

THE QUEEN'S CLOSET OPENED.

THERE lies before me a leather-bound, time-stained, dingy little quarto of four hundred and fifty pages that was printed in the year 1656. Its contents comprise three parts or books. First, "The Queens Closet Opened, or The Pearl of Practise: Accurate, Physical, and Chirurgical Receipts." Second, "A Queens Delight, or The Art of Preserving, Conserving, and Candyng, as also a Right Knowledge of Making Perfumes and Distilling the most Excellent Waters." Third, "The Compleat Cook, Expertly Prescribing the most ready wayes, whether Italian, Spanish, or French, For Dressing of Flesh and Fish, Ordering of Sauces, or Making of PASTRY," — "pastry" in capitals, as is due so distinguished an article and art.

This conjunction of medicine and cooking was far from being considered demeaning to the healing art. A great number of the cook-books of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries were written by physicians. Dr. Lister, physician to Queen Anne, wrote plainly, "I do not consider myself as hazarding anything when I say no man can be a good physician who has not a competent knowledge of cookery."

This book contains a long, pompous preface, in which it is asserted that these receipts had been collected originally for "her distress'd Sovereigne Majesty the Queen," Henrietta Maria; that they had been "laid at her feet by Persons of Honour and Quality;" and that, since false and poor copies had been circulated during the queen's banishment, the compiler — who "fell with the Court," not being able to render his beloved queen any further service — felt that he could "prevent all disservices" by giving in print to her friends these true rules. Thus could he keep the absent queen in their minds; and also he

could give a fair copy to her, since she had lost her receipts in her flight. He complains, however, that some are "altered and corrupted by the failing of printing, some disordered, others false Printed: which kind of dealing I must impute to the most unfortunate customes of Printers, whose triviall excuses cannot free me from the highest misfortune that may befall me on this earthe should my Royall Mistress be displeas'd."

The preface is signed with initials only, W. M. Do they stand for the "little Vill Murray" of the queen's letters, the Will Murray so often mentioned in Evelyn's Diary as a faithful friend and letter-carrier for the king and queen? Or was W. M. Walter Montagu, the queen's almoner, who wrote for her pleasure *The Queen's Pastoral*, and remained her true follower through all her adversity? Though W. M. blamed the printer, I cannot. Clear and black is the type and firm the paper; and as for the bookbinder, let me, though rather late in the day, sound the praises of Nathaniel Brook at *The Angel in Cornhill*. Securely sewed, firmly glued, strongly backed, his work has stood the hard wear and tear of two centuries, and is still in good condition. The portrait of the queen, on the first page of the book, is said by Agnes Strickland to be a good likeness. It shows the royal widow in a black gown, a black veil with a triangular frontlet, a straight white cape, and one jewel, a cross. Doubtless the book was published with the hope of endearing the queen to the middle classes, who would care more for her skill in medicine and cooking than for her courage and magnanimity; especially would the book interest the people since it stated that she had practiced these receipts personally in her leisure hours.

As I open this old book, there runs across the yellow, time-stained pages, zigzagging sideways and backwards, crab fashion, on his ugly crooked legs, a pigmy brown book-spider, — one of those little insect bibliophiles that seem flatter even than the close-pressed pages that form their home. Skinny and active is this special spider who has chosen my drug-scented volume to live in; eager is he to hide in the old binding, where he can inhale the healing medicinal aroma, and rear in undisturbed quiet his hideous little progeny.

Two or three names are carefully written on the inside of the cover of this book, — names of past owners, without doubt. "Edward Talbot, his Book" is in the most faded ink. In a different handwriting is this rhyme: —

"When land is Gone and money Spent
then Learning is Most Axelant.
When I am gone & Rotton
If these you se Remember me,
When Others is Forgotton.

"Edward Reynolds, his Book, 1704."

In still another chirography is a rival effusion: —

"Dont steal this Book
for fear of Shame,
for underneathe you see
the oners name.
The first is J by
all mens site,
the second is R
if you spell Right.

"John Russel, His Book, in the year 1733."

A musty, leathery smell pervades and exhales from the pages, and is mingled with whiffs of an equally ancient and more penetrating odor, that of old drugs and medicines. For this book was not fated to dwell always among "persons of honour and quality" in Old England; it crossed the waters to the new land, and was for many years the pocket-companion of an old New England physician. Many a journey over bleak hills and lonely dales has it made, safely reposing at the bottom of its owner's pocket, or

lying cheek by jowl with the box of drugs and medicines and case of lancets in his ample saddle-bags. This country doctor had not studied deeply in college and in hospital; nor had he taken any long courses of instruction in foreign schools and universities. When he had decided to become a doctor, he had simply ridden with an old-established physician — ridden literally — in a half-menial, half-medical capacity. He had cared for the doctor's horse, swept the doctor's office, run the doctor's errands, pounded drugs, gathered herbs, and mixed plasters, until he was fitted to "ride" for himself. Then he had applied to the court and received a license to practice, — that was all. I doubt not that this book of mine and a few Latin treatises that he could hardly decipher formed his entire pharmacopœia. As he had chanced to inherit a small fortune from a relative, he became quite a physician; for in colonial days wealth and position were as essential as were learning and experience to enable one to become a good doctor.

I like to think of the rich and pompous old doctor a-riding out to see his patients, clad in his suit of sober brown or claret color with great shining buttons made of silver coins. The full-skirted coat had great pockets and flaps, as did the long waistcoat that reached well over the hips. Rather short were the sleeves of the coat, to show the white ruffles and frills at the wrist; but the forearm was well protected in cold weather by the long gauntlets of his riding-gloves and by his muffedettes. Full kneebreeches dressed his shapely legs, while fine silk stockings and buckled shoes displayed his well-turned calves and ankles. But in muddy weather high leather boots took the place of the fine hose and shoes, and his handsome breeches were covered with long tow overalls, or "tongs," as they were called. On his head the doctor wore a cocked hat and wig. He owned and wore in

turn wigs of different sizes and dignity, — ties, bags, periwigs, and bobs. His portrait was painted in a full-bottomed wig that rivaled the Lord Chancellor's in size ; but his every-day riding-wig was a rather commonplace horsehair affair with a stiff eelskin cue. One wig he lost by a mysterious accident, one day while he was attending a patient who was lying ill of a fever, of which the crisis seemed at hand. The doctor decided to remain all night, and sat down by the side of a table in the sick man's room. The hours passed slowly away. Physician and nurse and goodwife talked and droned on ; the sick man moaned and tossed in his bed, and begged fruitlessly for water. At last the room grew silent ; the tired watchers dozed in their chairs ; the doctor nodded and nodded, bringing his eelskin cue dangerously near the flame of the candle that stood on the table. Suddenly there was heard a violent explosion, a hiss, a sizzle ; and when the smoke cleared, and the terrified occupants of the room collected their senses, the nurse and wife were discovered under the valance of the bed ; the doctor stood, scorched and bare-headed, looking for his wig ; while the sick man, who had jumped out of bed, in the confusion, and captured a pitcher of water, drunk half the contents and thrown the remainder over the doctor's head, was lying behind the bed-curtains laughing hysterically at the ridiculous appearance of the man of medicine. Instant death was predicted for the invalid, who, strange to say, either from the laughter or the water, began to recover from that moment. The terrified physician was uncertain whether he ought to attribute the explosion and conflagration of his wig to a violent demonstration of the devil in his effort to obtain possession of the sick man's soul, or to the powerful influence of some conjunction of the planets, or to the new-fangled power of electricity which Dr. Franklin had just discovered, and

was making so much talk about, and was so recklessly tinkering with in Philadelphia at that very time. The doctor had strongly disapproved of Franklin's reprehensible and meddlesome boldness, but he felt that it was best, nevertheless, to write and obtain the philosopher's advice as to the feasibility, advisability, and best convenience of having one of the new lightning-rods rigged upon his medical back, and running thence up through his wig, thus warding off further alarming accident. Ere this was done the mystery of the explosion was solved. When the doctor's new wig arrived from Boston, he ordered his Indian servant to powder it well ere it was worn. He was horrified to see Noantum give the wig a liberal sprinkling of gunpowder from the powder-horn, instead of starch from the dredging-box. So the explosion of the old wig was no longer assigned to diabolical, thaumaturgical, or meteorological influences.

But I must turn from the doctor and the wig to the book ; let us see what he did when he singed his head and burnt his face. He whipped my little book out of his pocket and turned to page 77 : there he was told to make "Oyl of Eggs. Take twelve yolks of eggs and put them in a pot over the fire, and let them stand till you percieve them to turn black ; then put them in a press and press out the Oyl." Or he could make "Oyl of Fennel," if he preferred it. But probably the goodwife had on hand one of the dozen astounding salves described in the book, that the doctor had ere this instructed her to make, and in which I trust he found due relief.

One cannot wonder that the sick man craved water, when we read what he had had to drink. He had been given, a spoonful at a time, this " Comfortable Juleb for a Feaver," made of " Barley water & VVhite VVine each one pint, VVhey one quart, two ounces of Conserves of Barberries, and the Juyces of two limmons and 2 Oranges." The

doctor had also taken (if he followed his Pearl of Practise) "two Salt white herings & slit them down the back and bound them to the soles of the feet" of his patient; and I doubt not he had bled the sufferer at once, for he always did that on every possible occasion.

The "Water of Life" was also given for fevers, a few drops at a time, and as a tonic in health doubtless it proved strengthening.

"Take Balm leaves and stalks, Betony leaves and flowers, Rosemary, red sage, Taragon, Tormentil leaves, Rossolis and Roses, Carnation, Hyssop, Thyme, red strings that grow upon Savory, red Fennel leaves and root, red Mints, of each a handful; bruise these hearbs and put them in a great earthen pot, & pour on them enough VVhite VVine as wil cover them, stop them close, and let them steep for eight or nine days; then put to it Cinnamon, Ginger, Angelica-seeds, Cloves, and Nutmegs, of each an ounce, a little Saffron, Sugar one pound, Ray-sins solis stoned one pound, Dates stoned and sliced half a pound, the loyns and legs of an old Coney, a fleshy running Capon, the red flesh of the sinews of a leg of Mutton, four young Chickens, twelve larks, the yolks of twelve Eggs, a Loaf of VVhite-bread cut in sops, and two or three ounces of Mithridate or Treacle & as much Muscadine as will cover them all. Distil al with a moderate fire, and keep the first and second waters by themselves; and when there comes no more by Distilling put more VVine into the pot upon the same stufte and distil it again, and you shal have another good water. This water strengtheneth the Spirit, Brain, Heart, Liver and stomack. Take when need is by itself, or with Ale, Beer, or VVine mingled with Sugar."

Who could doubt that it strengthened the spirit? Plainly here do we see the need of a doctor being a good cook. But what pot would hold all that flesh and fowl, that blooming flower garden

of herbs and posies, that assorted lot of fruits and spices, to say nothing of the muscadine?

Surely our ancestors spared no pains to prepare these medicines. They did not, shifting all responsibility, run to a chemist or apothecary with a little slip of paper; with their own hands they picked, pulled, pounded, stamped, shredded, dropped, powdered, and distilled, regardless of expense, or trouble, or hard work. Truly they deserved to be cured.

Of course the remedies given in this book were largely for the diseases of the day. Physicians and parsons, lords and ladies, combined to furnish complex and elaborate prescriptions and perfumes to cure and avert the plague; and the list includes one plague-cure that "the Lord-Mayor had from the Queen;" and I may add that it is a particularly unpleasant and revolting one. But all these "sure cures" were of little avail; the whole score could not stop the terrible course of that terrible disease when, nine years later, it swept throughout England, killing in London alone one hundred thousand persons. Many a one of that great army of dead men took confidently and faithfully medicines such as are given in this little book of mine: the king's feeble and much-vaunted dose of "VVhite VVine, Ginger Treacle, and Sage;" the celebrated Dr. Butler and Dr. Read's ineffectual preservatives of wood sorrel and sugar; Dr. Butler's cordial-water "to drive al venome from the heart," composed of a few herbs, rose water, and Venice treacle; "Dr. Atkinson's excellent perfume against the Plague," of "Angelica roots and VVine Vinegar, that if taken fasting, your breath would kill the Plague" (it must have been a fearful dose); "Mr. Fenton's the Chirurgeon's Posset and his Sedour Root;" and the Countess of Arundel's drink of malmsey, grain, and Jean treacle, that "saved 38 commons of Windsor the last great Plague of 1593, and was proved upon many poor people

and they recovered." Alas, alas! the great bells tolled, the death-carts rumbled, and the deep trenches were filled, in spite of all this printed wisdom of great churgeons and doctors that I find in my Pearl of Practise.

Cures for smallpox and for gout are many. Varied are the lotions for the "pin and web in the eye;" so many are there of these that it makes me suspect that our English forefathers were sadly sore-eyed.

One very prevalent ail that our ancestors had to endure (if we can judge from the number of prescriptions for its relief) was a "cold stomach;" literally cold, one might think, since most of the cures were by external application. Lady Spencer used a plebeian "green turfe of grasse" to warm her stomach, with the green side, not the dirt side, placed next the skin. She could scarcely have worn this turf when she was up and around the house, could she? She must have had it placed upon her while she was in bed. The Countess of Mounteagle gave her remedy for a "cold stomach" as periwinkle and rosemary tops made hot. A "Restorative Bag" of herbs and spices heated in "boyld Vinegar" is asserted to be "comfortable." "It must be as hot as can be endured, and keep yourself from studying and musing and it will comfort you much." So it seems that you ought not to study or muse if your stomach be cold.

Many and manifold are the remedies to "cheer the heart," to "drive melancholy," to "cure one pensive," "for a grief," and without doubt the queen often needed them. We know, too, that "things ill for the heart" were "beans, pease, sadness, onions, anger, evil-tidings, and loss of friends," — a very arbitrary and unjust classification. Melancholy was evidently regarded as a disease, and a much-to-be-lamented one. External applications were made to "drive the worms out of the Brain as well as Dross

out of the Stomack." Here is "A precious water to revive the Spirits:" —

"Take four gallons of strong Ale, five ounces of Aniseeds, Liquorish scraped half a pound, Sweet Mints, Angelica, Eccony, Cowslip flowers, Sage & Rosemary Flowers, sweet Marjoram, of each three handfuls, Palitory of the VVal one handful. After it is fermented two or three dayes, distil it in a Limbeck, and in the water infuse one handful of the flowers aforesaid, Cinnamon and Fenel-seed of each half an ounce, Juniper berries bruised one dram, red Rosebuds, roasted Apples & dates sliced and stoned, of each half a pound; distil it again and sweeten it with some Sugar-candy, and take of Ambergreese, Pearl, Red Coral, Hartshorn pounded, and leaf Gold, of each half a Dram, put them in a fine Linnen bag, and hang them by a thread in a Glasse."

Think of taking all that trouble to make something to cheer the spirits, when the four gallons of strong ale with spices would have fully answered the purpose, without bothering with such an assorted lot of herbs and fruits! I suppose the gold and jewels were particularly cheering ingredients, and perhaps entitled the drink to its name of "precious water." Indeed, it would be cheering to the spirits of any one nowadays to have the precious metals and gems that were so lavishly used in these ancient medicines.

Full jeweled were the works of English "persons of quality" in the time of the Merry Monarch and his sire: The gold and gems were not always hung in bags in the medicines; frequently they were powdered and dissolved, and formed a large portion of the dose. Dr. Gifford's "Amber Pils for Consumption" contained a large quantity of pearls, white amber, and coral, as did also Lady Kent's powder. Sir Edward Spencer's eye-salve was rich in powdered pearls. The Bishop of Worcester's "admirable curing powder" (which included much

thaumaturgical nonsense, that the "black tips of Crabs Claws must be taken when the Sun enters Cancer," and that the "hartshorn must be from a red deer killed when the moon is in Leo") was composed largely of "ten skins of snakes or adders or Slow worms" mixed with "Magistry of Pearls." The latter was a common ingredient, and under the head of *Choice Secrets Made Known* we are told how to manufacture it:—

"Dissolve two or three ounces of fine seed Pearl in distill'd Vinegar, and when it's perfectly dissolved and all taken up, pour the Vinegar into a clean glasse Bason; then drop some few drops of oyl of Tartar upon it, and it will call down the Pearl into the powder; then pour the Vinegar clean off softly; then put to the Pearl clear Conduit or Spring water; pour that off, and do so often until the taste of the Vinegar and Tartar be clean gone; then dry the powder of Pearl upon warm embers and keep for your use."

Gold and precious stones were specially necessary "to ease the passion of the Heart," as indeed they are nowadays. In that century, however, they applied the mercenary cure inwardly, and prepared it thus:—

"Take Damask Roses half-blown, cut off thier whites, and stamp them very fine, and straine out the Juyce very strong; moisten it in the stamping with a little Damask Rose water; then put thereto fine powder Sugar, and boyl it gently to a fine Syrup; then take the Powders of Amber, Pearl & Rubies, of each half a dram, Ambergresse one scruple, and mingle them with the said syrup till it be somewhat thick, and take a little thereof on a knives point morning and evening."

Red and white roses formed the base of the majority of these compounds, but the white roses were never taken internally. I can now understand the reason for the unceasing, the incurable melancholy that hung like a heavy black shadow

over so many of the Puritan divines in the early days of New England, as their gloomy sermons, their sad diaries and letters, plainly show. Those poor ministers had no chance to use such receipts, and thus get cured of "worms in the brain," with annual salaries of only £60, which they had to take in corn, wheat, codfish, or bearskins, in any kind of county pay, or even in wampum, in order to get it at all. Rubies and pearls and gold and coral were scarce in clerical circles in Massachusetts Bay and Plymouth plantations. Even amber and ivory were far from plentiful. Cleopatra drinks were out of fashion in the New World. So Mather and Hooker and Warham were condemned to die with "uncheered spirits" and unjeweled stomachs.

Another ingredient, unicorns' horns, which were ground and used in powders, must have been difficult to obtain in New England, although I believe Governor Winthrop had one sent to him as a gift from Old England. The horn of a unicorn was a sovereign detective to search out poison. If you fancied that your host was poisoning you (as was too often the case), you had only triumphantly to fetch out your trusty unicorn's horn, thrust it into the suspected cup, and either drink down the liquid with profuse apologies if your shockingly insulting suspicions proved incorrect, or kill your host if your horn turned color. Ambergris was also too rare and costly for American Puritans to use. A large lump of "ambergresse" was one of the most valued gifts to Queen Henrietta Maria in honor of the birth of her first child.

Insomnia is not a bane of our modern civilization alone. This little book shows that our ancestors craved and sought sleep just as we do. Here is a receipt to cure sleeplessness which might be tried by any wakeful soul of modern times, since it requires neither rubies, pearls, nor gold in its manufacture:—

“Bruise a handful of Annis-seeds, and steep them in Red Rose Water, & make it up in little bags, & binde one of them to ech Nostrill, and it will cause sleep.”

So aniseed bags were used in those days for a purpose very different and remote from our modern one; if your nineteenth-century nose should refuse to accustom itself to having bags hung on it, you can “Chop Chamomile & crumbs of Brown Bread smal and boyl them with VVhite VVine Vinegar, stir it wel and spred it on a cloth & binde it to the soles of the feet as hot as you can suffer it.” And if that should not make you sleepy, there are frankincense-perfumed paper bags for your head, and some very pleasant things made of rose leaves for your temples, and hard-boiled eggs for the nape of your neck, — you can choose from all of these.

I fancy these remedies for sleeplessness were collected specially for Queen Henrietta Maria, whose well-known wakefulness inspired the elegant lines of Waller inscribed To the Lady who could do Anything but Sleep when she Chose. Small wonder she could not sleep in those troubled days; uneasy lay her fair crowned head. I do not like to think of her, though, with wet bags tied to her nose; I know her remedy was the rose leaves. Nor do I wish to remember that the poor sleepless queen at last found her death in a narcotic which was not as harmless as these in my Pearl of Practise.

They had abounding faith, these old Englishmen. Several of the prescriptions in *The Queen's Closet* are to cure people at a remote distance, by applying the nostrums to a linen cloth previously wet with the patient's blood. They had “plasters of power” that they put on the back of the head to draw the palate into place; and wonderful elixirs that would keep a dying man alive five years; and herb juices to make a dumb man speak. The following pre-

scription shows plainly their confiding spirit:—

“To Cure Deafnesse. — Take the Garden Dasie roots and make juyce therof, and lay the worst side of the head low upon the bolster & drop three or four drops therof into the better Ear: this do three or four dayes together.”

The vanity of our far-away grandmothers was carefully catered to in this book. There are many receipts to “make the face fair.” “Take the flowers of Rosemary and seeth them in VVhite VVine, with which wash your face, and if you drink therof it will make you have a sweet breath.” They were also told to gather the sweet May dew from the grass in the early morning to make a fair face; and pretty it were to see Cicely, Peg, and Joan in petticoat and sack or smock, each with a “faire linnen cloath” a-dipping her rosy face in the fresh May dew. Could this have been only a sly trick to get the maids from bed betimes? We know the early hour at which Madam Pepys bathed her “mighty handsome face” in the beautifying spring dew. The vain dames were also instructed to use gourd seed, liverwort, and almond milk for “Flaming Noses.” Various tooth-washes and “dentifrices” were given (and under this name, which I had fancied to be quite a modern one).

“If you will keep your teeth from rot, plug, or aking, wash the mouth continually with Juyce of Lemons, and afterwards rub your teeth with a Sage Leaf and VVash your teeth after meat with faire water. To cure Tooth Ach. 1: Take Mastick and chew it in your mouth till it is as soft as VVax, then stop your teeth with it, if hollow, there remaining till it's consumed, and it will certainly cure you. 2: The tooth of a dead man carried about a man presently suppresses the pains of the Teeth.”

I suppose this latter ghoulish cure would not affect a woman; but if a seventeenth-century dame could cure the

toothache simply with a plug of mastic, she was much to be envied by her degenerate nineteenth-century sister with her long dentist's bill. Another "Dentifrice much approved at Court" runs thus:—

"First take eight ounces of Irios roots, also four ounces of Pomistone, and eight ounces of cutel bone, also eight ounces Mother of Pearl, and eight ounces of Coral, and a pound of Brown Sugar Candy, and a pound of Brick if you desire to make them red, but he did oftner make them white, and he did then instead of the Brick take a pound of white Alabaster; al this being thouroughly beaten and sifted through a fine searse, the powder is then prepared to make up in a past."

The paste was made with damask-rose water and gum "dragant" into "long rowls of Dentifrices." These dentifrices were rubbed on the teeth, toothbrushes not being used. Just fancy scouring the teeth with a stick of brick dust, pumice stone, powdered cuttle bone, mother of pearl, and coral! A short course of such treatment would leave no teeth to scour.

Hair restorers these ancients also used; and in these days of manifold mysterious nostrums that gild the head of declining age and make glad the waste places on bald young masculine pates, let us read the simple receipts of the good old times:—

"Take half a Pound of Aqua Mellis in the Springtime of the Year, warm a little of it every morning when you rise in a Sawcer, and tie a little Spunge to a fine Box combe, and dip it in the water and therewith moisten the roots of the hair in Combing it, and it will grow long and thick and curled in a very short time."

"Take three spoonfuls of Honey and a good handful of Vine Twigs that twist like VVire, and beat them wel, and strain thier Juyce into the Honey and anoynt the Bald Places therewith."

These washes were not so expensive as Hirsutus or Tricopherous, but quite as effective, perhaps. There were hair-dyes, too, "to make hair grow black though of any color;" and the leaf that holds this precious instruction is sadly worn and spotted with various-tinted inks, as though the words had been often read and copied:—

"Take a little Aqua Fortis, put there in a groat or sixpence, as to the quantity of the aforesaid water, then set both to dissolve before the fire, then dip a small Spunge in the said water, and wet your beard or hair therewith, but touch not the skin."

Perfumes and powders were given that waft faint, balmy odors to our nostrils down through these long centuries. The fair dames were ordered to "wash the Gloves and Jerkins first in old red Rose water and then lay your perfume in." Orris root, clover, violet flowers, lavender, orange flowers, ambergris, damask rosebuds, "civit," musk, gillyflowers, cloves, and cowslips combine their fragrance in these old receipts. Queen Elizabeth's perfume was made of rosemary and benjamin, while King Edward, who had a pretty taste in such trifles, furnished a rule to make the house sweet with damask roses.

In a "medical dispensatory" of the times, the different varieties of medicines are enumerated. They are "leaves, herbs, roots, barks, seeds, flowers, juices, distilled waters, syrups, juleps, decoctions, oils, electuaries, conserves, preserves, lohocks, ointments, plaisters, poultices, troches, and pills." These words and articles are all used nowadays except the "lohock," which was to be *licked* up, and in consistency stood in the intermediate ground between an electuary and a syrup. These terms, of course, were in the Galenic practice. In *The Queen's Closet* all the physic was found afield, with the exception of the precious metals and one compound, "rubila," which was made of antimony and

nitre. To this latter mixture the Americans did not take kindly; Giles Firmin called it a "meene helpe." There was also an "oyntment" made of quicksilver, verdigris, and brimstone mixed with "barrows grease," which was good for "horse, man, or other beast." Alum and copperas were once recommended for external use. The powerful "plaster of Paracelsus" was not composed of mineral drugs, as might be supposed, but was of herbs, and from the ingredients named must have been particularly nasty smelling as well as powerful.

The medicine mithridate forms a part in many of these prescriptions; it does not seem to be regarded as an alexipharmic, but as a soporific. It is said to have been the cure-all of King Mithridates. I will not give an account of the process of its manufacture; it would fill about three pages of this magazine, and I should think it would take about six weeks to compound a good dose of it. There are forty-five different articles used, each to be prepared "by slow degrees," and introduced with great care; some of them (such as treacle mustard, the rape of storax, camel's hay, and bellies of skinks) might also be inconvenient to procure. Mithridates would hardly recognize his own medicine in this conglomeration, for when Pompey found his precious receipt it was simple enough: "Pound with care two walnuts, two dried figs, twenty pounds of rice, and a grain of salt." I think we might take this *cum grano salis*.

Queer were the names of some of the herbs: alehoof, which was ground-ivy, or gill-go-by-ground, or haymaids, or twinhoof, or gill-creep-by-ground, and was an herb of Venus, and thus in special use for "passions of the heart;" the blessed thistle, of which one scandalized old writer says, "I suppose the name was put upon it by them that had little holiness themselves;" clary, or clear-eye, or Christ's-eye, which latter name

makes the same writer indignantly say, "I could wish from my soul that blasphemy and ignorance were ceased among physicians," — as if the poor doctors gave these folk-names. The "crabs-claws" so often mentioned was also an herb, otherwise known as knights-pond water and freshwater-soldier. The "mints" to flavor were horsemint, spearmint, peppermint, catmint, and heartmint.

The earliest New England colonists did not discover in the new country all the herbs and simples of their native land, but the Indian powwows knew of others that answered every purpose; very healing herbs, too, as Wood in his *New England's Prospects* unwillingly acknowledges and explains: "Sometimes the devill for requitall of thier worship recovers the partie to muzzle them up in thier devilish Religion." The planters sent to England for herbs and drugs, as existing inventories show; and they planted seeds, and soon had plenty of home herbs that grew apace. The New Haven colony passed a law at an early date to force the destruction of a "great stinking poisonous weed" which is said to have been the *Datura stramonium*, a medicinal herb. It had been brought over by the Jamestown colonists, and had spread miraculously, and was known as "Jimson" or Jamestown weed.

These old Englishmen did not measure the drugs with precision in preparing their medicines, as do our chemists nowadays, nor were their prescriptions written in Latin nor with cabalistic marks, — the asbestos stomachs and colossal minds of our ancestors were above such petty minuteness; nor did they administer the doses with exactness. "The bigth of a walnut," "enough to lie on a pen knives point," "the weight of a shilling," "enough to cover a French crown," "as bigg as a haslenut," "as great as a charger," "the bigth of a Turkeys Egg," "a pretty draught," "a pretty bunch of herbs," "take a little

handful," "take a pretty quantity as often as you please," — such are the lax directions that accompany these old prescriptions.

There is a charm in these medical rules in my old book, in spite of the earth-worms and wood-lice and adders and vipers in which some of them abound (to say nothing of other and more shocking ingredients). In surprising and unpleasant compounds they do not excel the prescriptions in a serious medical book published in Exeter, New Hampshire, in 1835. Nor is Cotton Mather's favorite and much-vaunted ingredient millepedes, or *sowbugs*, once mentioned within. All are not vile in my Queen's Closet, — far from it. Medicines composed of Canary wine or sack, with rose water, juice of oranges and lemons, syrup of clove-gillyflower, loaf sugar, "Mallago raisins," nutmegs, cloves, cinnamon, mace, remind me strongly of Josselyn's "New England nectar," and render me quite dissatisfied with our modern innovations of quinine, iron, antipyrine, and phenacetin, and even make only passively welcome the innocuous and uninteresting homœopathic pellet and drop.

But whatever the medicines were, of the cooking receipts in *The Compleat Cook* but one word can be said, — that of praise. This book was printed one hundred years before the cook-book of the celebrated Mrs. Glass, and I read "in great amaze" at the luxury, the refinement, of the court of Charles I. Not only did the seventeenth-century cooks possess delicious materials, but they knew how to use them. I never pity the Pilgrim mothers and Puritan goodwives who came to these lonely, desolate shores of New England more than when I read this cook-book. Although they were not of the court, these pious women gave up the most dainty, most nourishing, most appetizing food to live upon mussels, codfish, corn bread, peas and pork, and "pompions." Even

in the large towns and plantations, in the year 1656, such a cook-book as this would have been of little use, for the goodwives were too frugal and too poor to afford any luxury. Small wonder *The Queen's Closet Opened* is more worn than *The Compleat Cook*.

Let me give one of the delicious dishes. With so much "richness" I hardly know which to choose.

"To make a Pigeon Pye. — Take your Pigeons (if they be not very young, cut them into four quarters,) one sweet-bread sliced the long way, that it may be thin, and the peeces not too big, one Sheeps tongue, little more than parboyl'd and the skin pul'd off, and the tongue cut in slices, two or three slices of Veale, as much of Mutton, young Chickens (if not little, quarter them), chick Heads, lark or any such like, Pullets, Coxcombs, Oysters, Calves' Udder cut in peeces, good Store of Marrow for seasoning; take as much Pepper & Salt as you think fit to season it Slightly, good Store of Sweet Marjoram, a little Time and Lemon-Pill fine sliced; season it well with these spices as the time of the year will afford; put in either of Chesnuts (if you put in Chesnuts they must be either boyl'd or roasted,) Goose berries or Guage; large Mace will do well in this Pye; then take a little Piece of Veal parboyl'd and slice it very fine, as much Marrow as meat stirred amongst it; then take grated Bread, as much as a quarter of the meat, four yelks of Eggs or more according to the Stuff you make; shred Dates as small as may be, season it with salt, Nutmeg as much as will season it, sweet Marjoram a pretty store but very small shred, work it up with as much sweet Creame as will make it up in little puddings, some long, some round, so put as many of them in the Pye as you please; put therein two or three spoonfulls of Gravy of Mutton, or so much strong Mutton Broth, before you put it in the Oven, the bottome of boyl'd Hartichoks, minced Marrow over and in the bottom

of the Pye after your Pye is baked; when you put it up, have some five yolks of Eggs minced, and the juyce of two or three Oranges, the meat of one Lemon cut in Peeeces, a little VVhite and Claret VVine; put this in your Pye, being well mingled, and shake it very well together."

By this time you have lost the pigeons, but you have found a pie worthy of Brillat-Savarin; and its lordly lavishness makes a pleasant picture of the luxury of the times.

The receipt for Virginia trout I regard with keen disfavor, as an entirely needless and disagreeable seventeenth-century British sneer at America; somewhat after the fashion of calling salt codfish "Cape Cod turkey."

"To make Virginia Trout. — Take pickled Herrings, cut off thier Heads, and lay the bodies two dayes and nights in water, then wash them well, then season them with Mace, Cinamon, Cloves, Pepper, and a little red Saunders, then lay them close in a pot with a little onyon strewed small upon them, and cast between every Layer; when you have thus done, put in a pint of Clarret VVine to them, and cover them with a double paper tyed on the pot, and set them in the oven with household bread. They are to be eaten cold."

This is as simple a receipt as any of the three hundred in the book; but, after all, Virginia trout could not have been ill to eat, though they were but masquerading herring.

Long have I known a sack posset. Oft hath my old friend Will Shakespeare spoken of it, but ne'er till now have I known how to mix it.

"Take a Quart of Cream and boyle it very well with Sugar, Mace, and Nutmeg, take half a pint of Sack and as much Ale, and boyle them well together with Some Sugar; then put your Cream into your Bason to your Sack, then heat a pewter dish very hot and cover your Bason with it, and set it by the fireside,

and let it stand there two or three houres before you use it."

If you have no cream, you can "make a Sack Posset without Milk or Cream."

"Take eighteen Eggs, whites and all, taking out the treads, let them be beaten very well; take a pint of Sack and a quart of Ale boyl'd, and scum it, then put in three-quarters of a pound of sugar and a little Nutmeg, let it boyl a little together, then take it off the fire, stirring the Eggs still; put into them two or three Ladlefuls of drink; then mingle all together, and set it on the fire, and keepe it stirring till you find it thick; then serve it up."

All the possets, paps, caudles, fumities, and syllabubs are delightful; a toper would long for the king's strong ales and meads and metheglins, for the "usquebarbs" and dainty wines. The "Taffaty Tarts," "Apple Tanseys," "Pye Slumps," "Gooseberry Fools," "Angelots," "Poor Knights," and "Devonshire VVhite Pots" make one's mouth water. The preserves, candies, and cakes are concocted with judgment, and can hardly be excelled by Miss Parloa; the curds and cheeses and creams — clouted cream, sack cream, "pyramids" cream, Spanish cream, French barley cream, and almond cream — are quite beyond her. I think she might learn from *The Compleat Cook* much about the dressing of fish, for the receipts are the most toothsome, the most dainty, that I have ever seen.

They were as exact and nice in speaking of fish in those days as they were in dressing it. They could not refer to serving or helping salmon. They had to say "chine that salmon," "string that lamprey," "splat that pike," "sauce that plaice or tench," "splay that bream," "side that haddock," "tusk that barbel," "culpon that trout," "fin that chevin," "transom that eel," "tranch that sturgeon," "undertranch that porpoise," "tame that crab," and "barb that lobster." I suppose, had a

diner-out said, "Will you culpon that salmon and let me have a slice?" or "Will you kindly tranch that trout?" he would have been hopelessly lost, — stamped at once as low bred and plebeian. They had also to mind their manners when they carved or asked for game or fowl. They had to speak of "rearing a goose," "lifting a swan," "saucing a capon," "spoiling a hen," "frussing a chicken," "unbracing a mallard," "unlacing a cony," "dismembering a heron," "displaying a crane," "disfiguring a peacock," "unjointing a bittern," "untacking a curlew," "allaying a pheasant," "winging a partridge or a quail," "mincing a plover," "thighing a pigeon or woodcock." It must have been very embarrassing when they did not really recognize whether it were a crane or a heron that was placed before them; or, worse yet, when they had to draw a fine line between a hen and a chicken. Perhaps it is better, after all, to have our game and fowl served as they are nowadays, cut up secretly in a "Black Hole" of a butler's pantry, and shoved in warmish slices in front of us, — the very kind and cut we don't like. We should never have the patience for so much etiquette, or, as the book says, "a-la-mode ways," in carving in this century.

In all the list no mention is made of what we regard as a most characteristic English viand, — roast beef. Though cooked and served in Queen Elizabeth's day, it did not become popular until the reign of Charles II. The Merry Monarch knighted the Sirloin of Beef. The barons and cavaliers fought upon minces and stews and made dishes; but they were good ones, and nourished good soldiers. Not until the fork was introduced was spoon meat crowded out. Nor are turkeys alluded to, though "turkies, carp, hops, piccarel & beare came into England all in one year," the year 1524. In *The Accomplisht Cook*, printed in 1678 (and in which

many of the receipts are taken word for word from *The Compleat Cook*), turkeys are frequently named, and Pepys often dined upon them. There was not the great variety of vegetables that we have to cook with; onions, parsley, "caphers," "chibals," mushrooms, pom-pions, "spinage," "clove of garlick," rice, and artichokes comprise the short list. "Turneps" are mentioned in the medicines. A receipt for "patis," or cabbage cream, is given, but I can discover no cabbage in it.

Potatoes are not named, though they appear in *The Accomplisht Cook*, where, I may say in passing, they are ordered to be boiled and blanched; seasoned with nutmeg, cinnamon, and pepper; mixed with "eringo roots," dates, lemons, and whole mace; covered with butter, sugar, and grape verjuice; made with pastry into a pie, and iced with rose water and sugar. Alas! poor, ill-used, besugared potato! I can well understand why Englishmen did not take kindly to the new vegetable.

But one objection could be brought to any of these receipts by the owner of a modern palate, — the use of perfumes. Musk and civet are employed in some confections, as well as rose and violet and orange-flower water. The coloring matters seem also rather curious, — "saunders, saffron, chochineli, and blew starch," and juices of violets, gillyflowers, and marigolds.

Obsolete words are found, and words with obsolete meanings. Cakes and puddings were baked in "coffins;" sugar and spices were "searsed;" they "cod-dled," "seethed," "bottomed," "endored." In bread they had "cheat-loaves" and "mauchets" and "crack-nels," as well as many other varieties. They had "strikes of malt," "coasts of beef," "cheese mots," and "ranioles," and yet the receipts are all easy to comprehend. I am surprised to find that they had "marchepans," "fritturs," "jumbals," and "sallets," all of which

I had thought to be comparatively modern dishes.

Now shall you receive from this old book the choicest, rarest, most delectable receipt of all that are therein — No, marry! you shall not! Preserve to myself will I this Old English riddle, this seventeenth-century secret. Be it a

quiddany or a marmalet, an electuary or a lohock, a hypocras or a pomander, be it made of horrihocks or mushrumps or fricats, you shall never know. Live proudly shall I the rest of my days in the surety that I am the only dame in this New World who knows how to make for you a Damnable Hum.

Alice Morse Earle.

THE REFORM OF THE SENATE.

It might plausibly be maintained that the United States Senate is the most corrupting element in our national political system. This is not because it has become, as is sometimes alleged, a club of millionaires. Such a consummation would not have displeased certain of the framers of the Constitution. General Pinckney opposed the payment of salaries to Senators, on the ground that their branch "was meant to represent the wealth of the country," and that, in the absence of salaries, "the wealthy alone would undertake the service." Franklin seconded his motion. George Mason would have annexed a property qualification, since "one important object in constituting the Senate was to secure the rights of property." Their views did not prevail, but the millionaires have arrived, and make no scruple about drawing their salaries. They are a consequence of the mode of electing Senators established by the Constitution, and a part of the general demoralization ascribable to the same cause.

Notoriously, the Senate was the great stumbling-block — almost the *crux* — in the constitutional settlement. Edmund Randolph's plan provided for its election by the House "out of a proper number of persons nominated by the individual legislatures." George Read's substituted the President for the House. Dickinson, following Spaight, of North

Carolina, moved that the legislatures elect. Wilson, of Pennsylvania, on the other hand, advocated direct popular election; arguing that a choice by the legislatures would "introduce and cherish local interests and local prejudices." Any of the rejected schemes, we can see, would have had its own dangers and abuses; but who can say whether the result would have been more disastrous than that of Dickinson's, under which we have worked for a century? Read thought he foresaw, from the general character of the Constitution, an end of the federal system by absorption, so that the state governments would "soon be reduced to the mere office of electing the national Senate;" and this fear found an echo in the ratifying conventions. Thus, in Pennsylvania, John Smilie, speaking for the minority in opposition, said the state legislature would "necessarily degenerate into a mere name, or at most settle in a formal board of electors, periodically assembled to exhibit the servile farce of filling up the federal representation." In New York, again, it was objected that the Senate would tend to perpetuate itself, and Chancellor Livingston retorted: "Can they make interest with their legislatures, who are themselves varying every year, sufficient for such a purpose? Can we suppose two Senators will be able to corrupt the whole legis-