. See him take his seat at a supper party; watch him draw a laden dish towards him, and you would shudder from a dread that his eyes were about to drop into his plate—as if attached like those of the chameleon to the ends of flexible tubes, so fearfully did they advance and recede. He was at one time known as ‘Spoonie,’ and ‘Eating Nat,’ for he had an appetite equal to Galba’s—a stomach capacious as that of Vitellius. His spoon, and he had one for his exclusive use, might apply to him, with a slight alteration, an epigram by Boileau :

Here lies my owner, and heaven knows,  
Not less for mine than his repose.

“An excellent representative of the god of raillery and ridicule—that is, if Momus was a short and squab fellow



of forty, with a droll leer, a shambling gait, and a touch of Silenus or Bacchus about him. Exceedingly facetious, the Doctor told stories equal to Matthews or Hackett, and rivaled Braham in singing. He was full of first rate though second hand wit. His physiognomy was prepossessing, though his friends used to joke him about a devil lurking in his eye, which, they said, appeared sly as Sancho's, and mischievous as the solitary one in Ichabod Crane's nag.

"His knowledge was said by his friends to have been universal. In science, an Arago; in philosophy, a Newton; in chemistry, a Farraday or Berzelius; in general knowledge, a Crichton. Well versed in Thaumaturgy, he certainly could beat conjurers at their own weapons. An adept in Metoposcopy, he saw at once the various points in human character, and by some mesmeric influence could always open a communication between himself and those in whose affairs he wished to take an interest.

"All great men have their enemies, and Doctor Swallow was not without his. He had to pay the usual penalty exacted by envious detractors. These insisted that he was a literary Bombastes, in veracity a Mandeville, in morals a Mephistopheles, in scheming a Machiavel, and in every thing except humbugging a humbug. A retailer of other men's ideas, which (said they) he claimed as his own, and, like all liars, often forgot himself and claimed them in the presence of those from whom he received them—that his life was a lie. There is little doubt, that both parties were wrong. He never was the angel one made him, nor the devil the other called him; but, whatever he was, he was made President of the Society; and, all things considered, it was thought a better selection could not have been made; for, as an old chiffonnier, he had picked up more chiffons, and knew how to make more of them, than any other artist who lived by the hook.



"Popular with most of the members, nearly all consulted him on subjects they brought forward. Ever ready to give advice, and seldom more pleased than when asked for it. Though he never wrote a paper but one, and of the authorship of that some doubts have been raised, he was a judge of what would 'take;' or, what often amounts to the same thing, he had that reputation.

"When conducted to the chair, he rose with smiles playing round his lips and satisfaction sparkling in his eyes, and thus commenced his opening address: Gentlemen, I.... I know not how to thank you for this honor. I....I....d—n it, I cannot make a formal speech—I never could—unless I had it by heart. I tried once before at extempore, but it was no go; after getting rid of a few sentences, a kind of mental and physical lock-jaw seized me, and there I stood—my mouth wide open, and without the power to close it, or to call to mind what I meant to say. It was said I stood grinning like a Barbary ape, and in my efforts to articulate might have stood longer, if Medlar had not pulled me down by the skirt, while saying loud enough (hang him) for half the room to hear, 'don't make an ass of yourself, Nat.' Gentlemen, that man is now here, and I never see him without thinking of the predicament I was in, and the ugly epithet he gave me. I cannot go on unless he goes out, and I am not sure even then. But, gentlemen, if I cannot thank you as I'd like to, I can treat you to something better—something to eat. Will not a member move an adjournment to my house, where we can discuss matters more at ease, and amuse ourselves at intervals with a cold cut and a drop of"—[Ere the proposition was finished, the meeting adjourned amidst cries of 'Bravo!' 'Excellent!' 'A first rate speech, that, Doctor!']

"Reassembled at his dwelling, the party partook of a substantial supper, during which a curious conversation

arose on variety of tastes for food. Mr. Milder, an amiable and highly intelligent young man, but rather odd in some of his views, thought it artificial; others, with the Doctor, contended that it was natural. Nature, it was said, never designed men to live on one kind of food; if she had, she would not have furnished them with so many. She moreover produces no one in sufficient quantities to supersede all others, nor has she distributed any one over the whole earth. That's true, observed the Doctor; if we were designed to have but one dish, as pork, beef, mutton, or turkey, bread, cabbage, potatoes, or yams, I should like to know where *enough* is to come from? The case is different with drink. Water may be the natural beverage of animals and men, for it is every where, and every where abundant; but not so with either animal or vegetable food. It was further observed by the advocates for variety, that we might as well read only one book as eat of one dish; for if material palates are originally moulded after one pattern, so are literary ones. But no, said they; Nature has made both to vary as much as the minds and persons or faces of men. The Doctor thought if men had but one dish for the body and another for the mind, it would save a world of trouble to booksellers and keepers of eating houses; yet, even with those people, he was sure things were better as they are, because, said he, different tastes bring into action diverse talents, and so give employment to hosts of writers, and, what is better, to swarms of cooks. It is therefore right that what suits one stomach should not be the thing to tickle all others. Here is my friend, Sam Tortiller, imagines a connection between the bent of man's genius and his favorite food; as if by knowing the general course of a person's studies one could tell what he craves for his dinner, and *vice versa*. I don't believe a word of it. A writer on morals may love pork, and an author of romances abhor



it; but, to my knowledge, all pork eaters are not righteous men, nor those who let pigs alone composers of fiction. Professor Freeling often digests turkey, but it's not every chemist who can afford to put that into his digester. Then there is Finelli, a lover of shell fish—but what then?—if the lady that poets call the Genius of Song sometimes visits an oyster cellar, she does not confine her favors to those who either chew or eschew clams, crabs, and lobsters. Mr. Milder, let me help you to a slice of this ham; I believe you have not tasted it.”

“Not any for me; I never eat any, Mr. President.”

“Not eat ham! Why, you are neither a Jew nor a Turk, I hope, to abominate those glorious animals that supply us with the richest of all relishes?”

“No; but I prefer hams from China, if I must eat any.”

“O! O! I thought you knew what's good! Well! I can't say this fine fellow ever ran through the streets of Canton; but, is the difference of flavor between your oriental favorites and ours very sensible?”

“Very.”

“Ah! I must get my friend, Captain Drinker, to bring over a Chinaman grunter, or a few hams; but, will these not spoil on the voyage?”

“No danger of that. The fact is, sir, I am not a consumer of animal food; the joints I allude too are *vegetable* ones. They are described by La Compte and other travellers.”

“You are joking, (observed the Doctor, inquiringly;) Sam, here, says you are a terrible bore that way!”

“Not at all, (replied Mr. Milder;) I almost hope to see the day when no other hams will be used. You have heard of *wooden* ones?”

“Yes! Carved blocks of wood, so neatly sewed up in hog skins, as to deceive the eyes of the keenest pork butch-

ers! Yes; I have read of people boiling them, but I never heard of any having been *eaten*."

"True; but even that is not so unlikely as you seem to think."

"I pray heaven, (said the Doctor,) the practice may never become general; the chine of a two year old shote is with me a favorite dish. What reason have you for supposing it ever will, Mr. Milder?"

"Why, sir, you of course know that a few years ago, a German philosopher discovered the nutritious elements of wheaten bread in wooden meal—that he made wholesome cakes out of pine boards, and supported his wife and five children for seven weeks on dumplings kneaded of dough formed of fine sawdust and water. The paste, it is said, rose without leaven, and when cooked was really delicious—especially so, when lubricated with molasses, or sprinkled with the essence of sugar, extracted by Braconnot from old rags and scrap paper. Now, an ingenious friend of mine has been engaged on a somewhat analagous subject for the last twelve months, and, from an experiment I witnessed yesterday, I have no hesitation in avowing my confidence in his assertion that he will shortly produce good palatable pork out of whitewood, and well seasoned hams from red cedar."

[Much laughter, during which the Doctor observed, in a suppressed voice, to the gentleman at his right, "Sam, this fellow is a devil of a quiz; I cannot believe he is serious, and yet what a solemn phiz he puts on."]

"Now, sir, (continued Mr. Milder,) where is there a man of feeling who would not rejoice at the success of my friend, in attempting to change the world from a shambles for gratifying the carnivorous appetites of our species—a slaughter house constantly flooded with gore and vibrating with the shrieks of expiring victims? For my part, sir, I never



see a female cutting up raw flesh, her hands smeared with blood—now killing, plucking, embowelling, and at last, with perfect nonchalance, transfixing innocent fowls or sucking pigs on the spit, without shuddering at the disgusting employment—at the horrible effects of indulging unnatural appetites! O! how would the spirit of humanity exult at the abolition of animal diet—or even at the general introduction of vegetable hams! These would be a consummation in morals and science devoutly to be wished—to be prayed for; all Nature, sir, would rejoice at their manufacture—at any rate, sir, you will admit, all PIGS would—and well they might, as they would (to use a vulgar expression) then save their own bacon! Yes! Their days of mourning would then be over.

“And why should they not save it, sir, as well as we preserve ours? Has not a pig organs, dimensions, feelings, passions, affections? If struck, does it not cry? If wounded, does it not bleed? If imprisoned and in bonds, does it not struggle to be free? If driven to the shambles, does it not refuse to go? When slain, does it not suffer the pangs of death? In one word, sir, is not life as precious to pigs as to any of us? And would they not have cause to rejoice were they and their offspring no longer murdered ere living out half their days? Millions are slain in their infancy, and their parents in the vigor of life! Upwards of a century ago, not less than 52,500 sucking innocents were annually immolated in London alone!

Lovely buds—their mother's pride!

[Here, as at every other pause made by the speaker, excessive laughter broke out afresh; but, unembarrassed, he continued:]

“There is something else, sir, in connection with this subject, which every lover of his country should deplore. Slavery is an unmitigated evil, and we are taught to admire

the free States for shaking the incubus off; it is, however, a melancholy fact, that the citizens of what is called one of the most enlightened and liberal, are carrying to a horrible extent, a system almost equally atrocious. As if regretting their lost dominion over negroes, they seem determined to be revenged a hundred fold upon a race, between which and ours Blumenbach, in his remarks on varieties of complexion, has traced many analogies. Yes! The capital city of Ohio is rapidly rising into power, on the bodies of slaughtered swine! She is already known as 'The Emporium of Pork'—a designation which wicked Nineveh or more wicked Gomorrah would have shrunk from. Her merchandise is flesh. Her bulletins are occupied with its sales, and as the market price rises and falls, so does the value of her real estate. Her merchants are butchers; her staple is stearine; her palaces are built with the price of blood, and illumined at night with the fat of her slain! All her lamps are replenished with lard! Like Babylon, 'seated on many waters, and drunken with blood,' so reclines Cincinnati, on a larger stream than the Euphrates, clothed in scarlet, and proudly calling herself 'Queen of the West!' But let her beware—for, depend upon it, sir, vengeance will not sleep forever; and when pigs get their rights, she will meet her deserts!"

[On Mr. Milder concluding his remarks, a shout of laughter arose that shook both floor and table. Some held their sides, and groaned with pain; others screeched as they, ever and anon, glanced at the imperturbable gravity of Mr. M. and the woful appearance of the President's face.]

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But, indulgent guest, I am trespassing too much on thy patience. I will therefore lay aside, for the present, this account of the Society, and the rather since the author presses hard on the late President. They never were



friendly. The Doctor, like other men, had his faults; but he had good qualities as well. Peace to his ashes! He was one of my best customers in one respect though not in another; for he never was in a hurry to wipe out his scores, and, to speak truth, some he never wiped out. When my turn came round for a paper, I consulted him for a subject, and submitted to him what I wrote. Desirous of not disgracing my former profession of schoolmaster, I took particular pains; but the subject was new, and embarrassed me much. When I left the choice to him, I little imagined he would take a knife from the table and insist that *it* should be my text. However, I made out tolerably well; though he was sparing of praise. He was, in fact, not altogether pleased with my "Adventures of a Carving Knife;" but he made ample amends on another occasion, as will soon be perceived.

My next attempt was a higher flight—a composition half dramatic. There were passages in it of tragic interest: at least, *I* thought so. The subject—an ancient pincushion, brought over in the Mayflower. I had a presentiment that I should take the Doctor by surprise—snatch him up, as by a hurricane, into the regions of romance, and extort his praise ere he had time to descend and recover his self-possession. And, sure enough, something even more than this took place.

By appointment, I met him at his own house. He was in a happy mood, having just risen from dinner. We retired to the parlor, and I handed him the MS. Drawing his arm-chair in front of the fire, and desiring me to take another, he made a remark about the high price of beef, and commenced reading the first paragraph; but he made such murdering work of the sense, running one sentence half way into another, and then stopping as if brought up by a period, that I wriggled in the chair, and felt my viscera

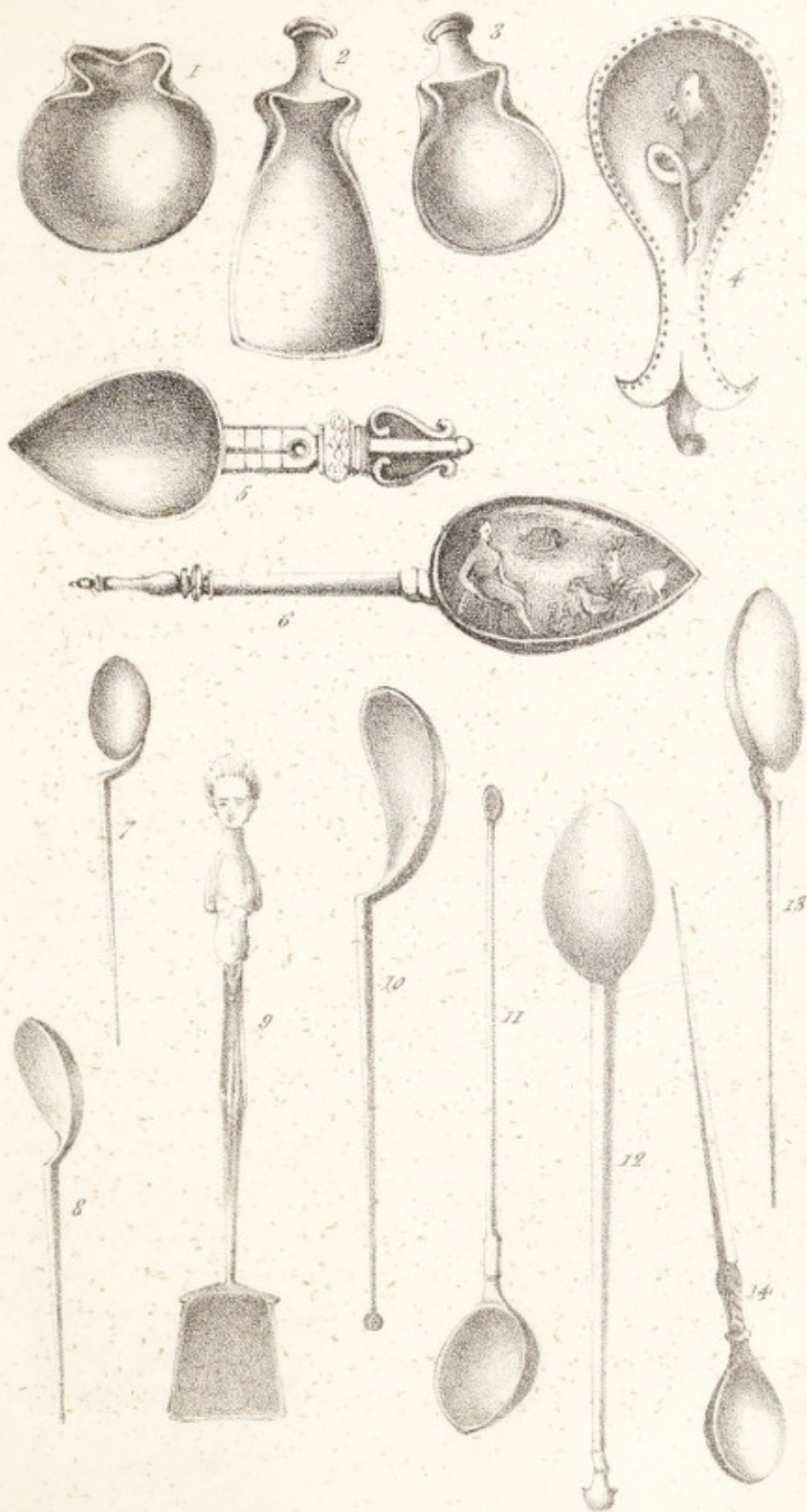
squirming like eels in a bag. I stopped him to explain, but he ascribed every thing to what he called my illegible hand. I proposed to read it myself. To this, he consented ; and, for the benefit of light, I stepped to the window, some distance behind him ; a circumstance which increased my confidence, and left him free to enter into the spirit of the story, unembarrassed with external interruptions.

I had not got through the first chapter before he gave utterance to some short but flattering expressions. They encouraged me wonderfully, and ere the second was finished became more frequent ; the words "rich !" "capital !" dropped from him several times. I felt elated, and went on trippingly to the end—borne along by the kindness of his manner, and quite lifted up with the confidence of having fairly gained his approbation. The reading did not occupy over fifteen minutes ; and, when finished, I remained standing, ready, with pencil in hand, to make such corrections and alterations as he might suggest. He seemed to be balancing the merits of different parts ; for he said, as if to himself, "that was overdone ;" "the other excellent ;" "capital !" He resembled the gentleman mentioned by Horace,

Who long imagin'd that he heard the tone  
Of deep Tragedians on an empty stage,  
And sat applauding, in ecstatic rage.

My feelings quickly overcame my politeness, and I cried "Come, Doctor, what is the sentence? Life or death?" (I had heard enough to know what it would be.) As I said this, I resumed my seat beside him, and thanked him for the kind attention he had given to the humble performance ; but I had scarcely finished the last word ere my old friend gave a memorable proof of the intense interest he had taken in the story—of the fine sensibilities of his nature, and the depth of his feelings. Now, Sir Guest, what think you he did? Perhaps you say: 'I suppose, Mr. Westman, his









cheeks were streaming with tears—his passions, excited by the incidents of the story, had not recovered their natural tone! Or, did he spring from his seat and embrace the magician, who had such power to enchant him? Either would have been very natural.'

He did neither, sir; he was unable to rise.

'Indeed! Why, what was the matter?'

His mental and bodily powers were prostrated.

'What do you mean?'

He was dead! th—

'Dead! did you say, Mr. Westman?'

On my conscience, yes sir; that is, he was, as the saying goes, *dead asleep!* As for tears, his cheeks were as free from them as the back of my hand, and his face calm as an infant's reposing on its mother's breast.

'You really surprise me!'

I was astonished myself, sir.

'And how did you act on making this strange discovery?'

I don't exactly know what I did, sir—nor what I thought—nor how I felt. I was paralyzed—deprived of the powers of speech and motion. My respiration was thick, and at last suspended. I believe I sat gazing on him five minutes without breathing or moving a muscle, except those by which the lower jaw is dropped to its farthest extent, and such as push the eyes out of the head. There was no mistake about his slumbers; to satisfy myself that they were genuine, I remember stretching my face towards his till both were nearly in contact. His mouth was wide open, and I had a full view of the horrible cavern within. What I suffered, ere I had power to leave my seat, was dreadful. Impalement could hardly, I should think, surpass it. When at last I rose and stepped in front of him, heaven forgive me, for, though I say it myself, a quieter man does not breathe, I felt as much inclined to push the end of my cane

down his gullet as ever I had to send any thing pleasant down my own.

On second thoughts, I took my hat, put the MS. in my pocket, and walked softly to the door of the room; when I heard him mutter something about "Betty.....sauce rich; veal.....overdone; rabbits.....excellent." The brute, sir—pardon the uncivil word—was dreaming about his dinner; but that was not all, nor the worst; for it was now clear he had fallen asleep almost as soon as he sat down, and the expressions of approbation which I had foolishly taken to myself were in reality compliments to Betty's skill in roasting and boiling! When this truth flashed on my mind, I felt keenly—my wrath rose, and Satan strongly urged me back to take leave of him by no gentle shake of his person or tweak of his proboscis—but either my good genius or his own interfered, and I hastened out of the house, without meeting one of the family. I am ashamed to say, I felt very unwell during the rest of the day, being greatly more affected than a sensible man should have been; but our feelings are not in our power.

I mentioned the circumstance to a few members the same evening, and learned the Doctor had been in gay company all the morning, and was certainly half drunk at the time of my interview with him. I certainly did notice something strange in him, but my mind was wholly absorbed on the paper. We were anxious to know how he would face the matter out; for no one believed he would for a moment acknowledge being asleep. Within a few days, Medlar, Pickwell, and I, met him in the street; when,—would you believe it?—without the slightest indication of embarrassment, he began the following colloquy:

'Neighbor Westman, further reflection has convinced me your last paper will never do. It will gain you neither credit with the members nor custom from their friends.'



*Further reflection*, did you say, Doctor!

‘There’s nothing in it, believe me, (said he,) neither life—’

Rather nettled, I abruptly asked *what* he wanted in it.

‘I’ll tell you what I don’t want—(he replied ;) a tale dull and monotonous from beginning to end—one without a grain of piquancy in it—flat and distasteful as buckwheat cakes without salt or sauce.’

Now I thought I had done better than could have been expected ; but stop, did you hear a word of—

‘*Expected!* (he cried out, as if wanting to hear nothing more ;) I expect, and so will the members, something like the spices and pickles at your ordinaries, and which you know full well often help an insipid dish down. The paper has but one quality that can render it of any service.’

What may that be?

‘It might serve on occasion as a soporific.’

I believe I colored at this, and said sharply, Yes, I understand. It composed *you* to sleep quick enough—or something else did.

‘No! not asleep ; (said he, unabashed, as with a face of flint—absolutely staggering me with the audacious falsehood ;) I remember feeling a little drowsy.’

Indeed! Do you recollect anything else?

‘No! nothing particular—ex—except that my strictures were perhaps too severe ; but I did not wish to mislead you by being less pointed.’

*Your strictures, eh!* Why, you made none, and for the best of reasons! Look ye, Doctor, you may, for aught I know, be able to catch authors napping when you’re awake, but not when you’re actually snoring. I’ve seen further into your head than you imagine.

Mr. Westman, (said he, in a bristling manner,) I hope you don’t mean to—to—t—t—t—

Yes, I do! and what’s more Doctor, I felt so confoundedly queer that I had some difficulty in refraining from —

‘From what?’

Never mind; I’ve got over it now; but you don’t see another paper of mine, I promise you, unless you will go through it before dinner. “Further reflection,” as you say, has convinced me the last is yet defective. I’ll revise, and we’ll read it some evening.

‘Better put it in the fire, some morning, (he said, resentfully, as if caught in an unpleasant dilemma, and determined to get out with a bold face; then assuming a patronizing tone, added :) Believe me, neighbor, you, and others I wot of, will never succeed in life till you let scribbling alone.’

Then, Doctor, let me tell you tha—

‘Peace, (he interrupted,) I pray you, peace! I know you, and Medlar, and Fribble, and Delever, well. Your talents are good of their *kind*, and may be useful in their *place*.’

In their place! Where is that?

‘*In the kitchen!* Confine your energies to your proper vocations, and you may do well. Stick to your fires and fuel, your andirons and hearths, spits and bellows, pots and pans, knives and forks—to your ladles and spoons—to—’

Enough! Enough! Egad, Doctor, you are right this time! (I exclaimed.) Yes, we will! We’ll write papers on all of them; and I’ll begin myself with *THE SPOON*.

On hearing this, he gazed intently on my face, and, as he turned on his heel, whispered in my ear, “Habbakuk, thou hast been handling thy decanters this morning!”

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I have no more to add, except to appeal, courteous reader, to thy judgment. Let me, therefore, entreat thee not to peruse the following pages directly after dinner, lest Morpheus make his appearance, and thou shouldst sin, like the President of the Chiffonnier Society, by ascribing the imp’s visit to

HAB’K O. WESTMAN.



# The Spoon;

ANCIENT AND MODERN.

## CHAPTER I.

*Singular Subjects chosen by Authors—The Spoon, a popular and fertile one—Sancho Panza, a Spoonmaker—Influence of this Profession on his Adventures—Ingenuity of Cervantes—Pedro Garcia's Purse—Selection of the Spoon for a Theme, an Indication of Taste—One of the first things wanted on coming into the world, and last parted with ere going out—Its Domestic and Moral Influence—Ancient Fracas with Hot Broth.*

SINGULAR are the subjects on which authors have written: as Lucian on a fly, Apuleius on the ass, Virgil on a gnat, and Homer on a pitched battle between some frogs and mice. One writer is sublime on a flea, another on the north wind, and a third on nothing. Here, one expatiates on the social pipe; and there, goes a royal counterblast against tobacco. Pope has a poem on a lock of hair, Gray wrote lines on a cat, Prior on the ladle, and Cowper on the sofa.

Tasso spun out twelve cantos on a bucket, and John Heywood, in Henry the Eighth's time, wrote seventy-seven chapters on cobwebs and spiders.

The merry Dean of St. Patrick's wrote an essay on a broomstick; and some reviewer of a late work on hydraulics thinks the author could readily compose a homily on pump handles, or a series of meditations on cistern hooks. A fig for such subjects, and those who discuss them. A person's taste is seen in what he writes on, as well as in what flows from his pen; and small must be the brains that think on such things. Every one knows Swift's head was worn out when kind Nature led him to muse on the stump of a besom—an emblem of himself. As there was always something of the wizard about him, he naturally selected the same hobby that accommodates witches in their evening excursions. As for the other gentleman, he must be a dry soul indeed, since he could hit upon nothing but water, about which to fill up a book—or some rickety machines to get at it.

Commend us to something better than either; and on the present occasion to that which daily inspired the reverend wit, and at which it is very certain every writer on water-works has labored oftener than at any pump gearing—*videlicet*, A SPOON. Why, there's life in the sound! To the hungry and poor and rich, it conjures up visions of pleasure. Its very picture moves the salivary glands into action, and sets the lickerish muscles agog, while thoughts of the good things with which it often is laden make



mendicants draw in their breath and thrust out their lips, as if about to salute it!

What gentleman cares for a broom, or a cistern pole, except to kick them out of his way, as a fat neighbor of ours did yesterday? But for a spoon, ah! how eagerly he seized it at dinner! Like the hand of a friend for whom he had long anxiously waited, and from whom he could hardly be prevailed on to part.

As a novel and a popular subject, the spoon is unrivaled—as a fertile one, its equal never rose in the brains of Will Shakespeare or John Baptiste Moliere; and that is strange too, seeing the implement so often entered their heads. A Spanish writer of the sixteenth century, however, did not let it escape him. His wanderings through various countries, and in indifferent circumstances, made him too keenly alive to its value to forget or neglect it. He has immortalized himself by recording the adventures of a spoonmaker, in an inimitable piece of biography.

‘Indeed! (exclaims some reader.) Pray, of whom do you speak? Who was this author, and who the mechanic he snatched from oblivion?’

Strange that at this day such a question should be asked! But, Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra was the writer, and Sancho Panza the artist.

‘Sancho Panza! The short and fat husband of Tereza—the Governor of Barrataria—he whose simplicity and shrewdness, jokes and proverbs, were so pleasant; and whose witty conceits fell from him as thick as drops in a shower—a maker of spoons!’

To be sure he was! And it was from this circumstance he became so expert in handling them, and which led him to prefer olla-podridas, stews, and hashes of cow beef and onions, to Milan godwits, Roman pheasants, geese of Lavajos, and other kick-shaws, which Doctor Pedro Rezio Aquero de Tirtaefuera and the steward talked about. Not that Sancho loved good eating more than other people, but he naturally enough preferred those kinds of food which were fluid, in the conveyance of which to his mouth he had become quite familiar from his previous professions and habits.

Cervantes, to elucidate the association of ideas and the force of early impressions, wittily concealed this employment of Sancho's, and left it till the knight was condemned by him of the 'White Moon' to refrain for a whole year from using a sword, or going in quest of adventures. Then the truth unexpectedly appears. Quixote proposed to pass the time in pastoral pursuits. 'O, Sancho! said he; we will turn shepherds for the time I must live retired. I will buy sheep and all necessary materials. We will range the mountains, the woods, and the meadows—singing here and complaining there—drinking the liquid crystal of the fountains, of the limpid brooks, and the mighty rivers. The oaks, with a plentiful hand, shall give their sweetest fruit—the trunks of the hardest cork-trees shall afford us seats, the willows shade, and the roses scent. The spacious meadows shall yield us carpets of a thousand colors—the air, clear and pure, shall supply breath,



the moon and stars afford light, maugre the darkness of night—singing shall furnish pleasure, and complaining yield delight! Heaven be my aid! What a life shall we lead, friend Sancho! What a world of bagpipes shall we hear! What pipes of Zamora! What tambourets and rebecks!’

‘Before God, quoth Sancho, this kind of life squares with me exactly; and no sooner will the Bachelor Sampson Carrasco, and Master Nicholas the barber, have well seen it, but they will have a mind to follow, and turn shepherds with us; and God grant that the priest have not an inclination to make one in the fold; he is of so gay a temper, and such a lover of mirth!’ After arranging about shepherdesses, each amateur shepherd to have one, except the priest, who, according to Sancho’s views, ought not to be associated with a lady; but if the bachelor Sampson was inclined that way, why, his soul was at his own disposal. Then the knight begins to anticipate the ditties he and his associates would indite to the charms of their lady loves, when Sancho, mentally recurring to occupations more agreeable to *his* taste, and with which he was more at home, exclaims in a rapture, ‘O! what spoons! What neat WOODEN SPOONS will I make when a shepherd!’ An exclamation which he never, of course, could have made had he not been engaged in that business before. Then, like a sound philosopher, who only regards science and the arts in proportion as they are applied to the purposes of life, he instantly recurs to the *use* of spoons, and, very naturally to

the agreeable visions they call up. "What crumbs! What cream! What olla-podridas! What stews we shall have!"

Having thus shown that the Knight of La Mancha's squire was, in the early part of his career, a manufacturer of spoons, the reader will at once concede the propriety of this reference to his labors; since he is, beyond controversy, the most famed character of the kind in print. But that is not all. There are other things in Cervantes which reviewers never dreamt of. It were an easy matter to show, but would be out of place here, that the celebrity of his great work is due chiefly to spoons; for example, had he withheld from Sancho the penchant for handling them, the history of Quixote might as well have been without the owner of Dapple; and every body knows what an insipid affair it would have been then. From what but the free use of spoons were the jolly face and sly look of Sancho derived? To what else but their neglect was to be attributed the ghastly appearance of him of the Rueful Countenance? Silenus and a moving corpse!

Such are the wonders wrought by the Spoon: but, great as they appear, they are not the greatest. Had the knight lived in the manner of Sancho, he had never lost his wits; and had the latter dieted as his master, he never would have had any. The moral of the romance is misunderstood. The author designed to inculcate this truth—that the proper use of a spoon can make a sensible man of a fool, and the neglect of it a fool of a sensible man!



The Spoon is really the nucleus of the romance—the core on which the party colored threads of the story are wound. Indeed, the whole affair is nothing else than a mystic account of this useful little implement, and written by Cervantes, most likely to fulfill a vow made on account of the services it rendered him on some occasions of extreme distress—occasions, from the checkered scenes of his life, believed to have been of frequent occurrence.

These things, to be sure, do not stand up on the surface—they are not seen at a glance. Cervantes, in concealing them from readers whose obtuseness of intellect does not suspect them, or who will not take the trouble to look for them, imitated the conduct of his witty and ingenious countryman, Pedro Garcias, whose epitaph strangely announced that his *soul* lay under the slab. And there it did lay, without exciting the least curiosity from the crowds walking over it, until a poor and shrewd student of Salamanca, travelling that way, guessed the truth, disinterred, and joyfully carried home the Licentiate's soul in his pocket. But to leave such matters: As every person on earth loves a spoon, there are few who cannot relish an essay upon it; and all will admit its selection for a theme, if no proof of genius, is at least a strong indication of taste.

The Spoon is one of the first things wanted when we come into the world, and one of the last we part with before we go out. It is the companion of childhood, manhood, and age—the great nurse of mankind. It administers comfort to ladies when they

‘lay in,’ and to every person before being ‘laid out.’ Without it, no baby takes pap; nor boys and girls porridge or soup; the man acquires strength by its aid, and it assists in prolonging the years of the old and infirm. In the hands of physicians, it drives sickness away; and when the angel of death comes at last, it soothes the last moments of many.

Its influence is felt in every department of life—in manners, morals, and even in national characteristics. Associated almost as much with the soul as the body, it seems equally to modify both. It is a healer of wounds, whether in the person or mind. What tempers has it not subdued—what passions allayed! For it is always called in after a broil to promote peace and good will. What evils, too, has it not extinguished which want has conceived and poverty planned! Hunger and haggard despair fly before it, while health and hilarity attend it! It is, and justly, a universal favorite—as well with the savage as the sage—with ladies and their maids—with children and their grandpas.

What urchin has not felt more elastic when beholding his mother beating up eggs for plum-cake with a spoon; or stood by when with it she scraped out the bowl in which the pudding was made! And where is the youngster with ‘a sweet tooth’ that has not thrust it with delight into ‘mush and molasses!’ or with joy almost extatic made it dive into ‘samp,’ through an ocean of melted butter and sugar! As for grown people, it daily works the same wonders in them as it did in the Rev. Mr. Sampson when ap-



plied by the hospitable hand of Mrs. Merriless. In barbarous and semi-barbarous countries, few meals are prepared without it, but in civilized life it is as regular an attendant at table as plates.

The moral influence of the spoon is remarkable. It preaches contentment, and fosters no pride. It enters the cottage and comforts those who are too poor to own either cottage or cot. It ascends into garrets, dives into cellars, and forces its way into prisons, where, like a Howard or Frye, it condoles with the children of sorrow. It is all things to all men, for it adapts itself to the circumstances of all. To the humble or poor, it appears in homely apparel; to the rich and the proud, it shines forth in ivory and pearl—in silver and gold.

Some men talk about the 'social glass'—of the pleasures it imparts, the agreeable reminiscences it calls up; but what are they, compared to those associated with the spoon? The former is selfish—men indulge in it by themselves; but the latter is the innocent companion of both sexes—of young and old. The glass too often destroys domestic joys—loosens domestic ties; the spoon revives the one and strengthens the other. It gratifies a natural, the glass an artificial, appetite. The one imparts happiness to the abstemious, the other maddens the brain of the intemperate. Here sits an industrious laborer at his evening meal; he has reached home shivering with cold and faint with hunger; he sups the warm pottage his wife has prepared, and finds his heart strengthened, and his energies blessed.

There carouses an acquaintance at the tavern ; his eyes now rolling with the maniac's gaze, and now like an idiot's, fixed on vacancy. Reason has left her seat, and the character of the man is lost in that of the beast. Such are the different effects of the 'social glass' and the spoon.

A lover of domestic quiet, family jars cease in its presence ; for unlike the mischief loving ladle, the spoon enters into no broils. An instrument of peace, it lends not itself to those illegitimate and unconjugal uses to which enraged housewives are said sometimes to put its taller associate. No ! Instead of stirring up the caldron of family feuds, the gentle spoon soothes the boiling elements, and, in the pleasantest way imaginable, silences the squalling of infants, and the grumbling of older folks.

It took no part in an ancient fray between the scholars of Oxford and some Reverend companions of the Pope's Legate, on a feast or saint's day ; but the soup or rather the broth did. The peace loving spoon withdrew ere the fracas began. "And at that tyme was maister Edmunde of Abendon archbishoppe of Caunterbury, an holi man, in the twelff hundred yere of our Lorde and foure and thritti. And at that tyme come the legat Oter from Rome, and called a councele of Bishoppes at London, and went from thens to Oxenford, to the Abbey of Osney. And as certeyn of the clerks come to speke with the legat, vppon Seynt Gregoryes day, one of the legats men *cast hote broth* vppon a scolore, and then come the clerkes first, and besett Osney, and slew one of the



legats men, and the legat fled into the steple." [*Peter Langtoff's Chronicle, Hearne's Glossary*, vol. ii. 682.]

This quotation may serve as a little seasoning to the dish before the reader. If any one questions its pertinence, and that of others hereafter to be noticed, we beg to observe that what relates to the soup can hardly be foreign to the spoon.



## CHAPTER II.

*The Spoon always an Object of Plunder—Border Thieves—Golden Rule—Index of Human Condition—Old English and other Salutations—Lip Worship—Spoons formerly Preachers of Temperance—Their Influence on Individual and National Character—Beef and Bouilli—Fat Men fined and Obesity revered—Steaks and Stews—Effects of Animal Food on Nations—War Speech of an English General—Greeks and Trojans—Spoons of peculiar Antiquarian Value—Trick of Alexander—Curious use of Spoons, and Lessons derived from them—Their Influence in Politics and War—Procure Food as well as Cook it—Friends in need—Heir-looms.*

THE virtues of the spoon have in every age led men to covet it, and, to gratify their covetousness, to commit burglaries to obtain it. With the wicked, this is natural; for a *silver* spoon is a talisman—he who possesses one can never want. It is chiefly, however, such unfortunates as are not born with one in their mouths who thus attempt to supply what

nature forgot. But *horn* and *pewter* spoons were not despised by respectable robbers of yore. In Maitland's "Complaynt against the Theivis of Liddisdail," we find them borne off from poor people's dwellings, along with bread, fowls, spinning apparatus, bed-clothes, shirts, &c. The old leviers of black mail seized on every thing that was not 'too heavy or too hot' to be carried away.

Thay spuilye pair men of their pakis,  
Thay leif them nocht on bed nor bakis;  
Baith hen and cok,  
With reil and rok,  
The Lairdis Jok,  
All with him takis.

Thay leif not spindel, SPOONE, nor speit,  
Bed, bolster, blanket, sark, nor scheit.

Many a knife has committed murder, and forks have been guilty of felony; but what bad thing has the spoon ever done? Kidnapped in all ages, it never was known to return evil to its evil entreaters; on the contrary, it has blessed its greatest foes. Like the sun shining on the wicked and the good, this servant of man has been among all nations, kindreds, and tongues, a practical teacher of the Golden Rule—withholding its services from none, but feeding alike the thankless and the thankful. No implement has done more for man. Almost all others have been turned against him, but the spoon—never.

The spoon is an indicator of merit and of human condition. It is every where deemed an appropriate crest for the arms of an alderman, because every where hailed as the symbol of good cheer. A wooden or a *pewter* spoon, or one of tinned iron, is an



emblem of an author, who seldom gets a better, unless he borrows it; a *silver* one, the symbol of a printer, who is generally "well to do;" and a *golden* one, of a publisher, who alone in the book trade can afford to eat turtle. Of all indications of poverty, a broken pewter spoon is the most distressing—a proof of wretchedness extreme.

The implement is about the only one belonging to the kitchen that behaves well in the dining room. Its associate, the angry knife, sometimes wounds its master, and the sly fork occasionally pricks him, but the spoon is 'ever faithful,' and the 'most obedient of servants.' To these amiable qualities it is possible the very common expressions, "Your humble servant," "Your most obedient and faithful servant," may be allied; for it is a fact that these French forms of address were first introduced into English compliments and composition on an occasion when the spoon performed a royal part—at the marriage of Mary, daughter of Henry IV. of France. The usual British salutations before this were, "God keep you," "God be with you;" and with country people, "How dost do?" accompanied often with a whack on the shoulder; and, if a woman, with a smack on the lips. (*See Antiq. Repertory*, iii. 43.)

Antiquarians inform us that kissing with a smack was a *Roman* practice; for the benefit of future Archæologists, an equally surprising fact may as well be mentioned of the *Dutch*, who actually relish other earthly comforts in a similar way! Whenever a glass or spoon leaves anything agreeable within

their lips, the approving smack, it is said, invariably follows. This sharp and pleasant little sound is so inseparably associated with their ideas of the good things of this life, that it has become incorporated with their ordinary salutations. Their usual morning greeting is "*Smaakelyk eeten!*" So a southern Chinese salutes another by saying *Ya tan?* Have you eaten your rice? In other words, have you handled your chopsticks or spoon?

The spoon is a fine symbol of complaisance. No one takes hold of it without pleasure, and many lay it down with regret. Its daily appearance at table is met with smiles, and every guest intimates his or her unalloyed joy by carrying it to their lips. In some countries it is so esteemed that when loaned it passes directly out of the mouth of the owner into that of the borrower. (See account of Esquimaux ladies at dinner, in the late voyages to the north.) Like the black stone at Mecca, it is polished with the lips of its admirers. A censorious world might stigmatize this as "lip worship," but it flows from the heart; or, at least, from the neighborhood of the heart, for, according to Chinese philosophy, the seat of the soul is in the centre of the stomach. So thought an old statesman and poet:

From thence she sends out those supplies  
Which make us either stout or wise;  
The strength of every other member  
Is founded on your belly timber;  
The qualms or raptures of your blood  
Rise in proportion to your food;  
And if you would improve your thought,  
You must be fed as well as taught.



Though with some an instrument of gluttony, the spoon was formerly a preacher of temperance; the lessons it taught being engraved as mottoes on the handle; while for those on whom words made no impression, (and few who used it in the middle ages could read,) images of death and the devil were cut on the bowl! *Plate V* has a figure of one of these curious inventions for enforcing moderation at meals—one on which is emblazoned a *death's head*! Think for a moment how could the most confirmed gourmand sin with such a tool! Why, the *chef d'œuvre* of gastronomic fluids could not be conveyed to any man's stomach in excess by it, unless the owner of the stomach was blind. The most horrible of *memento mori* not only staring him in the face, but actually mixing with his food! If anything could subdue voracious appetites, one might suppose this would.

The spoon opens the mouth of every dumb person; and, what is sometimes as difficult to accomplish, it stops the most loquacious one. Its effects are exceedingly diversified. With most people, eating puts an end to speaking, according to the venerable precept, "Let your meat stop your mouth;" but some are more talkative at table than any where else. We remember an old lady remarkably taciturn except when handling a spoon. It was a key that unloosed her tongue. Every time she sipped coffee or tea, a remark dropped from her; but not a word ever came out till the spoon had first gone in; as if it carried permission to the imprisoned member to take a moment's exercise.

Its influence is very observable on nations. It modifies their manners and customs, affects their arts, sciences, and manufactures; gives tone to individual character, to modes of thought and action. Who does not know that the vivacity and other marked attributes of the French people are derived from the free use of the spoon? They are too wise to follow the example of their saturnine neighbors, in everlastingly using the knife and the fork. It is a fact too well known to need repetition here, that the differences in the temper and habits of the Briton and Gaul are to be traced to Roasts and Ragouts, to Beef and Bouilli.

The Celts and Gauls fined a fat man, and increased or diminished the penalty according to the size of his paunch—reversing the doctrines of India, where Rajahs are respected for their obesity—and of Southern Africa, where ladies are admired for the width of their waists, and their beauty determined by the hundred weight.

*Steaks* make a German or an Englishman portly and dull; *stews*, a Frenchman light and agile. On one side of the channel, *fries* render men heavy as dray horses; on the other, *fricasees* make them frisky as genets. It is the spoon that causes one people to be graceful in their persons and polite in their demeanor, and the want of it another ungainly in their movements and awkward in their compliments—that fits this people for natural teachers of dancing, and makes those persons incapable of appreciating the rudiments of personal accomplishments. So with



other national characteristics. All may be traced more or less direct to the knife and the spoon.

Observe the various operations  
Of food, and drink in several nations.  
Was ever Tartar fierce and cruel  
Upon the strength of water-gruel?  
But who can stand his rage and force  
If first he rides, then eats his horse?  
Salad and eggs and lighter fare  
Tune the Italian spark's guitar;  
And if I read Dan Congreve right,  
Pudding and beef make Britons fight.—*Prior.*

Howell says, 'while Englishmen drank only ale, they were strong, brawny, able men, and could draw an arrow an ell long; but when they fell to wine and beer, they are found to be much impaired in their strength and age.'

An old British commander thus addressed his troops on the eve of battle: "What a shame it would be to you, Englishmen, who feed upon beef and drink beer, to let those rascally Spaniards beat you, who eat nothing but oranges and lemons." The same intellectual gentleman we presume it was who supposed a well-known passage in *Macbeth* had reference to the dressing of a beef steak or mutton chop:

If it were done, when 'tis done, then 'twere well  
It were done quickly.

Sir William Temple attributed the bravery of his countrymen to their carnivorous propensities. According to this doctrine, and it has many advocates, rice-eating Asiatics can never withstand European feeders on beef: those nations that excel others in killing cattle for food will generally be the most suc-

cessful butchers of men—the most valiant eating the most bullocks. The principle is certainly illustrated in almost every page of ancient history—and the most in accounts of those nations the most known—as the Greeks, Carthaginians, and Romans. So in the present day—oppressed people are such as are confined to vegetable diet, as the Hindoos, the Irish, &c. In the Iliad, spits, roasting fires, and boiling pots are about as common as spears, shields, or clubs: and enumeration of cattle, sheep, goats, and swine, as troops of men and horses. The Greek princes were their own butchers and cooks, and were often half broiled while preparing their dinners. But we don't read of Hector or his friends sweating like

Patroclus, who o'er the blazing fire  
Heaps in a brazen vase three chines entire.

No! the people of Troy were unfortunately more chastened in their manners, and refined in their appetites, and hence compelled to yield to their savage and flesh eating invaders!

Spoons possess a high antiquarian interest, not merely as specimens of the arts, and indicative of the use of hot fluids in former times, but as bearing on the curious subject of human stature—on the question of the degeneracy of man's frame. Egyptian spoons of great antiquity are preserved in museums of Europe, and are of the same average size as those now in use; [*see figures farther on* ;] proving in the clearest manner that people's mouths, between three and four thousand years ago, were of the same width and capacity as ours. If mummies, therefore, had



never been drawn from the catacombs of the Nile, these little implements would have been sufficient to show that while the subjects of the Pharaohs surpassed other people in the magnitude of their works, their souls dwelt in bodies no larger than ours.

Ancient caldrons were often of enormous capacities, sometimes equaling a modern brewer's vat. This was on account of the large households of princes—their families, like Solomon's, consisting of hundreds and even thousands of officers and attendants; but there is no record of the spoon having ever varied in its general dimensions. Had Alexander, when he wished to deceive posterity into a belief that his army was composed of giants, buried on each field of battle a few gross of spoons, capacious as good sized ladles, the deception would have been as likely to succeed as by his inhuming bridles and mangers for mammoth horses, and armor suitable for such men as Goliath of Gath, and the old King of Bashan.

Is it imagined existing ladles of a former world were possibly used as spoons, and therefore such reasoning is not conclusive? A little reflection will show the contrary; or if the reader will turn to *Plate III*, he will see it would be a very difficult matter to empty an ancient ladle, or simpulum, into the mouth, in consequence of the position of the handle; this being perpendicular to the mouth of the bowl; whereas in the spoon it is on a line or nearly so with it.

In how many ways does the spoon contribute to

man's enjoyments ! Besides its more appropriate business, it often assists in quite different matters. Its devotion is not confined to the mouth, nor to things for the mouth, but, like an anxious attendant, is ever ready to lend its assistance where it can. Most readers can call to mind numerous occasions on which the value of its presence was felt. Neighbor Windt can never get up the heels of his shoes till in place of his fingers he applies the shank of a spoon, and matches were never made in his house without tipping their ends in brimstone fused in another. Is a person faint ? The spoon is called to revive him. Are you in pain ? quoth the doctor, "three drops from this vial, in a tea-spoon full of syrup, will relieve you." You are restless ? "Take these pills in a table-spoon full of wine, and you'll soon be asleep." Infants suffer greatly in cutting their teeth, but by "champering a spoon," the gums are sooner cut through ; and thus this devoted servant of our species kindly hastens the period when, in a more legitimate way, it can gratify little innocents.

When influenzas rage, what is the first act of attending disciples of Galen ? To ask for a spoon, that with it they may press down the tongue to examine the fauces. In epidemic catarrhs, there is scarcely a house free from the disease, or a spoon from this service. Now, is it not remarkable that in afflictions of the mouth and throat the benign and sympathetic spoon should not only administer appropriate medicines, but be actually called in ere the



nature of those medicines is determined! Its presence required by consulting physicians, as if from its familiarity with the patient, his habits and manner of life, and its acquaintance with the bronchial regions—its aid was indispensable!

It serves prince and peasant on some curious occasions. The part it performs in the coronation of kings will be noticed further on, but we may here notice how the poor derive from it a valuable lesson. Start not, gentle reader, at our announcing that spoons have long taught the children of penury to lay right in bed! Yes; and shown them the only way, in certain cases, by which either to get in or keep in—solving a very curious geometrical problem. The custom alluded to is said to be well known in soldiers' barracks, lodging houses for mendicants, in cheap boarding schools for boys, and wherever circumstances require four or more persons to sleep on one couch. It is obvious uniformity of position and movement, in such cases, is indispensable to individual repose.

When half a dozen spoons are laid out separately, they take up considerable room, but place them edgewise, bring up the mouth of one close to the back of the next, &c. and the whole will form a compact mass. Just so with half a dozen tenants of one bed; if laid promiscuously, they could not find room; that is only obtained by placing themselves "spoon-fashion"—all turned one way and close fitted to each other. The oldest occupant regulates the positions and motions of his fellows. Having

the privilege of first laying down, he adjusts himself to his own liking ; drawing up his knees as far as he finds agreeable, he becomes a model or pattern to which those behind him must conform. No one can then "turn on t'other side," without general consent ; and it is only when the chief gives the signal (by exclaiming "*spoons*,") that the interesting evolution takes place.

Spoons were formerly used to feed the nose as well as the mouth—*snuff* being conveyed in them to the nostrils instead of between the finger and thumb—but this will be illustrated by a cut on a future page. We have somewhere read of the implement performing the part of a linguist—interpreting between navigators and strange people. When other modes failed to make known the want of food, the sight of a spoon, accompanied with the usual movements in using it, instantly opened the understandings of savages, and saved Christian travellers from starvation.

Silver spoons have made their influence felt in the politics of nations. The enthusiasm of the people of England in supporting the cause of the parliament against Charles I. may be gathered from the contribution of the inhabitants of a single town to the republican cause. In London, enormous masses of plate were heaped up in Guildhall, the gift of the citizens. We select a few items from the list of donors named in the *History and Antiquities of Great Yarmouth*, [Norwich, 1772.]

"Thomas Goose, seven pieces of plate and *two spoons*.

"Robert Wakeman, 51 oz. of plate, at 5s. 4d. per oz. and *nine spoons* in *coarse silver*, weighing 14 oz. at 4s. 6d. per oz."



[We leave it to modern smiths to distinguish between the "*coarse*" and "*best*" silver.]

"William Burton, 59 oz. plate, *one spoon, best, and four coarse spoons* and a bodkin.

"George England, 91 oz. and *seven silver spoons*.

"Robert Huntington, 158 oz. and *one spoon*.

"William Bridge, 10 pieces of plate and *seven spoons*; and at another time, 72 oz. and *seven spoons*.

"John Thompson, *two cups* and a *spoon*."

The above may serve as a commentary on the following lines from a contemporary poet, by whom the parliament is addressed :

Our plate, our coin, our jewels, and our rings,  
Arms, ornaments, and all our precious things,  
To you we brought as bountifully in,  
As if they had old rusty horse-shoes been.

Butler, the champion of monarchy, as a matter of course turned this patriotic ardor into ridicule :

Did saints for this bring in their plate,  
And crowd as if they came too late ?  
For when they thought the cause had need on't,  
Happy was he that could be rid on't.  
Did they coin p—p—s, bowls and flagons,  
Int' officers of horse and dragoons ?  
And into pikes and musqueteers,  
Stamp beakers, cups, and porringers ?  
A thimble, bodkin, and a spoon,  
Did start up living men as soon  
As in the furnace they were thrown.—*Hudibras, Canto ii.*

Nor have pewter spoons been behind silver ones in freedom's cause. Few kitchen utensils have done more for national independence. Like those in the house of John Adams, they have been molded into bullets, and sent in haste to stay the stomachs of mercenary troops attempting to prey upon their owners. In the war of the revolution, when the spoons in New-York were used up, a set of men

without the fear of God or the King before their eyes, pulled down the leaden statue of George in the Bowling Green, and fused him into balls. Then, as the royal officers professed to honor the king in their hearts, the rebels thought it right to send him into their bosoms. Here we see how spoons, though designed to convey victuals to the mouth, can of themselves effectually silence the cravings of hunger.

In another sense, pewter spoons have entered the field. Essentially of domestic habits, and brought up to wait on their owners at table, yet when a country family's provision has been spent, they have been known to go in quest of some. Putting on a new form, (being cast into "buck-shot,") they have left home, like Esau, "to take venison," and have generally returned (in the bodies of the game) with fresh supplies for the larder. Having done this, they have, in one or two instances, (when serving a backwoodsman,) resumed their previous occupation, (being recast,) and assisted to cook and serve up the animals they killed. But this is rarely the case, for rambling in the woods commonly puts an end to their household occupations.

In cities, silver spoons often leave home to raise means for purchasing provisions when the purse of their owner is emptied and his credit quite gone. Pledged for a loan, they remain in prison without murmuring till his circumstances revive and he redeems them from thralldom. Money lenders turn their backs on the poor man's knife and fork, but never refuse his silver spoons—*their* touching ap-



peals cannot be resisted. Like those heroic Moravian Missionaries, who went into slavery to benefit perishing heathen, these well disposed little things repeatedly save Christian families from famishing by acting in a similar manner. After a prolonged absence, great is the joy on their arrival—then every one takes them by the hand and greets their return.

Thus the spoon contributes to man's joys in prosperity, and diminishes his sorrows when in pecuniary trouble. It is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother. Like a Grecian or Roman nurse, its labors cease not with the death of its master—it continues to serve him in his descendants. Made an heir-loom, it bears his initials or his name, and is sent down to succeeding generations, a cherished memorial of the friendship that existed between them.

## CHAPTER III.

*Proverb respecting Long Spoons—Attempt to define its origin—Female Costume—Trains, Steeple Caps, Fardingales and Ruffs—Extract from an old Sermon—Homily on Dress—Enormous cost of Ruffs—George Heriot—Oriental long Spoons—Satan's Household—Other Proverbs—Conjurers—Mountebanks—Lotteries—Feats of the Spoon on the Stage—Curious Practice of Morris-dancers—Superstition of the Goths—Dryden—Gruel—Possets—Spoons doing duty as ferulas—Sir Thomas More—The Spoon or Spoon-meat typical of Infancy.*

THE spoon, as is well known to most readers, gave rise to a once celebrated proverb, indicative of the advances of sin and the lengths to which the wicked are led—"He wants a long spoon who sups with the devil." The saying is now nearly obsolete, but it was formerly, like the implement itself, in every one's mouth. Thus Chaucer, in the Squire's Tale :

What he answerd it nedeth not reherse ;  
 Who can say bet than he, who can do werse  
 Whan he hath al wel said than he hath done.  
 Therefore behoveth him a ful long sponne  
 That shal ete with a fend.

Shakespeare, in the Tempest, makes Stephano exclaim, on beholding Caliban, "Mercy ! Mercy ! This is a devil, and no monster ; I'll leave him ; I have no long spoon." And in the Comedy of Errors, the whimsical mistakes occasioned by the resemblance of the twins to each other, led the parties to suppose Satan himself was in the perform-



ance. Antipholus of Syracuse is invited by a female to dinner, his servant hints to him the character of the hostess :

*Dromio.*—Master, if you go, expect spoon-meat, or bespeak a *long spoon*.

*Ant.*—Why, Dromio ?

*Dromio.*—Marry, he must have a *long spoon* that must eat with the devil.

There was in Shakespeare's time a more substantial reason why those who supped with ladies as well as such as partook of Satan's hospitality, should have long spoons ; and why ladies themselves should have been, as they actually were, furnished with them. "Indeed !" exclaims some female reader ; "pray explain." Certainly, madam ; but before doing so, it is expedient to allude to something else.

From the times when primitive British ladies were clad in skins sewed together with sinews and pinned on the person with thorns, to those when Anglo-Saxon dames wore tunics and mufflers, and Norman females wrapped themselves in brodered mantles and copes, and thence to the present days, every age has been distinguished by innovations in *costume*, and of a very marked character. Norman fashions were succeeded in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries by the English gown, bibs, aprons, and corsets. Immense trains were attached to the skirts of gowns. Horned and also steeple caps for the head made their appearance, thus lengthening both extremities of the person to a monstrous extent. A lady, on a visit of ceremony, is said to have sometimes been in the centre of a drawing-room, while the tail of her dress was still in the

street. Chaucer is severe on this and other parts of female dress. In the Parson's Tale, he rails at "the superfluitee of the foresaide gounes, *trailing in the dong*, and in the *myre*, on hors, and eke on foot." In Dunbar's Poems, they are represented as performing the part of a besom :

Sic fartingailis on flaggis als fatt as quhailis  
 Fattit lyk fulis with hattis that littel availis ;  
 And sic fowill tailis to sweip the calsay clene.

[*Poems by W. Dunbar, from the MS. of George Bannatyne. Perth, 1788, p. 52.*]

Steeple caps towered about a yard above the heads which bore them, so that ladies in full dress could hardly pass through an ordinary door, or stand in a modern room. Queen Elizabeth, it is well known, carried her head pretty high, in more senses than one, but she had sometimes to bend. Visiting Burleigh, when he was laid up with the gout, she was much incommoded by her head-dress in entering his dwelling. As the statesman's servant conducted her through the door, he cautioned her to beware of the lintel, saying, "May it please your Highness to stoop." The haughty dame replied, she would not incline her body to the Spanish King, but on this occasion would bend to see his master. For specimens of steeple caps, see illustrations in current editions of Froissart, copied from illuminated MSS. particularly Isabella, wife of Edward I. entering Paris; the Dutchess of Montfort entering Nantes, and Philippa, consort of Edward III.

The sixteenth and part of the seventeenth century were characterized by long bodices, puffed sleeves,



the famous fardingale, and celebrated ruff. The huge cylindrical petticoat was projected by hoops as much at the hips as at the feet, so that the wearer seemed as if she stood through an opening in the centre of a round table, the linen cover of which reached down to the ground, and upon which she could arrange a variety of apparatus, such as a lady's work-bag usually contains—strongly reminding one of Chinese pedlars of small wares, who carry about goods on a somewhat similar looking contrivance. "The great ladies at Genoa (observes Evelyn) go in horrible overgrown vertigals of whalebone, which being put about the waist of the lady, and full as *broad on both sides as she can reach with her hands* bear out her coats in such a manner that she appears to be as broad as long." See a portrait of Anne of Denmark, wife of James I. usually found in works on costume.

The stiff ruff round the neck sometimes projected so far that a plumb-line dropped from its edge would nearly coincide with the periphery of the petticoat. At other times, it was pinned up round the ears, forming a fluted and inverted truncated cone or rather, it resembled the outer leaves of a rose protecting the blushing beauty within. Portraits of Queen Elizabeth exhibit both modes of wearing the ruff. A smaller kind was worn by men in like manner, as may be seen in portraits of Bacon, Dudley, Sidney, Cecil, and others of that and the following age. See also Dutch portraits, of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and illustrated

works of those periods—the ruff is represented enormously thick and proportionally broad. Both it and the fardingale are noticed by Cervantes.

Few parts of female apparel excited more notice than ruffs, and on none were bestowed more attention and regard. Cambric was first imported into England, (from Cambray in Flanders, and hence its name,) for the purpose of making them, and numerous were the devices for forming and stiffening the plaits. About the year 1574, an invention of great merit, in the estimation of ladies, was made, since it rendered the ruff much more commodious to the wearer, and increased the facility of dressing and putting it in shape. This was the famous “poking stick”—a polished steel implement which, when heated, was used for stiffening and plaiting the starched frills. The ladies had cause to rejoice that “setting pins” (slips of whalebone, &c. formerly concealed in the plaits in the manner of fans) were thus superseded. These uncomfortable adjuncts formed a species of *chevaux de frise*, enclosing the neck, and not only keeping other people, but in a manner themselves, at arms length. Ruffs were not unlike the Chinese *cangue*, a thick board like a table, resting on the shoulders of a criminal, his head being passed through a hole in the centre—a device often compared to “a frill or collar.” It prevents the wearer from reaching his mouth, so that unless fed by his friends he would inevitably perish with hunger.

Now, it has doubtless already occurred to our fair querist that, however elegant and fashionable ruffs



formerly were, they must have been extremely incommodious at *meal times*. It is manifest no lady could with an ordinary spoon convey food to her lips without crushing or otherwise spoiling the most cherished part of her attire. The result was, long-handled implements came into vogue, and were not disused till "setting-pins" and "poking sticks" were laid aside, and the dimensions of ruffs diminished.

For ladies' sakes, the following enumeration of fashionable articles of costume is taken from a sermon preached in the fourteenth century to worldly-minded misses: "Thus the devil farith with men and women: first, he stirreth them to pappe and pamper their flesh, desiring delicious meates and drinkes; and so they hop on the pillar of the devil's temptation, with their *horns, locks, garlands of gold and rich pearls, cauls, fillets and wimples*, and *riddled gowns* and *rockets, colors, laces, jackes, paltockes*, with their long *crakowes*; and thus the devil beareth them upon the pillar to teach them to fly above simple folk, and saith they shall not hurt themselves—but he lieth falsely, for unless they are as sorry therefore as ever they were glad, they shall leap down from the pillar into the pit of hell!" Horned caps were too conspicuous objects to escape the good father's censure. The *wimple* was a species of hood that covered the head, neck, and shoulders. *Paltockes*—doublets, and probably pantalettes; such as worn by Turkish females. *Crakowes*, long pointed shoes.

Of the homilies appointed by Queen Elizabeth to be read in churches, the one on excess of apparel

has some warm denunciations against wimples, mufflers, head-bands, crissing pins, ladies mincing as they went, and nicely treading with their feet. The gentlemen catch it also, with their *velvets, furred gowns, corked slippers, trim buskins*, and the multitudes of *changes of dress—one of this color, another of that*, one for *morning*, another for *afternoon*, this in *Spanish*, that in the *Turkish fashion*, &c. The evil had risen to such a height that “neither Almighty God by his word, nor godly and necessary laws, could stop it.” “One spendeth his patrimony in *pounces and cuts*, another bestoweth more on a *dancing shirt* than might suffice to buy apparel for his whole body. *Some hang their revenues about their necks, ruffling with their ruffs!*” All the world knows immense wealth, in the shape of jewels, is often pendant from a lady’s neck, but few persons are aware that gentlemen formerly laid out fortunes on *frills*, and had peculiar *shirts* to dance in.

George Heriot, goldsmith to James I. is figured with a ruff consisting of plaits piled one over another, the whole being at least six inches thick, and projecting in proportion. He never could have conveniently fed himself with “cock-a-leekie,” or “crowdy,” the favorite dishes of King Jamie, with anything like a modern spoon, without deranging if not defiling his frill. Yet his and his master’s were of moderate dimensions compared with those of the gallants of their days.

Long spoons are common with the Turks, Persians, and most Asiatics. They are mentioned by



old travellers as "reaching a great way." The proverb associated with them no doubt arose from the primitive custom, still prevalent over the greater part of the earth, of the inmates of a house eating out of one dish. The tables on this account approaching a circular form, so as to give every individual an equal chance at the provision; like the knights at Arthur's Round Table. In large households, the tables were necessarily made in proportion, and as the dish was placed at the centre, the implements were adapted to reach it without rising. An idea has always prevailed that Satan's household never was a small one; spoons therefore much longer than common were supposed to be required by those invited to a seat at his table.

Other proverbs are connected with the subject. Henry IV. quoted one, when rebuked for his clemency to his foes—"More flies are caught by a *spoon*-full of honey than with a hog'shead of vinegar." Perhaps the best description of a vain-glorious person is one in which he is represented as taking in praise like porridge, and "*licking the spoon!*"

Silver spoons, almost as much as anything else, afforded employment to conjurers and wise women of yore. Frequently stolen, their disconsolate owners had recourse to rustic oracles, who, with 'wand,' 'magic mirror,' 'key and book,' 'sieve and sheers,' or other cabalistic implements, found out the rogues. Sometimes the more learned professors of occult sciences were employed—men who consulted the

stars on the fate of kingdoms, stray cattle, lost keys, and goods of every description and value.

They'd search a planet's house to know  
Who broke and robbed a house below ;  
Examine Venus and the moon,  
Who stole a thimble or a spoon.—*Hudibras, Canto 1.*

Another class of men, whose glory has also departed, found a source of profit in spoons, viz.: *Mountebanks*, who were originally travelling venders of physic—a species of merchandise associated with rather unpleasant ideas—one ill adapted to form the staple of a lucrative trade. But, shrewd and observing, the itinerant quack knew the weak points of the species, and that to succeed he had only to keep his customers in good humor. Like a nurse coaxing sick children into love with the doctor's prescription, he tickled his hearers with the wonders his nostrums had wrought, and sold pills out of the same package for every complaint of man or beast. As people, however, are not always sick, he reminded them that they were daily in danger of being so ; and hence the wisdom of buying pills which not only removed disease but prevented its approach. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, he added to his stock various light articles, as tapes, rings, ribbons, bodkins, scissors, spoons, knives, razors, tea-pots, trays, calicoes, and eventually introduced them in lotteries—expatiating on their superior qualities with a fluency which rivaled that of 'Kikero'—as a country pedagogue of our acquaintance insists on pronouncing the name of the Roman orator.



The poets of the last century often complimented these amusing artists, as Gay in his Sixth Pastoral :

The mountebank now treads the stage and sells  
His pills, his balsams, and his ague spells;

\* \* \* \* \*

Of lotteries, next with tuneful note he told,  
Where *silver spoons* were won, and rings of gold.

The same gentry were very numerous in ancient Greece and Rome, and quite as clever as their present representatives. They dealt in trinkets and small wares, whose virtues were fully equal to modern ones. Eudamus, mentioned by Aristophanes, peddled finger-rings, for protecting the wearers from the bite of serpents or other venomous animals! Like recent artists of the same profession, he probably sold razors so sharp as would shave sleeping cats without wakening them, and spoons which rendered loathsome food pleasant, and poisoned food innocuous.

Modern mountebanks sometimes wound up the business of a lottery with general satisfaction, by providing from two to six bowls of *hasty pudding*, to partake of which an equal number of their patrons were invited to step on the stage. The food was scalding hot, and being retained in wooden bowls lost little of its heat ere passed to its destination. He who transmitted the contents of one bowl to his stomach in the shortest time was the victor, and bore off the prize; which was sometimes the spoon he had used. When every thing was prepared, the contest began on a signal given by the generous provider of the feast, and instantly accompanied with

acclamations of the bystanders. The witty remarks of Mr. Merryman caused roars of laughter to become, like approaching thunder, louder and louder, until the rain descended, and the faces of the multitudes were fairly washed in their own tears. Before the performers half finished the task, their visages acquired the temperature and color of fire, in spite of streams of perspiration with which they were flooded.

This employment of the spoon was at one time so common as to have given rise to the soubriquet by which the principal performer was, and still is, distinguished—*Jean Potage* in France—*Jack Pudding* in England.

Here we see the spoon taking an active part in the *public sports* of the people, as well as in furthering their private pleasures. It entered into an *innocent* contest, which the knife or the sword never did. It achieved a bloodless conquest, and as an emblem of victory was often stuck on one side of the hat, by way of cockade. And let not the disciples of Chesterfield sneer at these rustic entertainments of ignorant times, for the effects on both actors and spectators were more beneficial in shaking off the gross humors of the system than cart loads of physic or wagon loads of sermons.

The spoon in another respect assisted old charlatans, and in that part of their performances most interesting to themselves and trying to spectators—viz. in making the collection. The morris dancer, at the close of every act, put a large spoon or ladle



in the mouth of the hobby-horse and made it career round the ring to solicit donations, when we may suppose few could resist the moving appeal. [*See Douce's Illustrations of Shakespeare.*]

The caldron and ladle have been employed in forbidden matters. Witches made 'hell broth' in one, and stirred up the ingredients with the other—making the gruel thick and slab—but the food entered no mortal stomach, and hence no mortal spoon was wanted. This may be inferred from older writers than Shakespeare—from Saxo Grammaticus and Olaus Magnus. They tell us about the practices of 'women witches of the North, where the devil truly hath his seat'—of the 'gruel' and 'earthen pot wherein the juices, herbs, worms and entrails' were boiled, &c. but not a whisper about the spoon. Eventually the law of nature taught the Goths to detest devils and their dams, for it often happened that famines ensued when men obeyed them: 'birds and beasts forsook the woods, and fish the waters, and would not come back again [to be eaten] until such time as the Divine Majesty was pacified by prayers and benedictions of the sacred clergy.' So says the Reverend Archbishop of Upsal.

In satirical writings, allusions to *spoon-meats* were formerly common. When a passionate combatant had no other resource, he too often vented his wrath in gross personalities. Thus Dryden: 'Go back to where thy infancy began, eat pap and *spoon-meats*;' or when a fling was made at people's diet, as in the *Scornful Lady* of Beaumont and Fletcher: 'Faith,

sir, here are no *oats* to be got, unless you'll have 'em in porridge; the people are so given to *spoon-meats*.' A similar allusion to oat-meal gruel is made by Du Bartas :

And in a dish, for want of plate or glass,  
Sups oaten drink instead of hippocras.

In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries oat-meal gruel constituted the regular breakfast and supper of children. Dryden has an allusion to it in the 'Wild Gallant':—'Boy: These last three weeks I have almost forgot what my teeth were made for. Last night good Mrs. Bibber took pity on me, and crammed me a mess of gruel *with the children*, and I popt and popt my spoon three or four times to my mouth before I could find the way to it.'

If the spoon was the first thing wanted in a morning, it was often the last thing laid aside at night; for when youngsters broke their fast with porridge, old people wound up the day's labor with posset,—a hot mixture of milk and mulled wine, and frequently taken in bed. The custom is repeatedly mentioned in old writers. Page promised Falstaff a posset, and Mrs. Quickly cheered Rugby with the hopes of another. Lady Macbeth drugged the posset of Duncan's grooms. Thomas Heywood, a contemporary of Shakespeare notices the custom: "Thou shalt be welcome to beef and bacon, and perhaps a bag pudding; and my daughter Nell shall pop a posset upon thee when thou goest to bed."

Besides feeding boys and girls, the spoon has been known to remind them when they do ill, its



bowl being now and then applied to their pates, to teach them better manners. Among refined people or with mild housewives, this of course never occurs; but passionate cooks, when teased by young imperitents, seldom stop to reflect on the impropriety of using the same implement to baste a boy's head and a roasting pig. In country parts this practice is probably more frequent than in cities, *one* thing there being often necessarily put to *many* uses. Like a faithful nurse, the spoon goes out of its way to benefit young folks by performing duties towards them that do not belong to it.

In some regions, poor people are not over-nice in their tastes—it's a merciful dispensation they are not. When the Highland hostess took her son's cap off his head, and immediately boiled in it a pudding for Sam. Johnson's dinner, she made the most of her resources, did the best her limited stock of dry goods would permit, and displayed as much ingenuity in the application of an old thing to a new purpose, as one half of those do who secure their inventions by patents. There is no doubt that such a lady, when busily engaged in making "stirabout" for her family, would hasten the movements of a desidiose boy by applying the implement she was wielding to his sconce, as well as by threatening to withhold the contents of the kettle from his lips. To be sure, such a practice is not very cleanly; but what can a country matron in like circumstances do? She cannot leave the porridge to "burn" or "boil over," in order to seek a suitable rod; if she

did, in all probability the individual for whose benefit it was sought, would be *non est inventus* when she returned.

During the fierce contests between the advocates of faith and the champions of works, in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the spoon was sometimes introduced. On one occasion it proved a powerful weapon in the hands of Sir Thomas More. See how skillfully he wields it :—" I would wene one *sponeful* of good works should no more kill y<sup>e</sup> soule, then a potager of good wurts should kill and destroy y<sup>e</sup> bodie." Wurts is the old name for unfermented beer—a sweet infusion of malt—and is an aperient. This was an argument *ad hominum*, or rather *ad stomachus*. In it the Chancellor administered, and in a very quiet way, a medicine that could not help moving their bowels ; and it did move them—for those whom he thus addressed at length slew him. But such occasions are not the only ones where the spoon was associated with religious controversies or ceremonies, as the sequel of this essay will show.

The spoon, or 'spoon meat,' and 'strong meat,' have ever been typical of infancy and manhood—of weak and vigorous intellects. Paul tells the Hebrews they could only digest pap or spoon meats of children, instead of the strong food of men. "Ye have need of milk, and not of strong meat. Every one that useth milk is a babe, but strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age." Solomon has the same idea : it is in fact common as the spoon.



## CHAPTER IV.

*Heraldic Emblems—The Spoon neglected—Families of Spooners—Dutch Coat of Arms—Crest for Bishops—Warriors—Punishment of Death—Discontented People subdued by the Spoon—Peace made by it lasting—A Teacher of Military Tactics—Waterloo—Manual Exercise—The Spoon once a Side-Arm—Ancient Tenures—Curious Deed of Land—Bishop of Exeter—Sheep-Walk and Wooden Spoon—Tears collected by Spoons—Heaven opened by them—Property given to the Church—Mahomedans use Spoons in Paradise—Wash-Basin—Rebuke and Malediction.*

LOOKING over some works on Heraldry, we were surprised at the multitude of culinary utensils adopted into that 'heavenly science,' as one of its professors calls it. As we proceeded, the reason became plain ; for everything *eatable*, whether fish, flesh, or vegetable, being portrayed on escutcheons or crests, nothing was more natural than to introduce apparatus for cooking. As a symbol for beef, veal, mutton, lamb, pork, or venison, a gentleman selected for his crest, (as his palate preferred one dish or another) a bull or cow, a calf, a sheep, or goat, a lamb, boar, or stag. Those who lived more delicately chose a fowl, hare, or rabbit ;—others, pheasants, partridges, pigeons, snipe, quails, wild ducks, geese, herons, and every kind of game. Such as loved fish, selected perch, pike, flounders, salmon, trout, and so on, up to sturgeons and dol-

phins. Some had painted on their armorial ensigns, cockles, muscles, crabs, lobsters, and turtles. Those who relished vegetable diet, had sheafs of barley, rye, and wheat, beans, peas, asparagus, celery, turnips, cabbages. People fond of pies and desserts, had apples, pears, pomegranates, cherries, and grapes; and such as had more pleasure in handling the tumbler than the knife or spoon, selected for their crests, barrels [for beer], urns or vases [for wine], drinking cups, horns, goblets, mazars, &c.

Of devices taken from kitchen paraphernalia, we cannot name half; here are a few: The hearth and fire, being essential for preparing dinner, often occur; so do torches to light the fire, billets of wood to feed and bellows to blow it. A spit to roast meat, and sometimes the roast on it. Fire-dogs or andirons, caldrons, skewers and flesh-hooks. (Heads, limbs, and joints of animals, ready for the spit or kettle, are quite common.) Colanders, watering-pots, cleavers, carving-knives, plates and dishes, salts, cups and tankards. Stools to sit on, tables to eat off, hand-bells to call waiters, buckets of water, basins and ewers, to wash after dinner; combs to dress the hair before sitting down, scissors to trim the beard, and caps to place on the head.

“Well, but where is the spoon?” To tell the truth, we have not been able to find it! A disgrace to the science of heraldry it is not emblazoned, or if it be, it has escaped our notice. The ingrates! Or, were they ashamed of adopting it to conceal



their love of spoon meats ? As if the world perceived not their design in concealing a round of beef under the figure of an ox, a chine of pork under a boar, a haunch of venison under a fat buck, a loin of veal under a calf—or as if the reverend gentleman who adopted “two shin-bones” for his crest, could by such an affectation of abstinence hide from a prying world his attachment to marrow and strong broth. [See *Kent's Grammar of Heraldry*, Lond. 1724, and also *Guillim*, where the above “devices,” and hundreds more, may be found.]

There might be some excuse for Messrs. Fish, Flour, Bull, Bacon, Cook, Sprat, Drake, Taylor, Miller, Smith, Potts, Sadler, Wheeler, Fisher, Drinker, Baker, Carter, and others, rejecting from their coats of arms the object of our research ; but surely the ancient and honorable families of the SPOONERS should have known better. They, at least, might have had the grace to acknowledge and adopt the implement from which their patronymic is derived. What could have been more proper ? But alas ! the earth is as full of pride as ingratitude, and many besides the Spooners are indifferent about inquiring into the condition and deeds of their ancestors.

In an ancient and imperfectly depicted coat of arms, the supporters are a man and a woman : one flourishes what appears a ladle, and the other holds something like a spoon ; but *Guillim*, or some one else, explains the hieroglyphics in a different manner. With this exception, the arms of an old Dutch

family come nearest the mark. Their crest was a *Spoonbill*, the most singular looking of European birds, and a native of Holland; but whether it was selected on account of its name, the form of its mouth, or the length of its neck, we are not informed. If the gentleman who chose it was a ravenous feeder on soups, and a believer in the doctrine that the pleasures of eating and drinking are proportioned to the length of the channel through which food reaches the stomach, his heraldic ingenuity surpassed that of any gourmand on record; that is, unless the musician mentioned by Aulus Gellius adopted it as an armorial ensign, which is not unlikely, since he used to wish for a neck as long as a crane, that he might *longer* enjoy the victuals he ate.

As an heraldic device, the Spoon is infinitely more becoming Christian men than spears, daggers, bows and arrows, catapults, hatchets, clubs, knives, and other murderous weapons, which knights and even bishops sport on their plate and the panels of their carriages. To church dignitaries it seems peculiarly appropriate—a symbol of benevolence, of a disposition “to feed the hungry.” Charity, however, has always been at a discount, and the spoon, as its emblem, is neglected by heralds and bishops.

O, that warriors would adopt it! It would be consistent with sentiments many of them affect. Besides, the times are rapidly approaching when conquest in battle—the subjugation of nations by brute force—will no longer make a hero; when people cannot be treated by their rulers like cattle,



and slain in hordes by professional butchers ; by men whose acts fools vaunt and ideots gloze over. It had been well for the world had soldiers never handled any weapon but the spoon. As kindness is, and, from the constitution of the human mind, ever must be more effective than compulsion to overcome the wayward, victories more glorious and permanent than any attained by the musket and cannon would have been the result. Is this doubted? Let the plan be tried : it is based on philosophy, on principles implanted in man's nature ; whereas the other conflicts with them all.

Public sentiment is fast demanding the abolition of the punishment of death in civil communities—a punishment, which does not and cannot protect society from crimes, because it is itself a violation of the laws of humanity. Vindictive in its nature, it deliberately commits that which it condemns. If one man kill another in a passion, who can innocently put him to death in cold blood? But what, then, shall those scenes of wholesale slaughter be deemed where human beings, reeking with gore, are butchering one another—not that they are at enmity, but because their employers require it of them?

The murmurings of a discontented people may be silenced by thrusting bayonets into their bodies—'twould be a better way to put spoons in their mouths. Starving people have long enough been conquered by killing them ; why not stifle their complainings by feeding them—by killing them with kindness

instead of with cannon? The spoon not only subdues the rebellious but makes them good citizens. While conveying food to their stomachs, it transmits love of country, and admiration of its products, to their hearts. This the bayonet never did and never will. No peace can be lasting, and no people content, without the spoon. It is ridiculous to expect patriots in those deprived of one, or, what is the same thing, who cannot get sufficient employment for one. How can such dispose their hearts or their throats to sing a *Te Deum*, or with what kind of stomach can they join in a national anthem?

Captain Shandy carried on the siege of Dendermond in his garden, using pickets for men, and the dense volumes from Corporal Trim's pipe for the smoke of his cannon; but Joel Barlow, or some one else, has shown how military tactics may be more agreeably taught with a spoon; a platter of hot hasty pudding being the fortress attacked, and the citadel to be won the lump of sugar or butter ensconced in the centre.

After reconnoitering the thick circular wall to determine the point of attack, the spoon is brought to play; when, like a battering-ram applied to new buildings, it quickly makes an impression, and to keep the ground clear, bears off the materials broken down. Repeating the operation, an attempt is at length made to penetrate the centre in a radial direction; but no sooner is a practical opening formed, than the adjoining masses, as if endowed with instinct, rush down from both sides and make



the breach good. A short breathing spell follows, and then a furious onset is made ; the barriers give way, and a dashing effort carries the war into the bowels of the besieged ; but the heat of the smoking ruins becomes insufferable, confusion ensues, and a retreat the only alternative. The destructive engine is now brought to bear on one point, and now wheeled to another, without any decided effects, till the fatal plan is adopted of weakening the enemy uniformly all round ; thus slowly but surely diminishing the distance from the besieged. This is pursued until, by a little manœuvring, a passage is suddenly forced to the centre, and, by a *coup de main*, the greater part of the treasure borne off at a swoop ! Such are the innocent sweets which victory confers on the spoon.

If the horrible contest at Waterloo had been settled by the same weapon, it had been well for blushing humanity. Had the opposing heroes been seated on opposite sides of a sufficiently extended table, and entered into battle in the manner of hasty pudding heroes on a mountebank's stage, the victors would have acquired as much *true* honor as they have, and indeed a great deal *more*. Such would be quite as philosophical, and almost as Christian-like a way of ending national quarrels as that of stimulating combatants to shoot cold lead into each other's stomachs. There is also reason to believe it would be an acceptable one to a majority of troops ; besides, kings, and even queens, could safely fight with commendable eclat at the head of their armies,

and set them a royal example. Some, it is well known, could have rivaled the best field-m Marshals, and given additional evidence of "*divine* right" to their crowns. There would be fine opportunities, too, for military engineers to display their skill and secure promotion: *e. g.* in devising the best means for diminishing the sensibility of the gullet and thorax; or, in the language of old Morton's cook, in "causewaying the thrapples" of warriors—in ascertaining the shortest modes of preparing ammunition, and the readiest methods of using it.

The 'manual exercise' might be taught in a more gentle manner than by the musket—in a way more agreeable to nine-tenths of living soldiers; and, could they be consulted, to ten-tenths of deceased ones. Thus, 'Prepare your spoons'—'Charge your spoons'—'Discharge and charge again.' How pleasant! Females could take part in the good work, to encourage the timid and cheer the mighty. Officers might address them in the language of Todelet, (in Davenant's comedy, 'The Man is the Master,') "Ladies, pray take your spoons." Adopt this plan, and who would desert? Verily, there would be few absentees at roll-call—few would wilfully neglect the morning and evening parade, or be remiss in keeping their weapons in trim.

The spoon might with propriety be worn as a 'side-arm.' Enclosed in a sheath and suspended from the belt, or stuck in the sash, it would be as becoming an ornament for Christian heroes as a poignard. It would afford equal room for variety



in the qualities of its material and case : both could be plain or enriched according to the rank of the wearer, from a brigadier to a drummer. The fact is, it has often been efficacious as the sword in securing victory, viz. by demolishing the provisions of an enemy—the best way of fighting, and the only things worth fighting for. Does some mustached martinet bluster, or do young Hotspurs feel their pride wounded by the proposition ? What will they say if we tell them, one of the most warlike legions of ancient or modern times carried the spoon in the way indicated, and afterwards stuck it in front of the cap in place of a feather—that a soup-kettle was their banner, and the titles of their officers derived from kitchen utensils and scullion duties ! But we are anticipating what belongs to another part of the subject ; meanwhile, we would recommend those who think of selecting war as their profession—as the theatre of their labors through life, and who long to rival the glory of successful plunderers of the species—to study a certain chapter by Agrippa, upon the value of soldiers' services to mankind.

The spoon is occasionally mentioned in the curious tenures by which land was held in former times. Many domestic implements, duties, culinary dishes, &c. are enumerated, as well as some singular customs. Let us notice one or two : In the time of Edward I. a noble family held their lands on condition of furnishing “ rushes to strew on the king's chamber,” (in place of the modern carpet) and “ *two green geese*” for his dinner at Christmas. Under Edward

IV. a manor was held by furnishing, at the feast of St. Michael the archangel, "*a goose fit for the lord's dinner.*" Others paid *twenty-four pasties of fresh herring*. Some, *a mess of pottage—a mess of meat*. The yearly rents of other rich estates were a *bottle* or *jug*, a silver or maple *cup*—a *whittle* or *little knife*—a *pair of spurs*—a *pair of tongs*—a *wash-bowl* and *ewer*—a *spindle* and thread on it—a *tub of butter*—a *silver tankard*, &c.

The manor of Creswell was held by the service of carrying a *bottle of wine* for the king's breakfast. Fulk Fitz-Warren held lands in Gloucester by carrying a *hunting-horn* whenever the king hunted in the vicinity. The Hastings family held a manor in Sussex for this service: they were to find *an oar* by which to row the king over the haven at Hastings. Henry VIII. granted to Talbot, Earl of Shrewsbury, the site and precincts of a monastery, on condition of "finding the king a right-hand *glove* at his coronation, and support his right arm that day while he held the sceptre." To Walter de Marisco, was given a rich manor in Nottingham, "on condition of his presenting the king yearly a *pair of scarlet hose*." Lord Stafford, in Edward the First's reign, held land in Warwick, for the service of *three shillings* and a *pair of red stockings* yearly furnished to the king. One manor was granted by Henry VIII. to whom the grantees were to pay one pound of cummin seed, *two pair of gloves*, and a *steel needle*. Lands were held in Essex by paying a *silver needle* into the Exchequer.



The rich manor of Hopton was given to the ancestor of the family of that name by William the Conqueror, on condition of being supplied with *a bow and arrow*, whenever he hunted in the neighborhood. The grant, in an ancient black letter MS, is in verse, and is brief and curious. The mode by which the king confirmed the gift, by leaving the impression of *his teeth* on the seal, instead of "making his mark"—his sign *manual*—may be considered characteristic of the grantor and of the times.

"*To the heys male of the Hopton,*" &c.

"To me and to myne, to thee and to thine,  
While the water runs, and the sun doth shine,  
For lack of heys to the king againe,  
I William, king, the third year of my reign,  
Give to the Norman Hunter  
To me that art bothe line and deare,  
The Hoppe and Hoptoune,  
And al the bounds up and downe,  
Under the earth to *Hell*,  
Above the earth to *Heaven*:  
From me and from myne  
To thee and to thine,  
As good and as faire  
As ever they myne were.  
To witness that this is sooth,  
I bite the white wax with my tooth.  
Before Jugg, Marode, and Margery,  
And my thirde son Henry,  
For one Bow and Arrow,  
When I come to hunt upon Yarrow."

[Blount's *Ancient Tenures*, Lon. 1679.]

Sometimes a lord acted once a year as hostler, "holding the king's stirrup till he mounted;" others performed the duties of butler, cup-bearer, carver, valet, cook, taster, &c.

Sir Hugh Courtenay, in the fourteenth century,

held lands of the Bishop of Exeter. Some controversy having arisen respecting the service, it was determined, A. D. 1308, that when a bishop first came to take possession of the see, Courtenay or his heirs should ride to the east gate of the city to meet him; and at the feast in honor of his installation, carry the "first mess to the table. In consideration of which service, [besides the lands,] the said Courtenay and his heirs shall have, for their fee, four silver dishes of those carried to the table with the first mess—two salt cellars, one cup, wherein the bishop shall drink at that meal—one wine pot, *one spoon*, and two basons, wherein the bishop shall then wash—all which vessels are to be of silver."

In one old English tenure, by which a right of sheep-walk was held, the spoon was indispensable. Every shepherd presented on New Year's Day an apple-pie, (the crust of which contained a peck of flour) and a sweet cake to the lord of the manor, and carried with him "*a wooden spoon*." The bailiff of the manor provided furmenty in a large dish, sunk level with the ground, on an open space near the manor house. Each shepherd was required to sit down and eat of the dish—taking a spoonfull in his turn. If any neglected to bring his spoon, he was required to lay down on the grass and put his lips into the dish, or forfeit the right of pasture. [*See an account of this 'Jocular Tenure,' in Hone's Every Day Book*, vol. ii. 24.]

Another alleged application of spoons is too singular to be omitted in this enumeration of their uses.



Every person has read of the ancients collecting *tears*, shed by friends of a deceased person, and burying them in a bottle with the corpse. The custom is alluded to by the Psalmist: "Put thou my tears in thy bottle." (Ps. lvi. 8.) Now, it is very natural to enquire—In what manner was the fluid collected and conveyed into lachrymatories? as the little bronze and glass or earthenware phials were named. Many of these are extant; all have narrow necks, but some have in addition a concave mouth or lip, intended (as has been alleged) to embrace the eye, and consequently to catch the tears as they gushed forth. Other antiquarians think the precious drops were gathered first in narrow *spoons* and transferred by them into the phials! Pennant has engraved a figure of one. It resembles a marrow spoon, (*See Plate VIII.*) and from its form was well calculated for the purpose. Perhaps both modes were in vogue—if either.

Something odd is forcibly associated with ideas of the custom. Suppose it were revived—would it not be a hard matter sometimes to get a moderate spoonfull of genuine tears? and would it not at all times be a curious sight to witness their accumulation? We know not how the ancients acted; whether, when the friends of the deceased were assembled, a slave handed round to each a lachrymatory on a salver, that every mourner might bottle his own tears as he brewed them—or whether an attendant waited with a spoon, and, on a signal from a weeper, applied the instrument to the cheek and neatly caught

the descending pearl. It is very certain no mourner could use the spoon himself, because he could not direct it with sufficient celerity and precision to intercept the limpid stream—he would lose more than he could secure. The whole subject, although about tears, is fraught with matter for enticing speculation. We must leave it, however, lest entering farther upon it, we should forget or be unwilling to return.

The spoon has greater claims on the gratitude of mankind than any yet named. Not satisfied with comforting its owner through life, and assuaging his pains at death, it used to assist in opening the gates of heaven to his spirit! Churches were formerly crowded, like pagan temples, with altars, dedicated to different saints or demigods, and many are so still. On the walls were suspended every variety of votive offerings, exhibiting an assortment of goods not much unlike those in a modern pawnbroker's shop. A vast amount of plate, jewels, table linen and furniture was accumulated by officiating priests. Spoons often figure in catalogues of this holy merchandise; hence they not only fed the bodies of men, but were believed to contribute to the salvation of their souls. If there are people now-a-days who doubt the efficacy of such donations to the church, on their own heads be the effects of their infidelity. Houses, land, mines, manors, fish-ponds, and all kinds of real estate, were given to the church with the same view.

Thomas Caupemanura gave "to God and Saint Mary of Furness an oxgang of land," A. D. 1269. "Radulph de Bethum gave to the Abbey of Furness,



for the good of his own soul, and his wife Ingrith's soul, a saltwork," &c.—Adam de Asmunderlawe left funds to provide two pounds of wax for the church, at the feast of the Purification, for ever. Margaret de Boyvill, with the consent of her children, confirmed to the monks of Furness a rent of eight shillings "for the good of the soul of Robert her husband."—[*Antiquities of Furness*, 1774.]

Richard Qwykke, surgeon, by will, dated November 18, 1501, ordered his body to be buried in the cathedral, before the image of St. Ursula; and bequeathed (*pro salute animæ*) "to the altar of St. James, in the said church, a cloth of diaper; to the altar of St. Ursula, a plain towel marked with black silk; to the altar of Jesu and of St. Ursula, to make either of them an altar-cloth, a fyne shete; to the gentlemen's table in the hall, to wash daily therein, a bason of laton [brass] and an ewer with a rose in the middle. Item, *three sylver spones*, an owncce of broken sylver and three shillings in money, to make the *spones* in the fratrie, an *honest dosyn*:—item, to our Lady Jeson, a purse of gold and beryl, and coral stones to be broidered about it, and five pence in money:—item, six shillings and eight pence to buy a marbyl stone to lye upon his grave."—[*History and Antiquities of Rochester*, Lon. 1772.]

The vessel with a rose in the middle was probably similar to the brass basins still used in Egypt and other parts of the East. At the bottom is a cavity, covered by a rose or strainer. At the beginning and conclusion of a meal, a person washes his hands

by holding them over it, while a servant pours water upon them. The liquid instantly disappears beneath the strainer, and the attendant presents the purifying apparatus to the next person, who makes his ablutions without perceiving any of the fluid used by his predecessor.

According to the Koran, the spoon is not confined to the earth, but contributes to the joys of the faithful in heaven. The disciples of the Prophet are to imbibe nectar, and take electuaries from it there as they do here :—but it is time to end the chapter ; and if the reader's anger will not be excited, we will close it with a malediction.

Every person who handles a pen is indebted to the spoon—indebted to it for his daily food ; and yet, who among them has ever written a line in its praise ! Shame on ye editors, poets and moralists, who prate against ingratitude while wiping your mouths, and superciliously pushing aside the old servant that feeds you—preaching against that which you practice in the act of your preaching ! How long has this industrious and unobtrusive contributor to your health and your comforts been sailing, like an argosy, from you empty, and returning laden with treasure ! Treasure which you have eagerly seized and enjoyed, without bestowing a thought on the bearer ! May you, then, have the grace to peruse these pages with profit, and may your improvement be made manifest by appreciating other household slaves to your pleasures, for whom you have never spoken a good word, nor even thought of the obli-



gations you owe them. If you do not this much, may you never eat rice or any other pudding again, except *a la Turke*—with your fingers ; and when sore pressed with hunger, pick up single grains with a Chinaman's chopsticks !



## CHAPTER V.

*Trifling—Publishers' Rebuke—Habits of Animals and Men—Their Organization—Man designed for a Mechanic—Arts—Origin of Spoons—Descended from the Ladle and Caldron—Original pottage—Defects of Recorded History—Spoons coeval with Soup—Adam and Animal Food—Artificial Forms—Natural Utensils—Spoons of Marine Shells—Who first beheld the Ocean—Primitive Spoon-Handles—Devices common to all Times—Chowder Parties—Visit to the Sea—The Cockle an ancient Symbol.*

It is now time to attend to the more serious part of the subject. When schoolboys have consumed their allotted hour at noontide in sport, their attention is required to less diverting studies in-doors ; and we, after wearying grave readers with trifling, must endeavor to gain their forgiveness by closer attention to the lesson before us. We confess proceeding to the remainder with reluctance, and a wish that it was over ; because we regret to part from those congenial spirits with whom we have hitherto frolicked. It were unreasonable to hope for their

company to the end of our task, and presumptuous to press them to stay, lest entering on the following chapters should be to them like passing into school after play. We hope, however, like a veritable truant, to meet them again 'as soon as school's out,' and sooner, if the master's back should be turned.

While closing the last sentence, the bell wires suddenly lashed the walls of our humble domicile, making one start like an idler whose back unexpectedly tastes the pedagogue's cane. A presentiment came over us that all was not right; and sure enough, the postman handed in a note from the publishers, reminding us that they dealt in sterling works, and had no intention of vending ephemeral brochures—and that unless the rest of 'the copy' was divested of such volatile matter as pervaded the pages already printed, they should not risk any more of their money in setting up the type, and none of their reputation in selling the work! As there is no withstanding these men, the reader will bear in mind, when the subject becomes remarkably dull, that it is so in obedience to orders, and whenever a little life or pleasantry appears, the writer has for a moment slipped off the shackles so cruelly imposed upon him.

The history of man is more fluctuating than waves or the wind; its aspect is never the same for an hour. That of animals is uniform, because they pursue the even tenor of their way undiverted by unnatural or visionary speculations: they live, rear and educate their young, and die, as they ought to do; hence the annals of a tribe serve for the species



wherever located, and for that species forever. Their ideas of propriety, (they certainly have such, for a matronly cat slaps her kitten when it does wrong, as neatly, and frowns on it as demurely as a lady correcting her boy—so a monkey pinches the ear of its baby and grins its rebuke as intelligibly as ever did M. Picard,) their manners, customs, vocations, and devices, never vary, except where climate and peculiar circumstances require slight modifications. Pursuing the same course through life, one which experience has established as the best, the present races enjoy the blessings of existence in a degree equal to their ancestors, nor will their descendants partake of them in a greater.

But not so with man. Here, one people riots in luxury; yonder, groans another with the pangs of penury. There, science develops new motive forces to supercede human labor; here, men toil like cattle, and not even for themselves. This community is enlightened; the inhabitants of a thousand others are ignorant almost as the beasts among which they dwell. In one place, man is a philosopher; in another, a savage. Yonder, he exists in primeval forests, clothed with skins, sheltered in huts, and destitute of the commonest conveniences; here, he rolls through streets in chariots, his raiment silks and brocade—he banquets in palaces, taking his food from plates of porcelain, with forks of silver and spoons of gold.

The *origin* of spoons, like that of every primeval device may be traced to man's organization. Though

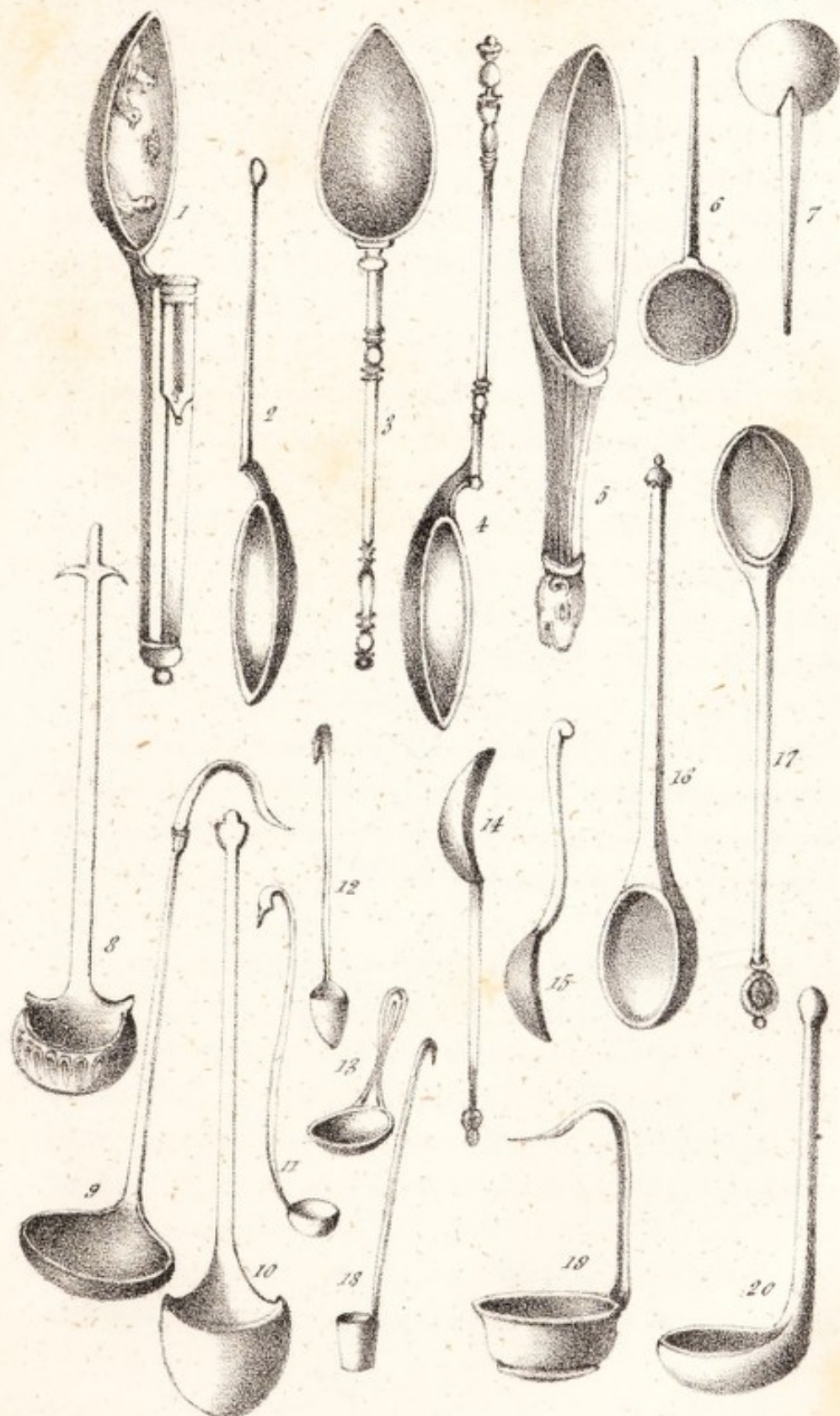
lord of this planet, he is destitute of many physical endowments conferred on inferior beings; but, in the superiority of his reasoning powers, he finds a thousand substitutes for every deprivation; hence, with a tender, a comparatively feeble, and a naked body, one unfurnished with defensive or destructive weapons, he overcomes the largest animals, subdues the fiercest, overtakes the fleetest, and brings to his feet both the feathered and finny tribes. Except him, all things living have natural apparatus or appendages to seek and seize their food. Such as live in liquids, or which frequently imbibe them, are equally provided for every emergency. The leech tribe, and myriads of insects, extract blood by natural lancets and cupping implements. Dogs, and the feline race, lap or scoop up water with their tongues. The elephant draws it through his trunk, as through the hose of an engine, while other quadrupeds plunge their mouths into a stream. Some birds pump it up as by a sucking syringe, and others hoist it mechanically in their bills—that is, in spoons attached to their heads.

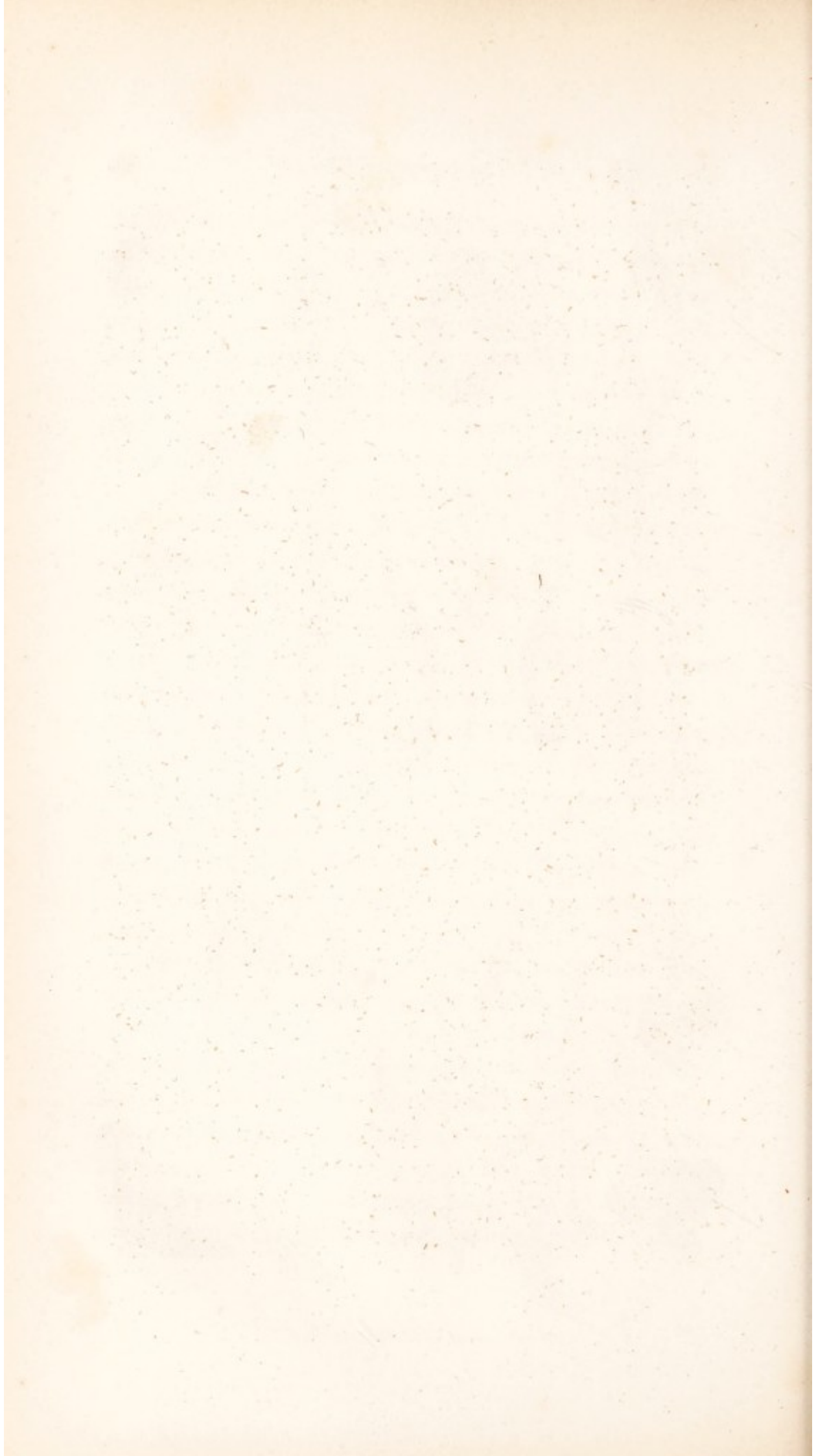
There is, then, a marked line of separation between man and other inhabitants of the earth, in this—he fabricates for himself artificial tools; they possess in their bodily organs natural ones. In other words, he was intended to be, *par excellence*, a mechanic—an inventor and maker of machines. Here we see the arts in their origin and design are of God; being based on the deficiencies of our natural organs, and on our capacities for devising substitutes.



Plate 3

Roman







No truth shines so clear on Nature's page. Without arts, man could not, as an animal, exist; the wolf, lion and bear would hunt him as their certain prey; but if none of these prowled in forests, the simplest of his wants could not be realized without implements of some form or other; he could neither procure water from pits, nor fruit from trees—nothing beyond the reach of his hands. He could have no beds to repose on, no clothes to cover nor fire to warm him. He would be the most loathsome and helpless of beings. THE ARTS make him what he is. Essential to animal life, they also form the ladder by which alone he rises in the scale of intelligence. They are the foundation of all his greatness; and while the world endures, those people who cultivate them the most will be found the most wealthy, powerful, and intelligent.

Man has no natural appendage for carrying fluids to his lips. The half-closed hand is at best a leaky and a poor substitute for a ladle or spoon; consequently never made for either. With hot liquids, it is wholly inapplicable. If the Creator, therefore, designed our species to cook food and feed on warm fluids, he also designed us to invent ready means of heating and convenient apparatus from which to receive them. Let us see how this duty has, in part, been performed; for the history of the spoon, so far as it goes, is, as well as that of the caldron, the history of man.

There are two views in which the origin of the implement may be considered: 1st, as a convenient

device for taking a mouthful of hot fluids ; 2d, its like employment for cold ones. Though now often used with food at natural temperatures, the spoon proper was not invented till victuals were boiled. It is a genuine descendant of the caldron : but comes more directly from the ladle. Another member of the family may here be mentioned—the basin or bowl—for the spoon is to the latter what the ladle is to the kettle or pot. The spoon is known in some countries as the bowl-spoon, and the ladle as the pot-spoon—‘*cuiller à pot.*’

These cognate companions are so proverbially fond of each other’s company that wherever one is, the others are sure not to be far off. When one is mentioned, the rest are implied—a fact of material benefit to us in pursuing the subject. Thus, when the servant of Elisha put on the great pot, as directed, ‘and poured out the pottage for the young men to eat,’ we are as certain he furnished each with a spoon, as if the fact had been particularly detailed. The order of precedence, then, according to seniority or birth-right, stands thus : the kettle, the ladle, the bowl, and the spoon.

Is it asked—When was the first pottage made ? We cannot tell. All similar questions bring antiquarians and historians to a stand, and for the simple reason, the annals of the early ages are lost—or rather, were never written. If we look back three thousand years—and what are thirty centuries in this planet’s history ?—we find little else than monstrous fables, puerile legends, and incredible traditions, in



which scarcely a ray of truth can be perceived. The early history of man is a blank ; that of succeeding ages, a chaos. The mythologic or legendary lore of antiquity is of the same character as modern barbarians give of their ancestors and country, and about the same reliance may be placed on one as on the other. All savages are ignorant of their origin as a people, and on the same subject enlightened nations are little better informed.

Take what is called ancient history, and what is it but a few isolated scraps relating to minute portions of the earth, and, comparatively speaking, extending back but to yesterday ? What men were doing elsewhere, absolutely nothing is known—there is not a whisper about them. Unheard of nations have agitated the surface of this planet, have been tossed to and fro by political and civil commotions, and have sunk into the fathomless depths of the past. Of them, neither we nor all who come after us can learn anything. In fact, we are wholly ignorant of the early adventures of our species. Oblivion has swept away all memorials of the first races of men, while the arenas of their exploits are, for aught we know, covered by the ocean.

If the first chapters of Genesis are to be taken in their literal sense, and the first pair of Moses for the original progenitors of mankind, (*i. e.* not of a race only, as some writers suppose,) spoons may be dated from the epoch of Adam. They are certainly coeval with soup, and soup with the boiling of liquids. 'Tis true the idea of flesh meats not having

been used in Adam's time is commonly entertained, notwithstanding animals were offered in sacrifices, their skins used as clothes, and the strange fact of his second son being a breeder of cattle, (strange, indeed, if vegetable food only was used); but we are fully persuaded the old gentleman, at least during the latter part of his life, ate venison with a relish equal to Isaac's, and conveyed pottage to his mouth with a spoon, in the manner of Esau. Meat broth was a favorite dish with the patriarchs, and there is little reason to suppose antediluvian farmers and keepers of sheep were not as fond of it as Abraham, Jacob, or Job, or those who in later times prepared soup for the 'sons of the prophets.'

The same instinct which leads man to seek food leads him to cook it; that which induces him to quench his thirst suggests the means of carrying fluids to his lips. Every close observer knows that the primitive contrivances of men were counterparts of Nature's. In all he received the first hint from her, while in many she supplied him with the object he wanted ready formed, or nearly so, to his hands. This might have been expected *à priori*; for, as an ignorant pupil, placed in her school, it was necessary that he should have examples to imitate—patterns to copy. Without these, what could he have done or known? He might have felt wants, but could not tell how to remove them. If natural objects had not, like types, impressed their images on his mind, and their adaptation to various purposes become obvious to his senses, a knowledge of the



properties of matter, of the principles of fusing, forging, modeling and carving it, and the influence of *figure* in its modifications, would have been slowly acquired, if acquired at all. The development of the intellect depends on external things; without these the mind would be a receptacle of dark and shapeless visions—a chaos. If innate ideas existed, they would have been useless, for they could have no relation to physical creation unless derived from it.

It would be a curious speculation to inquire what might have been the forms of the current productions of our workshops, if the Creator had molded every object after one figure. Could the human mind have produced the exquisite goblets and vases of Greece and Etruria, if beauty in these and endless other shapes had not been displayed in the vegetable kingdom? Where would have been the stately column, the wreathed shaft, Corinthian capital, and their appendages? And but for mineral and marine productions, could the primitive savage have developed the implements upon which his existence depended—tools, the parents of those on which the happiness of civilized society rests? We believe he could no more have invented the bow or sling than the musket—the spoon than the smoke-jack.

In utensils adapted for culinary purposes, nature is lavish of her gifts. Vessels of capacity, from a mug to a barrel, she supplies in abundance; leaving man simply to determine the uses to which to put

them. Pitchers, pipkins, ladles, buckets, plates, &c. of all sizes, are derived from the vegetable world—from husks of cocoa-nuts, joints of bamboo, from the calabash and other varieties of the gourd. In the East Indies, says Dampier, ‘cups, dishes, ladles, spoons, and in a manner all eating and drinking vessels, are made from the shell of the cocoa-nut.’ Marine shells are distinguished by naturalists, from their resemblance to artificial devices. One genera is named *Patella*, from their likeness to a *dish*; another is known as the *Dippers*. Of species, there is the *Haustrum* or *Bucket*, *Urceus* the *Pitcher*, *Trochus* the *Cup*, &c. Others are named after the *Razor*, *Rasp*, *Lancet*, *Awl*, *Bell*, *Bodkin*, *Needle*, &c. [See *Wood’s Catalogue*, *Lon.* 1828.]

The first spoons were all natural ones. A large class of prototypes were shells of the limpet, (a uni-valve) those of the cockle, muscle, clam, and similar bivalvular inhabitants of salt and fresh waters. They are so obviously adapted to convey small quantities of liquids to the mouth, so numerous and accessible, so neat and cleanly, that people in all ages have used them for such purposes. [See *Plate I.*] The choicest liquors of the old Picts and Scots were served in cockle shells; hence, “rejoicing in the shell,” was a term with them equivalent to modern expressions respecting the glass. Till recently Highlanders drank whiskey in the same way, holding the shell with the thumb on the thick part. Of late years, natural shells have given place to artificial



ones. [*See Scottish Gael*, 349.] Pearls were formerly found in fresh-water muscles of the River Ban, in Ulster, Ireland. The shells, says an old gazetteer, "are used by the poor as spoons."

People now sip tea with a spoon to which the name of the decoction has been given ; but formerly northern ladies took it from the same kind of vessels as their lords used for usquebaugh. Scott has an allusion to the practice in 'St. Ronan's Well'—the old nabob ungallantly describes the ladies as sipping catlap out of cockle shells.

An interesting question, could it be answered, is here suggested : Under what circumstances were shells originally used for artificial purposes ? Perhaps not till the ocean had been seen by human eyes ; but no one has told us where, nor at what epoch, this took place, nor who the individuals were. In fact, we are ignorant of the physical condition of the earth at the time, and of the location of the progenitors of our race with regard to the sea. Ages may have elapsed ere the grand terrestrial reservoir was made known. Who can imagine the feelings of those who first approached the coast, and their amazement when they reached it ! How intent they gazed upon the rising and receding waves, and marvelled at the breakers—at the roaring surf, as it rushed in foam towards them ! But when their emotions had somewhat subsided, with what rapture did they bound along the white and glistening shore, and seize the strangely formed and variously colored objects ! With what volubility did they descant

upon them, and the uses to which to apply them ! And how gladly were these primeval travellers hailed on returning to their homes, laden with knives, saws, cups, spoons, and other natural utensils ! Immense treasures must have adorned the virgin borders of the oceanic basin at the birth of man. Shells of every shape, and size, and hue, accumulated through unknown periods, had laid undisturbed until our species came.

Shells have been incorporated with the arts. Vessels for a thousand purposes are modeled and decorated after them. Some are perfect spoons, including the handles. [*See Plate I.*] Such are used where they abound, and of course were much more in demand in early times. When a muscle, cockle, or similar shell, was required for scooping up heated fluids, an artificial handle was necessary, to avoid scalding the fingers : now, of what material were the handles, and in what manner were they attached to the bowls ? These questions may appear unanswerable, but we think we can solve them as certainly as if we had lived among the first spoon-users : Man, under the same circumstances, always adopts the same or similar devices. This is a general—a universal truth. It is the result of a species of instinct, invariable in its impulses as in the lower tribes ; and hence, we are sure the original mode of putting handles to limpet, cockle, and clam shells, was identical with that now practiced by African negroes, American Indians, Arabs, Malays, and mountaineers, viz. by forcing the split-end of a



short stick over the edge, as represented in the plate. Shells of the cockle and soft clam thus make capital spoons, and fastidious indeed must he be who cannot relish his food from them.

Such contrivances are common to man—made patent from the beginning, and repeated in every age and clime. In them the origin of many useful arts and devices may be traced. They are among the ‘early lessons,’ the ‘easy problems,’ printed by nature in her horn-book for mechanics; and simple as they are, they offer delightful matter for reflection on the process by which man was led, step by step, to explore and beneficially employ the wonderful sources of pleasure and wealth placed at his disposal—in other words, to accomplish his destiny here.

Civilized parties of pleasure, when thrown upon their own resources to prepare food on the beach, or inland, &c. insensibly copy the devices of untutored children of the forests—making spoons of shells, forks and flesh-hooks out of pointed sticks, knives of flint or sharp-edged shells, and handling hot coals with tongs formed of a couple of twigs. By placing ourselves in such situations, we can study our species in times of which no record remains, and perceive how invention began and progressed. A sketch of an Indian “chowder party,” to illustrate more fully the use of shell spoons, was prepared, but subsequent arrangements required its exclusion and our lucubrations with it.

Perhaps no recreation, for people whose lives are spent in cities, is so beneficial as occasional fishing

trips to the sea. The fresh air, the new feelings which floating on water gives rise to, the excitement produced by sly fish nibbling, the palpitation consequent on ravenous bites, and the fluttering at heart when the biter is fairly hooked, &c. salutarily agitate both body and mind. The appetite created by the sea breeze and the exercise—the hoisting of the anchor and sailing to the shore to cook what is caught—one preparing the pot; another gathering fuel; a third, head cook; and a fourth converting shells into spoons, &c.—is real enjoyment. On such occasions the blessings of life are felt, uncontaminated with drawing-room rules and parlor distinctions.

To persons dwelling far inland, a visit once in their lives to the ocean constitutes an epoch in their existence, and a never-failing theme of grateful recollection and discourse. If such do not now wear scallop shells in their hats as emblems of having had a glimpse of the wonders of the deep, they retain vivid impressions of the scene in their heads. The adventure forms a pleasing reminiscence—its history a little romance and the gem of fire-side tales.

Much learning has been expended on the cockle as a badge of pilgrims in the middle ages. Worn in the hat, it indicated that the wearer had visited the shores of the Mediterranean and the Holy Land. But it was an emblem of Astarte, the famous Syrian goddess. Possibly its symbolical application originated from its primitive use as a spoon, and as such, carried about the person.



## CHAPTER VI.

*Other natural Spoons—Debris of Animals—Horns—Ancient uses of them—Horn Spoons—The Earth given to Mechanics—Indian Spoons—Laplanders—Custom at Highland Christenings—Horners—Proverbs—Ivory—Wood, and its importance to Man—Wooden Spoons—Invention scarcely a human attribute—Wooden Spoons from Africa and Oceanica—American Indian Spoon.*

ANOTHER class of natural spoons was, and still is, derived from the animal kingdom; from *horns* of goats, sheep, the bison, buffalo, ox, &c. Animals are the oldest occupants of this planet, and man the youngest. Their previous existence through countless ages was necessary to prepare the earth for his reception; to impart to it a suitable soil for the growth of grain and every kind of vegetable food—to put it into a condition, that when he appeared, he might become “a tiller of the ground.” Having done this, unknown multitudes retired forever from the scene: probably the changed condition of the earth was no longer fitted for their continuance.

Bones, horns, and other organic debris must have been exceedingly numerous at the birth of our species. Scattered on mountains, strewed over prairies and forests, they were met with every where, for ere man appeared they lay unmolested till dissolved by the elements. At first, they would be viewed as mementos of death—curious relics of beings which

had careered in life, and had laid down and died. Strange must have been the remarks made on them, singular the reflections they suggested. But when time and familiarity with them overcame a natural repugnance to handle such relics of mortality, the properties of buffalo and other horns would become obvious, and eventually implements and utensils be formed of them. The ancients had altars built wholly of horns, and Plutarch (in Theseus) mentions one formed of "*left-sided* horns."

Horns were the first trumpets: perhaps the first musical instruments, of which some are still named after them, as the French-horn, bugle-horn, &c. Primeval cups were natural horns. The Greeks, Romans, Celts, and all the people of antiquity drank out of such. To 'take a horn' was, and still is, an expression equivalent to quenching the thirst. Tumblers and other drinking vessels are yet occasionally called horns. Bows were anciently made of horn, and archers wore ferules of the same material on their thumbs. Ink-horns have been used since writing was practiced, while combs, pins, needles, lanterns, knife-hafts, and spoons, &c., have been formed of the substance since such things were invented. As with other materials, its adaptation for one purpose quickly suggested its appropriation to another.

Little art was required to cut or carve spoons out of horn. The substance is soft, and by holding it to the fire, or immersing it in warm water becomes more so, and susceptible of being bent into any position or receiving any impression. From its plastic



properties, it was well calculated for man to practice on in the beginning of his apprenticeship to the arts. The lessons he learned by it prepared him to undertake less pliant materials, as bone, ivory, wood, metals, &c. Every advantage gained from one acted as a stimulus to proceed to others. In this way the useful professions began and progressed till they became what they are at this day.

Horn spoons are small matters, but their material was the first animal substance employed in the fabrication of implements, and they themselves were among the first things made of it. When it is remembered that man's existence and improvement through all time was to depend on the development of his character as a mechanic; that this was to be his distinguishing attribute, one in which he approaches the nearest to the Creator—for what are the useful and ornamental arts but sources of physical and mental refinement, and what the universe but tangible, beneficent mechanism—it certainly is not useless to recur to those early lessons which contributed to form that character.

If the earth was given into the charge of one class of men more than others, it was to intelligent artisans—a term including farmers—they support all. Without them no other class could exist, and nature would resume the phase she wore before our species came. If our first parents were located, as generally imagined, at a distance from the sea, horn spoons were probably in use before those made of shells. Dispersed over the earth wherever animals

roamed, horns were always at hand, and no doubt were often used in their natural forms, as exhibited in *Figures 1, 2, 3, Plate I*, or with slight alterations. The *Figures* marked 4 and 5 are American Indian spoons, in the Philadelphia Museum. They are made of buffalo horns, but present nothing remarkable. The first is plain and about seven inches long. The other is much the same in size; the end of the handle being the natural termination of the horn, which was probably that of a cow or calf. The horns of the buffalo cow are much smaller than those of the bull. The bowls of both implements are shallow. Northern Indians have spoons, which hold several quarts, obtained from the animal named *Gros Corne*, or "Big Horn." In travelling they scoop up water with them to quench their own thirst and that of their dogs, which drag their sledges or carry their packs. Pliny (xi. 37,) mentions barbarians of the north drinking out of buffalo horns which contained several gallons, and were probably used as with our Indians, for buckets, scoops and spoons.

The natives of Nootka Sound prepare a species of broth by putting flesh of the dolphin in a square wooden trough containing water. Heated stones are then thrown in, by means of cleft sticks, till the meat be sufficiently stewed. They sup the broth "with a large spoon or scoop, made of horn." [*Cook's Voyages.*] The Greenlanders boil meat in wooden dishes of fir wood, and "drink the soup or eat it with spoons made of horn or wood." In the regions of Behring's Straits flesh is stewed in cylin-



drical caldrons, formed of the rind of the birch, the only tree that withstands the rigor of arctic winters. The liquid is heated by stones, and the decoction supped with "large horn spoons."

Laplanders carry a little bag hanging over the breast. Divided into two compartments, it contains in one tobacco and a pipe, a tinder-box and a spoon in the other. Some of the rich possess two or three pewter dishes and a few silver spoons, but the general household furniture consists of a brass or copper kettle, often a stone one, wooden bowls of birch wood, a basket, "and horn spoons." Infants are fed with milk through a small opening made in the end of a horn. The flesh of the rein-deer is the principal food, and generally boiled: it is previously cut into small pieces, which, when eaten, are dipped into liquid fat and "washed down by a ladleful of broth taken occasionally during the repast."

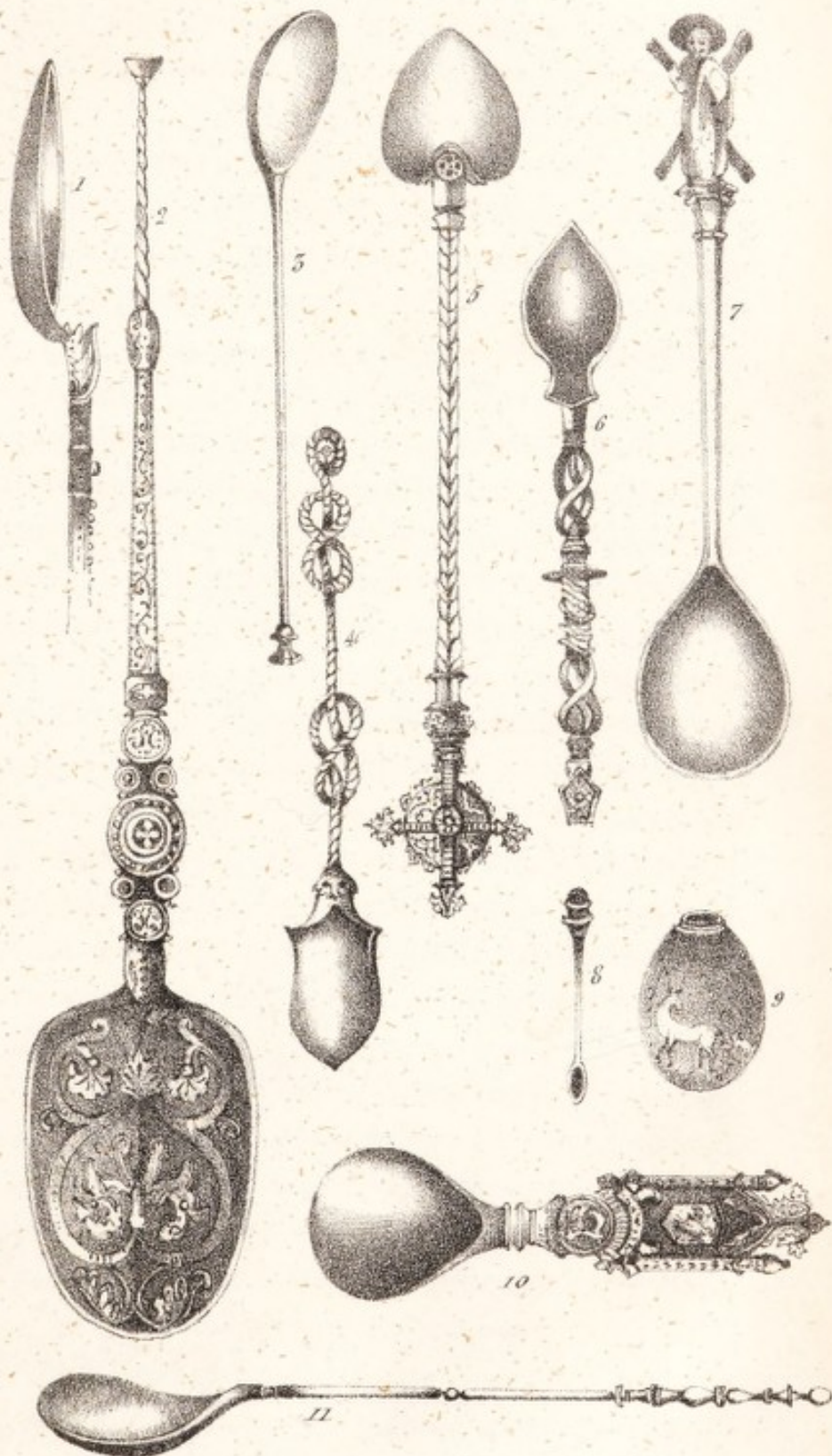
An old account of the Scotch Highlanders states that when a child was christened, it was put in a basket along with bread and cheese, and handed across the fire or suspended on the pot-hook or trammel! Immediately afterwards a dish of "crowdie" (a mixture of oatmeal and hot water) was handed round, and each person present "took three horn spoonfuls." This was designed to counteract the power of evil spirits and witches! The custom of passing the child over a fire is analogous to one common in China. When a bride first reaches the residence of her husband, she is lifted by matrons over a brazier of charcoal. Horn spoons were considered

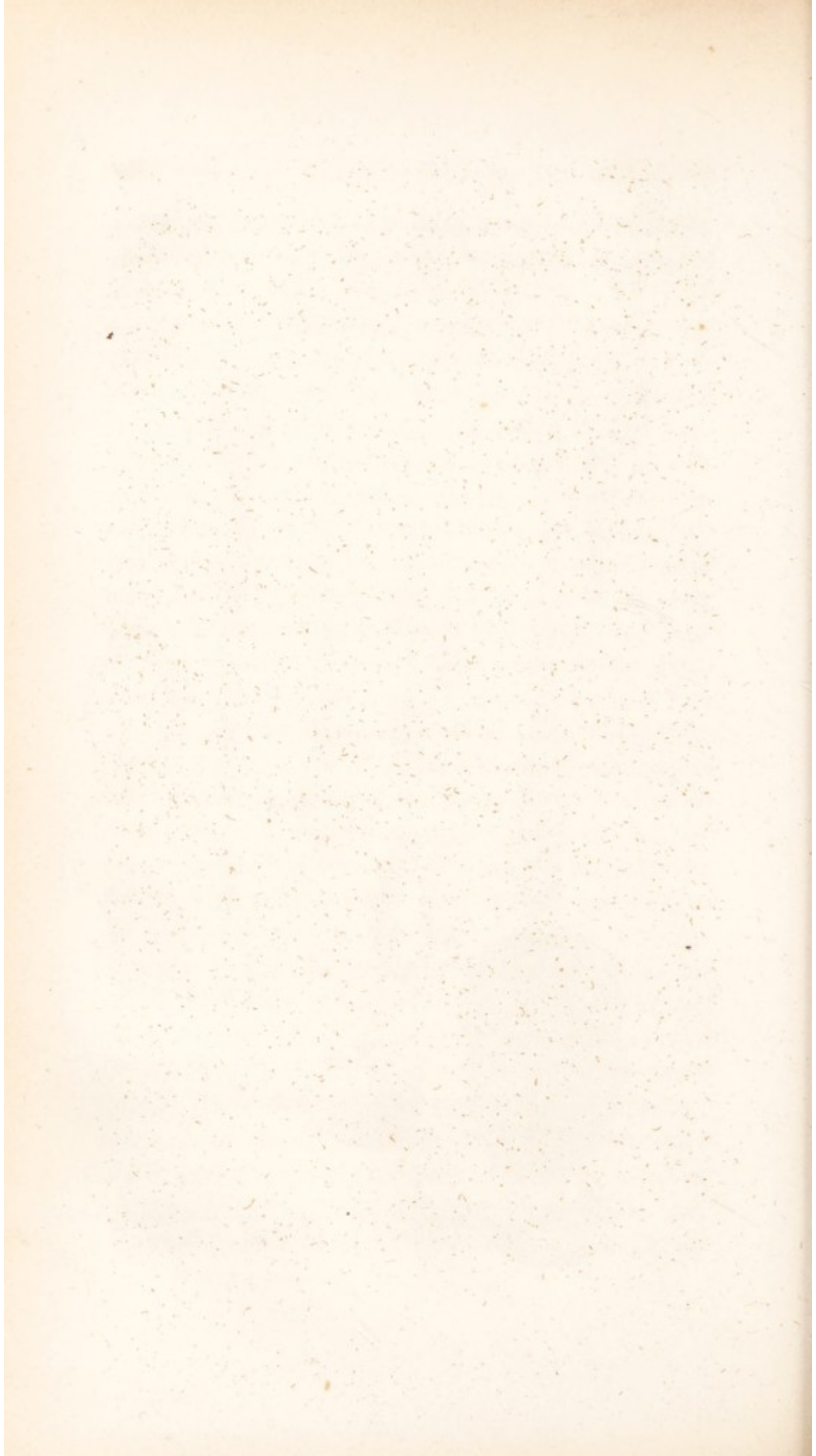
in old times as “the meetest instruments to eat furmenty and porage withall.” [*Nichol’s Progresses of Elizabeth.*]

The working of horn is one of the old professions descended to us through the Romans. Pliny enumerates a variety of uses to which the material was put in his time ; one was inlaid work, for which purpose it was stained with different colors. It was also, he says, much used for lanterns, being “cut into thin plates :” (xi. 37.) In the early acts passed by the English Parliament for the protection of trades and handicrafts, ‘horners’ are often mentioned. At their solicitation the importation of ‘horns for lanterns’ was expressly forbidden by an act of Rich. II. A.D. 1480. Adam Smith, in his *Wealth of Nations*, speaks of the exportation of horns being prohibited for the benefit of two insignificant trades—that of the *horner* and comb-maker.

The antiquity of proverbs goes back to the infancy of our race. One of the oldest extant, though only occasionally now met with, may here be mentioned, as it shows how common horn spoons at one time were. ‘*To make a spoon or spoil a horn*’ was an ancient mode of expressing a determination to accomplish an object at whatever risk or however thwarted. The incident on which it is based must have been constantly occurring in primitive times, and to some extent it occurs in all times. In attempting to make a spoon, the horn was often frittered away by bunglers, until sufficient material was not left for the smallest object. A farmer selected a log









of timber to make a gate, but he sawed, chopped, and planed, until what barely sufficed for a rail was left—hence the saying, ‘To spoil a tree or make a rail.’ Spaniards have the idea in another form: they say, in shaping the skirts of a gown, the material was cut down to a sleeve—cloth for a coat to a cuff. The Romans took the maxim from a potter, who, undertaking to make an enormous jar, turned out a small saucer.

The leisure incident to rural and pastoral life elicited the art of carving—one of the earliest of human arts, and what can be said of few, one that has been practiced in considerable perfection by most savages. It necessarily developed the peculiar properties of solid materials, and in so doing, must have originated many inventions. It is the most prominent mechanical profession mentioned in the Old Testament, and was carried to a wonderful extent by people of old. After horn, *bone* and *ivory* were used for personal ornaments and useful implements in the first ages; for pins, knives, spoons, and a hundred other matters.

Ivory formed a large item in the commerce of Tyre. (Ezek. xxvii.) Solomon imported it from India. We read in both sacred and profane authors of beds, thrones, and even houses built of it. It seems to have been as much used for *spoons* as it is at this day. Some ancient Egyptian ones will be shortly noticed. The famous Curule chairs were

Wrought from those valued tusks Syene lends,  
Which the swart Moor, or swarthier Indian sends  
From Nabath's forest, where the unwieldly beast  
Drops his huge burden of its weight released.

[*Juvenal*, xi. *Sat.*—*Badham*.]

A material difference in the properties of horn and ivory must quickly have been seen by the patriarchs of the arts. The former softened by heat, retains when cold, impressions stamped on it ; but the latter and bone must be carved in detail. Spoons formed of marine shells are not used by all people, but those of bone, ivory, or horn, are everywhere met with.

How beneficial to men have the horns, &c., of quadrupeds been. More durable than the rest of their bodies, and possessing peculiar properties, they would seem to have been ordained as a material for useful manufactures. We forget half the obligations we owe the lower tribes, when we forget the numberless uses to which their skins, hair, bones, &c., are put.

Another substance of primitive spoons was *wood*.

The earth, as one of Nature's work-shops, is stored with every kind of stock its occupants can require. It is the same throughout the Universe ; for all physical beings are artisans, and every orb an *atelier* in which they are at work. The proprietor of these wonderful establishments employs, we may presume, in each a distinct order of intelligent laborers, and supplies them with materials adapted to their capacities and wants. Compared with the magnitude of others, this globe is one of the Creator's minor establishments, and we, in whose charge it is placed, may be among the least intellectual and skillful of his artificers. When first man took possession, the development of his energies, and the direction given them depended upon the natural productions around



him. These necessarily arrested his attention, excited his curiosity, and became identified with his existence, his habits, thoughts and pursuits.

Of terrene substances, none has exercised a greater influence over human destiny than *wood*. None is more indispensable—hence we find it diffused over all lands. Its consumption is enormously large, and as an indication that it was designed to be so, provision is made, in the reproductive powers of plants and trees, to secure a supply for all generations. Without wood, man had probably never used fire, nor known what artificial light and heat meant. He would have been a troglodyte. The metals had not been worked : for want of fuel ores had not been reduced. Wood is the basis of the arts, savage or refined. It is the key which first unlocked the agricultural and mineral treasures stored away in the vaults of this terrestrial factory. No substance is more extensively used, and few, if any, possess so rich a variety of qualities, or have been applied to such a multitude of purposes. Essential in the construction of the palace as the hut ; the primitive bridge as well as ship or canoe ; the great agent of domestic conveniences to rich and poor ; it constitutes the elaborate furniture of the one and the homeliest utensil of the other—the *spoon*.

Unlike those made of vegetable, of horn, or marine shells, every feature of wooden spoons is brought out by art. Still they can hardly be deemed a human *invention*, since they are but imitations (in another material) of natural types. Indeed, so far as

relates to *figure* man has little claim to originality—it is not in his power to produce a purely new form—all that he has done or can do is to copy, modify, combine and apply those which nature has given. Every artificial object, no matter how irregular or uniform its contour, is a proof of this—the stately column or elaborate capital, an ordinary goblet, a pipkin, a pyramid, or a spoon.

As regards natural utensils, little mental effort was required to determine or extend their application. Their fitness for certain purposes—as shells for cups, scoops, and spoons; gourds for buckets, bottles, vases, ladles, caldrons, &c.—was so obvious that they were adopted at once; and when artificial ones were introduced, they only so far deviated in figure and dimensions as change of circumstances suggested. All our vessels of capacity retain a resemblance to their originals—art may disguise the likeness, but cannot obliterate it. Invention in its strictest sense is applicable only to God—with man it merely signifies imitation and combination—all his works are reducible to these, and he can never exhaust them.

We have no accounts of wooden spoons in very remote times. History descends not to such things, and no important fact is recorded with which they were associated. But what could history have told us about them which we do not know? We are sure they bore a general resemblance to those now made, were applied to the same uses, and fabricated, chiefly, by the same class of men. Specimens of



Egyptian and Roman ones are extant, but before referring to them we shall notice a few produced by modern barbarians, to serve as samples of those made by uncivilized man in the first ages. In mechanical devices, in tools, modes of operating, taste for, and style of ornament, the untutored child of nature is ever the same.

*Figures 6 and 7, Plate I,* are African wooden spoons. The first is from *Tome V.* page 188, of *Histoire Générale des Voyages, Hague, 1748.* It is represented along with jewelry, furniture, pots, knives, &c. made by negroes on the western coast of Africa.

*Figures 8 and 9* are from the Fejee Islands. They are made of a light wood resembling beech, and are as neatly finished as the ordinary wooden spoon of civilized countries. The bowls are nearly circular and  $2\frac{1}{2}$  inches over—the handles  $6\frac{1}{2}$  and 7 inches long. Both are ornamented, but *Fig. 9* the most. The front and back part of the handle are stained of a dark brown color—the effect of scorching the surface by drawing a hot stone or other smooth body over it. Waving, dotted, and other lines of a light color are then produced by cutting through the dark surface—a species of ornament affording room for great variety of patterns, and skill in working them out.

*Fig. 10.* Another spoon from the South Sea Islands, and preserved in the Philadelphia Museum. The bowl is round; the handle of a peculiar form, and not inelegant. The ornamental spots, at the

lower part, are openings cut entirely through—a feature common in Persian spoons. The entire length is about six inches.

*Fig. 11.* A very neatly made spoon, deviating considerably from ours both in the bowl and handle. The former is oblong, pear-shaped, and  $3\frac{1}{2}$  inches in length; the latter, attached to the smaller end, is an inch longer. This spoon is of sandal wood. Both it and *Figs. 8 and 9* are from Dr. Chilton's cabinet, New-York.

*Fig. 12.* A singular specimen of American Indian spoons in the Philadelphia Museum. It is of a dark colored wood, and about eight inches in length. The handle terminates in a wolf's head, upon which stands a human figure with a high cap, in a bent position, and with the arms raised in front of the breast, somewhat as in the attitude of prayer. It has been supposed that the natural form of the root or branch of which the spoon was made, suggested the figures. This may have been true; but there is a beautiful moral in the characters given them, whether intended or not. The animal, whose head is here carved, is the universal emblem of hunger. To 'keep the wolf from the door,' is to keep famine from a house. Now, no people on earth are more familiar with the literal and metaphorical wolf than the Indians of North America, and none are more accustomed to invoke the 'Great Spirit' for power to keep them at bay. What device, then, more expressive, and, of all things in the world, more appropriate for a *spoon*, than a man praying for bread on



the head of a wolf! The idea is in character with the symbolic imagery of the aborigines, and we question if a more comprehensive and beautiful one can be drawn from the works of classical artists.

The few spoons on *Plate I.* are, of course, mere specimens. Savages are known to vary their forms, proportions, and ornaments, as much almost as educated artists. In some respects they display a tact and resource which enlightened mechanics would hardly think of.

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## CHAPTER VII.

*Spoons unknown in Polynesia—People of Guinea at Dinner—Spoons of the Peruvians and Aztecs—Caldron and Spoon indigenous to Northern Climes—Hot Fluids and Ultra Dietists—Warm Drinks sold in Pompeii—Chinese Opinion—Natural Aliment of the Esquimaux—A Fuegian eating Fresh Fish—Cooking—Original Sin—Sacrifices—Athenian Boiling Feast—Anglo-Saxons—Unsavoury Superstitions—Persians—Guatemalan Kitchen—Tartar Cookery—Laplanders—Greenlanders—Cosmetics and Domestic Economy in the Polar Regions.*

It should be remarked that, notwithstanding the preceding specimens of spoons from the South Seas, there is no question of the implements being in many parts of Oceanica a modern innovation. In the Sandwich and other islands of Polynesia they were unknown till introduced by whalers or national

navigators. The inhabitants did not use them, because they had no use for them. They had no idea of heating liquids, and no vessels (except a small wooden bowl) in which to heat them. It was the same with most if not all the people of Australasia. Their cookery was confined to roasting and baking. Rutherford says the New Zealanders never drank any thing hot or warm. Their only vessel for holding water was the calabash which they never dreamt of turning to a boiler or skillet.

Some African tribes use the spoon, but many do not ; yet all are acquainted with the process of making pottage. Villault, speaking of Negroes on the coast of Guinea, says : ' Ils mangent avec beaucoup de mal propreté. Leurs ongles leur servent de couteau ; et n'ayant ni fourchettes ni cuillers : ils se lancent avec les doigts chaque morceau dans le gozier. On les voit porter tous ensemble la main au plat, et prendre leurs ragouts a poignées.' [*Histoire Générale, Tome V.* 197.] To take up solid and even semifluid food (as boiled rice) with the fingers, is of great antiquity. The custom prevails universally in the Eastern world, except China ; but this is not owing to ignorance of the spoon, either with Africans or Asiatics. If neither use the implement in eating rice, it invariably assists them to cook that great pabulum of life.

Perhaps it may be doubted whether the aborigines of America had the spoon previous to the arrival of white people : most of them certainly had. Here, as in other parts of the earth, wherever the caldron



was known, spoons were in use. The Peruvians had them of silver and gold ; so had the Mexicans. The Aztecs, in their feasts, ablutions, and table furniture, approached in many respects to Asiatic customs. They kept meats warm with chafing dishes. The tables of the wealthy were ornamented with vases of silver and sometimes of gold ; ‘their drinking cups and *spoons* were of the same costly materials.’ Montezuma took no other beverage than chocolate flavored with vanilla and other spices, so prepared as to be reduced to a froth of the consistency of honey, which gradually dissolved in the mouth. This beverage, if so it could be called, was served in golden goblets, with spoons of the same metal, or of tortoise-shell, finely wrought.’ [*Prescott’s Mexico.*]

But the less refined people of both continents were found in possession of the caldron and spoon. The brutalized Brazilians boiled victuals in earthen vessels, and used knives of flint and spoons of wood and horn. [*See Lafitau’s Mœurs des Sauvages, Tome I. 572, Plate 19, and Tome II. 114.*] The Virginia Indians had clay pipkins of a very superior quality, and wooden bowls, &c. of their own manufacture. [*Phil. Trans. Abrid. III. 572, and IX. 474.*] The Mandans, a tribe now nearly extinct, still fabricate earthen caldrons as their ancestors did. They alone, of those occupying the Missouri valley, are believed to make them.

The boiler and spoon would seem to be indigenous and indispensable to northern climes. The

former, made sometimes of a skin, at other times of wood, and the latter of horn, bone, &c. are used at this day, as they ever have been since man first took possession of the arctic regions. A few Indians about Hudson's Bay purchase brass kettles at the factories, but the greater part prepare their food in the large upright boilers of birch already mentioned. When animal food is scarce, and it often is so, they have no resource but to make pottage with a species of moss that collects on stones. To render it palatable or nutritive boiling is essential.

The utility of hot fluids is a mooted point, but it is not our intention to discuss it. If they are not natural to people in high latitudes, they are to none, and the caldron and spoon, as vehicles for preparing and receiving them, must be denounced as injurious devices. If heated decoctions are violations of nature's laws, warm or hot food of every description must be deemed such, whether taken in sickness or in health ; but who, except the most ultra of dietists, will believe this—men that not only reject animal food but every artificial preparation of aliment—who insist that we should eat only raw fruit and unground grain, and drink nothing. Of course, mills then should be abolished as enervating inventions, preventing people from grinding their own grist with their natural grinders. On the same principle, clothing, dwellings, and fire might be dispensed with ; for within the tropics people make little use of the first, and not much of the second ; while the Terra del Fuegians can endure their severe climate



apparently without the other. Abandon the use of fire in cooking, and there would be little demand for fuel even within the temperate zones. Probably three-fourths of the arts connected with the working of metals are more or less allied to the dining-room, kitchen, and toilet.

Nearly every device characteristic of civilization might with equal propriety be abolished; not trifling things only, as knives and forks, in place of teeth and fingers; plates and dishes, for leaves and slabs of slate; napkins, instead of wiping the mouth with the hand; but articles of dress, as shoes, that supersede the thick and more elastic soles which nature bestows on those who go barefoot; straw, beaver and other fancy coverings for the head, when she is ready to furnish gratis matted or felted caps to all who have no dealings with the hatter.

Beneficial or not, the ancients had shops expressly fitted up for the sale of hot drinks. Several *Thermopolia* have been discovered in Pompeii, with the urns in which the decoctions were made, and furnished with metallic heaters and cocks, like our tea and coffee urns. The Chinese (a pretty good authority as far as relates to antiquity of customs connected with domestic life) drink all their beverages warm. Cold liquids, even pure water, they say, engenders disease. Ice is employed by them to cool meats and fruits, but not to refrigerate water. [*Chinese Repos.* III. 464.]

Animal diet and warm fluids may be dispensed with in some countries, but not everywhere. It is as

absurd to suppose that man can in civilized society live in the manner of the savage, as that he could in all climates exist on the same food. Under the influence of science and the division of labor consequent upon an advanced state of the arts, the physical as well as the mental constitution is changed, and a different aliment required to sustain the one as well as the other. If the Creator designed the arctic regions of our planet to be inhabited, he designed man to sustain himself there on animal food, since, generally speaking, no other is within his reach, and in some parts absolutely no other. Besides food, the Esquimaux derive material for clothing, dwellings, light and fuel from the whale, seal, and a few land animals. Olaus Magnus, speaking of the wild people of the north in his time, says, "they dwell in caves made of the bones and ribs of sea-monsters ; they live without bread, but only on fish and deer." Pulse, grain, fruit or roots are not to be had ; but if they were actually produced by the soil the natives could not live upon them there.

With these people, then, the use of animal food cannot be wrong, nor the cooking of it a crime. Indeed, so far as they are concerned the kettle and spoon may be considered of divine origin ; though like more valuable gifts in more favored climes, these implements are too often neglected ; for the brutalized men and women of the north frequently feed, like the bear, on raw flesh ; while at the opposite extremity of the continent, the Fuegian, on catching a fish, is in the habit of taking it by the gills and



instantly making a repast on the struggling victim—lowering the tail into his mouth somewhat like a Neapolitan swallowing strings of macaroni: thus literally obeying the injunctions of those reformers who denounce “every species of cookery as polluting the food which the God of our natures has provided for the sustenance of man.”

So far as history goes, people without cooking have ever been savages, and no refined nations ever eat their food raw. Individual and partial exceptions may of course be found. Cato, the censor, seldom drank anything but water, and often ate dinner prepared without fire. Epicurus is slandered as a voluptuary, for his ordinary diet was bread and water, pulse, milk and cheese. The cynics lived austere, water being their beverage, and the ground their bed. Diogenes, it is well known, lived more like a brute than a gentleman: his manners too were allied to those of a Hottentot. But some modern ascetics leave the most eccentric of the ancients behind, for they reject not merely flesh meats, but bread, salt, milk, and even water itself! contending that juices of fruits and herbs yield fluid sufficient for the human system; and as animals bake not nor boil, make neither puddings, porridge nor pies—they conclude such things are superfluous to us: nay, some look on cooking as original sin—as the very crime for which Adam and his consort were driven out of Eden!—not satisfied with celestial food, it is said they began to improve (i. e. to spoil) it by art, and were therefore expelled, that they might

carry their wicked devices elsewhere. Hence the nature of their punishment, and why so large a portion was inflicted on Eve; she being the original transgressor and the greater sinner of the two, just as all her daughters, in the same respect, have been since; for where food is spoiled by cooking, it is woman generally who still commits the crime.

Boiled meats have been common from the earliest periods which history has noticed, and according to the scriptures, with divine approbation. Sacrifices were so frequently boiled that capacious caldrons were permanently erected near temples for the purpose. As the virtue of the flesh was extracted by the soup, spoons must have been in as great demand at Jewish and heathen festivals as knives, flesh-forks, or any other implement of the table. [*See Ewbank's Hydraulics*, p. 392.]

The Athenians had an annual boiling-feast, dating back to the times of Theseus and the fabulous Minotaur. It was instituted, according to Plutarch, to commemorate the return of the hero and his companions from their perilous adventure at Crete, and arose from the fact of their having made a species of ollapodrida the moment they got safe ashore—mixing the remains of their provisions, “and boiling them in one pot.” Theseus is supposed to have been contemporary with Gideon, and to have flourished 1350 B. C. about 1400 years before his ancient biographer.

The Anglo-Saxon and contemporary people chiefly boiled their meat. Large houses had “a boiling place for small meats and a boiling house



for the great boiler." One resistless argument that nature designed men to prepare food by fire is derived from the fact that some roots, upon which large portions of mankind live, are positively noxious if eaten without being cooked—the *potato* is a sufficient example. In some parts of the earth water for drinking requires to be boiled to render it wholesome. Several ancient people besides the Persians found this necessary.

Most northern nations have been noticed for a want of cleanliness, especially in cooking. The further northward we proceed, the less regard for this virtue appears. It diminishes with degrees of longitude, and within the arctic may be said to have vanished. But it is not confined to one people or one continent. We shall conclude this chapter with a few examples of unsavory superstitions, of which some have direct reference to the ladle and spoon. Let not the reader who is particular in his tastes turn sick at the manners of his species, for not many ages have elapsed since his forefathers became freed from practices as filthy and foolish as any about to be noticed.

The polite and effeminate Persian grandee, so scrupulous in his ablutions and personal purity, takes up his food with his hands, and dreads to change his table cover. "On the ground before us," observes Mr. Morier, in describing a dinner given to the British embassy by the governor of Bushire, "was spread the *sofra*, a fine chintz cloth, which perfectly entrenched our legs, and which is used so

long unchanged that the accumulated fragments of former meals collect into a musty paste and emit no very savory smell ; but the Persians are content, for they say that changing the sofra brings *ill luck*."

Irish women were formerly described as very "unmannerly [unwomanly] in making butter," because they held it extremely unlucky to wash their milk-vessels ! But the daughters of St. Patrick were not alone addicted to this filthy superstition. In some parts of Scotland the same prejudice to soap and water exists or did recently exist. It is humorously referred to in the Cottages of Glenburnie : "'Don't you clean the churn before you put in the cream ?' asked Mrs. Mason. 'Na, na,' returned Mrs. McClarty ; ' that wadna be canny ye ken. Naeboddy hereabouts wad clean their kirn for ony consideration. I never hard o' sic a thing in a' my life !' "

' Dirt bodes luck ' is an old Scottish proverb.

In the middle ages in Europe, candle-bearers in large houses were allowed, among other perquisites, the broken meat which the *king* or *lords* spilt on the floor from their plates ! No wonder that kings' houses were then littered with straw like modern stables.

Most travellers complain of South American cookery. Among others, Dunn, in Guatamala, observes, " The whole of these messes were prepared under a shed, in a large dirty yard, which served as a kitchen, and was full of filth of all kinds. The knowledge of this, with the sight of the servants had no tendency to quicken our appetites. The *spoons*, cups, knives, and forks were of silver."



Bell, in passing through Tartary, in the suite of the 'Russian Ambassador to Peking,' mentions a hospitable matron, whose cooking was not quite to his taste. Entering a tent, the mistress immediately set to work to make him and his companions some tea. After placing a large iron kettle over the fire, she wiped it out with a horse's tail which hung in one corner of the tent. Then some water was put in, coarse bohea tea, and a little salt. When near boiling, she took a large brass ladle and tossed the tea till the liquid became quite brown. It was next taken off the fire and poured into another vessel. The kettle was now again wiped out with the same implement as before, and a paste, made of meal and butter, put in and fried; some cream taken from a sheep-skin was added. The tea previously made was poured in, and the whole beat together with the ladle. After being allowed to cool, it was handed round in wooden bowls.

Maundeville, who 500 years before, seems to have passed through Tartary on his way to or from China, says: "The Tartarienes han gret conscience, and holden it for a gret synne to casten a knyf in the fuyr, and for to drawe flessche out of a pot with a knyf. . . . Thei eten but littille bred, but zif it be in the courtes of grete Lordes. And thei han not in many places nouthur pesen ne benes, ne non other potages, but the brothe of the flessche. For littille ete thei ony thing but flessche and the brothe. And whan thei han eten, thei wypen hire hondes upon hire skirtes; for thei usen non naperye ne towayelles,

but zif it be before grete Lordes. . . . And whan thei han eten, thei putten hire dissches *vnwasschen* in to the pot or cawdroun with remenant of the flessche and of the brothe, til thei wole eten azen." [*Travels*, cap. xxiii.]

The cookery of the Laplanders is generally performed by men, and in the dirtiest manner possible. It is said "the dishes and spoons are seldom washed, or at most, only by squirting water upon them from the mouth, and rubbing them with their fingers!" A favorite dish is made by boiling in a deer's paunch a mixture of minced meat, blood, and fat; "but the fat is previously chewed by the men and boys to prepare it for mixing more intimately with the other ingredients!" [*Ed. Encyc. Arts. Lapland—Hudson Bay.*]

With the Greenlanders, "the color and odor of the last dish are left to remove those of a former one." When a stranger is present, the woman of the house takes a piece of meat from the kettle, *licks* off the scum and blood, and presents it to him in her hands. This is considered a mark of respect—to decline on his part an insult! The inhabitants of the Marquesas are still more polite: at San Christina it is considered an act of civility to offer the food already chewed, to a friend, that he may have no other trouble than that of swallowing it! Verily, there is no accounting for tastes. The aboriginal women of Brazil prepared an intoxicating drink by masticating manioc, and boiling the substance thus reduced to a pulp. So the ladies of Otaheite made



a beverage for their lords by chewing yava and spitting the juice into a bowl, when it was mixed with cocoa-nut liquor, and left to ferment.

All the inhabitants of the polar regions resemble each other in their manners and customs. Their bodies are coated with a varnish of dirt and grease, the accumulation of years—the color of the surface beneath being as effectually concealed as in articles covered with paint or japan. With regard to the kitchen, Esquimaux dames would seem to bear off the palm, since they cleanse every culinary utensil, the caldron as well as the spoon, with their tongues ; continuing the operation as long as a particle of blubber remains. When Captain Parry bought a lamp of a matron, the economical owner *licked* it quite clean, devouring the soot and oil with which it was covered, as forming no part of the bargain, and too precious to be given away.

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## CHAPTER VIII.

*Antiquarian Value of Ancient Table Furniture—People of Egypt—Specimens of their Spoons—Humorists—Other Spoons of Ivory, Bronze and Wood—Salt and Salt-Cellar—Roast Goose in Egypt—Golden Spoons of the Tabernacle and Temple—Simpula of Wood, Bronze and Gilt—Reflections.*

HAVING given samples of primitive spoons formed of shells, horn, and wood, we might proceed to the introduction of those made of pewter, brass,

iron, silver and other metals—of which some were undoubtedly made in ages anterior to those of history ; but all would be sheer conjecture. The fortunes of the first races of men have not been recorded—much less the adventures of their spoons. We shall therefore confine our future observations chiefly to actual specimens, arranged in chronological order and beginning with the oldest extant.

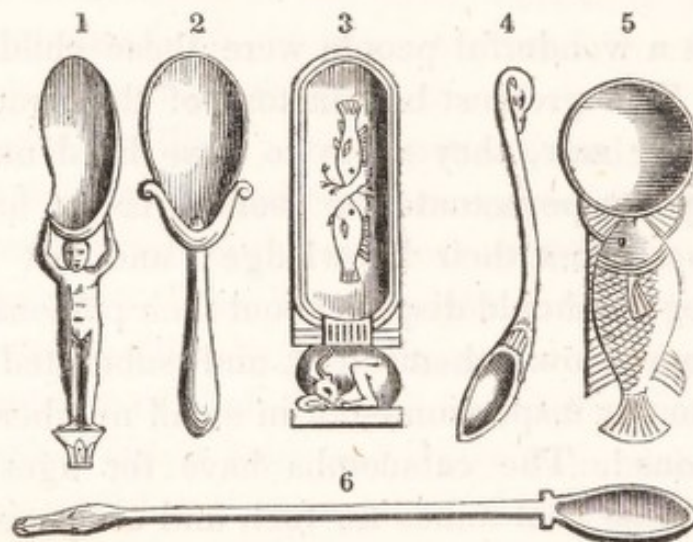
It would have been an agreeable task to have traced a connection in the table utensils of the famous nations of old—in those exported from Tyre, and such as were produced in the silversmith shops of Persepolis or Troy ; but no pattern-card of Tyrian or Sidonian spoon-makers has reached us, nor any specimens placed on the sideboards of Priam or Nebuchadnezzar. The blank might indeed be in a great measure filled by a few from the neighborhood of Memphis and Thebes—such as old Egyptian artists supplied their own and other countries with, when the useful and ornamental arts flourished in the Nilotic valley. Such would have given us an idea of prevailing tastes in the forms and decorations of the implement. We could at a glance have compared them with our own, and told in a moment whether Moses and Joshua, Nehemiah or Ezra—whether Egyptian gentlemen or Jewish maidens took pottage with implements fashioned like ours. How interesting would a sight of such spoons have been ! What would not lovers of antiquity give to behold them, or for drawings and descriptions of them ! Does the reader enter into the spirit and feelings of



such philosophers? Does he take pleasure in tracing the characters of remote people in vestiges of their arts—ascertaining their domestic manners in their culinary utensils, and the state of the useful professions among them in products of their workshops? Well, spoons made and used by the old inhabitants of Egypt *are* in existence! The assortment is limited, but it might have been less; and small as it is, we are enabled to produce drawings of ‘a round dozen.’

What a wonderful people were these children of Ham! The greatest benefactors of their race the world ever saw, they seem to have lived only for posterity—to perpetuate the useful arts—to hand to their successors their knowledge; and lest future physiologists should dispute about their persons, they have come down themselves, and submitted their bodies to our inspection—not in small numbers, but in millions! The catacombs have for ages been quarried like coal mines for fuel, and are yet said to contain more mummies than Egypt living men. How surpassing strange is it, then, that we should have before us spoons used (perhaps) three or four thousand years since, with the men and women they nourished—the identical hands that handled them—the very mouths they entered! What people but one ever did this much for posterity; and what people will ever repeat it? Four thousand years hence (or even one thousand) antiquarians, on referring to our days and our arts, might as well search the soil for our souls as our bodies.

Is the reader anxious to look on spoons made under the Ptolemies or Pharaohs? Let him exercise a little patience, and, ere he casts his eyes on the next illustration, think within himself what can they be like—of what forms are the bowls—do they resemble shells—are all of one shape—how decorated, if decorated at all? Then the handles—are they flat like modern ones, round or square, plain or carved? And of what materials are these relics of ancient days?



ANCIENT EGYPTIAN SPOONS.

See! there is half a dozen—each of a different pattern, and of assorted sizes, too; unless, as is most likely, the artist who copied them has not drawn all to the same scale. The originals are in the British Museum. Do not they, few as they are, present about as much variety as every species of modern spoons? But if they do—if these stragglers, picked up among tombs or ploughed out of the soil, exhibit such fertility of design, what rich displays of the article must the shelves of goldsmiths, hard-



ware and fancy stores in Memphis, Thebes, and On have afforded!

[As we have unfortunately little or no specific information respecting the originals of several of our illustrations, the reader will, we presume, be better pleased with some reflections than with absolute silence. It is awkward to introduce specimens without comment; hence, where descriptive data are not within reach, we shall occasionally offer such remarks, serious or otherwise, as the figures themselves may suggest.]

Not two of the bowls in the preceding spoons are alike; and as for the handles, they are as different as they well could be. In *Fig. 1.* the bowl represents a slightly scalloped shell, supported on the head of a human figure, which serves as a handle, and whose feet rest on the capital of a column. The handle is short compared to the size of the bowl, (a remark applicable to others,) but it was no doubt proportioned to the particular purpose for which such spoons were made. The pattern seems to have been borrowed from architecture; but there is something bizarre in making Atlantes bear spoons instead of entablatures or domes of temples. The Egyptians were great humorists, and freely indulged in burlesque. If we could suppose a joke was intended in the design, the figure might be taken for a caricature of Atlas or Hercules bearing the celestial or terrestrial sphere, as an intimation that the spoon was all the world to gastronomes, its effects a heavy burden fat men groaned under, and its pleasures

their highest delight. In this respect the figure is not an inapt representation of some people's achievements in life.

In *Fig. 2.* the handle appears as if turned in a lathe: where it joins the bowl it assumes the form of the lotus flower, out of whose leaves the bowl like a ripe fruit is seen to rise. The shape of the bowl is precisely like that of ours, viz: a longitudinal segment of an egg shell.

*Fig. 3.* is of wood, and very unlike a modern one in shape, unless compared to a marrow spoon. The bowl resembles the cartouche or royal oval, in which the names of the kings of Egypt are inscribed in hieroglyphics on the monuments. It obviously could only have raised fluid matter from shallow dishes or plates. The ornaments may be arbitrary, but we should rather suppose they had an allegorical meaning. The ibex or gazelle, an animal which supplied the chief material for broth; and the fish, with sprigs of parsley or other herbs, in their mouths, as if ready for the table, were certainly not inappropriate decorations of an implement employed in transmitting portions of these victims to the human palate.

*Fig. 4.*—a bronze spoon, and more nearly resembling the modern one than any of the preceding. The shank is made to represent the human hand and arm—a copy of the *first* spoon handles, when cockle and muscle shells only were in use. Perhaps there is an allusion to that custom in this ancient implement; but the artist did not forget to introduce a victim of the caldron or spit: he has made the han-



dle terminate with the head of a goose, a bird in much repute with the Apician literati of Egypt, and as such often figured on spoons.

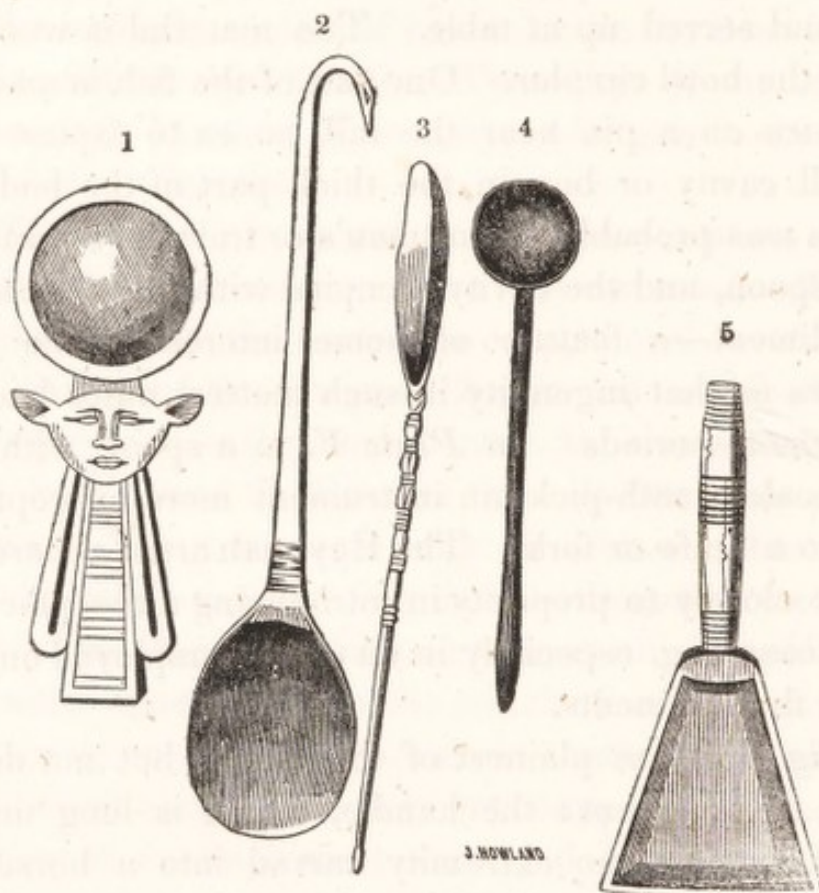
*Fig. 5.* Here we have a spoon representing a fish swimming into a kettle, as if anxious to be macerated and served up at table. The material is wood, and the bowl circular. One part of the fish is made to turn on a pin near the tail, so as to expose a small cavity or box in the thick part of the body. This was probably a sportman's or traveller's portable spoon, and the cavity occupied with salt or other condiment—a feature of some interest, since it shows us that ingenuity in such matters dates back to remote periods. In *Plate V.* is a spoon with a concealed tooth-pick, an instrument more appropriate to a knife or fork. The Egyptian artist adhered more closely to propriety in introducing a receptacle for seasoning, especially in an utensil employed only with fluid aliments.

*Fig. 6.* is the plainest of the whole, but not devoid of ornament: the handle, which is long and stout, having one extremity carved into a horse's head, and the other a projecting piece or shoulder that unites it to the bowl.

Another group, taken from Wilkinson's '*Manners and Customs of the Ancient Egyptians*,' will be found on the following page.

*Fig. 1.* is of ivory, about four inches long, and preserved in the Public Museum at Berlin. It was discovered at Thebes along with a deep stand or chest containing a number of small jars or bottles—

supposed to have been part of the stock of an apothecary, or to have belonged to the toilet of a Theban beauty. The style of the handle of this spoon is unique, and independent of the carved head, displays much taste.



ANCIENT EGYPTIAN SPOONS.

The implement itself is not unlike some of our small spoons—possibly it belonged to an ancient salt-cellar. Salt, it will be remembered, was used at table in remote antiquity just as it is at this day, and several superstitions were associated with it. Omens drawn from spilling it, observes Fosbroke, are equally antique with its use. The salt-cellar was



placed on the table with the first dish containing offerings to the Gods. Its presence was supposed to sanctify the food, and great importance was attached to keeping it bright and clean. Fabricius, the conqueror of Pyrrhus, was distinguished for the simplicity of his manners : history informs us that a small salt-cellar, with horn feet, was the only article of silver in his house.

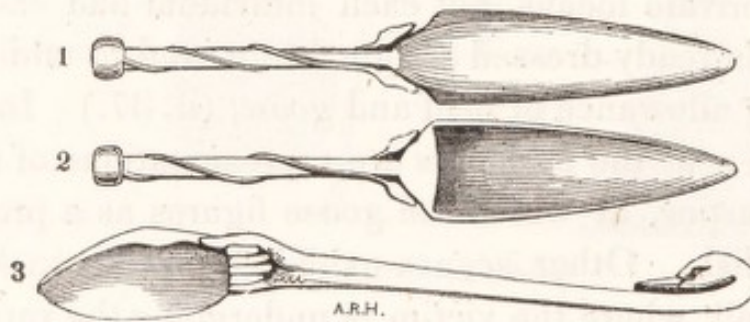
*Fig. 2.*—of bronze, eight inches long, and with a flat handle ; perhaps the common table-spoon of the people, occupying the place of the modern iron or pewter one. The form of the bowl is very like that of wooden and pewter spoons of the last century. Here we have the head of the goose again, one of the favorite, though certainly not most healthy viands of both priests and people. The occupants of the temples, says Herodotus, were not obliged to live on their private means, but each individual had sacred victuals ready dressed assigned him, and in addition a daily allowance of beef and *goose*, (ii. 37.) In the tombs near the pyramids are representations of dinner parties, at which the goose figures as a prominent dish. Other scenes exhibit Egyptian cookery in detail, where the victim is undergoing the various operations preparatory to its appearance at table. The end of the handle of *Fig. 2.* being curved was doubtless designed to suspend the spoon over the edge of a vessel, or over a nail or cord. Several utensils are seen hanging from lines in an Egyptian kitchen, portrayed in the tomb of Rameses III. at Thebes.

*Fig. 3.*—another bronze table spoon. The handle is round and tapered, partly formed in the lathe, enriched with carving, and having on the whole a tasteful appearance.

*Fig. 4.*—also of bronze, found at Thebes by Mr. Burton: smaller than 2 or 3, it was probably a child's spoon. It is the plainest of Egyptian spoons yet found.

*Fig. 5.*—a small wooden spoon, formed like a spade—a shape so singular that it has been refused a place at the dining table. It is, however, a genuine spoon. The Romans used such, (*See Plate II.*) and similar formed implements are not uncommon with the Chinese, as will be noticed in a future page,—a people among whom many primitive arts and implements are preserved in their purity.

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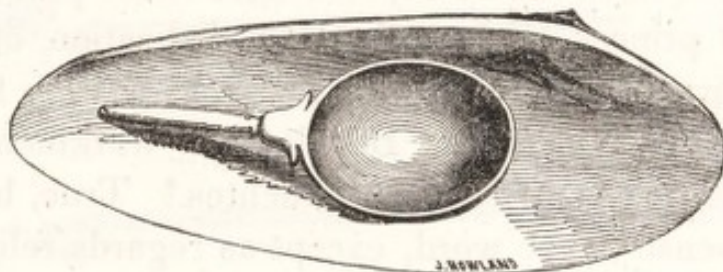
ANCIENT EGYPTIAN SPOONS.

In the first two figures above we have another elegant variety of the spoon. They represent the back and front of a wooden one. The handle is round, straight, and short, and handsomely set off with a wreath, terminating with leaves at the junction with the bowl. The latter is long and pointed, and seems



well calculated for a pap spoon for infants—a purpose for which it was probably designed. In comparing this implement with those which have preceded it, some readers will be agreeably surprised at finding so great a diversity of forms in so simple a thing ; but ere they arrive at the end of these pages the feeling will probably rise into wonder ; and yet the whole of the illustrations embraced in this essay are but part of what might have been introduced.

*Fig. 3.* resembles one figured on page 126 ; but it is not like that formed of metal, but of ivory—a circumstance from which we may infer that the goose and human hand were staple ornaments of Egyptian spoons, and frequently adopted with every material of which the latter were made.



ANCIENT EGYPTIAN SHELL AND SPOON.

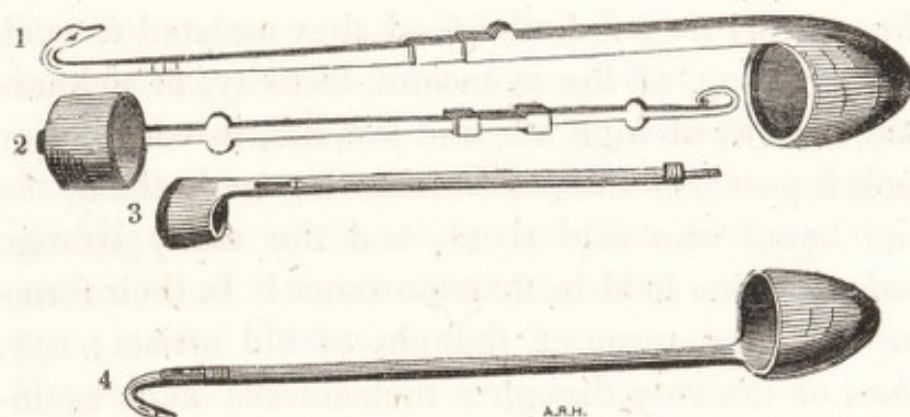
The relationship between spoons and their natural originals is exhibited in the above figure. The shell is an artificial one, of alabaster, and is among the antiquities preserved in Alnwick Castle. Its dimensions are those of an ordinary muscle shell or table spoon. The minikin spoon figured within it is supposed to have belonged to a lady's toilet. Where the handle unites with the bowl it assumes the form of the favorite lotus.

No better proof could be adduced of the refined taste of Pharaonic artists than this copying after nature ; for it is the perfection of skill to follow her instructions. In the infancy of the arts man runs from her, preferring puerile conceits and monstrous figures ; but as the mind ripens and the judgment matures, he returns to the only true teacher and guide.

We are not aware of any *silver* or *golden* spoons having been disinterred. It is certain the wealthy classes had such, and as the richest taste and greatest skill were lavished on them, it is to be regretted that none have been discovered. The first spoons mentioned in history were golden ones, made by Egyptian artists, viz: those furnished for the Tabernacle. (Exod. xxv. 29.) So were those presented by the princes of Israel at the dedication of the sanctuary. (Numb. vii.) Is it said they were fabricated by Aholiab and Bezaleel, or workmen employed by them, that is, by Israelites ? True, but in every sense of the word, except as regards religion, and even that need hardly be excepted, these men were Egyptians—natives of the land, both they and their fathers, for many generations. What did the people whom Moses led out of Egypt know, except what they learned there ? And what had they, but what they got there ? If he himself was learned, it was with ‘the wisdom of Egypt.’ Neither had they nor their ancestors any other country. In Egypt they were born and brought up, and when they entered Canaan, it was to them a foreign land.



The Jews always neglected the useful arts. The splendid mechanics who left Egypt with Moses died, and all their generation, in the wilderness. With them the arts were buried, and were never resuscitated on the other side Jordan. When Solomon built the temple he had workmen from Tyre; it was a Phenician founder who made the bronze and golden bowls, basins, snuffers, spoons, &c. required. (1. Kings vii.—2. Kings xxv.) Both spoons and ladders, or simpula, were extensively used in Pagan worship. A few of those of ancient Egypt are figured below.



EGYPTIAN LADLES OR SIMPULA.

Simpula have been found of great variety of forms and materials. Those of bronze were frequently *gilt*, which made them richer in ornament, and prevented wine or acids retained in them from being contaminated with solutions of copper. They were used chiefly for dipping fluids from amphoræ or jars. The two upper ones in the cut are of bronze, in the Berlin Museum. The first has a *folding joint* in the middle of the handle; and the next one has its

handle lengthened or shortened (according to the depth of the vessel) by one part sliding behind the other. *Fig. 3* represents an extremely small wooden ladle; the fixed part of the handle being only five inches in length, and the sliding rod which rises and falls in a groove extending down the centre, about the thickness of a darning needle. The last (*Fig. 4*) in Mr. Wilkinson's possession, is eighteen inches long, the bowl three inches deep and nearly the same in diameter. It is of bronze and has been gilt.

In taking leave of Egyptian spoons figured in this chapter, one can hardly avoid thinking of the persons they belonged to, of the families of their owners, the mouths they fed, the food they assisted to cook and serve up, of the scenes of festivity, of sickness and sorrow, of high life and low life, in which they took a part; of the workmen who made them, the merchants who sold them, and the many strange conversations held in their presence! In their forms we have the turns of thought of old artists; nay, casts of the very thoughts themselves; such as inspired the cunning artists, companions of Bezaleel or of Hiram, and like them, skilful to devise curious works in gold and silver, brass and iron, ivory and pearl. We fancy we can almost see a Theban spoonmaker's face brighten up as the image of a new pattern crossed his mind; behold him sketch it on papyrus, and watch every movement of his chisel or graver as he gradually embodied the thought, and published it in one of the forms portrayed on these pages—securing an accession of customers and a



corresponding reward in an increase of profits. We take it for granted that piratical artisans were not permitted to pounce on every popular invention which the wit of another brought forth. Had there been no checks to unprincipled usurpers of other men's productions, the energies of inventors would have been paralyzed and the arts could hardly have attained the perfection they did among some of the famous people of old.

What a transient, ephemeral being is man ! How short is his life compared even to that of a spoon ! Notwithstanding his pride and his power, the grasp of his intellect, the noise he makes in the world, and the lasting wonders he works, he is himself a bubble—no sooner inflated than burst ! The meanest of his labors survive, while he vanishes as vapor. Probably not less than one hundred generations, including some of the mightiest spirits of Egypt, have passed away since the implements delineated above were made ! Strange that a thing should endure longer than the head which conceived and the hands that formed it ; that a pot should live longer than a potter. Here have we the identical spoons which, twenty or thirty centuries ago, men, women, and children handled at dinner !—individuals perhaps contemporary with those who encamped with Moses at Elim, or fought under Joshua at Jericho ; or, it may be, such as were acquainted with Plato or Solon, with Helen and Herodotus, when these Grecian wanderers were in the land of Mizraim.

## CHAPTER IX.

*Roman Spoons—Useful Arts in Athens, Sparta and Rome—Mamurius the Brazier—Downfall of the Romans—Military and Mechanical Professions—Discovery of Herculaneum—Silver Spoons—Pompeii Disinterred—Kitchen Utensils and Spoons of Silver, Brass, Wood and Ivory found—Reflections on Pompeii—Street of the Silversmiths—Few Ancient Spoons described in Print—Antique Plate—Description of Plates II and III—Latin Name of the Spoon—Shell Spoons and Garum Sauce—Mercury Spoon—Soldiers' Iron Spoons—Specimens from Piranesi—Simpula—Indian Ladles, &c.*

HAVING noticed a few spoons made under the Ptolemies or Pharaohs, let us next refer to some fabricated in Rome or its provincial towns, under the Cæsars. We have no particular specimens from ancient Greece to lay before the reader, but the deficiency is not material, since a manifest conformity prevailed in the social economy of the Greeks and Romans.

The ancients generally paid little respect to mechanical professions; where one people fostered them a hundred treated them with contempt. This was the case even in Greece; the Lacedemonians and others despised, the Athenians alone respected them. Lycurgus forbade his countrymen to become artisans, but Solon made a law that no son should be compelled to support a destitute parent, if the latter had neglected to teach him a trade. The Athen-



ian lawgiver rendered the useful professions honorable; the goddess of the arts was adopted as the protectress of the city, and a distaff and spindle placed in her hands. Every school boy knows how much more the world is indebted to Athens than to Sparta. It is the same now—the most enlightened people are those who cultivate the arts most, and the weakest and rudest such as neglect them. There can be no science where there are no arts, and for the future there can be no national power but in proportion as they are cultivated. The age of the sword and brute force is passing away; that of the arts and intellectual power beginning to dawn.

In the infancy of their career the Romans promoted the useful professions. Numa, their second king, was incomparably the best they ever had. A philosopher, he preferred peace to war, and set himself to tame the ferocity of the people, by infusing into them a taste for agriculture and the arts; to induce them to rely on the fruits of honest industry rather than on the plunder of their neighbors. The people, says Plutarch, were divided into classes or corporations, according to their trades. Those of each profession had their respective halls, &c. a practice derived from the East. He mentions goldsmiths, dyers, tanners, coppersmiths, &c. Publicola also fostered domestic manufactures by exempting artificers from tribute.

That workers in metals were expert in Numa's time is evident from the story of the buckler reported to have fallen from heaven, and the eleven copies

of it made by Mamurius. But mechanics in those days were not the ignorant and sordid beings their enemies have generally represented them. Pliny, deploring the deteriorated workmanship of his time, observes, that every man labored only for money; whereas, in the days of our forefathers, says he, they worked for *fame*. The celebrated brazier just named asked no other reward for making the sacred shields, than to have his name mentioned in the hymns sung during the feasts of the Ancyliæ. Plutarch intimates that an ode was chanted to his memory by the Sallians along with the Pyrrhic dance.

Twenty centuries have elapsed since the Romans were in the height of their power. As a nation war was their profession, and pillage their wealth; they rose by the sword and by it they fell—a righteous Providence having meted to them the measure they meted to others. History is full of recitals of their conquests, of the victims they slew, and the terror their armies spread among nations, the triumphs accorded to their generals, with kings and spoils of kingdoms dragged in their trains; but not a page is devoted to those arts and professions which contribute to the permanent happiness of men. The world yet resounds with their feats of arms; but of the more useful and honest occupations of the *people*, all writers are silent. Of the click of the hammer, speed of the shuttle, creaking of the file, buzzing of lathes, roaring of bellows, of manufacturing machinery driven by men, horses, water or wind, Tacitus and Livy, Sallust and Suetonius have nothing to say.



Ancient annals may be said to give no more idea of the manners and customs, social habits and general employments of the people, than descriptions of modern battles do of the nations to whom the contending idiots belong. What Olaus Magnus said of the Goths was true of all nations, and is still true of too many: "They supposed all other arts nothing, when compared with military arts." The world is yet crowded with Goths.

Although the Romans formed the last link in the chain of nations, which connects us with the people of remote times, and as such should be somewhat familiar to us, yet so long and dark a night of turbulence and barbarism set in on their fall, that the knowledge of their arts and manufactures has in a great measure been lost. From the number of their colonies, a few products of their workshops have occasionally been picked up in various parts of Europe; but with all the collections and labors of antiquarians, comparatively little is known of the extent, and less of the processes, of mechanical manipulations among the classical ancients.

A very trivial circumstance occurred in the beginning of the last century (in 1711) which led to a discovery unexampled in the annals of our globe—one which reflected more light on ancient private life and on some branches of the useful arts than any thing else:—An Italian peasant, digging a well near his cottage, found some fragments of colored marble. These attracting attention, led to further excavation, when a statue of Hercules was disinterred, and

shortly afterwards a mutilated one of Cleopatra. These were found at a considerable depth below the surface, and in a place which subsequently proved to be a temple situated in the centre of the ancient city of Herculaneum. This city was overwhelmed with ashes and lava, during an eruption of Vesuvius, A. D. 79, being the same in which the elder Pliny perished. Herculaneum therefore had been buried 1630 years! and while every memorial of it was lost, and even the site unknown, it was thus suddenly, by a resurrection, then unparalleled, brought again to light; and streets, temples, houses, statues, paintings, jewelry, professional implements, kitchen utensils, and other articles connected with ancient domestic life, were to be seen arranged, as when their owners were actively moving among them.

There are some interesting letters in the early volumes of the Philosophical Transactions, from which it appears that slow progress was made in excavation at Herculaneum for several years. One from Mr. William Hamilton, dated Naples, March 1731, runs thus ;—"At *Resina*, about four miles from Naples, under the mountain, within half a mile of the sea-side, there is a *well* in a poor man's yard; down which about about thirty yards there is a hole which some people have the curiosity to creep into, and and may afterwards creep a good way under ground; and with lights find foundations of houses and streets, which, by some, it is said, was in the time of the Romans, a city called *Aretina*, others say Port Hercules, where the Romans usually embarked for Africa. I



have seen the well, which is deep, and a good depth of water at the bottom that I never cared to venture down."

Signor C. Paderni writes from Rome in November, 1739, to Allan Ramsay, that the king of Naples had appointed an artist to take charge of the articles found. Of these there were thirty or forty paintings, a chariot and horses in brass, several statues and basso-relievos, eight rings, containing engraved cornelians, a golden bracelet, a large brazen dish, &c. "They enter the place by a pit, like a well, to the depth of 88 Neapolitan palms, and then dig their way under the bituminous matter."

M. Geo. Knapton says, the ancient city of Herculaneum is now under a town called Portici, a quarter of a mile from the sea, at the foot of Vesuvius, and has no other road to it but that of the *town well*, [the same begun by the peasant in 1711] which is none of the most agreeable, being in parts very straight, in others wide, and cut in a most rude manner. Towards the bottom, where you go into the city, it is very broad, which they have made so to turn the columns which were brought up. . . . The entrance is 82 feet from the top of the well. . . . It is difficult for the first person let down to get in, but when once landed at the opening, "he pulled us in by the legs as we came down." This writer does not mention how far above the bottom of the well the opening into the city was, but the depth of water was considerable, for on account of it, excavations were not made to the foundations of the buildings.

Mr. Crispe, writing from Rome in April, 1740, after mentioning paintings, houses, statues, busts, &c. observes: They have found several antique rings, with cameos and intaglios set in them, a case of surgical instruments, a triumphal car of bronze, vessels full of rice, mouse traps, several kitchen utensils, a fork, and a *silver spoon, made in the handle like a modern one*, and the bowl pointed like an olive leaf. [*See Phil. Trans. Vols. xli. xliv. xlix.*]

Excavations were continued for several years, and vast treasures found, with which several museums have become enriched, besides those of Italy. As it would have been an immense undertaking to raise through the well all the materials displaced, the plan was adopted of filling up old excavations with the rubbish of fresh ones, and thus no series of buildings or streets are to be seen. The theatre only is open, and it is very imperfectly viewed by torch light, at so great a depth below the surface.

In 1755, another city, overwhelmed at the same time with Herculaneum, was discovered. This was Pompeii, the very name of which had been almost forgotten. As it lay at a greater distance from Vesuvius than Herculaneum, the stream of lava never reached it. It was inhumed by showers of ashes, pumice and stones, which formed a bed of variable depth from twelve to twenty feet, and easily removed; whereas the former city was entombed in ashes and lava to the depth of from seventy to a hundred feet. With the exception of the upper stories of the houses, which were either consumed by red hot stones



ejected from the volcano, or crushed by the weight of the matter collected on their roofs, we behold in Pompeii a flourishing city nearly in the same state in which it existed eighteen centuries ago ! The buildings unaltered by newer fashions ; the paintings undimmed by the leaden touch of time ; household furniture left in the confusion of use ; articles even of intrinsic value abandoned in the hurry of escape, yet safe from the robber, or scattered about as they fell from the trembling hand which could not stop or pause to pick them up.

The work of disinterment has been prosecuted to the present time, and every year adds to the treasures of the Portician Museum. Cooking utensils and kitchen furniture in great abundance, found in both cities, are very similar to our own, but generally of more durable materials and better finish ; sauce-pans being lined with silver instead of a thin coating of tin ; colanders, strainers, fish-slices, water-pails, of brass, and elaborately finished. Some sauce-pans have been found wholly of silver. Fire grates like ours were not used, but large braziers placed in the middle of the kitchen ; and ranges of small furnaces, of brick-work raised breast high, in which charcoal was used ; identical with those often seen in the kitchens of the wealthy, and which have been almost universal in Europe to the present century ; fixed and portable ovens, oil-flasks, bottles and glasses of every variety, glazed plates of earthen-ware packed in straw, cups and saucers of silver, like those now used for tea, gridirons, frying-pans, dripping-pans,



molds for pastry, caldrons, graters, mortars, knives, and SPOONS of *bronze*, *ivory* and *silver*.

Here is a female's toilet, essences, tortoise-shell combs, bracelets, mirrors, needles, a box of pins, ear and finger-rings, broaches, &c. as she left them, perhaps to visit the theatre, whence, with hundreds more, she never returned. (It was an opinion of the ancients that the inhabitants were surprised by the volcanic storm while in the theatre.) Few of the antiquities possess so melancholy an interest as those relating to children. It is obvious from Pliny's letters to Tacitus, and from the nature of the catastrophe, that numbers of these innocents perished; trod down by distracted crowds rushing out of the city, and seeking to fly from the supernatural darkness that enveloped it; killed by showers of falling stones, from which some few grown people fortunately protected themselves by tying pillows on their heads; suffocated by an atmosphere of ashes and cinders, their shrieks after their parents, as well as their mothers' cries after them, were gradually stifled with noxious vapors and dust. *Toys* have been found in some houses—the domicils, we may suppose, of benevolent couples, who, like Plutarch and his wife, were delighted in beholding their young offspring play and 'chatter with babies and dolls.' These, only relics of their romping little owners, thrown down in alarm when the terrors of the calamity entered each dwelling, have been picked up where they were left. The Pompeians moreover had not only toys to please their children, but pictures



and stories to frighten them, similar to such as have reached us through the middle ages. There is a dark looking personage roughly drawn with black paint on a wall; he has horns, cloven feet, and altogether resembles modern portraits of the wicked one.

A solitary wanderer in the avenues and alleys of Pompeii might almost anticipate the feelings of the "last man." It is awful to walk alone through a city in which no human being has moved for so many centuries; through dwellings fitted up with every convenience for large and small families, for rich and poor ones; through streets deeply rutted with carriage wheels, and on side-walks worn by foot passengers; to read the names of tradespeople on the doorposts and observe articles on counters; enter palaces of patricians and apartments of plebeians, the studios of sculptors and painters; and find every where household goods, utensils and tools, arranged as if their owners had just stepped out, and might be expected every moment to return.

In one house we find the chief rooms decorated with exquisite paintings and statuary; sleeping apartments appropriately adorned, and the kitchen furnished with every requisite; loaves of bread in one oven, a pie in another, flour in the kneading-trough, pickles and sauces in jars and glass bottles, oil in flasks, wine in amphoræ, and wine-glasses in abundance; here a pail half full of water, there a row of small furnaces with charcoal in them ready for kindling: a caldron close by, a sauce pan, a frying

pan for eggs, a knife, a silver bowl, several ladles and a spoon;—all laying as if the cook, about to prepare dinner, had stepped into the adjoining garden for esculent roots or pot herbs. It is almost impossible to look on, think on or handle such things, without being startled by the least noise, turning round and imagining the owner rushing into his dwelling and demanding the cause of one's intrusion.

In 1826 were found in an arched cellar the skeletons of two or more persons who had taken refuge there, carrying with them four gold rings, a pair of ear-rings, many coins of gold and silver, and *four silver spoons*. Subsequently we find enumerated vases, basins with handles formed of the wings of swans, pateræ, bells, inkstands, locks, an oval caldron, hundreds of common glass bottles, besides decanters, fluted tumblers and cups of green glass. In another place were found an oval ball, a pair of golden ear-rings, together with a *silver ladle or spoon*.—[*Gell's Pompeiana*, I. pp. 6, 41–2.]

The handsomest avenue yet discovered in Pompeii is known as the 'street of the silversmiths,' a designation given it from quantities of plate found in the shops. The practice was universal of old for mechanics of one profession to locate together, and it is still kept up throughout the east. It would have been better to have named the street after 'the goldsmiths,' for under this designation workmen in the precious metals have always been included. They are so in old French and English statutes and in the Scriptures. 'The goldsmith spreadeth



it over with gold, and casteth silver chains.' [*Isaiah.*] 'They lavish gold out of the bag, and weigh silver in the balance, and hire a goldsmith' [*Ibid.*]*—literally exemplified daily in Cairo and other oriental cities. That this class of artisans were influential and wealthy in Pompeii may be inferred from a notice of a gladiatorial show, got up at their cost, in honor of 'Caius Cuspius Pansa, the Ædile.'*

We believe few silver and other spoons found in Herculaneum and Pompeii have been described in print. Gell complains bitterly in his preface and appendix of the difficulties thrown in the way of foreign artists, and the unworthy policy of prohibiting sketches to be taken of antiquities found. They have yet to learn at Naples, he observes, that the only use or glory in the possession of these things consists in the promulgation of them to the world. The examination of antique works in metal by practical men can alone determine the modes of their manufacture. For want of this, the question whether sheet iron, copper, &c. was laminated by *rollers* is not determined, nor whether dies were used in producing ornamented hollow-ware; besides other questions of interest.

Allusions in classic authors to table furniture, and specimens extant, are calculated to impress us with high ideas of the skill of Roman gold and silver smiths. Besides models furnished by Etrurian, Grecian and oriental workmen, luxury and a general taste in the patricians for objects of *virtu* tended to foster these professions. The younger Pliny

speaks of the frugal repasts of Spurrinna being served 'in antique plate of pure silver,' which he preferred to a more fashionable and 'complete service of Corinthian metal' in his possession. (The composition of this alloy is wholly unknown. It was esteemed vastly more precious than gold.) That spoons were elaborately wrought, so as to keep pace with more splendid appendages of the beaufet, there is no doubt; but few, if any such, are extant. Perhaps the best of those to which we are about to refer were in no respect superior to silver ones in ordinary use.

DESCRIPTION OF PLATE II.—*Figures 1, 2, 3,* are Roman *pateræ*, or rather scoops. They clearly show how the classical ancients preserved the form of shells in utensils allied to the ladle and spoon. But the marine origin of the latter was preserved by the Romans in its *name*, for *cochleare*, a spoon, is derived from *cochlea* a shell or cockle.

*Fig. 4*—an antique spoon fashioned after a peculiar shell, and having a row of minute dots or openings as a border—perhaps in imitation of those in the haliotis and kindred productions of the deep. The short handle is modeled after the tail of a fish, and the interior of the bowl ornamented with a figure of a dolphin swimming in his native fluid—an indication perhaps that the implement was used at table with fish; for the ancients were often exceedingly happy in rendering their ornamental devices appropriate. This spoon could only have been employed for removing fluids from shallow dishes or saucers.



It was probably an olive spoon, or belonged to the small dish or cup containing anchovy or the famous *garum* sauce, both used at Roman tables, and the latter one for the manufacture of which Pompeii was celebrated. It was, says Pliny, (B. xxxi. 7, 8) the most exquisite and dainty of all condiments, "so costly and so much in request that every two congii thereof might not be bought under the price of 1000 sesterces," [about five dollars a quart.]

*Fig. 5*—another Roman spoon with a handle little longer than the bowl, but one displaying much taste. It is unique of its kind, and equals any other in elegance we have seen. The bowl is perfectly modern in its outline. Montfaucon is remarkably barren on this and *Fig. 4*: three words, 'found at Autun,' comprehend all he says. Hence we know neither their dimensions nor materials, nor how they were made. From the general appearance of *Fig. 4*, one might suppose it was struck up in a die from sheet metal.

*Fig. 6*—a very elaborate silver spoon—the bowl pointed like a French one, and the turned handle not unlike such as formerly prevailed in Europe. The notch or bend near the bowl is a common feature in Roman spoons—supposed to have been designed to rest the implement against the edge of the dish. The ornaments in the bowl are mythological. Mercury, seated on a rock, holds in his right hand a purse, and in his left the caduceus. His winged hat lays at his feet, and before him stands a cock, a goat, and a tortoise—animals often represented on tem-

ples and monuments dedicated to him. The whole of this spoon must have been cast unless the bowl and the figures on it were chased or stamped. The handle is short but strong, increasing in substance as it approaches the bowl. Chinese spoons were noticed by Van Braam as having very short handles. From the great beauty of ancient medallions, we may be sure articles of plate, if ornamented with the die, were sometimes equally well finished.

*Figs. 7 to 12, inclusive*, are from the second volume of Montfaucon's antiquities: 7 and 8, spoons four inches long, and hence about the size of modern mustard spoons; their handles plain and tapered to a point; their section a square. Their material is not mentioned; but in the second volume of his supplement the learned father has figured three similar spoons which he says were of silver, and used, as he supposed, for taking incense out of vases. In *Recueil d'Antiquities Egyptiennes, Etrusques, &c.* Paris, 1752, p. 325, a similar spoon is described. It was of *silver*, and between six and seven inches in length. *Fig. 9*—a utensil more like a shovel than a spoon, and from that circumstance conjectured by Montfaucon to have been employed in putting incense on the altar. He does not seem to have known that spoons of this shape have been used in the east from remote times. Modern salt and mustard spoons of the same form are quite common. In *Fig. 8* the handle is attached to the smaller end of the bowl—a very common feature in ancient spoons.



*Figs. 10, 11, 12*—ordinary household spoons. The handles are all square or nearly so, and the tip of No. 11 is molded into a minute spoon, perhaps designed to extract marrow from bones—a good idea and one worthy the attention of modern manufacturers. Of what substance these spoons were made we are not informed. *Fig. 13*—an iron one from the first volume of the *Antiquarian Repertory*, Lon. 1775. It was found with other antiques in Gloucestershire, Eng. and is perhaps the same kind as used by Roman soldiers. The long pointed handles, Grose thinks, were designed to open shellfish and doubtless for several other purposes. Stuck in the wall, or side of a tent, they answered for nails or pins, on which the inmates hung their armor or arms, and when required at meals performed the part of our forks in toasting or handling hot morsels.

*Fig. 14*—from Stukely's *Stonehenge*, and supposed to have been used for measuring small quantities of liquids—perhaps the cyath, which held the contents of an ounce vial. As a vehicle from which to take medicine, as well as to determine the quantity, the spoon was as much used by the ancients as by us. For both purposes it is repeatedly mentioned. To remove pains in the abdomen, Pliny says, "two spoonfuls of plantain, and of poppie one spoonful, mixed with four cyaths of wine," and taken night and morning, is an effectual remedy. [B. xxvi. 8. *Holland's Trans.*]

The figures in this and the following plates being derived from different sources, and the articles

themselves having been discovered at various times and portrayed on every scale, it is impossible to present them properly proportioned. Generally speaking, the *form* is all for which we must be held responsible.

DESCRIPTION OF PLATE III.—*Fig. 1*—a silver table spoon ‘found at Autun.’ The bowl is almost a fac simile of *No. 6* in *Plate II*, both in form and decorations. The handle is peculiar, consisting of two separate bars, suggesting an idea that the smaller and lower was intended to stiffen the upper one. Both terminate in a neat button or cap. This implement we may suppose, was named a ‘Mercury spoon.’ If it did not belong to some temple of that god, it would seem as if a variety with staple ornaments and designs were kept on hand by manufacturers, so that every purchaser could select his spoons (and other utensils) decorated with the established emblems of his patron saint or deity. If such was the practice—and there is much in history to confirm it—it must have been a great source of profit to gold and silver smiths, and may serve to account for that amazing variety of design and decorations which characterized their works. A similar custom was continued down to mediæval times, as will be seen in our notice of ‘Apostle spoons.’

*Figs. 2 to 7* are from Piranesi’s great work, the ‘Antiquities of the Kingdom of Naples,’ Paris, 1804. The first three are beautiful specimens. The handles of two are elegantly turned, and in quite a modern style of ornament. They present the remark-



able bend near the bowl, before alluded to ; the metal is there made deeper than at any other place, thus imparting strength where it is required. Plain and modern in the bowls, they might be almost taken as products of a living silversmith. It is not improbable that handles formed like these will again be in fashion. *Fig. 5* more resembles a patera than a spoon, and one like it is figured by Montfaucon ; but it is impossible to determine in all cases where the one ends and the other begins. It is more like a spoon than some utensils acknowledged to be such. The general form is pleasing. The handle terminates in a ram's head. *Figs. 6 and 7*—small bronze spoons for unguents. They are the only ones figured in the last French edition of the *Antiquities of Herculanæum*, in eight volumes octavo.

We have occupied the remainder of the plate with a collection of ancient ladles, spoons, &c. from various authorities, principally Piranesi and Montfaucon. The originals were chiefly bronze. Nothing is said respecting them, so that the forms only are left to remark on. Those with perpendicular handles were generally used to draw wine from amphoræ. Some of the smallest were liquid measures, &c. One with a cylindrical bowl or cup, marked 18, is identical with those used by our milk men, and with Egyptian *simpula* on page 135. Those numbered 13, 14, 15, and perhaps 16 and 17, are mere variations of the spoon. *Fig. 8*—a rich ladle, while 9 is nearly a literal copy of a modern cream spoon. *Figs. 10, 11, 12*—other varieties ; 19 is remarka-

ble for the turn of the handle, and 20 has so clumsy an appearance as to suggest the idea of its having been carved out of wood by an ancient Calabrian peasant. We know the ancients had *simpula* of earthen ware, and also of wood as well as of metal.

American Indian ladles of considerable antiquity are not very rare. An oblong one with a short pointed handle, and rudely carved out of wood, and excessively deformed, is in the Boston Museum. They are occasionally met with of *stone*, and so are spoons. Of the latter some are neatly formed and well polished, while others have a bowl at each end of the handle. Canadian Indians frequently make the bowls of their spoons and ladles out of *bark*—folding smooth pieces into the form of the common tin scoop, and tying to each a short stick as a handle. They carve spoons of the same shape out of solid wood.

By the way, it is not a little singular that beautifully formed spoons have been made for ages by people who never thought of employing such things in connection with food. They developed them for a very different purpose. Specimens are now before us—to be sure, their dimensions render them more suitable appendages to the breakfast table of Polyphemus, or for Goliath to take his porridge withal, than for feeding modern gentlemen or ladies. Has the reader never observed in public or private collections of curiosities, elaborately wrought wooden spoons, the bowls of quite a modern shape, but varying from 12 to 18 inches in length, from 4 to 6 in width, and of a proportionate depth—the han-



dles also tastefully designed, richly ornamented and two or three feet long? Such are the *paddles* of many South Sea islanders—the concave side of the bowl holding the water and more effectually propelling a canoe than the ordinarily formed blade of an oar. Certes, if these paddles had been now unknown, and a few specimens were dug out of the soil, among other relics of past ages, archeologists could hardly avoid receiving them as samples of the kitchen furniture of the Titans.

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## CHAPTER X.

*Description of Plate IV—Anointing of Kings and the Process—Miraculous Utensils—Oil Bottles brought from Heaven—The Spoon among Regalia—Relics of Becket—Coronation Spoon described—Its Antiquity—Spoons of Henry VI—Cadenat—Apostle Spoons—Ancient Customs at the Naming of Children—Christening Shirts—Scripture Biography taught by Spoons—Anecdotes of Henry VIII. and Cranmer, of Ben Jonson and Shakespeare—Plate presented to Guests—Spoons carried off—Sacramental Spoon—Sanguisuchello—Snuff Spoons—Chinese, Scotch and Malagasy Snuff Takers—Snuff an Ingredient used in Witchcraft.*

It may not be generally known that the spoon takes part in the most pompous of national pageants. We have spoken of exhibitions of mountebanks, wherein it amused common people: let us now refer to the part it performs in the hands of political raree-showmen for diverting another class of spectators.

*Anointing* monarchs at their coronation has always been deemed indispensable. Barely to touch royal sconces with the holy unguent, as sometimes now practiced, was formerly insufficient. Baker, in his *Chronicles*, says Richard I. the hero of the Crusades, "put off all his garments from his middle upwards but only his shirt, which was open on the shoulders, that he might be anointed. Then the Archbishop of Canterbury anointed him in three places: on the head, on the shoulder, and on the right arm." The same writer gives the particulars at the ceremony of crowning Richard II—a child of eleven years: "After a sermon the king took his oath, (!) and then the archbishop blessed the king, which done, he took off his garments and stripped him into his shift; then he anointed his hands, head, breast, shoulders, and the joynts of his arms with the sacred oil." Henry IV. (of England,) says Froissart, was "stripped of all his state before the altar, naked to his shirt, and was then anointed and consecrated at six places, that is to say, on the head, the breast, the two shoulders before and behind, on the back and the hands." [chap. cxvi.] Henry's title to the crown was a very dubious one—perhaps on that account a greater quantity of the consecrating ointment was expended on him and a larger portion of his body exposed to its influence.

It seems that much the same process was gone through with in the case of queens! Mary, of Smithfield memory, was crowned and anointed by Gardiner "with all rites and ceremonies of old ac-



customed." Similar language is used by Baker in the case of Elizabeth; so also of King Jamie and his wife: they were "crowned together and anointed at Westminster." The pageant of Charles I.'s coronation, got up by Laud, was, as may be supposed, a great affair. Obsolete customs were introduced, as well as old forms of prayer. When the king had taken an oath "to protect and defend the bishops and the churches under their government," his robes were taken off "and *offered at the altar* ; the king stood for a while, stripped to his doublet and hose of white satin; then, led by the archbishop and the Bishop of St. David's, he was placed in the chair of the coronation, having a close canopy spread over him; and while the archbishop anointed his head, shoulders, arms and hands with a costly ointment, the quire sung an anthem of these words:

'Zadock, the priest, anointed King Solomon.'"

So Charles was stripped to his hose and doublet when the crown was put on his head, as well as when he lost both his head and his crown. In him the magic shield which the scriptural passage 'touch not mine anointed' had for ages thrown around kings, and which some of these gentry used with effect in silencing the murmurings of their oppressed people, was shattered to the winds.

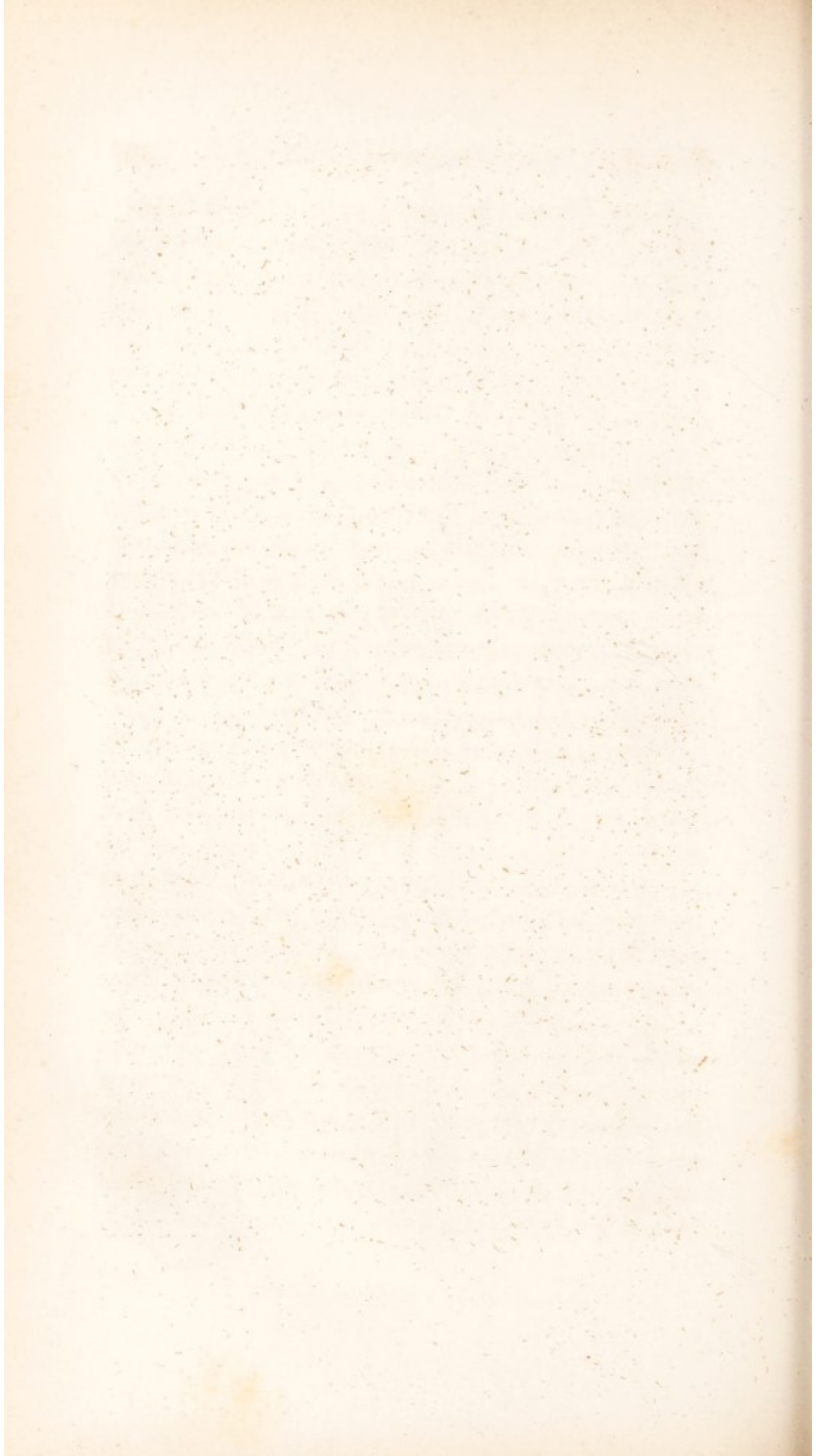
The blasphemous application of such passages of scripture as the foregoing to the vilest tyrants, was but a small part of that atrocious system of ecclesiastical delusions which prevailed through the dark ages. The monarch swore when crowned to 'pro-

fect bishops,' and they, from Dunstan downwards, returned the compliment. To preserve their immunities and extend their influence, they performed the part of pagan priests and made the oracles speak what they and the king pleased. But they did more: through their instrumentality it was that almost every utensil employed in coronations had a miraculous origin—was fabricated in heaven by angelic artists or beatified saints, and sent direct for the use of 'his sacred majesty' by a special embassy, consisting of one or more celestial messengers! The *ampoule* or small bottle containing the holy oil seems to have been most distinguished in this respect.

When Clovis of France embraced Christianity, he was baptized in the Church at Rheims in a consecrated lavatory, (on Christmas day, A. D. 496.) Three thousand of his people followed his example, and with him wore white robes for eight days. Now so great was the joy in heaven at their conversion that an angel appeared to a holy hermit, and deposited with him for the king's use, "a royal standard adorned with the oriflamme, a shield sown with the fleur de lis, and an ampoule of sacred oil." This celestial bottle is (or was in the last century) preserved in the cathedral church of Rheims, and is still used in the coronation of French kings. "On appelle la Sainte Ampoule, certaine petite bouteille venue du ciel, où il y a de l'huile qui sert à sacrer les Rois de France, laquelle on garde bien soigneusement dans l'Abbaye de saint Remi de Rheims."—[*Dict. de Trevoux and Mazeray.*]









When Charles was conducted by the Maïd of Orleans to Rheims and crowned in her presence, the holy oil and miraculous ampoule performed their part in the ceremony, as historians have taken care to inform us.

Hincmar, Archbishop of Rheims, in the time of Charles the Bald, declares (in his life of St. Remi) that the precious vial was sent from heaven by a white dove. Many French disputations have been written on the miracle, pro and con! The English ampoule (still used) was also of celestial origin, having been brought down by the Virgin Mary herself, and presented by her 'to St. Thomas of Canterbury [Becket] when he was in France.' It was, observes Mazeray, of lapis, with a golden eagle on the top and enriched with pearls and diamonds.

Now the consecrated fluid was not poured directly from the ampoule on the candidate for royalty, but into a *spoon*, whence it was transferred to its destination. As we presume our readers may gather a few facts from these speculations, with which they were not previously acquainted, it may be that some now learn for the first time, that besides crowns, orbs, sceptres, swords, globes, spheres, staffs, cups, plates, rings, and other royal rattletraps, which constitute what is known as 'the regalia and crown jewels,' the spoon holds a distinguished place! To those who admire such things it is shown, with the articles enumerated above, in the Tower of London at a shilling a head, and indeed to those who admire them not, at the same price.

Lord Herbert in his history of Henry VIII. mentions among other 'notable trumperies' by which the public were deluded, 'the *penknife* and *boots* of Becket, with a piece of his *shirt*.' Large sums, it seems, were received from ladies in a certain condition for permission to handle the last article.

The reader will now turn to Plate IV. *Figs. 1, 2*, represent the English coronation spoon, [from Shaw's splendid work, "Dresses and Decorations of the Middle Ages, from the seventh to the seventeenth centuries."] If drawn by Shaw to the full size, its length is 9 inches, that of the bowl  $2\frac{1}{4}$ , and its width  $1\frac{3}{4}$  inches. The whole is of gold, and whether made by a mortal goldsmith or not, a fine piece of work. The bowl is thin, with an elegant arabesque pattern engraved on its inner surface. At the broadest part of the handle are four pearls. The enamel with which it was once enriched is destroyed. There is a slight elevation or ridge dividing the bowl. When used a portion of the consecrating fluid being poured into it, the officiating bishop dips two fingers, one into each cavity of the bowl, and transfers what sticks to them to the head and other parts of the royal neophyte, who thus receives unction as a sign of investiture of regal power.

Hence the spoon is not the least useful of the numerous insignia employed on such occasions, and we may fairly presume it performs a more laborious part than any of them when the ceremonies are over and the actors are seated at dinner. In unison with this there is one feature in the official implement



which we must be excused for noticing. It will be seen that the upper part of the handle is twisted and the end terminates with a hemispherical button precisely like a punch spoon. This beautiful specimen of ancient art is in truth the oldest spoon of that kind known. Whether the maker designed a practical joke or not, it is not a bad one, considering the history of royal carousals, from Belshazzar and Alexander to George IV—the accomplished companion of modern Falstaffs, Pistols and Quicklys. Of all men, kings have been least stinted with punch or sack; few persons are known to have indulged more in it or got it on easier terms.

There is some uncertainty respecting the date of this royal spoon. Cromwell and the Long Parliament made sad havoc among 'the baubles,' as that irreverend man named the regalia. It seems most of them disappeared during the civil wars—probably melted down and the proceeds applied to the public service. When Charles II. returned, it is said, his inauguration was delayed on account of the absence of these necessary articles belonging to the ceremony! Shaw thinks some of the old ones were concealed and recovered, and among them the spoon. Its antiquity he says is undoubted. He supposes it to have been in use since the twelfth century.

Of coronations, their expense, inutility and puerilities, an English writer has well remarked, that they are only calculated to superinduce in the individual vanity upon vanity, and are characteristic of imperfect civilization.

We have not done with royal spoons :—In 1422, Henry V. the Hal of Shakespeare, died, and was succeeded by his son, an infant. As Henry VI. grew up he exhibited indications of a feeble mind. Harmless and passive, he was wholly unfit for controlling the destinies of his country and the ambition of its warlike nobles. His reign was one of perpetual domestic war. He had, says Sir R. Baker, virtues enough to make him a saint, but not to make him a god, as kings are said to be gods. He was fitter for a priest than a king, and for a sacrifice than a priest. A mere instrument in the hands of the ministers and his masculine wife, Margaret of Anjou, his fate was that of a shuttlecock, tossed to and fro and treated with contempt by the adherents of both the white and red roses. Repeatedly taken prisoner by one party or the other in battle, he at last ended his melancholy life in the Tower.

After the sanguinary battle of Hexham, in Northumberland, the fate of his family was distressing. Margaret with their son fled into a wood, where they were rudely seized and plundered of their jewels by thieves. While the robbers quarreled about the division of the plunder, the miserable captives crept unperceived into the thickest of the forest, where they sank down overcome with darkness, distress and fatigue. One of the robbers subsequently found them ; to him Margaret made herself known, and appealed to his generosity for protection, especially for the son of the king. He was amazed at the strange occurrence, swore to protect them, and kept



his word. He concealed them until an opportunity offered for conducting them to the coast, whence they sailed to Flanders.

How Henry escaped is not very well known. By the vigilance of friends he lay concealed in different parts of the country for twelve months. Shifting from place to place, he at length was seized while at dinner at Wadington Hall, in Lincolnshire, and carried to the tower. Ere being taken away he left with his host his *inkhorn*, one of the last articles retained about his person. It is of leather, like a knife sheath, with three cells, one for the ink and two for pens. It is ornamented with much elegance, and was worn suspended from the girdle. Before reaching Wadington, he was hid nine days at Bolton Hall; and here he left with the proprietor, as a token of his friendship, his boots, one glove (or a pair) and *his spoon*. [*See Antiq. Repertory, III. 168.*]

*Fig. 3, Plate IV.* represents this interesting relic of the fifteenth century. It was we presume of gold, though the account does not say so, but merely that its length was  $6\frac{1}{2}$  inches. The handle is short, and in its union to the small end of the bowl resembles both Roman and Egyptian spoons. The handle is a plain cylinder capped at its extremity with a molding and a hexagonal finial. Although void of ornament, this spoon exhibits considerable taste in its contour. Its dimensions, as will have been perceived from its length, did not exceed those of a modern dessert spoon. If made for Henry, it dates from the time of Jack Cade, Joan of Arc, the great

Earl of Warwick, and the introduction of Printing. The circumstance of a king carrying his spoon about with him may strike some readers as singular, but the practice was not uncommon in olden times. Almost every wealthy individual had a portable case containing one and a knife, to which in after times a fork was added. Even guests took their own implements when invited to a feast. Kings more than other people have always been particular in having feeding apparatus exclusively for their own use: the custom is an eastern one. Spoons which nourish royal palates must not enter meaner mouths. *Cadenat* was the old French term for the portable case in which was secured a prince's knife and spoon. It was afterwards written *cadenas*. The case was often of gold or silver gilt, and contained minute receptacles for salt, pepper, and other condiments. From the following extract it will be seen that kings and nobles used such pocket conveniences in the beginning of the last century, as well as in the previous ones:—

“*Cadenas* est aussi une espèce d'assiette carrée ou l'on serre la cuillère, la fourchette et le couteau. Un des côtés est retroussé et élevé de deux doigts, avec un petit courvercle où l'on met du sel, du sucre et du poivre. On s'en servoit *autrefois* chez les Rois et les Princes. C'est *maintenant* une espèce de coffret d'or ou de vermeil doré, où l'on met le couteau, la cuillère, la fourchette, &c. qu'on sert à la table des Rois et des Princes.” [*Old Dict. de Trévoux.*]



*Figs. 4, 5, and 10, Plate IV.* are from 'Ackerman's Designs for Gold and Silver Smiths,' published without any description. We know not the source whence they were derived, but as they were associated with 'Apostle Spoons,' known to be ancient, we suppose they are of the same character. The handle of *Fig. 4* is of twisted wire, folded into two knots, as in *Fig. 6*. The bowl, of a fanciful form, differs from every other we have met with. *Fig. 5*—an elaborate specimen, and well suited to a monastery or abbot. The heart at one extremity and the cross at the other are quite in character with the ecclesiastical tastes of the middle ages, and would afford matter for interesting reflections. *Fig. 10*, a salt spoon, partakes of the same religious character. It presents a motto, the initial and arms of the owner—acknowledged features of many ancient "spoons." Moral sentences and maxims of prudence are painted by the Chinese on most of their furniture and utensils—on tea pots, chop stick cases, combs, apparatus for striking fire, cups, lanterns, vases, &c. and might be advantageously imitated. *Fig. 6*—an ivory spoon of the sixteenth century. It is French, and preserved along with a knife and two pronged fork in the collection of the Louvre.

APOSTLE SPOONS.—*Fig. 7, Plate IV.* represents a class of implements intimately allied with the social and religious customs of former times. Nothing smooths the asperities of life like friendship. When evinced by kind offices and gifts, it unlocks the human breast and excites within it the holiest affec-

tions. All people learn this truth, and no lesson is more readily understood by juveniles; the pure and buoyant joys they feel on receiving novel or rich presents, may be portrayed on the mental tablet but not on paper. Now it is a fact that for ages the very *first* gift which boys and girls received, consisted of one or more spoons—these being the established presents of sponsors at christenings; hence the implements may be said to have not only fed the bodies of children but to have given them a taste of the sweetest of mental pleasures—indicating to the young travellers that enter this rugged world one of the pleasantest means of passing through it.

The Greeks, Romans, and older people than either, held family feasts when a child was named. Relatives and friends attended as witnesses, and made presents of various articles to the little stranger. The pouring on, or immersion in, water, (baptism) at the nomination of children, is also of heathen origin. It was practiced both in the old world and the new. When a child among the Astecs was to be named, a priestess sprinkled its lips and bosom with water, and invoked the goddess Cioacoatl that original sin might be thus removed and the child born anew. On these occasions friends and relatives brought presents of dresses and ornaments suitable to the circumstances of the parents and wants of the child.

In the earlier ages of Christianity sponsors provided a frock or shirt in which the infant was christened—hence named the ‘christening shirt.’ Its



value of course depended on the circumstances of the donor: when he or she was wealthy, it was often trimmed with silk and gold. The Anglo Saxons continued this custom for many ages, but it subsequently went out of fashion, and the older one of giving small articles of plate succeeded.

When spoons were given they were called *Apostle spoons*, because the handle of each was carved into the figure of an apostle with his appropriate symbol, as Peter with the keys, Andrew with his cross, &c. Wealthy godfathers generally gave a *dozen*, each being named after one of the twelve it was designed to represent. People, whose circumstances did not admit of giving so many, or who were penurious, compounded by sending the *four* evangelists; while those who could not do better ingeniously presented a *single* spoon, with the effigies of the saint after whom the infant was named, or under whose protection it had been placed by its parents.

This practice was in imitation of the heathen, who introduced figures of their gods upon almost every utensil—spoons, as we have seen, as well as the rest. The idea as adopted in the middle ages was excellent. A child no sooner learned to feed himself—to use his own spoons—than he began to acquire a knowledge of scriptural and ecclesiastical biography. Every spoonful of food he received, conveyed, or might convey a useful lesson to his mind. The custom might be revived with advantage—at any rate important truths or facts connected with scientific individuals or with science and the arts, might thus

be communicated to, and indelibly impressed upon the minds of the young.

Allusions to Apostle spoons are common. In the play of *Henry VIII.* Act 5, *Scene 2*, Shakespeare makes the king say to Cranmer that he must stand godfather to the young princess, Elizabeth. The Archbishop expresses his unfitness for so great an honor, upon which Harry, bantering him, says he is afraid of the expense of the usual gift to a godchild: "Come, come, my lord, you'd spare your *spoons*." In *Scene 4* the directions are, "Enter trumpets, lord mayor, Cranmer, dukes, &c. two noblemen bearing great standing bowls for the *christening gifts*."

In a manuscript of L'Estrange, preserved in the British Museum, an anecdote is related of Shakespeare himself and Ben Jonson directly in point. Shakespeare was godfather to one of Ben's children; and after the christening, being in a deep study, Jonson cheerily asked him why he was so melancholy? "Ben," said he, "I have been considering what would be the fittest gift for my godchild, and I have resolved it at last." "I pri'thee, what?" said Ben. "I' faith, then, Ben," answered Shakespeare, "I'll give him a good dozen of *latten spoons*, and thou shalt translate them;" an example of friendly pleasantry between the two wits—the word 'latten' being a play upon Latin. Latten, sometimes written *laton*, was formerly applied to tinned iron, or articles made of it, but more generally to brass, of which examples will be found in these pages.



Ben Jonson, Beaumont, Fletcher, and other dramatic writers, refer to christening or Apostle spoons. Thus also Congreve:—“*Angelica*—Will you lend me your coach or I’ll go on—nay I’ll declare how you prophesied popery was coming, only because the butler had mislaid some of the Apostle’s spoons, and thought they were lost—away went religion and spoon meat together.—[*Comedy of Love for Love*, Act 2, Scene 1.]

Mr. Hone, in his Every Day Book, [vol. i. 177,] has given a representation of a dozen in his own possession, and besides the anecdote of Shakespeare just recited, quotes the following lines from a poem published in 1666, in which the custom of giving spoons is stated to have been on the decline :

“Formerly when they used to troul  
Gilt bowls of sack, they gave the bowl,  
Two spoons at least—an use ill kept;  
’Tis well if now our own be left.”

The spoon figured on Plate IV. is in the writer’s possession. It is larger than those described by Hone, the bowl being  $2\frac{1}{4}$  inches wide and nearly 3 inches long. The handle is  $5\frac{1}{4}$  inches in length, including the figure of the apostle which is *gilt*. The hat or flat cap is common to this class of spoons, and was probably designed, as Hone suggests, to preserve the features from effacement; but this was not its only use; when the figure was not sufficiently characteristic of the particular *one* of the twelve whom it was intended to represent, an additional symbol of him was impressed on the crown of the cap; as an eagle, a dove, an ox, &c. emblematical

of the evangelists. The weight of this spoon is  $2\frac{1}{4}$  ounces. The only mark stamped on it is an X with what appear the remains of a crown above it, but it is very illegible. The face of the punch was a circle three eighths of an inch in diameter. The impression has been struck twice on the back of the handle and once inside of the bowl, (the usual place in old spoons.) The implement was forged, except the image of the apostle, which was cast and soldered on the handle. It is not of English manufacture, since neither three leopards, the ancient government stamp, nor a rampant lion, the modern one, is impressed upon it.

These implements are interesting, as showing the influence of religion on the arts in mediæval times—how ingeniously ecclesiastical matters were interwoven with almost every thing—how even a spoon was made to infuse religious truths into the minds of children while it conveyed pap to their mouths.

Without being aware of the origin of the custom, says Hone in his entertaining miscellany, many persons in Europe continue to present spoons at christenings, though no longer adorned with imagery.

One remark more ere Apostle spoons are dismissed : It was a custom of remote antiquity to get up convivial feasts at the common expense of the guests, each individual contributing his proportion either in money or victuals. There is an allusion to it in the first book of the *Odyssey* :—

\* \* \* \* \* Behold I here  
A banquet or a nuptial? For these  
Meet not by contribution to regale.—*Cowper.*



The custom may be traced down to present times. There is a direct reference to it in the Spanish proverb : *Huésped tardío no viene manivacio*—‘a late guest comes not sluggishly nor empty handed ;’ the presents he brings will account for his delay. In the middle ages donations were invariably sent by friends to feasts, whether social or religious. Another pleasing trait of primitive manners was the exchange of tokens of friendship between a host and an esteemed guest at parting. Sometimes a piece of money or other small article was broken in two, one piece being retained by each individual as a symbol and pledge of mutual hospitality. From wealthy houses a stranger of rank was seldom allowed to depart without a valuable gift, such as his condition or the disposition and ability of the donor might suggest ; as a falchion, a walking stick, vest, or tunic, &c. but more generally a golden or silver vase or cup. Instances abound in Homer.

It was also a practice for princes to present to each guest the goblet he drank from at table. Of the nine thousand individuals who feasted with Alexander at Susa, every one received a golden cup. The Roman emperors and patricians occasionally complimented their friends in the same way. Suetonius informs us that Claudius having suspected a visitor of stealing a golden cup, caused him to be served at another time with an earthenware one. Sometimes the plate used by visitors at a feast was sent home to them on the following day—one of the most acceptable tokens of the host’s regard.

In later times guests did not wait to be presented with, but actually helped themselves to articles of plate! At entertainments given on the installations of civil or ecclesiastical dignitaries, scrambles for silver cups, dishes, salt cellars and spoons occurred just as they have in recent times at coronations. The practice became so common that it was at last claimed by the robbers as a right, and was positively recognized as such by law! It became interwoven with the tenures by which lands and privileges were held! We have an example at page 80 of a lord of the manor being entitled to carry off four dishes, two salt-cellars, a cup, a wine pot, a spoon, and two wash bowls (all of silver) from a bishop's table; to which may be added a much later one: When Dudley North was elected Sheriff of London (in the last century) and knighted, he gave the usual official banquet, and selected for the purpose one of the largest halls in the city. Several public bodies contributed to the expense. The Middle Templars presented one hundred guineas. In North's life it is said, "he had diverse very considerable presents from friends and relations, besides the compliments of the several companies, inviting themselves and wives to dinner—dropping their guineas, and *taking Apostle spoons* in the room of them; which, with what they ate and drank, and such as came in the shape of wives, made but an indifferent bargain."

Another application of the spoon will hardly be anticipated by every reader—its employment in the administration of the sacrament. The introduction



of the implement for this purpose is ascribed by old ecclesiastical writers to St. Chrysostom ; who, it is said, designed it to prevent effusion of the chalice. The Greek Church does not allow of *pouring* wine into the cup ; it is therefore transferred in *spoons*. The practice is different at Rome, but as the pope claims to be the head of both Greek and Latin churches, he combines in his person the peculiar customs of both.

*Fig. 11, Plate IV.* represents the golden spoon used when he celebrates high mass 'in both languages,' and with the ceremonies common to both churches. It is from the first volume of Motraye's Travels, where it is figured of full size. The bowl is  $2\frac{1}{4}$  inches wide and 3 long ; the length of handle and bowl  $11\frac{1}{2}$  inches. With this spoon the deacon and sub-deacon, who are generally cardinal priests, sup what remains in the chalice after the pope has communicated.

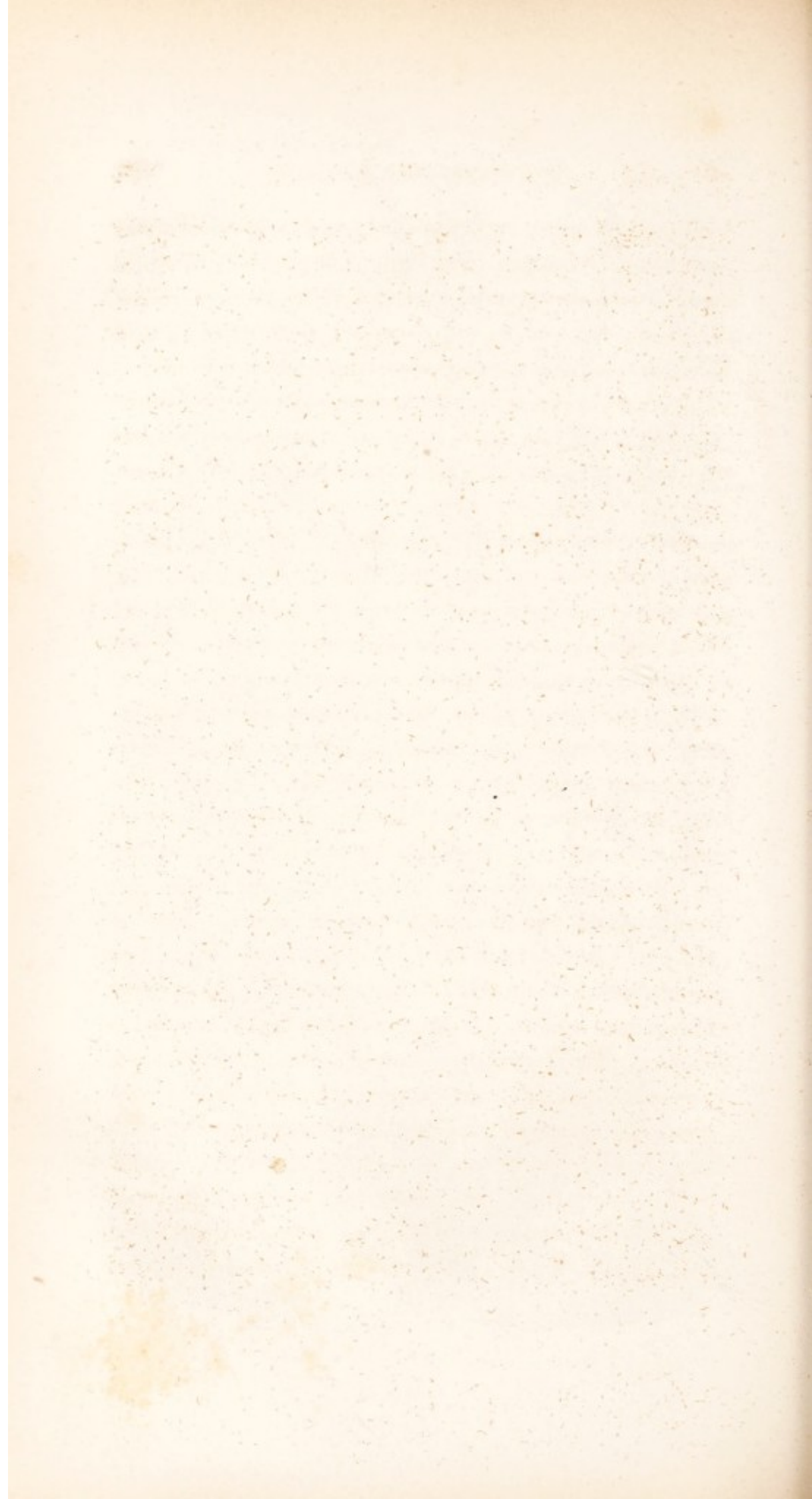
There can be no harm in stating here how the pope conveys the wine to his own mouth, since he neither puts the spoon nor the cup to his lips. As the wine is believed to be transubstantiated into real blood, it is deemed more seemly to suck than drink it ; and hence the 'sanguisuchello or blood-sucker,' a small golden and highly ornamented tube, 13 inches long, through which his holiness imbibes the consecrated fluid. [See its figure and description in Ewbank's Hydraulics.] At the celebration of high mass in the cathedral church of Paris, a similar instrument is used. [*Dict. de Trevoux, Art. Chalumeau.*] But

the honor of using it is deemed so great that permission to do so is scarcely ever obtained. Motraye tells us the king of Portugal was exceedingly zealous in promoting the splendor of the church, but it was not till after many solicitations that Clement XI. consented that the Archbishop of Lisbon should celebrate mass pontifically with papal paraphernalia, but the spoon and *sanguisuchello* were expressly excepted!

This curious instrument is not of modern date. The Queen of Oviedo and Asturia, A. D. 777, presented to one of the churches in Spain, dedicated to St. Thyrsus, 'a silver chalice and paten, a wash hand basin and a *pipe*;' which last, says Butler, in his lives of the Saints, was 'a silver pipe or quill to suck up the blood of Christ at the communion, such as the pope sometimes uses; it sucks it up as a nose draws up air.' The use of the instrument was not formerly confined to priests; i. e. not until the council of Constance took away the wine altogether from the laity and gave it exclusively to the clergy. Peter Martyr, complaining of the wealth and pride of the Roman clergy, quotes Beatus Rhenanus respecting 'certaine silver pypes, by the which prophane men, whom they call the laitie, sucked out of the chalice in the holy supper, as though, forsooth, out of the chalice itself the faithful might not drink.' The device was probably designed as a check—and an ingenious one it was—to rude and ignorant converts in the dark ages, to prevent them from taking too freely of the cup.









We have seen the spoon treasured up among the regalia of kings, and here we find it with crosiers, tiaras, sacred slippers, pastoral staffs, the sword of St. Peter, keys of heaven, and other holy matters belonging to the head of the church.

The next spoon was for a different purpose than any yet described; and so far from being a religious application of the implement, many persons consider it a wicked one; but sinful or not, it is our duty to notice it. Perhaps the reader's attention in arriving thus far in this long chapter begins to flag, and he mentally exclaims 'would it were ended.' Well, there is little to add, and if he will but imitate some drowsy people at church, by taking a sternutatory, he will arrive at the close without feeling fatigue or ascribing his heaviness to the writer. There are persons whose physical constitutions are so delicate that mere thoughts of taking snuff, (and medicines generally,) produce the same effect as inhaling the powder itself: now, if the imagination of the reader has a similar influence over his system, he can have no disposition to oscitate while finishing the chapter; on the contrary, the greatest obstacle to his progress will arise from a disposition to sneeze.

Spoons were formerly much in vogue for taking *snuff*! Gentlemen carried the powder in a small bottle, the neck of which was closed by a cork or stopper, through which passed the shank of a small spoon. Sometimes the handle of the spoon formed the head of the stopper. See *Figs. 8 and 9, Plate IV.* for a specimen of these precursors of the snuff-box.

In those days the expression was, 'take a *spoonful*,' instead of 'a *pinch*.' Old people yet living remember this use of the spoon. The stopper in the cut was screwed into the neck.

The practice was most probably derived from China, for snuff is there generally carried in vials or cruets by the wealthy, and drawn out with a spoon. In Mr. Dunn's celebrated Chinese collection, recently in Philadelphia, but now in London, there is a porcelain snuff bottle of great beauty, with a stopper of red cornelian, and a spoon of tortoise shell. [*Descriptive Catalogue, Phila.* 1839, p. 68.] 'A mandarin,' says Staunton, 'is seldom without a small ornamented vial to hold his snuff, of which he occasionally pours a quantity equal to a pinch upon the back of his left hand, between the thumb and index, and carrying to his nose, he snuffs up several times a day.' Powdered cinnabar is often employed for the same purpose, as opium and odorous ingredients are for smoking. The emperor of China distributed among other presents to the members of the Dutch embassy (of 1799) 'little bags for tobacco, and little glass bottles to hold snuff.' One of these would be taken by an American or European as a smelling bottle. With the spoon, says Dunn, they take out the pungent dust and place it on the back of the left hand, near the lower thumb joint, whence it is snuffed up by the olfactories to perform its titillating office.—[*Catalogue*, p. 11.]

With the bottle, snuff-taking was a more cleanly practice than the present one of thrusting the finger



and thumb into a box, and besmearing the person and pockets with the contents. Laws had not then been thought of, by which, as was subsequently enacted in some parts of Europe, those were to lose their noses who 'fed them with the prohibited food.'

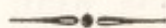
Howell mentions in his letters that rustic laborers and even maid-servants in his time were accustomed to snuff, taking out their boxes of 'smutchin' and conveying it to their nostrils by a *quill*. The Scotch highlanders take great pride in the 'mull' or spiral horn, which is supported as a personal ornament from the neck or belt, and from which they take the snuff either with a pen, quill, or *spoon* of tin, brass or silver, suspended by a small chain from the mull.

Pocket handkerchiefs were never very common with the Gael, and yet something of the kind seems indispensable to inveterate snuff takers; but men in every clime, when destitute of artificial conveniences, are soon furnished by nature with appropriate substitutes. It is so with the people of North Britain. Along with the spoon there dangles at their breast a *hare's foot*, with which they brush off superfluous particles from the regions of the nostrils and lips. The sensations produced by the use of this natural duster, it is said, are far more delicate and pleasing than the application of a bandana.

The people of Madagascar use snuff, but in a manner very different from inhabitants of the western world. These take it at the nose, but the Malagasy prefers the mouth. Putting a spoonful between the under lip and the teeth, he sucks it at leisure, affirm-

ing that a more lasting and exquisite pleasure is derived from it *there* than from momentary sniffs. Snuff was used by the ancient Mexicans.

*Nose powder* or snuff is mentioned in an ancient burlesque poem, on the laying of a ghost, inserted by Walter Scott, in the appendix to his introduction to the minstrelsy of the Scottish border. The ingredients required by the exorcist were as numerous and select as those used by the witches in *Macbeth*. Besides plants and holy water, there were fox-tails, teeth of an old horse, crabs' claws, a dog's ear, blue wool, a pig's tooth, the tail of a sow, &c. and "*of neis powder ane grit loik.*"



## CHAPTER XI.

*Old Pocket Spoons—Costume—Cutlers and Tailors. Pockets—their Origin, History and Influence—Derived from the Poke. Pocketing Sleeves. Valets. Ladies' Pockets—Reticules—Capacity and Strange Contents of Old Pockets—Material and Manufacture. Curious Old Folding Spoon—Conjectures respecting its owner. Forks—Of Uncertain Origin and Date—Ancient Egyptians at Dinner—Boarding Schools—Washing before and after Meals, and why—Anglo Saxons at Dinner—Forks denounced by the Clergy—Combined with the Spoon—Historical Notices of them.*

PLATE V. *Figs. 1 and 2* are French spoons of the sixteenth century. The style of *Fig. 2* (a shell and wreathed handle) is occasionally adopted in modern



specimens. *Fig. 1*—of silver gilt, and designed for the pocket. It consists of three distinct pieces, which joined together, form a spoon as in the figure, but when separated each serves a different purpose. The lower part of the handle forms a *fork*, the prongs of which fit into loops soldered on the back of the bowl; the upper extremity unscrews, and when taken off, presents a toothpick. A little above the bowl there is a joint by which, on removing a small ring that covers it, the whole may be folded up so as to occupy a very small space.

‘Folding spoons,’ as they were named, were not rare in the 16th and 17th centuries. In the *Progresses of Elizabeth* we read of a golden one, and numerous specimens are still extant. They were, we believe, like clasp or folding knives, one of the results of a change in costume. Does the reader smile at this, and ask what they could have to do with dress? At the first glance we admit the connection is not obvious; nevertheless they really were, and are, as much allied to POCKETS, as ever were long-handled ones to ruffs. In other words, if pockets had never been known, folding spoons like folding knives had never been made.

When knives had no joint at the junction of the handle and blade, they were worn pendant in sheaths at the side, as cooks, stevedores and sailors still wear them. Rich men and scholars sometimes attached them to silver or gilt chains that went round the neck. Chaucer thus carried his penknife, as seen in some of his portraits. Ladies now wear watches

much in the same way, and so do gentlemen reading glasses. But when the tunic and toga gave place to the coat, and the modern vest superseded the doublet, multitudes of portable implements were expressly designed for and named after the novel receptacles which the new garments brought into vogue—as pocket-books, pocket-glasses, pocket-knives, pocket-combs, &c. &c. Then came in also snuff-boxes in place of the old bottle, with hundreds of other pocket devices, which a dealer alone can enumerate—devices that never were thought of before. Where pockets have been made for one thing, a thousand things have been contrived for pockets. To the *tailor*, therefore, manufacturers of small articles in hardware, tortoise shell, ivory and pearl, are more indebted than they probably imagine. As for spoons, it is clear the same artist had a hand in bringing jointed ones into fashion, just as mantua-makers once caused the handles of ordinary ones to be lengthened.

One might almost suspect collusion between knights of the file and those of the scissors! Did ancient Sheffield workmen furnish contemporary shapers of apparel with bodkins, needles and thimbles, with shears and smoothing irons *gratis*, on condition of bringing pockets into fashion, and multiplying their variety? The offer of such a bribe would have been a proof of far-seeing sagacity, since every species of pocket, from those of an over-coat to the latent watch-fob, has made fortunes for fancy cutlers, for ages, and will make them for ages to come.



POCKETS.—In noticing pocket-spoons, perhaps we are expected to say something on pockets. Of all tasks, such an one would be to our taste ; but it would be digressing too far to enter on so diverting, instructive and copious a subject; or even give a sketch of these curious contrivances, of which it is supposed the classical ancients knew nothing. Still it is scarcely proper to pass them wholly without notice, since their connection with spoons is already apparent, and must as we proceed become more so. Shades of Demosthenes and Cicero, of Quintilian and Burke ! what a subject for eloquence and sublimity is here ! One fraught with materials for the richest paper ever read before a society of Chiffonniers—one charged, like pockets themselves, with entertaining miscellanies with gems and gimcracks, treasures and trifles, antiques and uniques ! A dish flavored with spices, one over which the eyes of literary gourmands would glisten and their pulse throb quicker as they seated themselves to enjoy it !

We know not how sufficiently to admire the ingenuity displayed in the origin and disposition on the person of these flexible little cupboards, for hiding what we wish to conceal, securing what we are anxious to preserve and for having always at hand what may every moment be wanted. To deduce their descent from the primitive girdle, oriental sash, philosopher's red scrip, pilgrim's wallet, and beggar's unctuous pouch—to trace them through every shape and disguise, and enumerate the diverse uses to which they have been put, would indeed be a feast

of good things and of queer things. But, alas ! no literary cuisinier can now procure the necessary ingredients. Such has been the inconsistency of historians that the annals of pockets have never been written, while memorials of old pocket-makers have been suffered to perish. Some valuable matter may of course yet be collected, and among other sources from Newgate calendars—from the lives and exploits of scientific analyzers of pockets—a class of men profoundly versed in their capacities, secret locations, approaches and uses. This branch of biography, we opine, must be studied ere a standard and luminous treatise on the subject can be written.

The history of a pocket would be a journal of the owner's thoughts—a record of his motives ; for in this adjunct to his dress lies coiled up the spring of his actions—the secret power that moves him. ‘The pocket’ is every thing to man—from it comfort and consequence proceed. He who hunting the dark recesses of one finds nothing, is nobody ; but to the pocket of the rich annuitant all do reverence. Strange that this little sack should be the fount of men's hopes and despair, the source of their sorrows and pleasures, the subject of their thoughts by day and dreams by night—they flourish with it and sicken as it dries up. When it expands so does their joy ; when it shrinks their pleasures are fled. The highest enjoyment is to fill it—the deepest distress to feel it void.

All the excitement in the world is about pockets ! One party putting their hands in, and the other striv-



ing to keep them out—some going deeper than the owners think right, and others appealing to the law to make them submit. Yonder fat publishers laugh at the profit they make, and here sits a lean author, shedding tears over the pittance they give him. The former are at peace with themselves and the world; the latter is at war with his tailor and dreads the sight of his butcher and baker. A history of pockets would make startling disclosures and correct many errors. Some would be found empty which rumor crams full, while in others supposed not to contain a maravedi a plum lies concealed.

Abolish pockets and the world will stand still, for every man lives by putting his hand into his neighbor's. It is his business—the only one by which he gets breads. To facilitate this reciprocal attention to each other's purses, merchants meet on 'Change, shops are furnished, stores erected, markets established and ships put afloat. For this, worshippers of Mercury adore him, and disciples of St. Nicholas pray. All the inequalities in human condition arise from the various modes of performing the operation: to do it adroitly is the science and apparently the sole purpose of life. Few minds can comprehend the multiplicity of devices by which pockets are exhausted, replenished and made to run over; nor is the genius yet born who can unravel them all:—but a truce to such thoughts and let us glance for a moment at pockets themselves.

Their name, as every body knows, is derived from the *poke*—a sack for carrying grain to feed cattle,

and sometimes small animals to market—hence the expression “to buy a pig in a poke.” Reduced in dimensions, it was adopted for holding victuals for men, and subsequently implements to eat with. It soon assumed a great variety of shapes, sizes and names. As a wallet both ends were closed, with an entrance through a slit in the middle, so that when slung over the shoulder, one moiety of the contents was suspended before and another behind—a species of biped saddle-bags. As a simple purse it was still more reduced and carried in the hand like a satchel or hung over the wrist. The next form was by far the most common, and we may safely infer the most useful—that of the *pouch*. This ancient and most favored of all forerunners of pockets was located at a different part of the person. Suspended from the girdle by strings or over the shoulders by a strap, it hung at the hips, either on the right side or left, (though sometimes in front,) so that the hand could enter, remain in, or be withdrawn, without inconvenience and with little effort. It is to the pouch we are indebted for outside coat pockets and ‘*poches des culottes*.’

As a bag or purse, the material was commonly linen or silk, and the mouth drawn close with strings; but as a pouch it was leather, sometimes prepared with the fur on, and the entrance left *open*—a serious inconvenience, since the opening became wider as the contents increased—inviting the notice of inquisitive people, and leading the patriarchs of pick-pockets into constant temptation; moreover, in wet



weather rain dripped in from upper parts of the dress, as into a gutter from the eaves of a house. These evils were removed by the invention of covers or *flaps*—an ingenious device for turning off water and shutting out from public gaze the treasures within.

The epoch of flaps is not well ascertained, but their antiquity is beyond cavil. In old cuts they are not always distinguishable, because artists were ignorant of the importance of delineating them distinctly. Clovis, who flourished in the fifth century, is represented with a purse or pouch at his girdle, very like a modern lady's work bag. In 1285 we find a French gentleman with one shaped like the curved blade of an axe or a leather-cutter's knife. Another specimen of the same century is plain, six or seven inches deep and nearly as many broad. A Parisian of A. D. 1400, sports one of a hemispherical shape, handsomely fluted or crimped; but these, belonging to fashionable people, deviated from flapped pouches of the commonalty. [See *Art du Tailleur, par Gausault*, published by the Academy in Arts et Metières, and numerous examples of the Anglo-Saxon pouch in Strutt.] Leather pouches were staple articles of the shoemaker or cordwainer's art. In the 'Orbis Pictus' of Commenius, the professor of those mysteries is at work, making them with pointed and other fashionable formed flaps and bodies. They were universally worn by people in the middle ranks of life, down to the seventeenth century, and by the poor in the eighteenth. We believe they are not yet wholly laid aside.

The next improvement was to secure the flaps. This was sometimes accomplished by a simple button: careful people had often two, and at one time three were quite common, just as outside coat pockets were fitted fifty years ago. These were indeed literal pouches fastened near that part of the person where they formerly hung, and with covers larger than those of a cartridge-box. Flaps were often edged with wrought borders and adorned with a row of gilt buttons. The pouch was sometimes provided with a minute padlock, like those used with valises, a precaution for keeping strangers' hands out, which we do not remember having seen adopted by tailors.

As coats, vests, and culottes rose into favor, wallets and pouches died off; but they left ere they vanished a prolific brood of hybrids behind. These are now classified under the generic names of the garments to which they belong; as cloak, coat, waistcoat and overcoat pockets, pockets for jackets, pantaloons, &c. Some are named from their location; as outside, inside, right and left handed pockets; and others again after the articles they are intended to hold. One is devoted to the handkerchief, a second to the gloves, a third to an eye or ogling glass, a fourth to a tooth pick, pencil case and knife. Some are for money and memoranda, watches, snuff boxes, small change, and indescribable sundries. Professional men have professional pockets; as surgeons, mechanics, and sportsmen; the first for their instruments, the second for rules and measuring tapes, the third for ammunition and game. Pockets



for the last article are as capacious as knapsacks, and when full often weigh down the owner, like Issachar's ass under a couple of panniers. Ere pockets were invented, sportsmen were content with less elaborate arrangements. Strutt has engraved the figure of an Anglo-Saxon gentleman, scouring the fields without a hat or any covering to his head; his arms are a quiver and bow, while his game (which he shot flying) are strung round his belt, forming a picturesque fringe composed of brant, snipe and quail.

Instead of the solitary pouch of our forefathers, pockets have become so very numerous that it is difficult to tell how many some gentlemen carry; always a pair, but often from three to five in the coat, two to four in the vest, as many in the pants, while in stormy weather an equal number in the great coat or surtout—and yet these are not enough, since we often see people stow away in their hats what they cannot find room for any where else—imitating prudent skippers who pile freight on deck for want of room in the hold. A person is now enveloped in pockets; they are suspended so thickly about him, that he would formerly have been taken for an itinerant 'pochetier,' or a merchant of new-fashioned 'escarcelles.'

As fashion is governed by whim, some whimsical pockets have come into fashion—as the 'pocketing sleeves' of the eleventh and twelfth centuries. These did not resemble the modern 'bishop sleeve,' but were long pendant pokes, which hung from

men's arms like orioles' nests, and from ladies' wrists like carpet bags. Modifications of them are yet worn by Spanish and Portuguese monks. Head, in his notes on the Pampas, mentions supping at an apology for an inn with a travelling priest. After finishing the meal, the reverend gentleman thrust his hand "into the large sleeve of his white serge gown and pulled out some cigars." Old writers state that these pockets were usually searched before their wearers could be admitted into kings' houses, and in some cases before retiring; the conveniences which they presented for concealing things surreptitiously acquired, gave rise to some strange petty larcenies.

Richard Brathwait, in his 'Rules for the government of the house of an Earle,' charges the usher of the dining hall to give a sharp look out, lest those who wait at table pocket the victuals; 'and I very well like the order I have seene in some noble houses, that neither yeoman, groome, nor gentleman's man, must be suffered to wait in a cloake, but in their livery coates, [garments fitted close to the body,] for so were they easier to be seene if they carried forthe any meat that they ought not to doe.' Hence there was after all nothing very extraordinary in Hudibras securing bread, black-puddings and cheese in his trunk hose, or Sancho stowing away in similar cavities boiled capons and sausage. Those who kept porters' lodges, [entrances to castles,] Brathwait observes, "should be men tall and stronge; they are to looke diligently that none filch and carry out



at the gates meate or any thing else." For the same reason Roman slaves who served at table were clothed only in tunics and girt with a towel. Visitors used their own napkins which a servant carried to the feast and took back, and in it generally part of the victuals—sometimes they were detected carrying off articles of plate.

So much for men's pockets: those of the ladies are more interesting affairs; but having been admonished to let them alone, at least to refrain from all remarks on modern '*poches des dames*,' we shall only take a peep at such as our grandmothers wore. Indeed it would require a more inquisitive disposition than ours to detect, and more assurance to describe the devices by which young ladies avoid carrying the enormous pouches in fashion a century ago. We have neither the requisite knowledge nor nerve. To be sure, we have occasionally seen belles, when preparing for shopping, thrust their money between the glove and palm of the hand, and others use cuffs of the pelisse for the purpose; while in cold weather they carry small parcels in muffs. *Billets-doux* and *souvenirs* are concealed in the bosom—a favorite place for favorite things—a convenient one too for papers of thread, and other things of that sort, in the absence of a work-bag—as Grecian and Roman ladies well knew.

But there never was half the subtlety employed in concealing the pockets of females as those of the ruder sex. The French lady's apron is provided with two pockets in front, as if inviting inspection.

Originally devised by 'une marchande' as a substitute for the till, it was found so convenient for other things besides change as to become adopted by those who had nothing to sell. The famed reticule is carried in the hand, in every one's sight, and even laid like the bonnet aside when its owner is not disposed to walk out. Its materials and decorations are surprisingly varied; sometimes formed of net work (hence its name) of links of silver or steel, like flexible armor of old; now made of shells, of seeds and glass beads, of rich colored velvets and silks, and enriched with lace. In public promenades, swinging to and fro from the arms, these beautiful things reflect rays tintured with azure, crimson and gold, reminding one of the plumage of tropical birds in the sun.

In articles of taste ladies take the lead—reticules are examples; for in them pockets have got back to the old pendant pouch. Having run through the entire circle of fashion, they have reached the point where they began, and are ready to run it again. This is an advance which the male sex has not attained; as in other circles, the beaux are here doomed to follow the belles.

But we are forgetting our promise to let pockets of living ladies alone, and notice simply such as belonged to frugal housewives in days gone by. Of a truth, theirs *were* pockets!—receptacles redolent of other perfumes than camphor or musk, and replete with other things than ladies now carry. Characteristic of rude times, they were doomed to hard



service. At first they were made of the most durable of woven fabrics, but so great was the wear and tear that eventually well tanned leather superseded every other material. In shape many of them resembled an inverted heart, but more were like a violin and in size a violoncello. Into one of these capacious *cul de sacs* a dozen reticules might have been put, a muff thrown in, and room be left. Let those who doubt this, if any such there be, enquire of an ancient farmer's wife, and they will doubt no more.

Besides doing duty as a purse or money drawer, we have known one hold a clasp-knife for paring apples and ripping up seams, half a dozen silver spoons, supposed to be safe no where else; a bunch of keys, bits of ginger, cinnamon, and straggling cloves, metallic tractors, a box of salve, a pincushion, thimble, scissors, a leather case well stocked with bodkins, needles, tape and hanks of thread. The marbles of the owner's favorite boy were thus secured each day, till he returned from school. A set of knitting needles with their sheath found lodgings there, and often folded in a half formed stocking, with the ball of yarn to finish it. There were other matters, but we forbear to specify them. It would be difficult to do so, because into this *omnium gatherum* all things were placed for which no other place was found—a kind of moving closet, into which, in sweeping round a house, the odds and ends were swept—things so various and select as would suffice to stock a curiosity shop.

It will at once be understood that pockets such as these were not suspended to any part of the attire: no gingham gown, nor silk, nor cotton stuff could long support the load without being rent to tatters. No! they were strapped round the person independently of the dress—a necessary precaution! They were worn at the right side, except the fair owner was an ambidexter, when they took the left. In large households a lady preferred *two*, thus dividing the load and making one half balance the other; at the same time preventing the wearer from the risk of being dragged down on one side and becoming deformed in the spine. It was at one time common to wear them on the outside of the gown, when they were generally ornamented with stars, rings and lovers' knots, in various colored leather. Sometimes the owner or the donor's name was wrought in 'chain stitch,' and like samplers with a motto underneath.

Justice to a class of scientific artists, now no more, requires us to state that these pockets were not the work of women. The severe labor to which they were subjected when in use, required a corresponding amount to be expended on their fabrication: this, as in the case of shoes, saddlery, and other departments of the leather trade, was deemed too great for females; hence housewives were indebted for their pockets, as well as corsets, to old 'stay makers.'

A marked relationship in the dress of the sexes is ever observable. If the costume of one sex be neat, elegant, or bizarre, so is that of the other.



They partake of each other's character, and are assimilated, though in a way not easily described; but look at works of costume from Roman times to our own, and this curious fact will be apparent. It is so to some extent even with pockets. When those of our grandmothers were all but fathomless, our grandfathers had theirs made of equal dimensions. When ladies wore high caps and copious gowns tucked out behind, gentlemen had their hair worked up in crests like cockatoos, and clad themselves in coats whose skirts were not like ours, "swallow-tailed," but broad and projecting, *a la* fan-tailed pigeons.

Let us now return to spoons: *Fig. 3, Plate V.* is another old pocket or folding one. The original, lying before us, is of silver. Like the one already described, its handle forms a fork. Having been purchased by a silversmith with other worn out plate, its history is unknown. From the style of the workmanship and other more obvious marks of antiquity, it would seem to date from a much earlier period than *Fig. 1*. The bowl is  $2\frac{3}{4}$  inches long and  $1\frac{3}{4}$  wide, and of a moderate depth; the length of bowl and handle when united,  $6\frac{1}{2}$  inches. Folded, the whole is comprised in less room than an ordinary snuff box. The jointed handle is shown separately at *Fig. 4*. The lower part, where united to the fork, is plain and square—a portion of which is removed on one side, leaving a recess into which the small shank of the fork is received; so that when the little sliding and ornamented tube is slipped over both, a perfect fork

is made. *Fig. 5*—the back of the bowl, showing five oblong loops, through which the prongs were pushed when the owner wished to transfer liquid food to his lips.

An interesting feature, and one indicative of considerable antiquity, is the *death's head*, and round it the well known admonition, '*memento mori*,' engraved on the bowl—the initials of the melancholy owner standing on each side like armorial supporters to this graveyard emblazonry. The letters and writing are rudely executed, much more so than appears in the cut.

Possibly the implement belonged to some pious recluse who doomed himself to self-torture, and took this mode of mortifying his flesh—causing an image of the grim monster to stare him in the face with every mouthful he swallowed—a device by which the horrors of the charnel house were associated with the dining table! Quite a refinement on the practice of the ancient Egyptians—a people naturally lively and jocose, and whom the priests, as guardians of their morality, had considerable difficulty to keep within bounds. At convivial parties, Herodotus informs us (ii. 78) a coffin containing a perfect image of a dead person was carried round to every guest, the bearer requesting him to look on, and remember he would soon resemble it—an ingenious contrivance to keep people sober—but the owner of the spoon went further; he actually put into his mouth a grinning death's head when he tasted his food, and repeated the operation with every morsel he ate.



Custom is all powerful, or such a mode of taking dinner would stay some people's stomachs ere dinner began.

Numerous were the inventions in past ages for conquering rebellious appetites. Most of them had relation to abstinence ; as with the Yogees and other sects of India, of which some individuals, though watched closely, were never seen to eat, and were therefore esteemed most holy. There is certainly nothing like fasting for subduing the passions, and it is really astonishing how far it has been carried. Red lettered eremites, in whose constitutions a craving for food predominated, heroically endured the constant pangs of hunger and thirst, with the view of fairly starving the wicked ones out. Some limited themselves to two or three spoonfuls of thin pottage a day, and with it actually 'mixed dirt' to punish the palate, or sprinkled in 'grit' to set the teeth on an edge ! They sorrowed because they could not exist without eating. From some accounts it would seem as if each spoonful was accompanied to the mouth with a groan, while streams of tears often made it run over ! No wonder that such men checked indulgence in themselves and other people by engraving emblems of death on table utensils.

Perhaps it will be said, severe disciplinarians used simple spoons of wood or horn, while the one under consideration, being of silver, was not suited to a sorrowful penitent. True ; hence if it really belonged to a monastery, it perhaps had a place in the abbot's buffet. These men, we know, 'lived well,'

bodily as well as spiritually; they were no strangers to creature comforts. 'Table d'Abbe' was a proverbial expression for a splendidly furnished board. They were served in plate, and with considerable state too; so were lady abbesses also; but we cannot think this spoon was ever owned by a nun—no female could of choice love to contemplate (in the ornament on the back) the figure her face was destined to make, nor did any one ever wish her beauty to fade. The lady of the cloister no more than her sister of the ball room was ever insensible to personal charms or indifferent about her appearance in the eyes of mankind.

With the implement, then, we may suppose some superior of a convent moderately cherished his body, especially on meagre days; and as an exterior sign of interior grace had a symbol of mortification cut on the outside of the bowl. Perhaps many a lesson on fasting was given to his attendants with this spoon in his hand—serious homilies on the evils of good cheer, and the blessings heaven bestows on the abtemious—blessings, we may presume, evinced in the shining face, the *en bon point* and comely appearance of his reverence. But other thoughts were indulged and other scenes enacted when his table was cleared, and the spoon, with the dishes, found their way to the kitchen or refectory, where the lay brethren dined, out of his sight and out of his hearing! Verily, all the stories extant about monasteries and monks would be well nigh eclipsed by a week's table-talk held in the presence of an old abbot's spoon.



Possibly some reader exclaims, 'this is all well enough, if the implement ever had a place in a convent—it more likely was owned by a layman; the initials imply as much, while the female bust on the handle was not by any means appropriate for a priest either to handle or look on.' There is some force in these remarks. Well, let us see to whom it could have belonged—not to an Englishman certainly, since neither the maker's nor the government stamp is impressed on it. It is from continental Europe, and if made to order was designed for a gentleman acquainted with mythology and versed in the classics. The handle, representing a nymph and twisted serpents, indicates this. Now who could he be? The initials are A. L.—perhaps Alphonso Ledesma, the Spanish poet, who died in 1623; or Andrea Lanzano, the Italian painter; but poets and painters are generally poor, and many, like Cervantes and Morland, never owned any plate; we shall therefore conclude that Andrew Laguna, the rich and favorite physician of Charles V. once owned it. If such *was* the fact, this spoon was probably often in the company of the most famous men of the age. It may have been even handled by Columbus himself, after returning from his immortal adventure.

Other readers may think the implement was originally made for the *special* use of an individual: very possible, and on second thoughts we may be sure none but a niggard, afraid of his victuals, or a miser like Elwes could have made a practice of putting such an one into guests' hands.

After all it is no great matter who the owner was. It has obviously existed through two, possibly three or even four centuries, and has seen much service. Many are the mouths it has opened, the palates it has tickled, the stomachs it has comforted, the tongues it has silenced, and peradventure blistered by hastily leaving scalding pottage in the mouth. But alas! where now are the eyes that once glistened over it, the wits seated at tables it has graced? Having outlived them all, it appears in a land of strangers; a wanderer in another hemisphere. Could this venerable relic give an account of its former proprietors, tell us who and what they were, how they lived and where they died, how it came among and why parted from them—could it describe their persons, tempers, and conditions, the friends they entertained and the families they visited—few novels would surpass, perhaps none equal the story in interest.

FORKS.—As the handles of some old spoons were separable from the bowls, so as to be used as *forks*, we may as well devote the concluding pages of this chapter to the latter. The transition from pocket-spoons to pocket-forks is easy enough, but when both implements are joined together, their descriptions should not be apart.

There is something singular in the history of forks. Though of modern date, as little is known of their origin as that of spoons. The author of one is as much lost to fame as the inventor of the other. It is certain that people of the ancient world took dinner without forks. All raised victuals to their mouths



as orientals do now; hot and thin liquids with spoons, and butcher's meat with the fingers. Even in the advanced state of society and manners under the Pharaohs, Egyptians held cooked joints and roasted fowls in one hand while shaving off slices with a knife in the other. In one of the paintings copied by Rossilini representing a feasting party, a gentleman flourishes a joint of venison or lamb, two are eating fish which they retain in their fingers, while a fourth is actually separating the wing of a goose with the same instruments. This may have been an exception to the general practice, though if so, why it should have been selected for record on eternal tablets of stone, it is not easy to divine. These tablets present the most ancient pictures in existence of feasts. It is not till some four thousand years later we meet with table forks. These are not found portrayed in sculptures, nor paintings or engravings till the 17th century, yet pictorial delineations of Roman, Asiatic, Norman, and Anglo-Saxon domestic life abound.

The absence of forks at Jewish tables is sufficiently evident from the affecting declaration of the Savior: 'He that dippeth his hand with me in the dish, the same shall betray me'—the identical mode of eating still followed in Palestine. We know from Roman writers, that to take food from a dish without unnecessarily immersing the fingers, was a part of the education of youth of both sexes. Ovid has versified the lesson:

"Your meat genteelly with your fingers raise;  
And, as in eating there's a certain grace,  
Beware, with greasy hands, lest you besmear your face."

The same advice was imparted to boys and girls of ancient Greece. It is now impressed upon their offspring by the polite Persian, Turk and Hindoo. Boarding schools are of extreme antiquity, (ii. Kings, iv. 38.) and Pharaonic as well as Jewish proprietors taught young masters and misses to behave not unseemly at table. Chaucer mentions a school at Bow, where girls were initiated in the arts of fashionable life; among other acquirements they were taught how to avoid putting their hands too deep in the dish. Somewhat similar advice was given to European ladies in the seventeenth century, and Quixote praises Sancho for his attainments in this branch of politeness.

It was the want of forks which gave rise to the old practice of washing before and after meals—one for which the ceremonious Pharisees were so tenacious, and with which they combined many ridiculous superstitions. The custom was demanded by decency, when plates were not in use and each person at dinner thrust his hand into one common dish. What could be more offensive to natural propriety than an individual fishing up from that dish gobbets of flesh with fingers only washed with the soup! To the decent as well as the delicate, the sight must ever be abhorrent. A subsequent ablution was as necessary to personal comfort as the first was to the company's enjoyment of their food. When pocket handkerchiefs were not in vogue, what else could a lady or gentleman do while their fingers were streaming with the fluid material of a ragout, or coated with



the glutinous remains of a bowl of rich cuscous ? They must either have wiped them dry on the hair of their heads, or rubbed off what they could on their garments. The process of washing the hands, and the utensils employed, are described at page 83, as used in Europe in the sixteenth century. Later still the custom was common. In Commenius' *Visible World* there is a cut representing a feast. The guests being brought in, wash their hands by holding them over a basin presented by a servant, who pours out water from an ewer. The reader who is desirous of beholding orientals dining on the favorite ragout may consult the cuts in *Lane's Modern Egyptians*, and illustrated works on Eastern manners. If he wishes to see how occidentals formerly managed roasted joints let him cast his eyes on the cut below, copied from Strutt :



ANGLO-SAXON NOBLES OR PRINCES AT DINNER.

Three Anglo-Saxon nobles or princes at dinner !  
Their rank is indicated by being served on the knee.

The number was one most preferred in classical eras for convivial parties. These, it was said, ought never to consist of fewer persons than the Graces nor more than the Muses. The round table is covered by an ample cloth upon which are placed bowls or deep dishes, but no plates. One of the party only is supplied with a spoon; he seems in the act of calling to his attendant, perhaps for soup. His associates amuse themselves with solider things; one is engaged in separating a slice from a joint presented on the rod on which it was roasted. To facilitate the operation, he grasps one end of the spit while the waiter holds fast the other. The gentleman with a beard appears indetermined whether to follow the example or first finish the fish in his hand.

Here is ocular proof how indispensable was the washing of hands *after* dinner, and this old painting is in all essential points a mere fac-simile of others which might be produced, of earlier and later dates. The reader may find specimens in D'Agincourt's History of the Arts. Plate 71 shows a royal party at a table furnished much in the same style as the foregoing. To assist digestion and gratify two senses at once, a fiddler stands by, playing a favorite air. The date is about the 11th century. But so late as the middle of the 17th century, it was common for carvers to *handle* flesh meats at table. In 1641 a festival was held at Paris by the *Saretiers*. One gentleman grasps the shank of a leg of mutton while cutting it up, to supply the plate of a lady beside him. It is hence obvious that the unbecoming practice of



'licking the fingers,' attributed as a crime to ancient turnspits, was not unknown to their betters—that kings as well as cobblers were guilty of it daily.

The attendants in the cut wear tunics, and apparently are girt with towels. Each holds a trencher, the essential requisite of an Anglo-Saxon page. He was never allowed to wait at table without it; a good reason for which is furnished by the illustration: held under the smoking joint, it caught the dripping gravy and such pieces of meat as a guest when carving might let fall. [The rich subject of *spits* must be left for future papers which the Society of Chiffonniers intend to issue.]

Perhaps some readers imagine the want of forks was sensibly felt in old times, and that they were eagerly adopted as soon as they appeared. No such thing. We regret to say their introduction was violently opposed, and a storm of abuse poured on the heads of their users. Even the clergy, who ought to have known better, preached against them as a wicked innovation. Among others, the Benedictines of St. Maur declared them inconsistent with the scriptural mode of living, as exemplified by the patriarchs, prophets, and especially by the great exemplar and his apostles—an abominable violation of primitive manners! But notwithstanding the denunciation of table forks by friars and monks, the very people among whom the pope had his seat were the first to receive them. They were first domesticated in Italy in the 16th century, but were certainly known there before, either as luxuries or curiosities.

As early as the 11th and 12th centuries they were occasionally used by the wealthy. Peter Damiani, who died A. D. 1073, mentions in one of his letters a lady of Constantinople, married to a doge of Venice, and who, among other strange fancies, required rain water to wash in, and used a *golden* fork to eat with. But this does not determine the date or place of their invention. It does not appear that they were quite novel things then—nay, a silver fork has been found at Pompeii; so that they were not absolutely unknown to some of the fashionables of antiquity.

Forks are mentioned in a charter of Ferdinand I. of Spain, A. D. 1101. In the wardrobe account of Edward I. king of England, ‘a pair of knives with sheathes of silver enameled, and a forcke of chrystal’ are specified. In 1595, Queen Elizabeth dined at Kew, at the house of Sir John Pickering, who presented her with a rich fan, the handle of which was set with diamonds; an artificial nosegay composed of jewels, “and to grace him the more, she, of herself, took from him a salt, a spoone, and a forcke of fair agatte.” At the same period they were looked on as curiosities in France. Brathwait, who wrote his ‘Rules’ in the early part of the reign of James I. is silent on forks, though full on the minutest matters. The groom of the pantry was “to keepe the saltes, spoones, and knives very faire and cleane.”

It was owing to their being made portable that eventually brought forks into vogue. Travellers, gentlemen, delicate ladies, young beaux, and all who disliked to feed out of dishes into which the fingers



of a company were unceremoniously thrust, carried their eating apparatus in a case or cadenas. The eighty-second proposition of the Marquis of Worcester's famous *Century of Inventions* is a proof in point :—" A knife, spoon, or fork, in an *usual* portable case, may have the like conveyance in their handles;" i. e. secret devices might be concealed in them. Nichols mentions knives with 'conceytes' in the handles—a toothpick for example, as in a spoon already described. Great ingenuity was displayed in things of this kind and not a little pride indulged in them by the wearers—like the conceited fop in *Gil Blas* who carried his gloves and handkerchief in the hilt of his sword. The oldest forks were generally of silver. Henry IV. of France had one of steel. Heylin attributes their introduction into England to young men of fashion, but errs, we think, in ascribing them to the Chinese: "The use of silver forks with us, by some of our spruce gallants taken up *of late*, came from China to Italy, and from thence to England."—[*Cosmog.* p. 865.]

In the cut of a feast in *Commenius*, besides trenchers, cups, glasses, knives, and other table furniture, there are "**little forks**," not much unlike those figured on Plate VI. which date from an earlier period. In 1611, Coryatt, the eccentric English traveller was ridiculed by writers and wits for using forks. Their introduction into Britain has been erroneously ascribed to him. They were previously known there as we have seen, but the book of his travels made the public more familiar with them :

“ I observed,” he says “ a custom in all those Italian cities and townes through the which I passed, that is not used in any other country that I saw in my travels ; neither do I think that any other nation of Christendome doth use it, but only Italy. The Italian and most strangers that are commorant [dwelling] in Italy, do alwaies at their meales *use a little forke*, when they cut their meate. For while with their knife, which they hold in one hand, they cut the meate out of the dish, they fasten their forke, which they hold in the other hand, upon the same dish. So that whatsoever he be, that sitting in the company of any others at meale, should unadvisedly touch the dish of meate with his fingers, from which all at the table doe eat, he will give occasion of offense unto the company, as having transgressed the lawes of good manners ; insomuch that for his error he shall be at least brow-beaten, if not reprehended in words. This forme of feeding, I understand, is generally used in all places in Italy, their forkes being for the most part made of yron or steele, and some of silver ; but these are used only by gentlemen. The reason of this their curiosity is, because the Italian cannot by any means have his dish touched with fingers, seeing all men’s fingers are not alike cleane—hereupon I myself thought good to imitate the Italian fashion, by this forked cutting of meate, not only while I was in Italy, but also in Germany, and oftentimes in England since I came home : being once quipped for that frequent using of my forke, by a certain learned gentleman, a familiar friend of



mine, one Master Laurence Whitaker, who in his merry humour doubted not to call me *furcifer*, only for using a forke at feeding."

In the preceding extract, we have a view of Italian gentlemen 'feeding' in the beginning of the 17th century. In the following passage we obtain an insight into British manners during the middle of it:—"A gentlewoman being at table, abroad or at home, must observe to keep her body straighte, and lean not by any means upon her elbowes—nor by ravenous gesture discover a voracious appetite. Talke not when you have meate in your mouth; and do not smacke like a pig—nor eat spoonemeat so hot that the tears stand in your eyes. It is very uncourtly to drink so large a draught that your breath is almost gone, and you are forced to blow strongly to recover yourselfe. Throwing down your liquor as into a funnel, is an action fitter for a juggler than a gentlewoman. In carving at your own table, distribute the best pieces first, and it will appear very decent and comely to *use a forke*; so touch no piece of meat without it." This elegant extract is from '*The Accomplished Lady's Rich Closet of Rarities.*' London, 1653.

To conclude: That forks were known in Spain when Cervantes wrote, is obvious from the address of Quixote to Don Antonio in praise of Squire Pansa: 'In truth, Sancho's temperance and cleanliness in eating deserve to be engraved on plates of brass, to remain an eternal memorial for ages to come. I must confess when he is hungry, he seems to be

somewhat of a glutton, for he eats fast and chews on both sides of his mouth; but for cleanliness he always strictly observes it. When he was a governor he learned to eat so nicely that he took up grapes and even the grains of pomegranates with the point of a **FORK.**'

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## CHAPTER XII.

*Oriental Manners—Semifluids and Fingers—Spoons of Gold and Silver prohibited—Church Plate—Quibbling Evasion of Mahomet's Precept—Modern Oriental Spoons—Substitutes for Tumblers—Arabs at Dinner—Revenge of Hasan—Persian Spoons—A Vulgar Ambassador—Cakes used as Napkins—Frolic of Tavernier and the King of Persia—Proverbs—Sherbert Spoons—Curious Article in the Persian Creed—Repartee—Chinese Spoons—Chopsticks—Sheathed Knives and Spoons—Worn by Janizaries—'Standard and Caldron'—Military Romances—Ancient Beggars—Clack Dish and Spoon—Interesting Family—Beggars and Lent—St. Giles.*

A CURSORY reader of travels might imagine spoons unknown in the greater part of the earth, so frequently are unguarded expressions to that effect met with. We may therefore as well premise that the practice of conveying *semifluid* food to the mouth without them was formerly as universal as handling flesh meats at table without forks. With the exception of Europe and European descendants, it is so still. Boiled rice is the great pabulum of life to a majority



of our species—with millions it is the only food. Now, whether eaten by the scrupulous Hindoo, delicate Persian, or fastidious Turk—people with whom cleanliness is godliness, whose daily ablutions are religious duties—or by the revolting Hottentot, the wild Arab, or revengeful Malay, it is conveyed to the mouth with the hand alone. So general is this filthy custom among people on opposite parts of the globe that it can hardly be looked on in any other light than as a relic of times when mankind formed one family—times when no forks were used but fingers, no other knives than finger nails, and spoons had not been thought of—when men and women clutched their food as parrots do, and raised it to their lips like squirrels.

Suppose we add a few examples of the custom—not drawn from people ignorant of spoons, but such as follow it from choice. The reflecting reader will need no stronger proof of the still prevailing influence of antediluvian usages, and of the humiliating fact, that like other creatures, men are creatures of habit—that tenacity to the rude practices of our forefathers is not always to be overcome by refinements or reason.

The Hindoos use neither knives nor forks at table, ‘nor spoons except with soup.’ Rice is served on banana leaves cut in the form of plates, and fresh ones are had for every meal.

M. Loubere, ambassador to Siam in 1687, and the author of two volumes on that country, says:—  
‘Ils n’ont à table, ny nappe, ny serviette, ny cuillère,

ny fourchette, ny couteau.' [*Tome* i. 101.] But that spoons were known there, is clear from the oriental jewelry and plate presented to the king of France by his royal brother of Siam, in 1685. Among other things was 'une *cuillère d'or*, au plus bel ouvrage du Japon.'—[*His. Gen. Tome* xii.]

One traveller says the natives of Madagascar use no spoons; another, that they find substitutes for them and for dishes and ladles in the leaves of the raven plant. According to a third, spoons are not uncommon, while some of costly materials are occasionally to be met with. Rice is considered the best of all dishes; and beef, mutton, fowls and fish mere adjuncts. These, when cooked, are cut into small pieces, and invariably served up on boiled rice, into which 'horn spoons are stuck,' and for it alone used. The fore finger and thumb—a pair of natural forceps—pick up the meat and deliver it into the mouth. When Radama, king of the Island, died in 1828, immense treasure was buried with him. His coffin was silver. To make it, fourteen thousand dollars were melted and beaten into plates, which were fastened together with silver rivets. Besides other valuables buried with him were a silver *ladle* and a *golden spoon*, for his use in another world.

The people of Barbary make no use of knives and forks, 'and very rarely of spoons.' Like other orientals, they take up their food with the right hand, and dexterously jerk it into the mouth. Caffres use neither tables, knives nor plates, but sometimes call in the aid of forks and spoons. Squatting round a



boiling pot, each spears with a pointed stick a piece of flesh, and leisurely eats it from the hand. When a missionary arrived at Lattakoo, some colored ladies sent his party a present of porridge in the pot in which it was made, but unaccompanied with implements to eat it with; they never thought of spoons being used with semifluid food, but naturally supposed that white as well as black men's fingers tasted every morsel swallowed. The Negroes of the Gambia, says Moore, are not very proud in their furniture, for the greater part have only a mat raised on a few sticks to sleep on, a jar for water, a calabash for drinking, two or three mortars to pound rice, and calabashes out of which they eat rice with *their hands*.

The Sumatrans, says Marsden, use at table neither knives nor spoons, nor any substitute for them. They take up rice and other victuals with the thumb and fingers, and dexterously throw it into the mouth. Rice is boiled generally in a joint of bamboo, and by the time it is cooked the vessel is nearly destroyed. Their manner of boiling the grain is to let it simmer over a slow fire, drawing off the water by degrees 'with a flat ladle or spoon.'

The Bashee Islanders take meat from the pot in which it is cooked with their fingers, as the Moors do pillau, using no spoons. At Mindanao the common food is sago and rice. When served up, each person dips his fingers in water, to prevent the glutinous food from sticking to them; then taking a handful out of the platter, squeezes it into a lump, and crams it into his mouth. [*Dampier.*]

When Kotzebue was at Owhyhee, Tamaahmaah, the king, who possessed European table utensils, including spoons, used a gourd for a basin at dinner, and fed himself like an Asiatic, dipping his fingers into the taro dough, and conveying it to his mouth with the same implements. He observed to the Russian navigator: 'This is the custom in my country, and I will not depart from it.' The same slovenly way of eating was observed from the king to the lowest menial. Mr. Farnham, in his 'Scenes in the Pacific,' is more particular: "The mode of conveying *poi* to their mouths was quite primitive. The fore and middle fingers served instead of a spoon. These they inserted to the depth of the knuckles, and having raised as much as would lie upon them, and by a very dexterous whirl brought it into a globular shape upon the tips, they thrust it into their mouths and licked the fingers clean for another essay."

When Captain John Smith, the hero and historian of Virginia was a slave among the Turks, his stomach was sorely tried. In his chapter on Turkish diet, he says pillau was served out to his captors in great bowls; they sat 'round it on the ground, and after they have raked it thorow so oft as they please with their foule fists, the remainder was for the christian slaves.'

Nearly 200 years have elapsed since Van Sleb visited Egypt. He was once entertained at an extraordinary banquet given by a rich Arab; but 'wine was wanting, and spoons, knives and forks.' 'The modern Egyptians,' says Lane, 'seldom use at table



either knives or forks; the thumb and two fingers of the right hand serve for every thing not fluid. Spoons are used for soup and thin rice, or other things not easily conveyed to the mouth without them.' The same writer, speaking 'on meals and the manner of eating,' in a note to his translation of the 'Thousand and One Tales,' remarks: 'The table is usually placed upon a round cloth spread in the middle of the floor, or in a corner next two of the deewáns or low seats, which generally extend along three sides of the room: it is composed of a large round tray of silver, or tinned copper or brass, supported by a stool commonly about 15 or 16 inches high, made of wood and generally inlaid with mother of pearl, tortoise shell, &c. The dishes are of silver, of tinned copper or china; several are placed upon the tray, and around them are dispersed some round flat cakes of bread, with *spoons* of *box-wood*, *ebony*, or other material.'

The leading customs through all the East, with regard to eating, are in fact similar. When people sit at table their legs are crossed under them. They perform topical ablutions before and after meals, at which knives and spoons are seldom seen. When the master of the family is present, he first puts his hand in the dish, and the rest in order after him. There is another particular with which the reader should be acquainted, in order to understand why *wooden* spoons chiefly are used by wealthy orientals. The poorer classes have spoons of horn, wood, brass, and iron; and a few silver and golden ones may oc-

casionally be found on the tables of princes and rich men ; but such are not common, and for this reason : *they were prohibited* by Mahomet. “Verily, [said he,] the fire of hell will roar like the bellowings of a camel in the bellies of those who eat and drink from vessels of gold and silver.” No articles of plate are allowed in mosques, and formerly they were excluded from christian churches. “Exuperius, Bishop of Tholose, ministered the holie supper with a glasse cup and a wicker basket. The Triburien Council disputed whether golden or wooden vessels should be used. Boniface, the martyr, said when they were golden priests, they had wooden cups, but now being wooden priests, they will have golden challices.” [*P. Martyr, on ‘Ornaments of Churches.’*]

Some rich Mahommedans, however, like other rich people, contrive, while obeying literally a precept they do not like, to depart widely from its spirit. Indeed no law, divine or human, can repress the love of distinction. Hunger breaks through stone walls, but pride bursts through brass ones. Believers in the Koran are forbid to eat or drink out of gold or silver utensils. ‘True,’ quoth a worldly-minded mufti ; ‘*that* applies only to things put to the lips, not to trays, dishes, wash-basins, knives, nor yet to the *handles* of spoons, for none of these things come in contact with the mouth.’ Awful would be the fury of the prophet, could he hear his doctrines thus explained away ; and how would his indignation boil could he read the following extract



from a travelling giaour's remarks on the manners of his people: 'As for pillau, and other soft and liquid meats, the Turks have spoons, though not of gold and silver, which they are forbidden by the law to put into their mouths. Those at the tables of persons of distinction are generally of *agate*, *amber*, or other scarce material, with *handles* of gold or silver gilt, and set with *jewels*; for the parts which enter not the mouth *may be* of those metals!' [*Motraye.*]

In the 'Grande Description,' tome ii. E. M. are two Egyptian spoons of the kind, being richly ornamented. They are shown in *Figs. 6, 7, Plate V.* 'Cuillers en ecaille, ornées d'ambre, de corail et de nacre. [*Fig. 8 is enlarged from a cut in Jacob Cat's works.*] *Fig. 9*—another Turkish spoon, elaborately enriched in both bowl and handle.

The Turks and other orientals seldom drink at meals, but when they do it is out of spoons; hence if they do not employ them always as we do, they put them in requisition where we do not. The wealthy have a variety of pleasant drinks, consisting of diluted peach, cherry, and raspberry syrups. Each person has by him a *wooden spoon*, with which he lades the syrup out of bowls, taking ever and anon spoonfuls of it, and so suspends his thirst. [*Tavernier.*] A sweet drink, composed of raisins boiled in sugar and scented with rose water, is drunk by ladies out of ladles, or spoons of tortoise shell, and sometimes of cocoa nut. [*Lane.*]

Near the custom house, says Commodore Porter, is the most famous eating place in all Constantino-

ple. Persons who like what is good go there to regale themselves with kibobs, a dish in great favor with the Turks. It consists of pieces of mutton or lamb cut into small mouthfuls and seasoned; then strung on an iron skewer and exposed to the heat of an oven of peculiar construction. They are, when done, served up in their own gravy, or in kaymar, which is cream. There is also served with them a soft flat kind of bread or pancake, which, as no knives or forks are made use of, suits admirably as a means of conveying the kibobs and kaymar to the mouth, whence they soon find their way into the stomach. The bread is called Firna Pidésé. With this mess they give you a large vessel filled with sherbet, or a drink prepared from dried grapes, and to each person is given a *large spoon* to sip it.

The manners of Arabs at table are repulsive. ‘They use neither knives nor forks, nor even spoons, unless for food wholly liquid.’ They have been observed to plunge their filthy hands into milk placed before them, and thus raise the liquid to the lips. Before sitting down they repeat a short prayer beginning thus:—“In the name of the most merciful God.” The instant it is finished all hands are in the food—and lo, it has vanished! “In the middle of all was a large wooden bowl, in which were the camel’s bones and a thin broth in which they were boiled. Knives, forks, and spoons are silly, impertinent things in the esteem of Arabs; however, being known to use such things, we had large wooden spoons laid before us.” [*Jour. to Tadmor*, 1691.]



Having no arabesque spoon, plain or jewelled, to lay before the reader, we present him with a gem of another kind—one first brought to light as an Ishmaelite sat down to dinner. It is an old remark that hunger induces ill humor—that men are more disposed to anger when waiting for a meal, than when rising from the table. As Hasan, the son and successor of Ali was one day about to dine, a slave let a dish of hot pillau drop on him! An unprecedented insult to the dread leader of the faithful! Now, how did the startled caliph, as his eyes glistened and his face assumed the color of fire, act—he at whose nod the heads of a dozen men would have flown for a less offence from their owners' shoulders? We have seen a servant of the pope's slain for spilling hot broth on a scholar, and an ambassador of his holiness flying for his life on that occasion to a steeple; we know too how a pagan Roman acted when one of his servants let a porcelain dish fall, at a supper given to Augustus—viz: ordered the offender to be sunk in a fish-pond wherein the monster fattened lampreys on human flesh! an order which thrilled Octavius with horror.

The revenge of Hasan exceeded them both; and it was based on a verse of the Koran! In the third chapter of that book is the following passage:—"Paradise is prepared for those who give alms in prosperity and adversity; who bridle their anger and forgive men, for God loveth the beneficent." Dreading the caliph's resentment, the poor slave dropped on his knees, and in an agony exclaimed, "Paradise

is for those who bridle their anger—" "I—I am not angry," was the unexpected reply. The trembling suppliant proceeded—"and for those who forgive men—" "I forgive you," was the life-sparing answer—thus emboldened, the youth meekly added, "for God loveth the beneficent." "Since it is so," said Hasan, whose brow the angel of forgiveness had now smoothed, and lit up his face with virtue's own smile—"I give you your liberty and four hundred pieces of silver" !

If there is a more beautiful episode in human annals, we have not met with it. Who would compare Alexander to Hasan—who is not enraptured at the intelligence and ready wit of the young Arab slave ; at the inspiration which led him to quote and beautifully invert the order of a passage so suited to the exigencies of the moment—and who does not envy Hasan the heavenly feast he enjoyed in the place of the dish he had lost ?

PERSIAN SPOONS.—The Persians, says Tavernier, eat their broths with wooden spoons. Their rice, which is made thick, they take up with their fingers, and wipe their hands upon handkerchiefs. Invited with the Venetian ambassador to sup with a Persian grandee, the representative of the doge, he remarks, 'committed an absurdity, for there are no [few] silver or gold spoons in Persia, but only long wooden ladles that reach a great way. Now, the ambassador, reaching his ladle to a porcelain dish, full of scalding hot pottage, clapped it presently into his mouth, but finding it so hot that he could not endure



it, after several scurvy faces threw it out of his mouth into his hand, in presence of all the company.'

John Bell says an entertainment given to the Russian ambassador at Ispahan consisted of sweetmeats, ice water in golden basins, rice boiled with butter, fowls, mutton, lambs, &c. The whole was served in gold and china dishes. 'But according to the custom of the country, we had neither napkins, spoons, knives nor forks. The shah himself eat with his fingers, and every one followed his example. Thin cakes made of wheat flour were used to *wipe our fingers*.'—a practice of the Romans, whose slaves afterwards ate the cakes. Fryer visited Persia 170 years ago, and observed the wealthy drink wine out of 'long thin wooden spoons,' but he was in error in saying 'spoons are not in use, unless to drink sherbet with.'

Tavernier is one of the most interesting of old travellers. His details of oriental life are vivid and fresh as if drawn yesterday. He had, from his profession as a merchant-jeweller and goldsmith, access to every court. Having spent forty years in his travels, he was personally known to most Asiatic princes, and his arrival was often hailed by them with joy. On his sixth and last visit to Ispahan, he was warmly greeted by the king, who seems to have been a real toper. Two days after reaching the city, the traveller was waited on early in the morning, by a chief officer of state, accompanied by a jesuit and two Dutchmen, (favorites of the monarch,) and requested to attend them to the palace. Upon enter-

ing, they found his majesty seated upon a low pallet; before him were fruits, sweetmeats, two bottles of Schiras wine and a golden cup. There was also a small wooden vat or cistern full of wine, and a golden spoon or ladle which held nearly a pint. The bottles and cup were for the king; the vat and spoon for his guests.

It would be disagreeable to many readers, were we to recite the particulars of the succeeding debauch—one in which the spoon acted so prominent a part, despite of every precept of the Koran. Suffice to say, ‘the entertainment’ was kept up for seventeen hours! being diversified with feasting, music and dancing. At short intervals ‘the great ladle went about smartly,’ the king insisting that ‘no man should leave a drop.’ Tavernier thus winds up the account:—“We had droll’d together till eleven o’clock at night, when the king started another question—whether any one present could sing? It happened that there was one Monsieur Daulier there, who played on the virginals, and pretended to sing a court air. His voice being high-pitched, the king did not like it, as the Persians prefer the base. Perceiving this, and being in a merry vein, though I knew not a note, yet having a deep and clear voice, I sung an old air, beginning thus:—

“‘Fill all the bowls, then—fill ’em high!  
Fill all the glasses there—for why  
Should every creature drink but I?’”

The king was ravished, crying out, ‘Baricala! Baricala!’ an exclamation equivalent to ‘Oh! the works of God!’



Wine, as well as 'plate,' is prohibited, but rich Persians make no scruple about either. They excuse themselves when overtaken by liquor, by quoting a proverb which certainly was not designed to encourage drunkenness :—'Equal sin in a spoonful as in a potful.' Hence, after tasting a small quantity, they have no compunction about swallowing the largest. But such reasoning is not confined to oriental sinners; we have too many who exclaim, 'In for a penny, in for a pound'—'As well be hanged for a sheep as a lamb.'

Morier, describing a dinner given to the British embassy, says, there was placed before each guest a tray, on which stood three china bowls, filled with sherbets; two made of sweet liquors, and one an exquisite species of lemonade. There were besides, fruits ready cut, plates with elegant little arrangements of sweetmeats and confectionery, and smaller cups of sweet sherbet; the whole of which were placed most symmetrically, and were quite inviting even by their appearance. In the vases of sherbet were *spoons made of the pear tree*, with very deep bowls, and worked so delicately that the long handles just slightly *bent* when carried to the mouth.

If the reader has any curiosity to behold a Persian sherbet spoon, let him turn to *Plate V. Figs. 10, 11*, represent one, preserved with others of a similar form and different sizes in the Philadelphia Museum. It is fifteen inches long, and made of box-wood or pear tree. The handle is thin and ornamented with designs formed by openings cut entirely through.

The junction of the handle with the bowl is strengthened by a pierced semicircular piece, shown in *Fig. 10*, and exhibiting a very novel feature.

From what has been said, the reader will be no longer surprised at Mahommedans associating the spoon with the pleasures of heaven ; yet unless he had been informed of its employment in drinking wine upon earth, he could scarcely comprehend that part of the Persian creed which states that Rusuen, the porter of paradise, opens to faithful Mahommedans the gates of heaven ; and when seated on the banks of the fountain Kauser, the great camel driver himself hands round to each *the water of life in a LADLE.*

As a specimen of Persian repartee, we may here introduce an anecdote, which, if not associated with the spoon, is at least connected with one of the ingredients of soup. An Ispahan dealer in pot-herbs, remonstrating against the imposition of an exorbitant tax, was ordered by the governor to pay it or leave the city. "I cannot pay it, and whither can I go," ejaculated the poor man—knowing no place where he could live, out of the reach of the oppressor, or his equally rapacious relatives. "You may proceed to Schiras or Kashan, if you like those cities better than this." "Yes ; but your brother is in power in one, and your nephew in the other ; what relief can I expect in either ?" "Proceed, then, to court, and complain to the king," replied the extortioner. "Alas ! your brother, the Hajee, is prime minister." "Well, then," said the irritated minister,



“go to the *devil*, and trouble me no more!” “Ah! but the holy man your deceased father is with *him*”! said the persevering dealer in esculents. The spectators laughed, the governor followed their example, and promised to examine and redress the bold green-grocer’s wrongs.

CHINESE SPOONS.—In China and neighboring countries, spoons are often of earthenware. At an entertainment given to the British embassy in Cochin China, the table was loaded with every imaginable delicacy. The number of dishes piled in three rows, one above the other, exceeded a hundred. Before each person was placed boiled rice in place of bread, and two porcupine quills by way of knife and fork. ‘The spoons were of *porcelain*, and somewhat in the form of small shovels.’ [*Staunton.*] ‘We were in want of every accommodation, even of forks and spoons, for the former are not used in China, and the latter are made of porcelain, with very short handles.’ [*Van Braam.*]

CHOPSTICKS.—But of Chinese peculiarities, few things have excited more interest than chopsticks—two small rods or wires, which at table perform the same duties as our forks and spoons. Enclosed in a sheath along with a knife, they are suspended from the sash of every gentleman. See *Fig. 12, Plate V.* for the sheath. The original is before us. It is 7 inches long, and half an inch wide, made of bamboo, and neatly covered with tortoise shell, in which no joint can be detected. A minute brass band goes round the middle and each end. A ring is attached

to the upper one, and on a strip of metal is a proverb or moral sentence. An ivory handled knife, (left out in the cut) with a strong blade, and rough as the grindstone left it, occupies one half of the sheath. As both sticks are alike, one only is figured. They are square rods of ivory, eight inches long, one-fifth of an inch thick at the smaller ends, and rather thicker at the other, which are held in the hand. The thick parts, like the handle of the knife, project out of the case. Sometimes they are round and have their ends pointed with silver. When used, they are held in the right hand, between the forefinger and thumb. A tooth-pick occasionally finds a place in the sheath.

The dexterity with which chopsticks are used, and the celerity with which food disappears before them, show how appropriate is their name—*kwae tsze*, 'nimble lads.' A native readily picks up objects small as pin heads, while fruitless attempts of foreigners to convey with them a piece of edible bird's-nest to the mouth, often afford amusement to Chinese hosts. The eating apparatus of the poorer classes consists of chopsticks and bowls. If they possess no table or bench, the large pot of rice is placed on the floor, and they squat round, with their feet inwards, just the contrary way from the Jews and Romans. A portion of rice is transferred by a ladle to each member's bowl. This he holds in one hand close to the chin, and with the 'nimble lads' pushes the food into his mouth till the latter is crammed; then wiping the sticks across the edge of



the bowl, he takes up with them, as with forceps, a piece of fish, meat, or whatever else is on the table, and thrusts it in edgewise as a relish. After a while the mouth is ready for more, and the nimble lads are again set to work. [*See Chinese Rep. Vol. iii.*]

Chopsticks are interesting relics of antediluvian days ; for their origin is to be traced to the twigs by which barbarians scrape semifluid food from natural cups into the mouth ; such as travellers use when dining on cuscous, while far distant from dwellings and destitute of artificial spatulæ. South Sea islanders thus gather taro dough out of cocoa shells, and American Indians scrape samp out of baskets.

A sheathed eating-knife was worn at the belt by the Celts, Gauls, Germans, Saxons and Anglo-Saxons, and by their descendants down to recent times. It was an essential part of the personal equipment of gentlemen, laborers and artisans. Even ladies wore them as they wear scissors now. An old saying arose from the practice, intimating that appearances are often deceptive :—"In a sheath of gold may be a knife of lead." 'Among the Celts,' says Macpherson, 'as at this day in France, guests carried their own knives and *forks* [!] enclosed in the same sheath with the dagger.' Highlanders carry the *skene dhu* or knife, and a fork, in a horn or other sheath—the handle of the knife being sometimes hollowed out for the reception of snuff. *Spoons* also were worn in like manner. Every Janizary had one, and there is no reason to suppose the custom originated with them.

*Fig. 13, Plate V.* represents a brass sheath hold-

ing three knives and a spoon, such as the warlike infantry of the Turks formerly were furnished with, and which they wore pendent from, or stuck in, the girdle. At the time Motraye wrote, the spoon had been removed, being then worn in a perpendicular sheath in *front of the cap*, occupying the place of the head dress of modern troops, where we may suppose it sometimes warded off a blow aimed at the head of its owner, as well as refreshing him when a battle was over. This prominent disposition of the spoon by the Janizaries was appropriate enough, since each regiment had its own *soup kettle*, which in process of time acquired a sort of prescriptive sanctity, and formed as it were the *chief standard* of the regiment; while the officers and other military functionaries derived *their titles* from their various supposed employments as cooks, waiters, or scullions! The Spaniards have a proverb which reflects light on this strange custom:—'Pendon y caldera'—the standard and caldron. In the Moorish wars, a Castilian who undertook to raise a regiment, was privileged by the king to carry a standard as the sign of his authority to enlist troops; while a caldron figured on it indicated that he fed them at his own cost.

Let not modern warriors laugh at this; for if posterity judge them from 'Tableux,' 'Military Adventures,' and other fashionable novels, descriptive of the foraging and bivouacing of epauletted gourmands and legal bucaniers, which constitute so large a portion of the light literature of the day, the old Turkish legions, God wot, will lose nothing in the com-



parison ; for knives, forks, plates, spoons, the bottle and the glass, are infinitely more conspicuous than such things ever were with the Moslem. But it is a new thing under the sun for the most horrible of all crimes—that which includes every other, and surpasses the power of devils to commit, to be treated in books as a bagatelle, for the amusement of drawing-room loungers and boarding-school misses. Would that these literary warriors electrified the reading world with equally vivid details of the blessings their own countrymen have derived from their valor—how every victory has lessened the laborer's toil and increased the artisan's comforts, diminished the price of bread, and poured abundance among a happy population—how their liberties have increased with their armies, and taxes been reduced with their conquests—how—but we are digressing.

*Fig. 14, Plate V.*—one of the numerous illustrations of the 'Romance of the Rose,' a French poetical satire, written by Guillaume de Lois, and translated by Chaucer. As a portrait of a female mendicant of the middle ages, it is not without interest, independently of the spoon which ornaments the felt hat. The distressed condition of the lady's wardrobe and her famishing looks are described in the poem :—

"She was like thing for hunger dede,  
That lad her life onely by brede,  
Kneden with eisel stronge and egre,  
And thereto she was leane and megre ;  
And she was clad ful poorely  
All in an olde torne courtpy,  
As she were all with dogges torne  
And botn behind and eke beforne.  
Clouted was she beggerly."

The poet is speaking of avarice, which the ancient illustrator depicts in the aspect and costume of a beggar. The alms-dish, suspended from the wrist, was the professional badge of mendicants in the remotest ages, and has continued to be one to the present day. It dates back to the fountain-head of Hindoo mythology. 'Gunga was produced by the sweat of Vishnu's foot, which Brahma caught in his *alms dish*.' The Pandaroons and other beggars of India eat from it the rice given them. Fryer, describing the Fakirs, says, 'they beg up and down like our bedlams with an horn and a bowl.'

The spoon is also carried by Asiatic as well as old European beggars. 'Persian Durweeshes in Egypt have oblong bowls of cocoa-nut or metal, in which they receive alms and put their food. They carry also a wooden *spoon*.' [*Lane.*]

It was a daily custom to distribute victuals at the gates of monasteries and rich houses. Of such, we often read, 'Pottage was given to every poor person who begged.' 'All dinners being ended, the Vsher and Groome of the Hall are to see the broken meate and drinke safely put into the almes tubbes.' [*Brathwait.*] Every recipient was required to provide his own bowl and spoon—a prudent precaution, since lepers or other diseased persons were commonly among the applicants. It does not seem possible that more appropriate symbols of want could have been adopted, than those carried by ancient children of sorrow. What more touching devices for moving the bowels of the compassionate than an



empty bowl and an unemployed spoon? There was even something expressive in the way they were carried—the spoon as near the mouth as could be, and the vacant dish in front of the empty stomach.

As the lady figured on *Plate V.* represents a class of old artists allied to modern chiffonniers, we trust no reader will take offence at her presence. Having described spoons belonging to kings, why should we not mention those owned by people, who, like kings, are fed at the public expense? Every part of her gabardine seems ready to bid 'good bye' to its neighbors, while many have already gone off, as certain rents and gaps too plainly declare. Still, there is philosophy in the disposal of the dress. If her organs of motion are wofully exposed, the more noble parts of her person are carefully guarded from the weather—perhaps on the principle of keeping 'the head warm and feet cold;' an aphorism which Boerhaave acquired praise for inverting, though against the experience of swarms of young urchins, who scamper about summer and winter with bare legs and feet; and contrary to the advice of Locke, to bore holes in the soles of new shoes, that wind and water might always have free ingress and egress! There was policy if not humor in exhibiting the parts which the figure represents as denuded: in approaching a mansion for alms, the wretched toes enforced the appeal, and where their owner received nothing but curses, she quickly showed the churls 'a clean pair of heels.'

Beggars were not allowed to enter a house when

they sought alms—a circumstance from which a proverbial expression of ‘poor Richard’ is derived :— ‘Hunger looks in at the working-man’s door, but dares not enter.’ Various devices were in vogue for giving notice of their presence ; sometimes a horn was blown, or other rude instrument played on ; but the usual music was produced by striking the dish with the spoon or a cup. From this clattering the principal utensil became known as the ‘clap-dish,’ or ‘clack-dish.’

The useful arts arose in Asia ; and poetry, painting, and music were born there. Thence came the trumpet, harp, drum, cymbals, and what is older than all, the musical clack-dish. The begging friars of Fo enforce their demands by beating two pieces of bamboo, ‘or hammering a hollow piece of wood with a stick.’ With similar instruments Chinese mendicants get up such powerful solos and duets in front of shop doors, that the inmates, whose organs of harmony sympathize not with the sounds, relieve the musicians to get rid of the music. Lepers, when they attended markets to beg corn, carried a rattle to warn people from touching them.

There is an Italian female mendicant in one of the illustrations of Ackerman’s ‘Forget me Not’ for 1843, which shows how little the accoutrements and costume of this class have changed. With the exception of a crutch, she of Italy might be taken for the ancient French damsel on *Plate V.* An equal lack of covering is equally obvious about the regions of the toes, and opposite extremities of her feet.









The mantle and skirts of an inner garment are ornamented with the same picturesque fringe ; a species of muffler or band holds up the chin, and kept the miserable mouth shut when there was no occasion to open it ; a tapered hat covers the head ; a *spoon*, stuck through the band, sets off the hat, and an alms-dish hangs from the waist.

In a volume of ancient engravings now before us, one dated A. D. 1470 represents an itinerant charlatan, with his family and stock in trade. He is playing on bagpipes, and bears two children in a basket strapped to his back. His wife carries a young cherub and leads an ass laden with panniers, out of which peep a couple of boys who have not learned to walk. The eldest son, accompanied by the dog, goes before with an owl on his shoulder. In the man's hat are stuck a couple of *spoons*.

In the days of ecclesiastical rule, when monks were monarchs and lay people could neither eat nor drink but as the Church pleased, a merciful clause was at length introduced into the canons respecting lent, with the view of removing a very serious obstacle to the salvation of those who lived upon alms—a pleasing proof of the anxiety of ghostly fathers to save (though only at the last extremity) the ghastly sheep in their flocks. It was to this effect :—“Beggars, *when ready to affamish* for want, *may* eat in lent time what they can get.”

## CHAPTER XIII.

*Pewter or Tin—Vulcan a Pewterer—Tin Armor—Ezekiel—Roman Pewterers and Vitellius—Tin Idols—Singular Imposture of Durand, a French Carpenter—Louis XI—English Pewter Ware—St. Peter's Chalice—Mexican Pewterers—English Laws respecting Pewter—Cheats, time of Richard II—Pewter Articles, under Henry VIII—Pewter Money and James II—European Manufactures, A. D. 1483—Pewter Spoons described—Anecdote of one—Charles XII—Singular Property of Pewter Mugs—Extension of the Principle suggested—Authors likened to Cabmen—Brass Spoons—Tinned iron ones—Tinning—Tin Plate—Andrew Yarranton—Wooden Spoons—Forks—Cutty Spoons—Relish of Food—Spoons at Work—Dance of Death—End of the World—The Last Spoon.*

OF metallic spoons, those made of tin or its alloys were perhaps the first ; but it is not to be supposed that proofs of this can be found in the material or mental relics of a former world. Such things were too easily defaced and too insignificant to be noticed or preserved, where others infinitely more durable and valuable have perished. Before describing *pewter* spoons, a few references to the employment of this factitious metal in early times may gratify some readers. Its base is *tin*, a white and bright metal, lighter than iron and soft almost as lead. It is generally hardened by the addition of a little antimony, as silver is with copper ; and there was no more reason to give a new name to the mixture in one case than in the other. The name of tin is not



only withheld from articles formed of it, but given to others only washed with it. That fine material known in commerce as 'tin plate' is sheet iron coated with tin. The French distinguish it from untinned plate by the appropriate term '*fer blanc*,' or white iron. Old English writers made a similar distinction.

From the facility of working tin, the low temperature at which it fuses, its ductility, brilliancy, and unquestionable employment in remote ages, we may safely infer that articles were made of it long before the refractory ores were reduced. That implements of iron preceded those of bronze is the uniform declaration of history; but bronze was itself an alloy of copper and tin. The latter is the natural solder of lead, for which it has probably been used ever since the heavier metal was wrought. Tin was among the spoils taken from the Midianites. Articles formed of it were to be melted down and recast; hence the antiquity of the pewterer's art.

Whoever Vulcan was, or however remote the times in which he lived, he was a pewterer as well as a blacksmith and brass founder. Bucklers, greaves, and other defensive armor were in his time made of and adorned with *tin*. The herd of cattle and other raised work on the shield of Achilles were executed in this metal. The corslet of Agamemnon was composed of alternate bars or scales of gold, steel and tin. The central stud of his shield was encircled

'With twice ten bosses of resplendent tin.'

In the form of wire tin was also used for binding different parts together; as the lining of Sarpedon's shield was stitched with wires of gold. Defensive armor of so soft a material may excite the smile of modern soldiers, and induce incredulity in Homer's statements, or an impression that he is misunderstood; but independent of the remarkable fact of the word used by him to designate tin being the same by which the metal is still known in the East, the material is still used for the very same purpose at this day. The Calmucks, we are told, when equipped for war often protect their persons 'with armor made of scales of tin.' Lapland women make ornaments of it to decorate their own and their husbands' dresses. They produce beautiful wire for embroidery, &c., by drawing the metal through holes drilled in horns or bones of rein-deer; a practice probably dating from the age of Homer. The 'shining canisters,' in which bread was served to guests, often mentioned by the father of poets, were very likely the work of the pewterer. Frontlets, anklets, bracelets, and other personal ornaments of tin, still worn in the East, are of extreme antiquity. Pausanias mentions an antique tablet of tin connected with the Messenians.

When Ezekiel wrote, tin was a staple article of import at Tyre, and we have sufficient evidence that its consumption anciently must have been as great as at present. Whether the slabs piled on the docks and in the stores of Phenician merchants in the prophet's days were drawn from India, Spain or Britain,



is uncertain; but within two, if not one century of his death, the greatest navigators of old drew part of their supplies from Cornwall. It is pretty evident that English mines were wrought before iron was known on the island, for pickaxes of stag's horns, hard wood, and flint, have been found embedded in ore, as well as wooden shovels and buckets; the latter without any kind of hoops. A plate of tin was disinterred in the time of Henry VIII. inscribed with unknown characters, supposed to have been Druidical precepts. In 1635, tablets with strange inscriptions were found, which Stukely ascribed to Britons of a remote age. Posidonius says the ancient Celtæ had pewter platters.

The pewterer's art was extensively carried on in old Rome, and most articles current a century ago were made there. It would seem from Pliny, (xxx. 7.) that what he calls an 'instrument of tin' was the common pewter syringe. From Suetonius we infer that goblets, dishes, pitchers, cups, urns, and other utensils of gold and silver, dedicated to the gods, were imitated in pewter, as such things are now. Vitellius, he remarks, rifled the temples of their treasures, substituting articles of pewter and copper for those of silver and gold. The successor of Otho imitated in this respect another military ethnic, who, wanting money, took a golden robe from the statue of Jupiter, and replaced it with a woollen one, philosophically observing that the latter would keep the deity warmer in winter, and press lighter on his shoulders in summer.

In the dark ages the worship of heathen deities was transferred unaltered to christian saints. The Virgin received the same compliments that her half-pagan adorers previously paid to Diana ; whose shrines, numerous as they were, never equaled those of her successor. As the precious metals were not so abundant after the fall of the Romans, tin offered a good and cheap substitute for one of them ; and pewterers in Germany, Britain and Gaul, drove a brisker business in making portable idols than ever did Demetrius and his fellow craftsmen of Asia Minor.

The feudal contests of the old barons were a scourge to Europe for many ages. Declaring war against each other at will, arson, rapine and murder, stalked unchecked through the land. The Church launched her thunders in vain ; she was unable to correct an evil which kings could not cure. At length a cunning carpenter, named *Durand*, conceived a plan (if indeed it was his own) which succeeded in France, and made the inventor's fortune. He solemnly gave out that God appeared to him in Auvergne, and commanded him to proclaim an instant peace between all contending parties. For proof of his mission, he exhibited an image of the Virgin, which he had the impudence to say was left with him for that purpose by the Almighty. The astonished nobles accordingly assembled in the City Du Puy, and after listening to opinions of churchmen, hearing the asseverations of the bold artisan, and examining his celestial image, agreed to lay aside their



animosities and swear on the holy evangelists to entertain love and peace for each other! As a proof of sincerity and faith in the revelation, they wore "an image of our lady in *pewter*" on their breasts—copies of the one in Durand's possession, and most likely cast in the same mould—with capuches of white linen on their heads, which articles *the carpenter sold them!*

That son of Apollyon, Louis XI. constantly wore a madonna of lead or pewter in his hat, which he would take off and invoke when about to commit some horrible crime, so as to be sure of pardon beforehand. It is pleasant, says Mazeray, to notice his pranks when his own death drew near—sending all over Europe for relics of saints, to Rheims for the holy ampoule and oil, ordering processions and masses in his behalf, and not forgetting prayers that God would prevent certain winds, which incommoded him, from blowing! But there are people now-a-days who send up official requests to the Virgin for rain or fair weather.

In the Northumberland Household Book are allusions to pewter ware: "Item—to be payd to the saide Richard Gowge, and Thomas Percy for the bying of vj dossen rugh pewter vessels for servynge of my house for oone hole yere, after vj shillings the dossen." "The groom of the squillery is to be careful after every meal to gather into his office the silver and pewter vessels, and before they goe to the scowring or washing certainly to number them." [*Brathwait.*] In the United States the communion ser-

vice plate is as often the work of the pewterer as of the silversmith. It was so in the primitive church. Among the relics preserved in St. Lateran's at Rome, are a wooden altar and a pewter chalice—both said to have been used by St. Peter. Coffins were formerly made of pewter: see accounts of several in Nugent's travels. Block tin or pewter worms for distilling are ancient. Alchemists used them and denounced leaden ones. Van Sleb mentions pewter mortars in Egypt. Mexican pewterers, like other mechanics, exhibited their goods for sale in the great market. Cortez who mentions this fact in a letter to Charles V. does not particularize the articles. Anklets, bracelets, and other ornaments of tin, have been worn by Negroes, Arabs and others, from time immemorial.

The process of making pewter goods differs from that of working most metals. Articles are formed complete, or nearly so, by running the fused material into clay, brass or other moulds. A spoon, for example, is cast in a moment, whereas a gold or silver one has to be forged into shape. The importance in which pewter was anciently held in England appears from the laws made to preserve its purity, and reputation abroad. As spoons are enumerated we shall notice some of the enactments. Previous to the reign of Henry VII. all articles were to be compared with standard metal and stamped; but the law had been disregarded, since he issued a fresh edict, forbidding under certain penalties any pewter or brass article to be sold without the maker's name.



and the assay officer's mark. In the time of Richard II. the pewterers complained of their business being injured by pedlars and tinkers going round the country and recasting worn out articles, but which they mixed with lead, "so as to be not worth the fourth part sold for." These pedestrian gentlemen were charged with stealing and encouraging others to steal old brass and pewter, and selling them to go out of the country; thus letting foreigners into the secrets of the trades. They also robbed the people whom they dealt with by using false weights and beams. One of the latter, says the statute, "will stand even with twelve pounds weight at one end, against a quarter of a pound at the other end, to the singular advantage of themselves." (!) This equals the morality of our old Dutch traders, who, in buying furs by weight from their Indian brethren, are said to have put their left hand into the scale for one pound, and their right foot for two.

The act of Richard was renewed by Henry VIII. with severer penalties, and new sections added. *Spoons*, as well as more important articles, were required to be of standard workmanship and assay—all below them were forfeited. No foreigner was to be taken as an apprentice, or in any way to learn the trade, lest going abroad the art should go also.

Section 7, cap. 8, of the first act of Henry VIII. enumerates the following articles; if any were found below the standard, they were to be seized:—"Platters, chargers, dishes, saucers, porringers, trenchers, basons, flaggons, pottles, pots, saltsels, goblets,

*spoons*, cruets or candlesticks, or any such wares of tin or pewter." Twenty-one years afterwards pewterers again petitioned the king. They said the trade was ruined by foreign manufactures, which they prayed might be prohibited. It was therefore enacted that foreign tin or pewter "platters, dishes, saucers, pots, basons, ewers, flaggons, goblets, salts, saltsellers, *spoons*, or any thing made of tin or pewter, might be seized, in whose hands soever it may be found."

A dinner set of pewter plate comprised three dozen dishes and plates, one dozen saucers, a tankard or flagon, salts, mustard pot, pepper box, half a dozen mugs, and one or two dozen spoons. The whole was arranged on a kind of sideboard or dresser with shelves, called the pewter rack. Women prided themselves in keeping the whole brilliant as silver. In some parts of Europe they are yet to be seen, but are rapidly disappearing.

London pewterers were incorporated in 1474. The company was designated as 'The master, wardens, and commonalty of the art and mystery of pewterers.' Their motto, "In God is all my trust;" their crest, two hands holding a pewter dish. The best pewter was for plates and dishes, and known as 'plate pewter;' it was composed of tin and from 8 to 17 per cent of antimony, and a little copper. 'Ley pewter,' often denounced in old statutes, consisted of tin with a large proportion of lead, one-fifth, and sometimes one third! But English did not equal Roman cheats. Pliny speaks of culinary utensils



made from equal quantities of tin and lead ! Desire for wealth is a universal passion, and to get it by the shortest methods a universal temptation. Lead costs three, and tin sixteen cents per pound. We have heard a wealthy pewterer boast of supplying plantations in the West Indies with worms for distilling, made from an alloy of 100 lbs of tin to a ton of lead ! ‘Pewter, (he would remark) is tin and lead, and so were the articles I made.’ He sold them by weight.

Making base money out of pewter has always been in vogue, but not always by men that wore aprons. It has been practiced by some who wore crowns. James II. of England, ‘cast all the brass guns and all the brass and copper vessels of [Irish] protestants that he could seize, into half-crowns, shillings and sixpences,’ and ordered them to pass current at the value of the same denominations in silver. Continuing to want cash, and unable to get copper, he seized the people’s pewter dishes, plates and spoons, and converted them into *silver* crowns. Roman counterfeiters carried on a heavy business. Numbers of their molds have been dug up in England. Some are of clay and so arranged that a number of pewter coins could be cast at one operation. [*Phil. Trans.* vols. 44 and 24.] According to Tavernier, the king of Cheda and Pera coins no other than tin money. In Sumatra such was and probably is still in circulation.

In 1483 we have, in a list of foreign goods, the importation of which into England was prohibited,

a better account of the state of the mechanic arts at that time in Europe than is any where else to be found. In consequence of a moving appeal from the parties interested it was "ordained that no merchant-stranger, after the feast of Easter next coming, shall bring into this realm of England, to be sold, any manner of girdles, nor harneys wrought for girdles, points, leather laces, purses, pouches, pins, gloves, knives, hangers, tailors' sheers, sysors, andyrons, cobbards, tongs, fire-forks, gredyrons, stocklocks, keys, hinges and garnets, spurrs, painted glasses, painted papers, [paper hangings?] painted forcers, painted images, painted clothes, beaten gold, or beaten silver wrought in papers for painters, saddles, saddle trees, horse harness, boots, bits, stirrups, buckles, chains, latten nails with iron shanks, turnets, hanging candlesticks, holy water stopps, chaffing dishes, hanging lavers, curtain rings, cards for wool, roan cards, sheers, buckles for shoes, broches or spits, bells, hawks bells, *tinn* and *leaden spoons*, wyre of latten and iron, iron candlesticks, grates, horns for lanthorns, or any of the said wares."

*Figs. 1, 2, Plate VI.* represent the oldest fashioned pewter spoon we have met with. It is cast from a brass mold before us, and dates from the time of Elizabeth, whose head and crown are figured on the handle. Raised scroll work covers the entire back and front, except the interior of the bowl, which was burnished. Such spoons were all but finished when cast, so that a pedlar or tinker possessing the mold, could renew the spoons of a family in a trice.



The dimensions are those of a tea spoon, but it must not thence be concluded that such diminutive implements were not in use before tea was introduced. They were employed for various purposes as now, for eating eggs, taking up preserves and such like dainties, for pickles, salt, &c. The vinegar cruet, we know, had a place in Roman buffets, and occasionally on the tables of Anglo-Saxons ; but so late as the 16th century, that pungent fluid was often placed on the table in pewter saucers, whence it was transferred by small spoons.

Pewter spoons of this style were more or less common in the middle ages. In the 17th and 18th century a less profusion of ornament prevailed, being confined chiefly to the front part of the handle. Fifty years ago, a row of beads round the edge, as in *Fig. 3*, and a single or double row of engraved work (as in 2, *Plate VII.*) were common. An open space at the top for the initials in the form of an armorial shield or other device was also left, in imitation of silver spoons of that day. A dozen different patterns might here be added, but the variations are too slight to interest general readers. *Figs. 4* and *5*—modern pewter or Britannia metal spoons, as they are called, from the superior hardness and color of the metal. Being *buffed*, (that is, polished on the wheel) they are better finished than ancient spoons burnished by hand. The handle of *Fig. 4* resembles old patterns—that of *5* is of more recent date.

With an anecdote and reflection or two we will dismiss pewter spoons. A pleasing incident is men-

tioned in the journal of Capt. King, the companion of Cook, and the continuator of that great navigator's last voyage:—"Whilst we were at dinner in this miserable hut, on the banks of the river Awatska, the guests of a people with whose existence we had before been scarcely acquainted, and at the extremity of the globe, a solitary half-worn *pewter spoon*, whose shape was familiar to us, attracted our attention, and on examination, we found it stamped on the back with the word 'London.' I cannot pass over this circumstance in silence, out of gratitude for the many pleasant thoughts, anxious hopes and tender remembrances it excited in us." Captain King, like Captain Cook, did not live to see England again, and this poor spoon probably furnished him with the last vivid recollections of home.

Charles XII. of Sweden banished silver from his table, and replaced it with pewter! The circumstance that led to the determination occurred on this wise:—Returning from his long captivity among the Turks, he passed through Lund, where the workmen of a tin mine in the vicinity waited on him to offer their congratulations and present him specimens of various articles formed of the metal. Charles treated them to wine, and made them carry home the silver goblets out of which they drank it. To encourage the new manufacture, he forbade the use of silver in future at his own table, and ordered "all his cups, dishes, plates, *spoons*, salt cellars and candlesticks to be made of *tin*"—an act more honorable to his memory than any battle he won.



It is known to the learned in porterhouse lore that pewter pots impart a peculiar flavor to ale, beer, and cider. The phenomenon is due to an electro-galvanic influence, excited by contact of the metallic alloy with the liquids; but the same curious savans are not known to give an equal preference to pewter spoons, although the same principle must be equally developed in them while delivering liquids with which they are charged. The subject is an interesting one, and has, we presume, been accidentally neglected. When cultivated it may lead to incredible results, for it points to sources of human enjoyments which the most enthusiastic could hardly hope for ere the millenium set in.

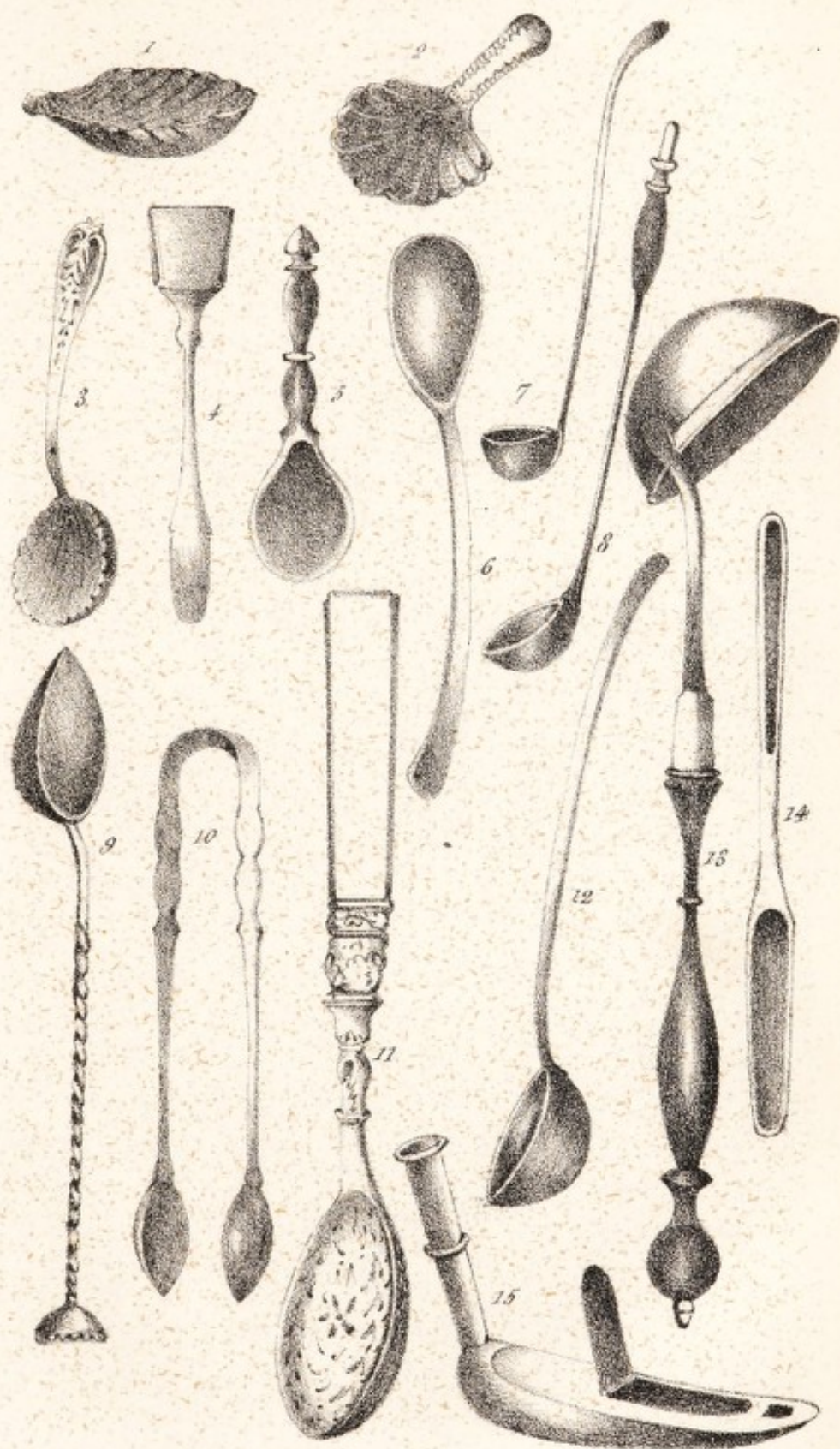
That the sense of taste depends chiefly on electricity there is little doubt; though the modes by which this most subtle of fluids acts, and the means of diversifying its effects on the palate, are yet among the arcana of nature. Its fearful activity at the breakfast and dinner table is shown by a calculation based on ascertained data:—"The largest charge of a Leyden battery does not equal in quantity the electricity which passes between the tongue and a silver spoon, during the simple act of eating an egg. Indeed, if the quantity developed in the latter case were free to assume the form of that obtained by friction, the result would be a lightning flash of no small power."

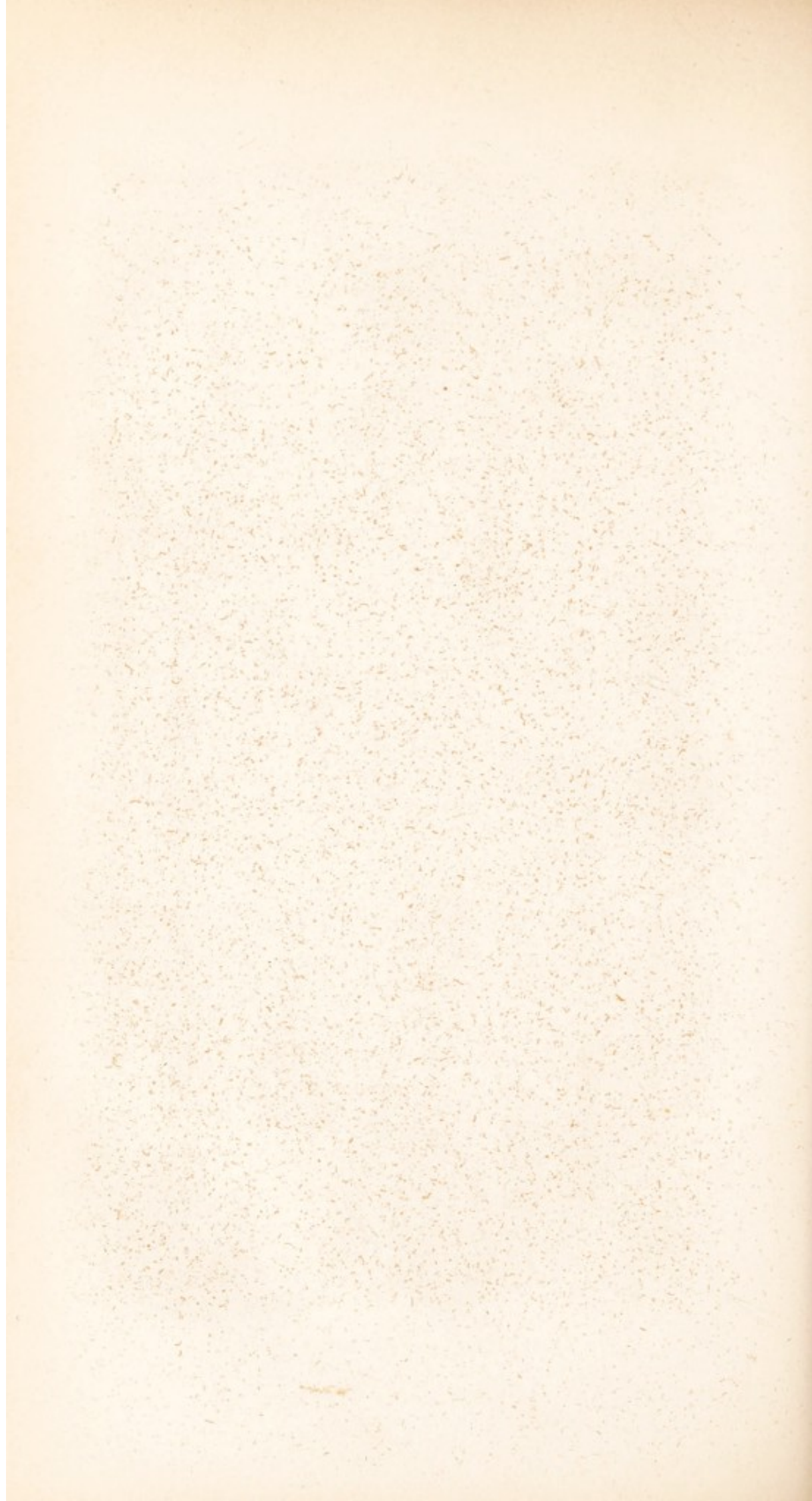
If then, a mug composed of tin, antimony and lead, can impart an ethereal flavor to fluids brewed from apples and malt, why may not spoons (by vary-

ing, multiplying, and properly proportioning the elements of their composition) be made to give the taste of roast beef to rice pudding, and of fashionable soups to onion broth or water gruel? The idea is not so visionary as those who never laugh may suppose. Bread from boards, sugar from starch and old shirts, the most intense sweet from the union of two disgusting bitters, (nitrate of silver and hyper-sulphate of soda) show with what magic effect the modern chemist plays with our palates, and how he challenges imagination itself to limit his powers over the organs of taste.

Will the reader wait one moment, while we catch another glimpse of a subject, perhaps destined to occupy a large space in future annals of science and patents, and which, when fully explored, may go a great way towards driving hunger and alm-houses out of the world? When people constantly dine on one food they long for a change; unless seasoned with St. Bernard's sauce, [hunger] both chicken and cheese, pudding and pie, will pall on the sense. Now, by extending the electrical principle to all kinds of eating apparatus, the time may come when a family sitting down to the plainest food, shall derive from it the flavor of the richest the markets afford—turkey this day, venison the next, and on the following one canvas-back ducks, or any thing else, indigenous or exotic, the stomach may crave. A few dozen of electro-galvanic plates, knives, forks, spoons, bottles and cups, &c. would only be wanted; for if properly made, each would be equivalent to a









distinct dish, and should be marked with the name of the aliment whose taste it imparted. But a more surprising and economical feature of the system is this : when a company cloys on one food, by simply interchanging their spoons and plates, ladies and gentlemen might multiply, as in the permutation of figures, their gustable dainties nearly *ad infinitum* !

Early fruits and asparagus could be had from dried apples and clover. Poor people would sip tea when they had none in the house, and enrich it with cream that never came from a cow. Fresh steaks could be sliced from jerked beef or salt pork—thus enabling old sailors to laugh at the scurvy. To wash down a dinner, any kind of wine might be got from lemonade or root beer, by imbibing those fluids from electrical goblets ; the—but serious readers frown at what they miscall our levity, and others are perhaps restless as stage passengers, who, anxious to get to the end of their journey, find fault with the driver at every little delay ; hence we must forego the pleasures of a ramble in this Hesperidian field of research, until our engagements to those who have patronized us on the present excursion be fulfilled : for, authors are cabmen, and books are their cabs : title pages are advertisements soliciting the public to take trips with the Jehus whose names they display. Some of these gentlemen furnish accommodations so elastic and pleasant that travellers at the end of a journey leave with regret—the vehicles of others are so rudely put together that in lumbering along, those embarked become jolted till they are

glad to get out and give up their fare. Nor are drivers alike. Some urge their nags only over regular routes, hurrying at a uniform speed over grass, gravel or mud, not allowing their patrons a moment to look out till they come to the FINIS. But some gentle spirits there are who willingly strike into new paths, to give their customers a sight of every thing interesting or rare; sweeping down this avenue, now wheeling over yon lawn, and anon trotting into the turnpike again, with perfect good humor. These are the men we try to imitate, well knowing our accommodations are poor and the road we are traveling so rugged that, unless determined to please, we might crack our whip for customers till doomsday and never succeed.

If the first metallic spoons were pewter or tin, the second were copper or brass. Copper was the precursor of iron, and bronze of steel. The world has never been, and perhaps never will be uniformly advanced in metallurgy. The age of iron had not dawned on these continents four centuries ago. Brass or bronze spoons are relics of the brazen age. Several ancient ones have been described, and some of recent days alluded to under the name of *latten* spoons. [Laton, leton, and laiton are French terms for brass.] *Fig. 6, Plate VI.* is an old English brass spoon, with a round handle, resembling those worn in their caps by janizaries. These implements were no doubt tinned or silvered by the ancients. Most of their cooking utensils were. Having detected the injurious effects of food cooked in plain



brass pots, they of course knew it was not improved when taken into the mouth from untinned brass spoons—verdigris being equally generated by both.

*Figs. 7, 8, 9—Iron spoons*; the most durable of all, and of immense antiquity. The specimens are more clumsy in appearance than those now made, which resemble *Fig. 4*. Tinned iron spoons certainly formed part of the invoices of ancient hardware men. They have had a place in English manufactures ever since ‘Sheffield whittles’ were forged. Some ancient iron spoons had pointed handles, as shown on the second plate. The art of tinning pots and pans, as well as plating buckles and other articles of harness and carriage furniture, Pliny ascribes to the Gauls, and he mentions the workmen of Bourges as excelling in the art. [xxxiv. 17.]

Iron spoons were at first forged, next cut out of thick sheets, pressed into shape by dies, and then tinned. They have also been stamped out of *tin plate*—one of the finest of metallurgical productions, and of whose origin so little is known. A word or two (our limits will not allow more) on an invention which has so greatly contributed to domestic comfort: It can be traced only three or four centuries back to Germany and Bohemia; how much older it may be is uncertain. There is nothing improbable in supposing it to date from Roman or even earlier times. A passage in Chaucer has escaped the notice of writers on the subject which seems to refer to tin plate—if so, the article was then common:—

Tho saw I stand on a pillere  
That was of tinned iron clere.—[*House of Fame.*]

England now supplies a great part of the world with tin plate ; yet 130 years have not elapsed since the first sheet was made there, nor is the name of the man who introduced it known to one in a hundred of her citizens. This was Andrew Yarranton, an individual of a singular genius and great enterprise. Little of him is known, except what he tells us in a remarkable book entitled ‘England’s Improvement by sea and land, to out-do the Dutch without fighting, to pay debts without moneys,’ &c. Lon. 1677. He was put apprentice to a linen draper, staid some years, then ran away and became a soldier in the civil wars. In 1652 he ‘entered upon iron works and plied them several years.’ He practiced as a surveyor and civil engineer. ‘Being employed by twelve gentlemen of England to bring a manufacture out of Saxony and Bohemia, made of iron and tin, there I did see what I here set down,’ &c. When Van Tromp defeated the English fleet, Yarranton was in Saxony collecting information relative to the manufacturing of ‘linen, thread, tape, and tin plates,’ which, once introduced into England, with other improvements derived from Holland, would enable his countrymen “to beat the Dutch without fighting them ;” viz. ‘by securing the mistress called *Trade*’—the greatest prophet of his age.

About 1720 the manufacture was begun in England, but the importation of tin-plate continued for some years after. Dr. Rutt, in the 35th volume Phil. Trans. quoting the Memoirs of the Academy of Sciences for 1725, observes :—“The making of



tin plates, or latten as it is called, being not commonly practiced in England though there is so great a consumption for it . . . whereby we are obliged to export our tin to Germany, and receive it back again manufactured."

*Figs. 10, 11, 12*—modern wooden spoons, as now sold in furnishing stores. The one with a turned handle is the common French spoon. *Fig. 13*—the old spoon and ladle rack of rustic dwellings and kitchens. The 'little forks' are from a cut of the latter part of the 16th century, showing the form of these implements when first brought into fashion. Ladies at table held them between the finger and thumb, and knives were not used—meat on the plates being previously cut into small pieces. The first direct allusion to table forks we have met with is given by Diogenes Laertius in the proem to his 'Lives.' The Magi, he says, used reeds at meals, 'with the sharp ends of which they took up their cheese, and put it to their mouths.' Shetland islanders used sticks as forks when eating the flesh of seals. The old horn or wooden spoon was short, as figured on the wall. The Gaelic word *cutag*, scottice *cutty*, was a short hafted spoon. One of these was devoted to scraping out the '*kail-pot*,' and then distinguished by the euphonius title of *kailgullie*. Such are the things employed,

'When rural life o' ev'ry station  
Unite in common recreation.

Scottish drovers carried a wallet of oatmeal and a wooden bowl. When arrived at a brook and hun-

gry, they mixed a little meal and water, stirring the mixture with one end of a cutty spoon; and, when duly compounded, eating it out of the other. The relish of food is from heaven, and does not depend upon knives and spoons. In this respect, and in ten thousand others, life is redolent of blessings. Had not the Creator consulted man's felicity, he might have made the taking of food and every essential act of life disagreeable instead of a pleasure. Wooden spoons no more spoil the appetite of the poor than golden ones improve that of the rich. Forster, after living on the luxuries of Asia, returning home by the Caspian sea, enjoyed the sweetest regale of his life, when sitting down with the crew of a small Russian vessel—each helping himself out of one common dish of fish broth with a wooden platter and spoon. Servants in lord's houses as well as rural laborers made their own spoons and plates. None, says Brathwait, were permitted to use trenchers but such as they made for themselves.

Simple as the spoon is, no talisman ever equaled the miracles it works. It transforms infants into youth and youth into manhood; infuses strength into the limbs and marrow through the bones; expanding the person, imparting symmetry to the frame, health to the body and intelligence to the soul. A child cannot arrive at maturity without it. See the usual process by which it works these wonders at the foot of *Plate VI*. There half a dozen are in active operation, and as nature is always the same, we see how boys and girls have eaten porridge,



since porridge was made. With the exception of costume the scene represented belongs to all times. The children of Leah, Rachel, and Niobe fed themselves like the group of Dutch youngsters the reader beholds. They handled their spoons in the same way, blew on the food when it was hot, made wry faces, and shed tears when they swallowed it too soon.

The design is no fancy sketch ; there is no poetry in the composition—no got-up attitudes. Dame Nature herself arranged the figures for the painter to copy. To be sure, the girls do not rival the graces nor the boys Belvidere Apollos. No lady at court would imitate the posture of either of the girls to the right. The gentleman at the back, with his spoon in the dish, seems indetermined whether to raise it while the eye of the reader is on him. His sister at the extreme left looks as if ashamed to eat before strangers, and in the act of requesting the beholder to turn his attention elsewhere—but it is unnecessary to dilate on each figure ; the rest are acting in accordance with the injunction of Solomon :—‘Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might.’ The good dame points with pride to her thriving cherubs, and rejoices in seeing them so agreeably amused with their spoons. To anticipate their thirst she has placed a pitcher of water beside them.

The most touching design in Holbein’s Dance of Death is ‘The Infant.’ A poor widow prepares a meal for her two orphans ; before it is ready Death

steps in and leads out the youngest. While passing the threshold, the romping little innocent looks back towards its mother and its spoon, (the latter lying on the floor,) and seems to long for something to eat before going off with the stranger.

In a curious account of Death's doings, published in the 16th century, the grim monster under various disguises takes away all sorts of people, and at the most inconvenient seasons. Misers, merchants, friars, nuns, cardinals, bishops, soldiers, beggars and belles are interrupted in the midst of agreeable occupations, and while accompanied with things they most valued. A *bon vivant* carries a spit laden with trussed fowls in one hand, and grasps in the other a jug and a spoon. The monarch of Hades approaches and solicits his acquaintance—this is refused—a struggle ensues; and soon, stripped of his goods, the portly sinner is led an unwilling guest to the mansions below.

The end of the world has been symbolized by Death breaking an hour glass; the moral would be quite as striking were he represented destroying the last spoon. The last spoon! Bless us, what thoughts does that call up—thoughts of its maker, state of the arts and of the world at the time—of its owner, his profession and place of abode, his feelings when his contemporaries drop off, and finally leave him the last of living men—the universal heir of his species. Where, and of what will he prepare his last meal; and what will be his reflections when he swallows the last spoonful!



## CHAPTER XIV.

*Plate VII—Silver Spoons—Chocolate, Coffee and Tea—Japanese Spoon—Old Dessert Spoons—A mark of meanness to be without Plate—Northmen—Prizes at Races—Necklaces of Spoons—Plated and German Silver Spoons—The World full of Plated Characters—Cheating—Swearers and the Devil—Laws prohibiting Plating and Transmutation—English Assay and Stamp—Proverb—Perpetual renewal of Forms—Brazen Girdles—Shackles—Spoons bewitched—Salad Spoon—Knife, Fork, and Spoon—Swiss—French—Shanks of Hams decorated—Carving—Boarding School Usages—Presents—Whittling—Mat weaving Legislators.*

PLATE VII.—The first eight figures are silver spoons, such as were in fashion 300 years ago. *Figs. 1, 2*, are English, and *3* French. The style of ornament on *2, 3*, continued in vogue to the present century. Armorial shields, as in *3*, and other ensigns were anciently engraved on spoons. The Greeks and Romans had their initials cut on them, as we have. In the middle ages quaint devices, and with churchmen an *Agnus Dei*, or similar emblems were adopted. [Hogarth, it will be remembered, began his career with engraving arms and cyphers on spoons and plate.] The shape of *Fig. 4* is quite modern—the fiddle head, molding of the handle, reversed bend of its tip, are now in fashion, but the figure is copied from an engraving a century

old. A plain silver spoon of a like form is portrayed on Planche 8, of the 'Distillateur and Liquoriste,' in Arts et Metières, of the French Academy. *Fig. 5*—the ordinary spoon of the present day, and almost identical with 4. *Fig. 6*—a recent pattern; the handle more ornamented and the point of the bowl rounded off. *Fig. 7*—modern French, from the pattern book of a Paris manufacturer. *Fig. 8*—a fancy tea spoon, from a set belonging to an antiquarian collector, and of English manufacture of the last century. [As table, dessert, and tea spoons differ only in size, each kind is sufficiently represented by the figures on the plate.]

Speaking of tea spoons—what a revolution in manners and customs have three beverages wrought in three centuries—chocolate, coffee, and tea! The first, an ordinary drink of Astec princes, (see page 113) was derived from Mexico in 1520. The second was unknown in western Europe till the close of the 16th century. Its early history is involved in fable. Employed by Arab monks to drive off sleep, and enable those insensates to spend their nights in watchings, it at length was universally adopted by Mussulmen for its refreshing properties. It was carried from Turkey to England in 1641, and the first coffee house opened by a Jew of Oxford, in 1650. A Greek set up another in London in 1652. Henry Blount, describing the diet of the Turks in 1634, observes, 'They have another drinke, not good at meat, called *cauphe*, made of a berry as big as a small beane, dryed in a furnace and beat to powder,



of a soote colour, in taste a little bitterish: they seethe and drinke it hote as may be endured . . . it is thought to be the old *blacke broth* used so much by the Lacedemonians.' [*Voyage to the Levant*, p. 105.] The consumption of coffee throughout the world during the past year has been estimated at 453 millions of pounds.

But an infusion of leaves of the tea plant has eclipsed all other potations. Imparting tone to the stomach, soothing the irritated system, removing languor and slightly exhilarating, it has become a favorite beverage of civilized nations. Tea was first imported from China by the Dutch, and in the middle of the 17th century sold in England at sixty shillings per pound—a price equivalent to twenty dollars now. Notwithstanding the denunciations of dietists, the moral influence of tea has been manifestly beneficial. It has introduced elegance at meals and politeness at table, diminished gross feeding and abolished the grosser manners of former times. What barbarian would rob ladies of tea—what substitute could he propose—does he wish the fair sex to live as in times ere an infusion of the tea plant was known—to breakfast on beef, pork, and beer, and sup on pork, beer, and beef? The meal known as 'tea' is the most intellectual of repasts; no excess attends it; it rather invigorates the spirits than pampers the appetite. Coarse feeders eschew it, for the fluid is but slightly nutritive. No drunkard loves it, for it is the soberest of potations. To refined minds it is nectar which drives away

gloom and makes the soul sparkle with joy—a divine cordial, the reverse of beastly malt liquors which the sensual guzzle. Doubtless Circe kept a porter house, and Hygeia drank hyson and bohea.

A fig for those philosophers who denounce tea and modestly ask us to take to cold water—requiring us to renounce that which has done so much towards polishing our manners, and rendering home attractive—pseudo-reformers, who start at a tea-pot and groan at the sight of a saucer. The tea spoon is justly caressed by old ladies, and more fondled by young ones than any thing else. It is to these the bearer of sweets and the medium of taste. Without coyness they reach out their mouths to meet it half way and pout with their lips till they give it a kiss. As they laugh and play with it, the vermillion of their lips is deepened in tone, and vivacity darts from their eyes.

Tea table equipages, and adjuncts in the form of cabinet, china, silver, iron, japanned and copper and other wares, give employment to millions and wealth to thousands. The original tea spoon came from Asia, where its shape often deviates considerably from ours. In the appendix to Kempfer's Japan is figured a portable case about a foot square, containing every requisite for making tea, including a kettle, canister, cup, and a singular looking tea spoon. It may be compared to a curved and tapered marrow spoon, the small end being the handle. A tea apparatus is carried by the Japanese 'on their journeyings, and wherever they go.'



It has already been stated that implements small as tea spoons were used in Europe long before tea: besides other duties, they performed those of modern desserts; were used in eating honey, sugar, and fruits preserved in sugar; sweetmeats were favorite dainties in former days. Paul Hentzer, who travelled in England in 1598, gives some interesting particulars relating to the English court and manners. Visiting the palace at Greenwich, he found the presence chamber hung with tapestry and strewn with hay or rushes. He noticed the servants carrying dishes into the queen's dining room, and prostrating themselves before her empty chair. Of Elizabeth herself he observes, "Next came the queen, in the sixty-fifth year of her age, as we were told, very majestick; her face oblong, fair but wrinkled; her eyes small, yet black and pleasant; a nose a little hooked, her lips narrow, and her *teeth black*; a defect the English seem subject to from their too *great use of sugar*." In Nichols' progresses of Elizabeth mention is made of comfit or preserve boxes, with "a litill spone of gold." Aaron Hill, in his 'Ottoman Empire,' says the Turks take up sweetmeats 'with little spoons like those we use for tea.'

With the ancients it was an indication of poverty or meanness not to possess spoons or some articles of plate. Suetonius observes of Domitian that he was born in Pomegranate street, and so reduced in his younger days as not to own a single utensil of gold or silver. Vespasian drank on solemn occasions out of a silver mug which belonged to his

grandmother. She was probably poor, for the family was an obscure one, having no ancestral statues. The emperor himself once let out horses and mules for hire, and hence nicknamed *the muleteer*.

Silver, remarks Olaus Magnus, was anciently in great plenty with the Northmen. Household utensils and even cradles were made of it. Ladies wore chains, bracelets, and round their heads bands of silver four fingers broad. The men had girdles and buttons of the same metal. This display, the reverend historian rather uncanonically observes, did honor to the prince who thus ruled over a gallant people, and not over "poor indigent fellows that are but scabs and pilfering knaves." [B. vi. cap. 12.] Gold and silver smiths, he says, exhibited their goods at the great annual fairs, held on the ice by the Goths, time out of mind. They furnished the prize cups and spoons distributed at the horse and foot races held yearly on the ice. The footmen wore skates made of the shank bones of the reindeer, and ran over a distance of from eight to twelve miles. The successful competitors were presented with "silver spoons, brass vessels, swords, new garments, and young horses."

In northern Europe, young females on festival days adorn themselves with rows of silver spoons strung together and worn as a necklace or girdle—a singular proof of imperfect civilization.

To accommodate all tastes and purses, iron, brass and copper spoons are plated with silver, and silver ones with a coat of gold, fine as those ancient ladies'



dresses which were compared to woven wind. Plating and gilding are of unknown antiquity. In modern times a new and cheap factitious substance has been introduced, named *argentane* or *German silver*. It is composed of copper, zinc and nickel, to which some add a dose of arsenic or antimony. It constitutes a tolerable imitation of real silver. Though slowly oxidized in air, the alloy rapidly corrodes in acids, and injurious effects have resulted from its employment in the kitchen and at the dining table. Recently its color and exterior qualities have been much improved. German silver and plated wares enable poor and economical people to imitate their betters in display, but the cost laid out in sterling goods is the true economy. 'A poor squire,' said a Spanish Æsop, 'should have his cup of silver and his kettle of copper.' Though they cost more than others, they last longer, and when worn out will buy fresh ones.

It is with men as with their jewels; all is not gold that glitters. Some put so thick a coat of virtue on that few detect the base material underneath—others wear so thin a film that the slightest friction rubs it through. The world is full of plated wares; streets are crowded as well as tradesmen's shelves. With spoons and with their owners, iron, brass, lead and copper gilt, ape sterling metal. A like variety in both prevails—from tinsel things to catch the vulgar eye, to tasteful forms and ornaments that captivate politer circles. At the best, men are only like their buttons, i. e. single, double or treble gilt. Ar-

tists have a rule to distinguish between the true and false, and it applies to moral as well as to material merchandize. Plated goods, it is said, exhibit a darker hue, a stronger glare than native gold and silver; hence where there is excessive gloss, be sure there's brass below. The art of plating human character preceded that of gilding metals. It soon reached perfection. Recent ages have added nothing, nor will future ages find aught to add.

Tricks of old roguish pewterers were noticed in the last chapter; the reader will be grieved to see in this that the morals of their contemporaries who wrought in finer metals were no better. That ancient Scottish poem, '*The Sweirers and the Devill*,' gives a graphic account of the manner and wiles of tradesmen to sell their goods. The fiend is described perambulating a town *incog.* on a market day, and chuckling at the oaths and imprecations of dealers with a view to deceive purchasers. One wished "the devill mot stik him with a knyfe," if what he said respecting his goods was not true. The malster renounced God, and hoped the 'devill of hell might taik him, gif ony bettir malt may be.' The tailor gave himself 'to the feynd' if bettir cloaks were ever made.

Ane merchand, his geir as he did sell,  
Renuncit his part of hevin and hell.  
The fleshour [butcher] swoir be the sacrament,  
And be Chryst's bluid maist innocent,  
Nevir fatter flesch saw man with ee.  
Ane goldsmith said the gold's sa fyne,  
That all the warkmanschip I tyne, [lose]  
The feynd ressaif me gif I lie.  
.... Quoth the devill, thou art mine.



Since the discovery of the electrotype process of coating one metal with another, spoons of German silver are made to appear so much like those of sterling silver as to be sold by cheats for such. Similar frauds were formerly practiced with plated goods. An English statute of 1403 is to this effect: "Whereas many fraudulent artificers, imagining to deceive common people, do daily make locks, [lockets] rings, beads, candlesticks, harneis for girdles, hilts, chalices and sword pomels, powder [pouncet] boxes, and covers for cups, of copper and of latin, and the same over gilt and silver, like to gold and silver, and the same sell and put in gage to many men not having full knowledge thereof, *for whole gold and whole silver*, to the great deceit, loss, and hindrance of the common people, and the *wasting* of gold and silver; it is ordained and established that no artificer, nor other man whatsoever he be, from henceforth shall gilt nor silver any such, &c. upon pain to forfeit to the king one hundred shillings, and to make satisfaction to the party grieved for his damages." Chalices and ornaments for the church were excepted—they might be gilt or plated with silver, but at the foot or underside the real material was to be exposed, "to the intent that a man may see whereof the thing is made, for to eschew the deceit aforesaid."

By an act of the same year it was made felony to transmute lead, iron, copper, &c. into gold and silver! "It is ordained and established that none from henceforth shall use to multiply gold and silver, nor

use the craft of multiplication ; and if any the same do, that he incur the pain of felony in this case." The 5th of Hen. V. allowed gilding but only on sterling silver ; no inferior metal was to be covered with silver except "knight's spurs and all the apparel that pertaineth to a baron."

A. D. 1300, an act required all articles to be 'of good and true alloy—of no worse gold than the touch of Paris,' and silver to equal the current coin ; no article to leave the workmen 'untill it be essaied by the wardens of the craft, and marked with the leopard's head.' Under Edward III. every master was to stamp his own mark on the articles before submitting them for assay to the king's officers. In 1423, another act required gold and silver vessels 'to be essaied and touched by the keeper of the touch,' then marked, if found good, 'with the leopard's head.' No more 'sowder' was to be used than necessary—an intimation that it was not spared when every article was sold by weight. In 1294, Phillippe le Bel published regulations and renewed others, for the guidance of Paris gold and silver smiths.

The goldsmith's profession furnishes a cutting rebuke to simpletons and impudent boasters :—"A fool of 24 carats" is one whose folly is without alloy : "a philosopher of 25 carats"—nature has exceeded herself in producing him.

Silver spoons are emblematical of that renewal of forms which organized matter perpetually undergoes. Vegetables, animals and men are composed of the



same ingredients—alternately nourishing and imbibing nourishment from each other. Their figures and condition, not their substance, change. A portion of the reader's person may have nerved the right arm of David, swelled the stature of Goliath, blushed in the cheek of Lucretia, handled the crayons of Zeuxis, hunted with Meleager, or even been part of the wild boar he slew! Start not, gentle reader, for that which was a calf or pig, an ox or sheep, yesterday, is veal or pork, beef or mutton to-day, and to-morrow becomes assimilated to its human consumer; bone of thy bone, and flesh of thy flesh. It is humiliating to human glory that the proudest individuals are composed of such vile materials;—a courtier's body may have toiled at Babel, and may again be a bricklayer's clerk. The skull of a king may once have been a calabash, his nose a pullet's gizzard; his blood may through a goose have trilled, his heart have panted in a deer; his lips may once have jabbered on a baboon's face, and ages hence may do the like again: he yet may serve to grease a carriage axle, manure a cabbage or a radish bed, and be served up to clowns in salad. Princes, when sick, are fed sometimes on asses' milk, or draw their nourishment from dugs of goats, and thus incorporate these animals with themselves.

If there never was a transmigration of souls, there has always been one of human bodies and of—silver spoons! As the elements of our ancestors exist in us, so do tons of ancient plate in our buffets. Human beings are dissolved in the grave, and the pre-

cious metals in the crucible ; but the operation in both cases is preliminary to the reëpearance of the substances in new forms. The gold coin in the reader's pocket may have constituted a part of the chain which Pharaoh put round Joseph's neck, or of the bodkin which Fulvia thrust through Cicero's tongue. Spoons used at our tables may once have been shekels of the sanctuary, or paid by Abraham for his field at Hebron. They may have entered the lips of Cleopatra, and been employed by Andromache or Artaxerxes at dinner. The ingenuity of antediluvian artists was perhaps expended on the substance of that goblet. Noah may have handled it, and Judas bore it in his scrip. A monarch's table fork may once have picked the teeth of rebels, or in a surgeon's hands punctured boils and sores. As with the past so with the future : Reader ! ages hence thy silver plate may form the spoons of an individual, a portion of whose body may be identical with thine, and who, like thee, may sit speculating on the metamorphoses terrestrial beings undergo.

Before leaving this very curious subject we may be permitted to suggest, that the often quoted contest between two individuals of the feline race, at Kilkenny, which ended by each party eating up the other, *may* be less akin to an Irish bull and more allied to a philosophical truth than is generally surmised.

As devices for diminishing a craving for food have been mentioned, some moral prescriptions for moderating a longing for rich furniture might here be



quoted, but they would be of little avail. Neither one appetite nor the other can be tamed by medical or sacerdotal doctors. Few persons now prefer eating sand to filling the stomach with good things; yet except to such, table equipages, if emblazoned with fiends, snakes and toads, would exert no lasting influence. Though table cloths were winding sheets, knife hafts dead men's bones, and spoons, cups and butter boats made of human skulls, the generality of mankind would soon eat and drink as heartily as if the service were of silver, and no arguments had been adduced against intemperance.

One device to make people stop when they had sufficient has not been noticed; it was the last mechanical resource, viz: a broad brass or iron band fitted to and worn around the abdomen; so that when the wearer could not stop putting food into his mouth there was not room for it below—the stomach no longer resembling an elastic sack, capable of extension, but a non-elastic barrel which could not be surcharged. An abbot in the 11th century, inordinately given to creature comforts, had his trunk thus cased with a brazen band. With these girdles neither penitents nor those who loved short masses and long dinners could eat.

'Till a' their weel-swail'd kytes belyve  
Were bent like drums.'

It often happened that those who indulged an inordinate taste for gold and silver plate wore shackles of another kind—according to the saying, 'men of smell means who eat from silver, fast and die in

iron.' Living beyond their income, they end their days in jail. A fondness for display, whether in the house or out of it, has caused no small share of human misery. Many a female has ruined her husband by longing for plate. The Italians say, the smiles of a woman are the tears of the purse—a rich sideboard and a fat kitchen make a lean will.

When those capricious goblins yclept 'fairies' used to assist their rustic friends, by kindling kitchen fires at early dawn, sweeping floors, milking cows, and churning butter, they played less pleasant pranks to those who slighted them. Puck scared dairy maids, skimmed their milk, and would not let their cheeses curdle nor the butter 'come,' "if a bowle of curds and creame" had not been offered him. Often he slipped boys' stools away as they sat down :—

And then the whole quire hold their hips and loffe.

Sometimes he lurk'd in a gossip's bowl,

In very likeness of a roasted crab, [apple]

And when she drank, against her lips he bobb'd,

And on her wither'd dew-lap pour'd the ale.

Worse things mischievous genii did to those obnoxious to their wrath. Spoons at supper time denied their aid, and either vanished in the steaming porridge or refused to leave the bowl or dish—more appalling still, they have, on entering a hungry boor's mouth, stuck fast, and defied all human power to draw them thence, until the offended spirit was appeased, and ceased to press the rustic's upper and under jaw against the implement ! Legends such as these were often based on facts, and demons more tangible than 'Pucks' or 'Robin Goodfellows' were



the authors. Fusible spoons are not of recent date, nor are metallic bowls with spoons cast to them and made to resemble earthenware. Moreover, spoons were as easily made to enter the mouth and remain a certain time as those "untoothsome pears," cherries and plums, mentioned by old writers, "which being put into a body's mouth, shall presently shoot forth such and so many bolts on every side, that without the owner's key cannot be got out again." The Cathayans had magical cups and we presume spoons too, which filled themselves and then went of their own accord "ten paces through the ayre into the hands of the Great Khan, and when he hath drunke, in like sort they return to their place"! [*Ewbank's Hydraulics.*]

*Fig. 9*—a French device, resembling a large pair of scissors; one blade being a fork, the other a spoon—a singular union. The screw or pivot is made to take out, that each implement may, when desirable, be separately handled. The whole is of ivory or buffalo's horn and designed to transfer salads at table. The usual dressings, as vinegar, salt, oil, mustard, &c. corrode metallic substances. When used, the spoon or fork is held downwards, accordingly as a part of the fluid is required to be raised or not. That Warwickshire wizard who ranged through all nature and every art to cull flowers and collect ingredients for those spells by which he has bewitched the world, did not pass by salads:

"Twas a good lady; we may pick a thousand salads ere we light on such another herb.

Indeed, sir, she was the sweet marjoram of the salad, or rather the herb of grace.—[*All's well that ends well.*]

*Fig. 10*—a pocket knife, fork and spoon united in one handle. Implements of this kind were formerly much in fashion; at present they are occasionally carried by travellers and by individuals on gunning or fishing excursions. Captain Head used one when traversing the Pampas and Andes. Supping at a wretched post, where table furniture was scarcely known, a black girl held the light in one hand and furnished salt with the other—artificial candlesticks and salt-cellars forming no part of the establishment. He drew from his pocket ‘a clasp knife and fork,’ and picked up with the latter chopped pieces of beef from a pewter dish to the no small delight of the living candelabrum.

Peasants in Switzerland and other parts of the European continent, commonly carry a device like *Fig. 10*, or a sheath containing the separate implements. Before the revolution in France, it was customary when a gentleman was invited to dinner, to send a servant with his knife, fork and spoon; if he had no attendant, he took them in his breeches pocket, as a carpenter carries a rule. “A few of the ancient regime still follow the good old custom, because it is old.” Has not the reader noticed at public dinners, or when making ‘New-Year’s calls,’ the shank of a ham or leg of mutton tastefully decorated with gilt or cut paper and ribbons? This was a custom somewhat general before forks were introduced, and still is common in Germany and Italy. The carver grasped that part of the joint in his left hand while he shaved off slices with a pointed knife in his



right. That he might hold it firmly and perform his duty more expeditiously and seemly, a piece of paper was neatly tied round the shank, and on great occasions set off with ribbons. Each slice as cut off was raised on the point of the knife and laid on a thin piece of bread, a pile of which was placed near the carver, who thus served the guests in rotation. Ovid has observed there was grace in using the fingers at table; so there is in handling a fork. In old engravings we see ladies holding it between the finger and thumb, as if afraid to touch it, or as people take snuff; others retain it in the hand in the manner of a pen, and some grasp the handle with a clenched fist, as a boy clutches an apple or a gentlemen the head of his walking cane.

Portable cases of morocco containing a separate knife, fork and spoon are for sale in our silver smiths' shops. It is said gentlemen of the *ton* would as soon go a journey without their dressing cases as some of them would take their seats at a *table d'hôte* without their own spoons and forks. In public gardens visitors sometimes take ice cream and other refreshments with their own apparatus; but a certain class prefer the proprietor's spoons, which, when of silver, they have forgotten to return. We have heard of knives and forks being chained to plates, and spoons to bowls, in London chop and soup houses—imitating a practice introduced by Edwyn in the 7th century, of fastening by the same means iron cups to wells and springs, for the use of honest and dishonest travellers. As the 'Transactions' of

the Society of Literary and Scientific Chiffonniers will no doubt be consulted in future times, the following extract from the circular of a fashionable female boarding school may interest young ladies and teachers a century hence:—"Parents to furnish each pupil with bed and bedding, six towels, napkins and a knife; a silver fork, *spoon* and mug; a thimble and a pair of scissors; all to be marked in full: washing seven dollars a quarter."

A portable knife has always been an acceptable present to boys. The first one is examined with rapture, and its possession sometimes forms an epoch in the life of its owner, as was the case with young Achilles. When disguised as a girl, and placed among the daughters of Lycomedes, the wily pedlar of Ithaca took an effectual mode to discover him. The pretended merchant unslinging his pack, displayed before the family of Lycomedes thread, tapes, ribbons, scissors and needles, with an assortment of neat daggers and knives; the females confined their purchases to articles appropriate to them, but the youth, forgetting the part his concealment required, eagerly pounced on the knives, &c. thus revealing the secret of his sex, and to the man above all others interested in finding him out. The Germans make annual presents to their godsons, till the lads reach the age of fourteen, when the last gift, invariably a pocket knife, is made. The instrument is considered symbolical of a youth cut loose from leading strings, and thenceforward accountable for his acts. Girls, we suppose, are treated with a pair of scissors.



Not a few modern devices are ancient inventions. There is one universally ascribed to Yankees, but which, so far from being of republican origin, is descended from royalty. An ancient writer, describing the manners and magnificence of the Persian king, says, when he rode in a chariot, instead of occupying his thoughts in reading or conversation, he spent the time "in whittling with a knife." [*Purchas.*] Major Harris, in his 'Highlands of Ethiopia,' mentions Arabian legislators plating date leaves into mats while sitting in council—the most useful, in his opinion, of their acts.

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## CHAPTER XV.

*Plate VIII—Tea Caddy, Salt Spoons, and Salt—Salt-Cellar—Monks of La Trappe—Egg Spoon—Paschal Eggs—Poultry raised by Steam—Mustard Spoons—French Prayer—Celestial House Movers—Beef and Mustard—Punch Spoon and Ladle—Wassail Bowl—Burns—'Arts et Metières'—Sugar Tongs—Sifter and Snuff Spoons—Cream, Marrow, and Physic Spoons—Human Life—History and Influence of the Spoon—Author's Request—His Parting Bow.*

PLATE VIII—a miscellaneous collection. *Figs. 1, 2*—tea caddy spoons, for transferring the dried herb from small canisters to tea-pots. They are of the last century; but being imitations of nature, will be more or less in fashion while refined taste prevails. *Figs. 3, 4, 5*—salt spoons of silver, pearl and ivory, but

sometimes made of tortoise shell, horn and bone, and of diverse patterns. As salt has been used at table from primitive times minute implements for taking it up are of undoubted antiquity, though particular descriptions of them have not reached us.

Of all condiments salt is the chief, both for animals and men. Quadrupeds relish it as well as bipeds. One of nature's own preparing, it is furnished in profuse abundance. Millions of tons are annually consumed by horses, sheep and oxen in Europe and the United States. Ancient farmers gave it to their stock, for which Plutarch (in *Nat. Ques.*) assigns the same reasons as modern agriculturists. What philosophical husbandman is not gratified as his cattle crowd around him for it? The mild eyes of his oxen looking grateful for a relish and watching his movements in hopes of another. The timid ewe takes the treat from his hand, and licks up every stray atom, while the colt, more familiar, smells his pockets and whinnies for more.

Salt not only seasons unsavory meat but preserves it from putrefaction. In view of these admirable qualities, Homer calls it 'divine.' It was a symbol of incorruptibility and fidelity—a pledge of friendship and hospitality which nothing but death was allowed to cancel. No social feast was perfect without it, and oblations were seldom offered unless it was an ingredient. 'No sacrifice,' says Pliny, 'was presented to the gods without salt.' 'Every oblation of thy meat offering shalt thou season with salt.' [*Levit.*] At the ceremony of circumcision the Turks place,



or used to place, a few grains in the boy's mouth, saying, 'Heaven make thy name savory as salt among men, and mayest thou live to enjoy the fruits of the earth.' Can that which is unsavory, exclaims Job, be eaten without salt? Even bread, says one of the ancients, is unpalatable without it. Its enormous consumption was a fruitful source of revenue to ancient as well as modern governments. On one occasion Demetrius rewarded the fidelity of the Jews to him by remitting the gabel.

The salt-cellar was held in great veneration of old, and from superstitious motives, kept remarkably bright and clean. Placed on the table near the images of the presiding deities (as already observed) its presence consecrated the food. In the middle ages it was generally of silver and elaborately wrought. A gilt one is extant modelled after the white tower of London.

To be placed at table above the salt was a mark of honor—to desire a guest to seat himself below it an indication of inferior rank, or of disesteem. In the latter case the mortification was not altogether imaginary, as the following account of an old English hall, the scene of feasting and hospitality, will show:—"At the upper end was placed the orsille, or high table, a little elevated above the floor, and here the master of the mansion presided with an authority, if not a state, which almost equalled that of the potent baron. The table was divided into upper and lower messes by a *huge salt-cellar*, and the rank and consequence of the visitors were marked

by the situation of their seats above and below it—a custom which not only distinguished the relative dignity of the guests, but extended to the nature of the provision—the wine frequently circulating only above the salt-cellar, and the dishes below it being of a coarser kind than those near the head of the table.” From the correspondence of the younger Pliny, it appears that a similar practice prevailed among the Romans. [See Letter vi. Book 2.]

The fabrication of carved spoons was an employment of religious recluses; they brought higher prices than when made by worldly minded workmen. The monks of La Trappe were prohibited from using their tongues—all communications being made by signs. They were forbidden to read, write, or raise their eyes above the ground unless to direct their steps. Their teeth too might as well have been drawn, for neither fish, flesh nor any thing like solid food was given them to grind;—but absorbed as these men were with celestial matters, and having no need themselves of eating apparatus, they thought it no sin to provide them for other people. Such of the brethren as could not endure the fatigue of the mattock (observes Motraye) were employed in turning, carving, &c. The traveller was presented “with an ivory spoon and fork wrought as well as possible.”

*Fig. 6*—an egg spoon, rather larger than a ‘tea,’ and having the handle joined to the small end of the bowl. Such kind of implements have been in use since hens laid eggs and women boiled them.



The Romans were great consumers of eggs ; hence the saying '*ab ovo usque ad mala*,' from eggs to apples—an elliptical expression for a feast—eggs being the first, and apples the last dish served up. Eggs played important parts in monastic feasts and farces. The tenth of all produce of land, fowls and cattle kept monks' larders well supplied, and woe to him who robbed the church of tythes, or 'stole eggs from a cloister.' "If a peeter penny or an housle egg were behind, or a patch of tythe unpaid, then beware of spirits." At Easter, eggs were boiled hard and stained of various colors with onion peeling or broom flowers, and sometimes gilded. They were consecrated according to a ritual of Pope Paul V. and presented to children and friends, under the name of *pace* or *paschal* eggs. The practice of boys striking eggs against each other, the shattered becoming the property of the owners of the sound ones, is descended from mediæval times.

The egg was an ancient emblem of the universe, and has been symbolized in a thousand things. An envious man thinks his neighbor's fowls lay more than his. Eggs are now hatched by steam, and chickens reared without the aid of clucking hens. Released from anxious care about their young and from the debilitating work of incubation, matronly fowls have now nought to do but quietly lay their eggs and pass their time in pleasure. Cooks with poultry can be supplied without tearing screaming pullets from their parent's side—sundering the finest fibres of affection. Then the '*Eccaleobion*,' it is said,

will shortly place within the poor's reach luxuries hitherto denied them. The destitute are not long to remain ignorant of the taste of chicken broth and plovers fricasseed, of broiled partridge, quail and meadow hens ; of roasted geese, and ducks and turkeys.

*Fig. 7* a silver and *8* an ebony mustard spoon. Forms of the ancient implements have not reached us, but some sayings to which the condiment gave rise are still in use :—‘ ’Tis mustard after dinner,’ indicating that the time for using a thing has passed, or that the thing itself is of no consequence ; ‘ a man amused with mustard ;’ one that makes great things of trifles. It has ever been deemed essential to beef, especially salt beef ; hence an old French prayer :—

De trois choses Dieu nous garde,  
*Du bœuf salé sans moutarde,*  
D'un valet qui se regarde,  
D'une femme qui se farde.

‘ Dijon mustard’ was renowned in the time of Philip the Fair, during whose reign the reader will recollect two important transactions took place—the introduction of the mariner's compass into modern Europe, and [in 1291] the transportation by angels of the Virgin Mary's dwelling at Nazareth into Dalmatia ; whence it was conveyed three years afterwards (by the same celestial house movers) to the opposite coast of the Adriatic, and located on land belonging to a widow named Loretta. There it has remained for the edification of pious pilgrims, and the maturing of grace in the hearts of its reverend proprietors.



*Grumio.* What say you to a piece of beef and mustard?

*Kath.* A dish that I do love to feed upon.

*Grumio.* Aye, but the mustard is too hot a little.

*Kath.* Why then the beef, and let the mustard rest.

*Grumio.* Nay, then I will not; you shall have the mustard,

Or else you get no beef from Grumio.

*Kath.* Then both, or one, or any thing thou wilt.

*Grumio.* Why then, the mustard without the beef.

[*Taming of the Shrew.*]

*Fig. 9*—a punch spoon, and 13 a punch ladle—two of the least beneficial applications of a valuable thing.

Many estates have been spent in the getting,  
Since women for tea forsook spinning and knitting,  
And men for *punch* left off hewing and splitting.

Few things have better exemplified the truth of another saying of 'Poor Richard' than punch and punch spoons:—'What maintains one vice would bring up two children.' The old 'wassail bowl' and its accompanying spoon were not such promoters of dissipation as their modern descendants, nor did they accommodate such pernicious liquids. Families took wassail at home on festivals, when innocent hilarity reigned; but to indulge in punch, men meet at taverns, where they ply the ladle till they perform antics rude and grotesque as those for which that hero is known whose name is the same as the liquor. After supper at Christmas "the wassail bowl was brought in, of which every one partook, by taking with a spoon a roasted apple out of the ale and eating it, then drinking the healths of the company out of the bowl, wishing them a merry christmas and a happy new year." With the Greeks and Romans wine was carried to the dining room in large vases,

and poured into bowls, whence it was drawn by ladders into cups and tumblers. See figures on the second plate.

O whiskey ! saul o' plays an' pranks !  
Accept a bardie's humble thanks !  
When wanting thee, what tuneless cranks  
Are my poor verses !

Unfortunately for Burns he did not confine himself to invocations of the spirit, or even to moderate draughts at her fountain. His punch bowl of Inverary marble and its attending ladle were too often put in requisition. Under their influence he produced his poem called 'Scotch Drink,' in which he thus humorously blesses every total abstinence man :

May gravels round his blather wrench,  
An' gouts torment him inch by inch,  
Wha twists his grundle wi' a glunch.  
O' sour disdain,  
Out owre a glass o' *whiskey punch*  
W' honest men.

How opinions change ! With the laudable view of preserving a knowledge of the arts and of innocent comforts, and to guard, as far as human power can, against a second deluge of barbarism, the old French Academy published descriptions, in great detail, of the most valuable manufactures and professions. In 'L'Art du Distillateur Liquoriste' is figured and described a Paris coffee room with its appendages, including a "grande jatte de porcelaine *pleine de punch*, un cuiller de buis pour puiser cette liqueur, et la verser dans les verres."

*Figs. 10*—sugar tongs; a singular application of the spoon, which, instead of scooping up fluids or semi-fluids is here designed to take up solids. When



loaf sugar was introduced, (the period of which is uncertain, for it was made several ages before its alleged discovery by Venetians in the 16th century,) the ordinary spoon could not readily plunge among the lumps nor be secure of catching one, or of retaining it when caught; hence *two* spoons were joined in the chase, and as one heads the game while the other closes up the rear, they seldom lose their destined prey. Two spoons inseparably linked in a pair of sugar tongs are like those married couples, who none but mutual pleasures know, and whose time is spent among the sweets of life.

*Fig. 11*—another curious transformation. We have seen the spoon resemble a pair of shears, then a pair of tongs—here it is a *sifter*. Copiously perforated, the bowl is used to sprinkle refined sugar over the crust of pies, custards and other delicious dainties. Strange, how one thing glides into another! What primeval artist ever thought that spoons would be converted into riddles—made as useless for lifting liquids as the buckets of the Danaïdes! The bowl is also sometimes flattened and pierced for a fish slice, and, when half covered, is made into a basting ladle! By the way, we forgot to mention at page 177, that snuff spoons were also punctured, because they could not properly discharge their contents otherwise. When held laden to the nostrils, the sudden withdrawal of the superincumbent air by the snifter draws up the spoon itself if the bowl be not perforated, just as a piece of paper held near the mouth is sucked in by an inspiration. But when

two or three minute holes are made in the bowl, no sooner does the owner set his nasal pump at work than the atmospheric air, ascending through the openings, drives up the powder in a trice, and scatters none in lateral directions.

*Fig. 12*—a cream spoon, invented on the labor saving principle. It supersedes the necessity of lifting the pitcher with its contents every time a modicum only of the fluid is wanted—exhibiting the advantages of economizing force, though in a less degree than the tea or coffee urn. Fifty cups can be filled from one of these by simply opening a tap which the little finger can effect; whereas no lady could charge half that number from a tea-pot without her arms and shoulders complaining of the labor. *Fig. 14* is the well known marrow spoon, of the history of which we are uninformed. It is however an emblem of many good things. O! for the salt of wit, cream of pleasantry, and marrow of rich stories!

The last spoon figured on the plate is not the least appropriate to finish with. The others are for taking food, this for taking physic; they to comfort people when in health, this to cure them when sick. Having furnished so many devices by which the stomach is often overloaded, it may be expected that one at least will be given to assist in recovering its natural tone. Every person knows that pills were formerly *gilded* with the view of preventing their substance from annoying the sense while passing the gullet. Roman apothecaries supplied squeamish patients with such; as a box half full with the



gold leaf remaining has been found at Pompeii. The spoon *Fig. 15* is designed for much the like purpose, viz: to send fluids down the same passage with as little delay and annoyance as possible. To patients in a recumbent position, and to such as are disposed to resist, it is a capital thing. The handle is hollow and communicates with the bowl. When the latter is charged (through the lid which is shown open) the thumb of the nurse or attendant is placed over the aperture of the handle and the lid closed. The contents are then prevented, by the exclusion of air, from escaping. The spoon is next properly placed in the patient's mouth, and the thumb removed, when the liquid necessarily goes to its appointed place, for air cannot pass to the lungs but through the handle and bowl. This contrivance is modern, but covered spoons for administering broths to sick people, and medicines to children, are old.

Roman *bon vivants* took a vomit before dinner, as well as one after, and even now there are persons who prepare for the principal meal by exciting an artificial craving with 'dinner pills.' There have been, and perhaps always will be, men who live only to digest, and many more with two stomachs to eat and not one to work.

The different states of human life—infancy, adolescence, manhood, senility and second childhood, are represented by pap, dessert, table, tea and physic spoons. The spoon is the first artificial thing an infant studies, the earliest one he handles and knows. As intelligence dawns it is recognized, and at its



sight he flutters like a nestling impatient for aliment. In time he leaves the nurse's arms and tries to feed himself; ambitious to manage his spoon alone, he scatters half the food upon his bib, and smears his hands, his face and throat with porridge. Next a youth, he handles it with ease and plies it with dexterity; a stranger to artificial appetite, he relishes the food it bears, and grows in strength and beauty. A strong man now, his breasts the implement has filled with milk, and made his bones abound with marrow. But quickly the noon of life is past; age and infirmity with rapid strides approach, and take his relish and his strength away. An octogenary now, he feeds himself with pain. Next, helpless as when born, he stares in idiot vacancy and recognizes nothing—save a spoon. The nurse now feeds him as at first, and tends this fitful being, till he goes wailing out of life as he came crying in.

Lest the reader should feel symptoms of a surfeit, we will now make an end, although many things are left untouched, especially such as relate to the statistics of spoons, their diversified materials, processes of manufacture, their cost, numbers annually worn out, hosts of artists employed in making them, talents they have exercised and skill displayed; the myriads incessantly engaged in using them, the daily influx into our world of fresh beings that want them, and a probably increasing demand to the end of time for them—for though science supersedes many things, and the progress of the arts renders old machines useless, neither science nor arts, nor fashion



to boot, can ever banish spoons from the earth, or make much alteration in them. While men's mouths are not placed at the ends of flexible trunks, manufacturers will find work; and the last spoons will differ as little from ours as the persons of the present and the latest spoonmakers. Nay, if people in Venus and Mars eat like us, as they probably do, a deputation from each at one of our public dinners would be at no loss in applying these table utensils.

An extended account of the spoon; of its influence on food, manners, and imagination; of its virtues, the pleasures it imparts and sorrows it soothes, would be a history of all times and people. Looking at the excitement it produces, how seas are crossed, lands ploughed, rivers dragged, fish ponds made, cattle slain, birds ensnared, caldrons cast, mines exhausted and forests burnt for fuel; mountains of clay used up for pottery, kitchens built and cooks employed, &c. to supply materials and prepare them for it—one might suppose the spoon was the spring that keeps all things in motion—the source of genius and parent of the useful arts.

We trust the reader, now he has arrived at the close, will admit that he is more familiar with the subject than when he began it. Few persons would refuse a modest author so slight a reward for his toil, since he could hardly solicit a less one. But there are envious critics, we fear, who, without perusing our work, will condemn it; perhaps declaring there is nothing novel in its spirit or its plan, and that the best things in it were written years ago! If

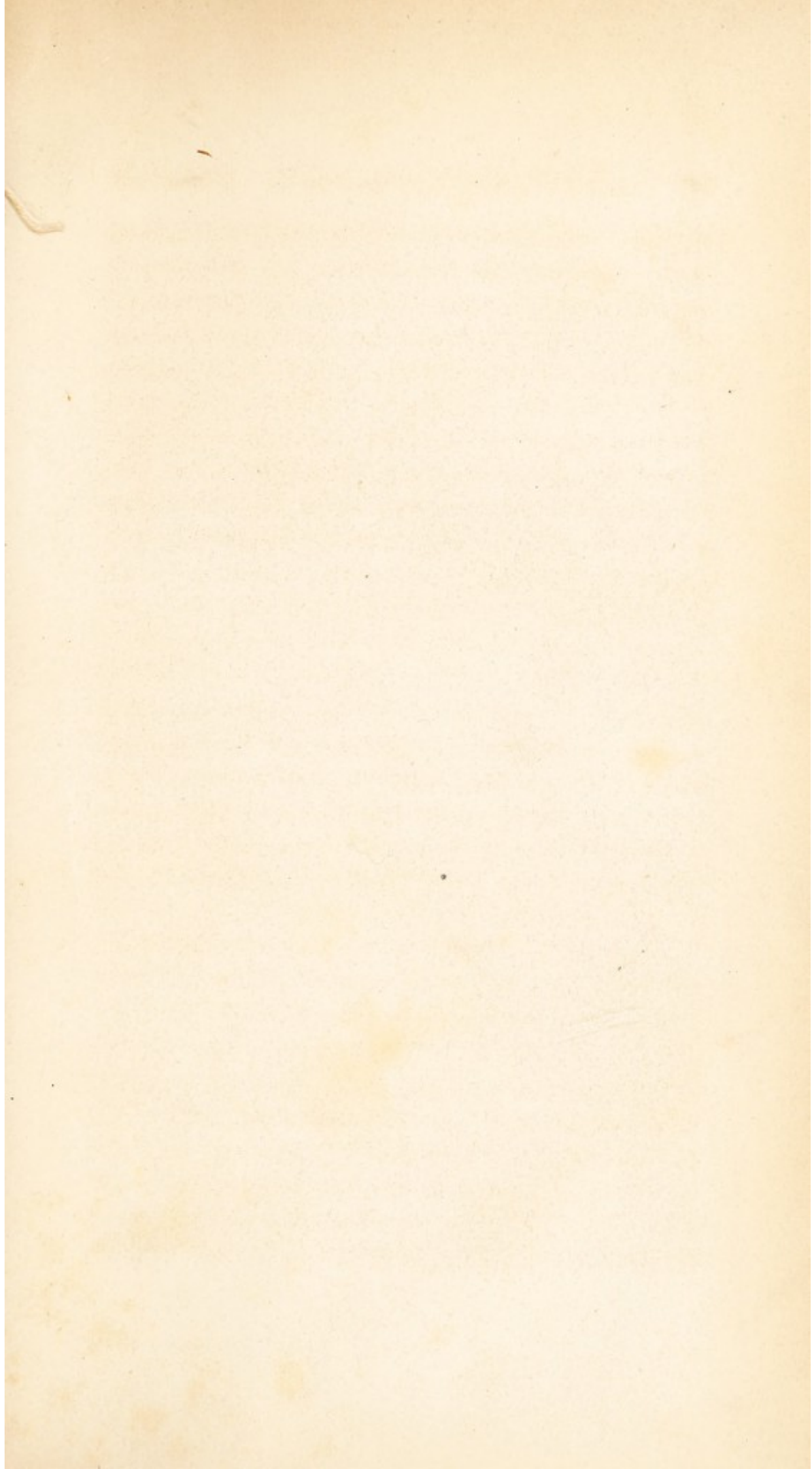
they do, and if, which heaven forefend, they should prove it too, we shall, with the feelings of injured innocence, fervently pray that those impertinent plagiarists may perish who said *our* good things before us, and that memory may fail all who remember them!

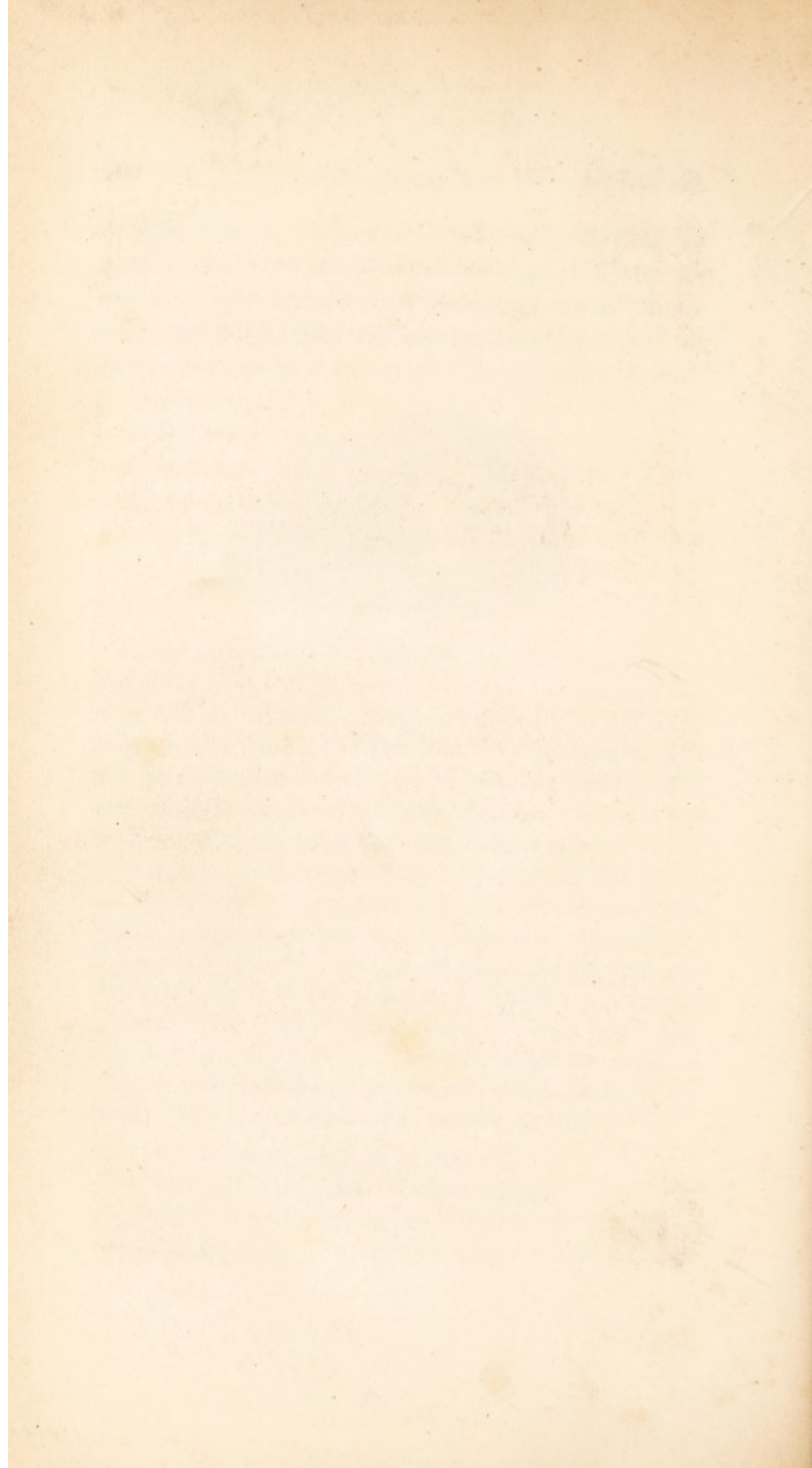


RESPECTED GUEST:—Perceiving by the inverted position of thy bowl and spoon that thou hast not despised the plain food set before thee, but hast relished it so well as to leave none, I, HAB'K O. WESTMAN, present myself in *propria persona*, as in duty bound, to make my parting bow, and acknowledge my sense of thy patronage. It is also my wont, when an agreeable customer is about to leave me, to request him, if the entertainments have been to his liking, and the charges no more than they should be, to invite his friends to take an opportunity of judging of my cookery, and my conscience in making out bills. Adieu, kind patron! Heaven send thee pleasant adventures and a speedy return to "The Globe," when I hope to have a better dish awaiting thy reception—one preparing under the auspices of our society, and the recipe of which was commended by Dr. Swallow himself—who was, as thou art aware,

"Of palate exquisite, of labor free,  
A kitchen doctor of the first degree."









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