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UNIVERSITY OF LOUISVILLE

FOOD AND DRINK OF ELIZABETHAN ENGLAND AS REFLECTED IN THE LITERATURE OF THE AGE.

A Dissertation
Submitted to the Faculty
Of the Graduate School of the University of Louisville
In Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree
of Master of Arts

Department of English
by

ELIZABETH FREDERICK BAGGERLY

1955.

THE FOOD AND DRINK OF ELIZABETHAN ENGLAND AS REFLECTED IN THE LITERATURE OF THE AGE.

CONTENTS

Chapter. **Page.**

CHAPTER I. SOCIAL LIFE. 1.

CHAPTER II. FOOD OF THE AGE OF ELIZABETH. 44

CHAPTER III. DRINK OF THE AGE OF ELIZABETH. 78

CHAPTER IV. FOOD AND DRINK AS A PART OF FEASTS AND CELEBRATIONS IN ELIZABETHAN ENGLAND. 100

CONCLUSION. 108

BIBLIOGRAPHY. 115

CHAPTER I.

SOCIAL LIFE

FOOD AND DRINK OF ELIZABETHAN ENGLAND AS REFLECTED IN THE LITERATURE OF THE AGE.

Sir Toby: Does not life consist of the four elements?
Sir Andrew: Faith, so they say: but I think it rather consists of eating and drinking.
(Twelfth Night, II, iii, 11).

CHAPTER I

SOCIAL LIFE

Food and drink have always been of major interest to mankind, but a study of the literature of Elizabethan England reveals an absorption that is almost unparalleled. However, the British from the early days of history have been distinguished for hearty appetites; provisions in sixteenth century England were both plentiful and cheap,[1] which facts in combination with the extraordinary flourishing of a realistic drama, may account for the innumerable allusions to eating and drinking.

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[1] H. D. Traill and J. S. Mann, Social England, London, 1902, Vol., 3, p. 541.
William S. Davis, Life in Elizabethan Days, New York, 1930, p. 79.

William Harrison in his Elizabethan England, published in 1577, thus naively accounts for the lusty appetites of his countrymen:

> The situation of our region, lying near unto the north, doth cause the heat of our stomachs to be of somewhat greater force: therefore our bodies do crave a little more ample nourishment than the inhabitants of the hotter regions are accustomed withal, whose digestive force is not altogether so vehement, because their internal heat is not so strong as ours, which is kept in by the coldness of the air that from time to time(especially in winter) doth environ our bodies.
>
> It is no marvel therefore that our tables are oftentimes more plentifully garnished than those of other nations, and this trade hath continued with us even since the very beginning.[1]

Thomas Heywood in The English Traveller has written along the same lines in the speech of young Geraldine:

> As I observe,
> Each several clime, for object, fare, or use,
> Affords within itself for all of these
> What is most pleasing to the man there born:
> Spain, that yields scant of food, affords the nation
> A parsimonious stomach, whereas our appetites
> Are not content but with the large excess
> Of a full table; where the pleasing'st fruits
> Are found most frequent, there they best content;
> Where plenty flows, it asks abundant feasts;
> For so hath provident Nature dealt with all.
> (I, i, 165).

Love of food and drink was a heritage from the Saxons, who were notoriously intemperate at the table. It is interesting to note that much of the food of

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1. William Harrison, Elizabethan England, London, 1876, p. 84.

Elizabethan England was distinctly medieval in character and that many of the same dishes had been eaten in ancient Greece and Rome. Certainly the Romans on their conquest of Britain left their imprint for all time on English cookery. Such typically English dishes as roast boar, roast pig, meat pies and puddings were eaten in Greece and Rome. Likewise porridge had been a national dish of the Romans until wheaten bread was introduced from Athens. Herbs were then as lavishly used for flavorings; vegetables and meats were maltreated in the same fashion; and honey dispensed in the same unrestrained amounts as was sugar in Elizabeth's time. Too numerous to mention are other similarities.

William the Conqueror, who was something of a gourmet for his day, imported his entire kitchen staff and consequently bequeathed to English cookery some of the refinements of French cuisine.[1] The Normans were naturally more temperate than the Saxons, but with the rapid assimilation of the two peoples, this restraint soon disappeared. Throughout the medieval period feasting was nothing less than gluttonous.

During Tudor times there were a great many changes in the diet, particularly in that of the well-to-do Englishman. In Henry VIII's Reign, England, always more than normally insular, had established contact with the continent, and hence had become a new market for foreign products. Elizabethan England was richer than ever before and there-

1. M. B. Synge, Social Life in England, New York, 1906, p. 66.

fore was able to enjoy the cultivated luxuries that come with economic prosperity. The voyages of exploration and discovery, the opening up of new trade routes, and the general extension of English commerce, all brought advances in domestic refinement which caused marked changes in the social life of the people.[1]

Tradesmen had been a little slow in accepting the changed conditions. The first foreign luxuries introduced in the fifteenth century had been called "unthrifty wares" and it is recorded that a Welsh port refused to take a cargo of apples, "rubbish that would be wasted in a week," in exchange for broadcloth and wool, "the more durable wares of the country."[2]

New extravagances found their way into the country, strange foods from distant lands, amongst which were turkeys from Mexico, potatoes from Chili, apricots, lemons and tomatoes, all of which contributed to the national menu. Since an interest in travel had been stimulated, the returned voyager brought home with him an acquired taste for foreign foods and new fashions which set their mark on the social life of the time.

And, naturally the elders, as has been customary with elders since time immemorial, looked upon these changes and feared that a demoralisation of the national fibre would

[1] H. D. Traill, op.cit., p. 212.
[2] Ibid, p. 211.

ensue.[1] William Harrison warned that England would be ruined by "the usual sending of noblemen's and mean gentlemen's sons into Italy, from whence they bring home nothing but mere atheism, infidelity, vicious conversation, and ambitious and proud behaviour, whereby it cometh to pass that they return far worse men than they went out."[2] Thomas Nashe in The Unfortunate Traveller claims that "Italy makes our yonge master a courtier....he brings the art of epicurising."[3]

The introduction of luxuries into England and the returned traveller with his Continental polish did not escape the satiric darts of the writers of the period. "The follies of the fashionable had for years been jealously watched by the Puritan. Now the satirist and dramatist both turned to the attack, men whose temper was that of the middle class Englishman - Greene, Nashe, Lodge, Chapman, Hall, Donne, Marston and Jonson."[4]

Said Ben Jonson of the traveller in Cynthia's Revels:

> He doth learn to make strange sauces, to eat anchovies, maccaroni..........
> (II, i, 264).

The tooth-pick and fork in particular were

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1. H. D. Traill, op.cit., p. 502.
2. William Harrison, op.cit., p. 37.
3. Thomas Nashe, The Unfortunate Traveller, Boston and New York, 1920, p. 96.
4. Charles Reed Baskervill, English Elements in Jonson's Early Comedy, Austin, Texas, 1911, p. 19.

singled out for all manner of ridicule. In those days, when cleanliness of body was as little thought of as was the sanitary conditions of the house, the advent of the toothpick was really a mark of advance in civilization. Tooth-picks were ostentatiously carried. Often they were made of gold with jeweled cases. Sometimes they must have been fastened with ribbons as in this extract from Beaumont and Fletcher's The Woman-Hater:

> Lucio: I would not have appeared to you
> thus ignorantly attired, without a toothpick
> in a ribband. (V, i, 101).

To pick one's teeth in public became as surely the mark of a gentleman as to talk the rubbish set in vogue by Lyly's Euphues."[1]

In Monsieur Thomas by Beaumont and Fletcher, Sebastian cries out in bitterness against travel that has caused his son to "eat with picks."

> My grand curse
> Hangs o'er the head that thus transform'd thee:
> Travel! (I, ii, 431).

In Cynthia's Revels by Jonson there is this sketch of a traveller:

> He that is with him is Amorphus,
> A traveller......He walks most commonly
> With a clove or tooth-pick in his mouth.
> He speaks all cream-skimmed(affected).
> (II, i, 200).

---

1. Henry Thew Stephenson, Elizabethan People, New York, 1912, p. 386.

Also in The Honest Man's Fortune by Beaumont and Fletcher there is this indictment of travel:

> You have travell'd like a fiddler to make faces,
> And brought home nothing but a case of tooth-
> picks. (V, iii, 244).

It is generally supposed that one Thomas Coryat introduced the fork into England. In his Crudities, published in 1556, he gives an account of the use of the fork in Italy. "The Italian cannot by any means to have his dish of meat touched with fingers, seeing that all men's fingers are not alike clean!" Thomas had to endure the jibes of his untravelled fellows when he used his fork, for even his friends considered it a foreign affectation. One clergyman preached against the use of forks "as being an insult to Providence not to touch one's meat with one's fingers!"[1]

In Massinger's The Great Duke of Florence, Sanzarro, the duke's favorite, says:

> I have all that's requisite
> To the making up of a signior: my spruce ruff,
> My hooded cloak, long stocking, and paned hose,
> My case of toothpicks, and my silver fork,
> To convey an olive neatly to my mouth.
> (III, i, 486).

Ben Jonson also flouts the "fork-carving foreigner," in The Devil is an Ass. Meercraft, an alert Elizabethan business-man, inquires of Gilthead and Sledge:

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1. Wm. J. Rolfe, Shakespeare the Boy, New York, 1896, p. 55.

Have I deserved this from you? for all
My pains at Court, to get you each a patent.
Gilthead. For what?
Meercraft. Upon my project of the forks.
Gilthead. Forks! What be they?
Meercraft. The laudable use of forks,
Brought into custom here as they are in Italy
To the sparing of napkins.
(V, iii, 136-137).

In Volpone by Jonson, Sir Polstick-Would-Be gives advice to Peregrine to:

......learn the use
And handling of your silver fork at meals,
The metal of your glass. These are main matters
With your Italian.
(II, ii, 175).

In The Queen of Corinth by John Fletcher, the Tutor says:

Your T beard is the fashion
And twifold doth express th' enamoured courtier
As full as your fork-carving traveller.
(IV, i, 136).

In spite of the lavish hospitality that is apparent in the literature of Elizabeth's time, the elders used to bemoan the passing of the entertainment of the old days. "The wealthier country gentlemen of knightly rank and the considerable functionaries maintained, as is well known, a style of housekeeping to which at present we have absolutely nothing that bears the least resemblance. Even in the Queen's days, and not in the latest of them, the death of Edward Earl of Derby was lamented as putting an end to 'old English hospitality:' but from what we know of the way of those who survived him, there was not much to complain of."[1]

It is true that during the Tudor period some changes had taken place. Perhaps a little of the magnificence, as well as the munificence, of the medieval table had passed away. Several inevitable causes had contributed to the change, not the least being the decay of feudalism, the spread of the restricting and joyless spirit of Puritanism, and perhaps the breaking-up of many home-keeping traditions, when the adventurous Englishman could no longer resist the call of the sea. The abolition of a large number of feast days after Henry VIII's separation from the Catholic church had reduced festivity to some slight extent, but considering that feast days were still more than "seven and twenty,"[2] Elizabeth's England was still a merry land.

In spite of these few restraining influences, hospitality was continued on an unbelievably prodigal scale by the wealthy families of the realm, with the Queen herself setting the example. For Elizabeth like her father was passionately addicted to entertainment and she enjoyed nothing so much as paying visits to her nobles.

The English love of eating and drinking is no more traditional than a fondness for profuse hospitality. Says Ben Jonson in his Poetaster:

> I had rathee want meat, than want guests;
> especially if they be courtly guests.
> (I, 1, 429).

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1. H. D. Traill, op.cit., p. 538.
2. William Harrison, op.cit., p. 78.

"Foreigners allege that the Queen's subjects are always glad of the least excuse for 'giving a feast to a stranger.' 'They would rather (wrote a Venetian ambassador) give five or six ducats to provide an entertainment for a person, than give a groat to assist him in any distress.' In the country, everyone, high or low, was forever asking in guests to his table. Humble-folk were constantly exchanging little presents of eatables-a cake, a pudding, and the like......One very wealthy squire in Nottingham had a sheer passion for hospitality. He began his Christmas on All Hallows' Eve (October 31-November 1) and continued it until Candlemas (February second), during which interval any man was permitted to stay and feast for three days without being asked 'whence he came or what he is.' For each of the twelve days before Christmas, the hospitable squire allowed his guests a fat ox and other provisions in proportion."[1] This generous soul was like unto the host in Beaumont and Fletcher's Rollo, or The Bloody Brother:

> ....a royal gentleman indeed,
> He will make the chimnies smoak!
> (II, ii, 153).

Heywood has thus summed up the matter in The English Traveller through the speech of the loquacious clown:

> I'll stand to it, that in good hospitality there can be nothing found that's ill: he that's a good house-keeper keeps a good table, a good table is never without good stools, good stools seldom without good guests, good guests never without good cheer, good cheer

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[1] W. S. Davis, op.cit., pp. 71-72.

> cannot be without good stomachs, good stomachs without good digestion, good digestion keeps man in good health; and therefore all good people that bear good minds, as you love goodness, be sure to keep good meat and drink in your houses, and you shall be called good men, and nothing can come on't but good, I warrant you.
>
> (I, ii, 163).

Massinger in The Unnatural Combat also has considered the subject, with the warning that hospitality should not be abused:

> Beaufort: I love a table furnish'd with full plenty,
> And store of friends to eat it: but with this caution,
> I would not have my house a common inn,
> ....
> I must not have my board pester'd with shadows, without invitement.
>
> (III, i, 165).

The term "shadows" can be understood by referring to Plutarch, who explains that it was a mark of politeness to let a guest know he was at liberty to bring a friend or two to meals: a permission sometimes abused. These friends the Romans called "shadows."[1]

Entertainment was more feasible in the country than in the city, where living quarters were not so ample or provisions so attainable. Some idea of the culinary efforts expended upon the country gentleman's meals can be realized by reading The English Housewife by Gervase Markham, written in the last years of the sixteenth century. Markham des-

1. Philip Massinger, Plays, London, 1813, note p. 165.

cribes a "humble feast or an ordinary proportion which any good man keep in his family for the entertainment of his true and worthy friends." The "humble feast or ordinary" includes "sixteen dishes of meat that are of substance and not empty, or for show." To these "sixteen full dishes," he adds "sallets, fricasses, quelque chose, and devised paste, and many dishes more, which make the full service no less than thirty-and-two dishes."[1] And this was a meal for the casual guest!

The setting of such tables fell upon the shoulders of the country housewife. "For hospitality to all who chose to demand it, to the lowest as well as the highest in the land was the first virtue to be practiced by the country housewife. In the days when there were few inns, none in country places fit for the accommodation of ladies, when roads were bad and coaches heavy, and when several nights had constantly to be spent in the course of a single journey, a friend's house was the natural halting place.

And friends were by no means the only visitors. Officials of all sorts, travelling the country in the course of their duties, expected to be entertained in the larger houses. Suites of rooms were especially built for visitors, who, if they were people of any consequence, brought in their train an immense number of servants and retainers."[2]

The visits that Queen Elizabeth was wont to pay her courtiers often entailed such elaborate preparations as those at Elvethan prior to her stay with the Earl of Hertford. As the Earl's mansion was too small to house the Queen's retinue, the following buildings were erected especially for her Majesty:

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[1] Rose Bradley, The Country Housewife of the 17th and 18th Centuries, London, 1912, p. 74.
[2] Ibid, p. 66.

> A room of estate for the nobles, with a withdrawing place for her Majesty: the outsides all covered with boughs, and clusters of ripe hazel nuts, and inside with arras, the roof with works of ivy leaves, the floors with sweet herbs and green rushes. Near to this were the special offices: the spicery, lardery, chandlery, wine-cellar, ewery, and pantry, all of which were tiled. There was alse made a great common buttery; a pitcher house; a large pastery, with five new ovens, some of them fourteen feet deep; a great kitchen, with four ranges and a boiling place; another great kitchen for all comers; a boiling house for the great boiler; a room for the scullery, and another for the cooks' lodgings.........[1]

Ben Jonson in an address to Penshurst thus eulogises the accomplished hostess whose house was kept perpetually at such a high standard of perfection that the Queen could pay a surprise visit to her in her absence and find everything in order for royal entertainment:

> Her linen, plate, and all things right
> Though she was far: and every room was drest
> As if she had expected such a guest.[2]

Besides a constant supervision of the larder, kitchens, and dining hall, the preserving of fruits, making of confections, drying and salting of meats, the making of wine and the brewing of ale, the country housewife attended

---

1. John Lyly, Complete Works, Oxford, 1902, Vol. 1, pp.432-433.
2. Rose Bradley, op.cit.,p. 66.

to the concocting of medicinal beverages furnished by the herb garden. Her life was a busy one.

Hospitality was not alone reserved for the great houses. In the humblest cottage, the people were willing to share their simple fare with friends. In The Witch of Edmonton, the work of John Ford, a yeoman speaks:

> When he comes he shall be welcome to bread, beer, and beef, yeoman's fare; we have no kickshaws: full dishes, whole bellyfuls.......
> (I, ii, 187).

Margaret, the keeper's daughter in Greene's Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay extends hospitality to Lacy:

> Well, if you chance to come by Fressingfield,
> Make but a step into the Keeper's lodge;
> And such poor fare as woodmen can afford,
> Butter and cheese, cream and fat venison,
> You shall have store, and welcome therewithal.
> (I, iii, 241).

While the unbidden guest was always welcomed at meals, in earlier times it was the custom to bring a stool on account of the scarcity of furniture. When a chair is offered to the Duke of Brachian in The White Devil by Webster, he says:

> Forbear your kindness; an unbidden guest
> Should travel as Dutch women go to church,
> Bear their stool with them.
> (note p. 181-Massinger-The Unnatural Combat).

Likewise in The Unnatural Combat by Massinger:

> ....like unbidden guests,
> Bring their stools with them.
> (III, iii, 181).

The main room of the mansion was usually the great hall, which often served as dining-room, drawing-room and as a place of festivity. When meals were served, tables were brought in or else taken down from their places against the walls. These tables consisted of leaves hinged together and laid temporarily on trestles.[1] In Romeo and Juliet, when more room is needed for dancing, Capulet orders:

> A hall! a hall! give room, and foot it, girls.
> More light, you knaves! and turn the tables up.
> (I, v, 122).

The floors were carpeted with a deep pile of rushes which were ordinarily renewed only yearly. In summer when the odor of new hay and fragrant boughs filled the hall, such carpeting must not have been unpleasant, but in midwinter and early spring, when a deposit of dust, grease, decayed food and all sorts of rubbish had joined the rushes, the melange must have been most unsavory. Menials wielding the "voiding knife," found the floor a tempting and convenient disposition for table refuse.[2]

The family of Sir Thomas More was known for startling innovations. The diary of Margery, daughter of Sir Thomas, indicates that the Mores were hygienically in advance of most of their countrymen. She wrote:

> Gonellius ask't leave to see Erasmus, his signet ring, which he handed down to him. In passing it back, William, who was so occupied in carving a crane, handed it soe negligentlie, that it fell to ye ground. I never saw such a face as Erasmus made when 'twas picked

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1. Henry Thew Stephenson, Shakespeare's London, New York, 1905, p. 17.
2. Beaumont & Fletcher, The Coxcomb, Edinburgh, 1812, I, i, p.34).

> out from ye rushes. And yet ours are renewed almost daylie, which manie think over nice.[1]

As it was a sign of special honour to distinguished visitors to renew rushes, green rushes became proverbial as a symbol of hospitality to strangers. In Lyly's Euphues and His England: "I am sorry Euphues, that we have no green rushes, considering you have been so great a stranger."[2]

Beaumont and Fletcher in Valentinian refer to this custom as follows:

> Rushes, ladies, rushes.
> Rushes as green as summer, for this stranger.
> (II, v, 410).

In John Webster's Westward Hoe:

> Here be rushes! (II, ii, 95).[3]

In the Elizabethan household, the head of the family no longer sat upon a dais, but at the end of a long table. Since the Norman conquest a huge salt cellar placed mid-way of the table, served as a boundary of distinction in table seating.[4] "Like a disposing angel at the Day of Judgment, the salt dish separated the social sheep from the social goats."[5] Above the salt sat the family, the steward, the chaplain, the gentleman ushers and the ladies-in-waiting.

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1. J. C. Andrews, Breakfast, Dinner and Tea, viewed Classically, Poetically and Practically, New York, 1869, p. 66.
2. John Lyly, op.cit., p. 385.
3. Rushes are also referred to in The Taming of a Shrew, (II, ii), Middleton's Women Beware Women, (III,iii,335); and in The Kinsmen, Fletcher and Shakespeare, (II,i,38).
4. M. B. Synge, op.cit., p. 80.
5. W. S. Davis, op.cit., p. 74.

Below sat all the house servants not concerned with the serving of the meal, the tenants, any wayfarers who claimed hospitality, or any poorer relations. Those below did not presume to talk with those on the other side of the huge salt dish. Naturally, there was a difference in the food and drink served on the opposites sides of the cellar.[1]

There are several references in the plays to this Norman custom of seating by the salt. In Cynthia's Revels by Jonson, Mercury says of a courtier:

> He never drinks below the salt.
> (II, i, 259).

In The Honest Whore by Dekker:

> Plague him, set him beneath the salt and let him not touch a bite till every one has had his full cut.
> (Part I, II, ii).

In The City Madam by Massinger:

> He sits beneath the salt, an object of contempt.
> (I, i, 402).

Miles in Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay says:

> ....their cheer shall not be great, and therefore what skills where the salt stand, before or behind?
> (III, ii, 272).

---

[1] W. S. Davis, op.cit., p. 74.

The great size of the salt-cellars at this time may be seen from the passage from Middleton's Your Five Gallants:

> O, my great bell-salt!
> Did you not see a fellow about door with a
> great silver salt under his arm?[1]

Also in The Coxcomb by Beaumont and Fletcher:

> ....and the great parcel salt.
> (IV, iii, 86).

The term "parcel gilt" which appears several times in the plays, evidently signifies that only part of the piece of plate was gilt. From "part-gilt," "parcel-gilt" must have been evolved by ellipsis. Other pieces of plate are referred to as "parcel-gilt." In Shakespeare's II Henry IV, the host reminds Falstaff:

> Thou did swear to me on a parcel-gilt goblet.
> (II, i, 94).

At the entertainment given to Elizabeth at Kenilworth, "the chief table was adorned with a 'salt, ship-fashion, made of mother-of-pearl, garnished with many designs.'" Another salt was fashioned of silver in the form of a swan in full sail. A silver St. George mounted and equipped was also on the table; the horse's tail held a case of knives, while the breast of the dragon presented a similar accommodation for oyster knives.[2]

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1. Beaumont and Fletcher, The Coxcomb, op.cit., p.86.
2. Sir Walter Scott, Kenilworth, Philadelphia, no date, p. 424.

The table of the country gentleman was covered with a cloth often spoken of as a carpet. Napkins or towels were used for wiping the hands after eating with the fingers, and in addition, a basin and ewer were passed to aid in cleansing the hands at the beginning and end of the meal.

Owing to a great plenty of silver after the Spanish conquests in Peru and Mexico, cupboards were plentifully garnished with plate, with the addition of some pewter.[1]

In _Romeo and Juliet,_ the first servant orders:

> .....remove the court cupboard, look to the plate. (I, v, 122).

China dishes and plates were beginning to be used, helped out with pewter.[2] Venetian glass was a novelty prized by the upper classes. Because of the cheapness of silver, "the gentility, as loathing the metals, silver and gold, because of the plenty, chose generally the Venice glasses," writes Harrison.[3] The poor people could afford an inferior home-made glass of fern and burned stone.[4]

In addition, poor folk still used wooden dishes or trenchers to a great extent, but the well-to-do farmer and trader was supplementing his wooden ware with pewter. "Here was another extravagance which made the champions of the Good Old Times shake their heads; were not 'treen(carved wooden)platters good enough for everybody while Merrie England was still Merrie England?"[1] The "treen" dishes often had proverbs carved or painted around the edges, which served to instruct the eater. "For," says Puttenham, in his Art of English Poesie, "our ancestors were careful to dole out instructions in many ways........These aphorita we call posies, and we do paint them now-a-dayes upon the back side of our fruite trenchers........."[2]

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[1] H. D. Traill, _op.cit._, p. 543.
[2] Mandell Creighton, _English Life in Elizabeth's Reign_, New York, 1898, p. 201.
[3] William Harrison, _op.cit._, p. 90.
[4] _Ibid_, p. 91.

George, the servant, in The Honest Whore by Dekker, comments on the adages set forth by the trenchers:

> ....as one of our cheese trenchers says very learnedly,
> As out of wormwood bees suck honey,
> As from poor clients lawyers firk money,
> As parsley from a roasted coney:
> So, though the day be ne-er so funny,
> If wives will have it rain, down then it drives,
> The calmest husbands make the stormiest wives.
> (Part I, V, i, 170).

In Northward Hoe by Webster, Doll remarks:

> I'll have you make twelve posies for a dozen
> of cheese trenchers.
> (III, i, 216).

Philip Massinger in The Old Law refers to this custom:

> Save a few running admonitions
> Upon cheese trenchers.........
> (II, i, 489).

As has been mentioned before, forks were in this

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1. W. S. Davis, op.cit., p.40.
2. Philip Massinger, Op.cit., The Old Law, p. 489.

period considered an affectation. It is said that Queen Elizabeth was the first royal personage in England known to have owned a fork and that she was seldom seen to use it, since she preferred to feed herself with her fingers. In her possession were three forks, one of "golde, one of corall, slightly garnished with golde, and one of crystal, garnished with golde slightly, and sparcks of garnetts."[1] It was not until the middle of the 17th century that forks were used even by the higher classes, and silver forks were not introduced until about 1814.[2] As late as 1700, people of the country districts were eating meat with fingers.[3]

In 1563 table knives were just coming into use, so ordinarily the knife worn at the belt was pressed into service at meal time for slicing off portions from the common dishes.

The dipping of knives into a common dish was not without its dangers if the following from Massinger's The Unnatural Combat be taken literally:

> ....for their own defence,
> At court should feed in gauntlets; they may have
> their fingers cut else........
> (III, iii, 181).

In Westward Hoe by Webster there is a reference to drawing a knife to eat.[4] Apemantus in Shakespeare's Timon of Athens speaks of the carrying of knives to meals:

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1. J. C. Andrews, op.cit., p. 31.
2. W. J. Rolfe, op.cit., p. 55.
3. W. S. Davis, op.cit., p. 85.
4. John Webster, Westward Hoe, III, ii, 112.

> I wonder men dare trust themselves with men:
> Methinks they should invite them without knives;
> Good for their meat, and safer for their lives.
> (I, ii, p.924).

The Elizabethan period was not without its attempts at proper table etiquette. Perhaps the current objection to eating with our knives is due to a survival of the rule that a knife that once had gone into the individual mouth could not with propriety go back into the common dish.[1] The upper classes at this time rather prided themselves upon their table manners. William Harrison says: "I might here talk somewhat of the great silence that is used at the tables of the honourable and wiser sort generally over the realm-(albeit that too much deserveth no commendation, for it belongeth to guests neither to be muti nor loquaces)......"[2]

The children of the upper stratum were strictly admonished as regards table manners:

> Not smacking thy lips as commonly do hogs,
> Nor gnawing the bones, as it were dogs,
> Such rudeness abhor, such beastliness fly,
> At the table behave thyself mannerly.[3]

Just how the lower classes conducted themselves at the table will have to be left to the imagination. And perhaps it is better so.

The nobility, gentry, and students usually dined at eleven or twelve, and supped between five and six. To

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1. H. T. Stephenson, Elizabethan People, op.cit., p. 385.
2. William Harrison, op.cit., p. 95.
3. Wm. J. Rolfe, op.cit., p. 62.

take two meals only was the rule: none but the young, the sick, and the very early riser was thought to need an early morning repast. Idle Londoners helped out the day by a half-pint of wine before dinner and a posset or night-cap before bed.

Scattered throughout the plays of the period are many references to meal hours. In Heywood's The English Traveller, Wincott, in speaking of his clown says:

> This fellow's my best clock,
> He still strikes true to dinner.
> Clown: And to supper too, sir: I know not how
> the day goes with you, but my stomach hath
> struck twelve,
> I can assure you that.
> (I, i, 163).

In Beaumont and Fletcher's The Woman Hater:

> I run: but not so fast as your mouth will do on
> the stroke of eleven.
> (I, ii, 16).

The physician in Ben Jonson's, The Case is Altered, recommends:

> Eat when your stomach serves,
> Not at eleven and six.
> (II, iii, 352).

Mistress Frankfort, in A Woman Killed With Kindness by John Heywood, orders her servant:

> ....'Tis six o'clock already struck.
> Go bid them spread the cloth and serve in
> supper.
> (IV, iii, 47).

In The Comedy of Errors, Dromio of Ephesus wails because dinner is late:

> ....approach'd too late:
> The capon burns, the pig falls from the spit,
> The clock hath strucken twelve upon the bell;
> (I, ii, 43).

It seems to have been customary for the cook to strike the dresser as a signal for dinner. In Massinger's The Unnatural Combat:

> When the dresser, the cook's drum, thunders,
> Come on! (III, i, 166).

In Jonson's A Tale of A Tub there appears an expression, "Had rung noon on your pate."[1] This was a proverbial allusion to the custom of striking the dresser at noon.[2]

Hospitality was easy because of the abundance of servants. The great houses of the day swarmed with them, since wages were very cheap. A country gentleman of wealth often had fifty servants. It is recorded that when Elizabeth dined at Elvethan, there were 200 footmen on duty.[3]

In an age noted for feasting, naturally the cook was an important personage. He was the supreme ruler of his domain - the kitchen. As said John Earle in his Microcosmographie, 1628, "The kitchen is his hell, and he the devil in it......here he will domineer and rule the roast, in spite of his master, and curses is the very dialect of his calling."[1] He lorded it over the scullions, threatening them with chopping knives and with other weapons such as "a mess of hot broth and scalding water."[2]

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[1] Jonson, A Tale of A Tub, (II, i, 156).
[2] Ibid,note p. 156.
[3] G. B. Harrison, An Elizabethan Journal, New York, 1931, p. 59.

The heat of the kitchen always gave him a perpetual thirst, such a thirst that "a hissing pot of ale slaked him like water cast on a firebrand."[3] In The Bloody Brother or Rollo by Beaumont and Fletcher, a scene laid in the servants' hall shows the thirsty cook calling for some drink:

> A hot day! a hot day! a vengeance hot day, boys.
> Give me some drink: this fire's a plaguy fretter!
> Body of me. I am dry still! Give me the jack, boy.
> This wooden skiff holds nothing.
> (II, ii, 149).

The cook of the Elizabethan period has been given high tribute. In The Devil is an Ass, Jonson has penned an eulogy to the master cook - "the glory of the kitchen."

> A master-cook! why, he's the man of men,
> For a professor! he designs, he draws,
> He paints, he carves, he builds, he fortifies,
> Makes citadels of curious fowl and fish.
> Some he dry-dishes, some motes round with broths;
> Mounts marrow-bones, cuts fifty-angled custards,
> Rears bulwark pies, and for his outer works,
> He raiseth ramparts of immortal crust;
> And teacheth all the tactics, at one dinner:
> What ranks, what files, to put his dishes in;
> The whole art military. Then he knows

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[1] John Dover Wilson, Life in Shakespeare's England, Cambridge, 1920, p. 226.

[2] Ibid., p. 226.

[3] Ibid, p. 266.

> The influence of the stars upon his meats,
> And all their seasons, tempers, qualities,
> And so to fit his relishes and sauces,
> He has nature in a pot, 'bove all the chymists,
> Or airy brethren of the Rosie-cross.
> He is an architect, an engineer,
> A soldier, a physician, a philosopher,
> A general mathematician.
> (IV, i).

John Earle, in his Micro-cosmographie, continues his portraiture of the cook:

> His cunning is not small in architecture, for he builds strange fabrics in paste, towers and castles, which are offered to the assault of valiant teeth, and like Darius his palace, in one banquet is demolished. He is a pitiless murderer of innocents, and he mangles poor fowls with unheard tortures, and it is thought the martyrs' persecutions were devised from hence; sure we are Saint Lawrence his grid-iron came out of his kitchen. His best faculty is at the dresser, where he seems to have great skill in the tactics, ranging his dishes in order military and placing with great discretion in the fore-front meats more strong and hardy, and the more cold and cowardly in the rear, as quaking tarts and quivering custards, and such milk-sop dishes which scape many times the fury of the encounter.[1]

After a glance at the menus and recipes of the period, one is inclined to think that no praise of the Elizabethan cook is too excessive. No concoction in pastry, custard or sugar seems to have been beyond his power to create, no culinary miracle too fantastic for him to achieve. Saith the cook in Rollo, or The Bloody Brother by Beaumont and Fletcher:

> If you would have the pasty speak:
> 'Tis in my power.
> (II, ii, 152).

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1. John D. Wilson, op.cit., p. 227.

French influence was still felt in the kitchen. Harrison speaks of the cooks as being "musical-headed Frenchmen and strangers."[1] The "kickshaws" that are spoken of in the plays, called "pretty little tiny kickshaws," by Justice Shallow, were undoubtedly a French concoction, "kickshaw" being a corruption of quelque chose."[2] "Kickshaws" were made of a great many materials. Eggs, cream, currants, cinnamon, cloves, mace, salt, ginger, spinach, endive, and marigold flowers, to which might be added the further delicacy, "pigge's pettitoes," well boiled, were all well fried together with butter.[3]

In Thomas Dekker's The Belman of London, appears a description of kitchen activity that must have been typical of the average mansion-house culinary regions before a feast. Dekker writes that he went into the kitchen and saw there:

> ......much stirring, as commonly is to be seene in a Booth, upon the first day of the opening of a Fayre. Some sate turning of spits, and the place being all smoaky, made mee thinke on hell, for the joynts of meate lay as if they had been broyling in the infernall fire; the turne-spits(who were poore tattered greasie fellowes) looking like so many hee divels. Some were basting and seemed like feindes powring scalding oyle upon the damned; others were myncing of pye-meate, and shewed like hangmen cutting up of quarters, whilst another whose eies glowed with the heate of the fire, stood poaking in at the mouth of an Oven,torurint soules as it were in the furnace of Lucifer. There was such chopping of hearbes, such tossing of ladels, such scolding, such laughing, such swearing, such running too and fro, as if Pluto had that day bidden all his friendes to a feast, and that these had been the Cookes that drest the dinner.[4]

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1. William Harrison, op.cit., p. 88.
2. F. W. Hackwood, Good Cheer, New York, 1911, p. 115.
3. Rose Bradley, op.cit., p. 91.
4. Thomas Dekker, The Belman of London, London, 1804, pp. 78-79.

In early days the work of turning the spit fell to a scullion, usually a lad, but in the Tudor period, dogs were pressed into service in some houses. The dog was trained to turn the spit by running around inside a caged revolving wheel in the manner of a captive squirrel. If the dog lagged in his enthusiasm, a hot coal was applied to his heels. In The Witch of Edmonton by Dekker, there is this reference to a dog turning the spit. Cuddy Banks in speaking to the Dog says:

> Or if your stomach did better like to serve in some nobleman's, knight's, or gentleman's kitchen, if you could brook the wheel and turn the spit....when they have roast meat.....
> (V, ii, 466).

It is curious to note that in the olden days cookery was considered as a branch of medicine; in fact the Latin verb curare means to "dress a dinner," as well as "to cure a disease." Onf of the very early cook-books of England, The Forme of Cury, written in 1390, at the time of Richard II, was compiled "under the assent and avisement of the masters of physic and philosophy that dwelled in the king's court."[1]

True to this tradition, most of the best old cookery books in English were written by eminent doctors. Dr. Tobias Venner's Via Recta ad Vitam Longam, 1620; Dr. Theodore Mayerne's Archimagirus Anglo-Gallicus, published in 1652, several years after the good doctor's death at the age of eighty-two years; and Dr. Kenelme Digby's The Closet of the Eminently Learned Sir Kenelme Digby, Kt., Opened, written in the early days of the 17th century, all gave medical and culinary advice in equal doses to inquiring housewives.[1]

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[1] F. W. Hackwood, op.cit., p. 235.

In Dr. William King's The Art of Cookery, which was written in imitation of Horace's Art of Poetry, sometime in the 17th century, reference is still made to this relation between doctor and cook.

> ....the Cook must pass thro' all degrees,
> And by his Art discordant Tempers please,
> And minister to Health and to Disease.[2]

These medical-cookery manuals particularly specialized in recipes for the preparation of home-made medicines. The gardens of the mansions furnished a huge supply of herbs for the homeopathic brews and other concoctions that were religiously taken for all sorts of maladies ranging from the plague to "inward bruises."

Of all the "herbs" that were found in Elizabethan gardens, lettuce and onions seem to have been the most useful. According to John Gerard's Herball or General Historie of Plantes, first published in 1597, "lettuce cooleth the heat of the stomacke, called the heart-burning; and helpeth it when it is troubled with choler: it quencheth thirst, and causeth sleep......if taken before meat it stirs up appetite; and if eaten after supper it keepeth away drunkennesse which commeth by the wine; and that is by reason that it staieth the vapours from rising up into the head.......Lettuce maketh

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1. F. W. Hackwood, op.cit., p. 236.
2. Dr. William King, The Art of Cookery, London, 1709, p. 85.

a pleasant sallad, being eaten raw....but if it be boiled it is sooner digested, and nourisheth more."[1]

Physicians in Elizabethan England seemed to have used poultices of lettuce as cooling applications, as is evinced by references to "lettice caps" in several of the plays. In Thierry and Theodoret by Beaumont and Fletcher, is such an allusion:

> ...physicians....with lettice caps
> An English doctor with a bunch of pot herbs....
> (V, ii, 365).

In Monsieur Thomas by Beaumont and Fletcher, the physician(or probably barber)orders:

> Bring in the lettice cap. You must be shaved,
> sir. (II, iii, 463).

Antonia, of Beaumont and Fletcher's The Chances, has been wounded and being treated by doctors, complains of the "sallads, green salves, and searches," used by the physicians.[2]

Onions were credited with many valuable properties. Gerard asserts that:

> The juice of Onions snuffed up into the nose, purgeth the head, and draweth forth raw flegmaticke humors. Stamped with Salt, Rue, and Honey, and so applied, they are good against the biting of a mad Dog. Rosted in the embers and applied, they ripen and breake cold Apostumes, Biles, and such like.
>
> The juice of Onions mixed with the decoction of Penni-royall, and anointed upon the goutie member with a feather, or a cloath wet therein, and applied

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1. John Gerard, Leaves from Gerard's Herball, Boston and New York, 1931, p. 19.
2. Beaumont and Fletcher, Monsieur Thomas, note p. 463.

> easeth the same very much. The juice anointed upon a pild or bald head in the Sun, bringeth the haire againe very speedily.
>
> The juice taketh away the heat of scalding with water or oile, as also burning with fire and gun-pouder..
>
> Onions sliced and dipped in the juice of Sorrel, and given unto the Sicke of a tertian Ague, to eat, takes away the fit.
>
> The Onion, being eaten, yea though it be boiled, causeth head-ache, hurteth the eyes, and maketh a man dim-sighted, dulleth the senses, and provoketh overmuch sleep, especially being eaten raw.[1]

Likewise in Dekker's The Guls Hornbook-How a Gallant is to Behave Himself Passing through the City: "If you smell a watch, and that you may easily do, for commonly they eat onions to keep them in sleeping, which they account a medicine against cold....."[2]

Beaumont and Fletcher in The Woman's Prize advise that:

> You may eat onions. They purge the blood.
> (IV, i, 354).

Among other valuable herbs mentioned are chevrill, "good for old people that are dull and without courage:"[3] sorrell, "used in green sauce and for them that have sicke and feeble stomacks:........"[4] the "long gourd Cucumber which being laid in the cradle of the yong infant whilst it is

1. John Gerard, op.cit., pp. 177-178.
2. Thomas Dekker, The Guls Hornbook, op.cit., p. 65.
3. John Gerard, op.cit., p. 130.
4. Ibid, p. 42.

asleep and sick of an ague, it shall be very quickly made whole:"[1] and the leaves of the Bramble (or raspberry bush) which boyled in water makes a decoction that fastneth the teeth."[2] There were other herbs in use to "cheereth the hearte," to "keepe little dogs from growing greate," to cure "over-much sighing," and to cure such as be Melancholike, sad, pensive, and without speech."[3] One could continue to list indefinitely the fascinating virtues of these garden herbs cultivated so faithfully by the Elizabethan housewife. Whether these home-wrought remedies were efficacious or not, a great deal of faith went into their making.

Home entertainment was more a part of country than of city living. In the towns, particularly London, the inns, taverns, and ordinaries were the centers of social life, as were the coffee houses of a later date. William Harrison in comparing the differences in country and city hospitality writes:

> In the country if the friends also of the wealthier sort come to their houses from far, they are commonly so welcome till they depart as upon the first day of their coming; whereas in good towns and cities, as London, men oftentimes complain of little room, and, in reward of a fat capon or plenty of beef and mutton largely bestowed upon them in the country, a cup of wine or beer with a napkin to wipe their lips and 'you are heartily welcome!' is thought to be a great entertainment; and therefore the old country clerks have framed this saying in that behalf upon the entertainment of townsmen and Londoners after the day of their abode, in this manner:
>
> 'Primus jucundus, tollerabilis estque secundus,
> Tertius est vanus, sed fetet quatriduanus.'"[4]

1. John Gerard, op.cit., p. 184.
2. Ibid, p. 261.
3. Ibid, p. 158.
4. William Harrison, op.cit., pp. 95-96.

In contrasting country plenty with city stinting, Ford in The Witch of Edmonton says:

> Should I diet three days at one of the slender
> city-suppers, you might send me to Barber-
> Surgeons' hall the fourth day, to hang up for
> an anatomy(skeleton).
> (I, ii, 187).

The city dinners and corporation feasts were an exception, for these were occasions of sumptuous splendor attended with a great consumption of food and drink. Harrison remarks that the feasting of the companies of every trade on their quarter days are "nothing inferior to the nobility."[1] Massinger in The City Madam refers to the city feasts:

> Men may talk of country-christmasses and court
> gluttony,
> Their thirty-pound buttered eggs, their pies
> of carp tongues,
> Their pheasants drenched with ambergris, the
> carcases
> Of three fat wethers bruised for gravy,
> To make sauce for a single peacock; yet their
> feasts
> Were fasts, compared with the city's.
> Tradewell: What dear dainty
> Was it, thou murmur'st at?
> There were three sucking pigs served up in a dish,
> Ta'en from the sow as soon as farrowed,
> A fortnight fed with dates, and muskadine,
> That stood my master in twenty marks apiece,
> And besides the puddings in their bellies, made
> Of I know what, - I dare swear the cook that
> dressed it,
> Was the devil, disguised as a Dutchman.
> (II, i, 421).

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1. William Harrison, op.cit., p. 94.

Also in The Maid of Honour by Massinger, the lavishness of the city feasts is cited:

> The city entertainment! A huge shoulder
> Of glorious fat ram-mutton, seconded
> With a pair of tame cats or conies, a crab-tart,
> With worthy loin of veal, and valiant capon....
> (III, 1, 343-4).

The ordinaries and taverns were the clubs of the period, and here Londoners, masculine for the most part, congregated to meet their fellows and discuss the news of the day. In Massinger's The City Madam, this function of the ordinary is set forth by Luke:

> Then sitting at the table with
> The graveries of the kingdom, you shall hear
> Occurrents from all corners of the world,
> Of plots, the counsels, the designs of princes,
> And freely censure them; the city wits
> Cried up, or decried, as their passions lend them.
> (II, 1, 424).

In Thomas Dekker's Plague Pamphlets is shown a gathering of Londoners at an ordinary "where the Fatte Host telles Tales at the upper ende of the Table."[1] It was the habit of all the men about town to dine at the ordinary at the table of the host, a term now converted to "table d'hote."[2]

Innumerable are the allusions to the well-known taverns and ordinaries of the day. In Newes from Bartholomew Fayre, author unknown, some of the most famous eating and drinking places are mentioned:

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1. Thomas Dekker, The Plague Pamphlets, Oxford, 1925, p. 1.
2. Frederick Hackwood, op.cit., p. 138.

There hath beene a great sale and utterance of wine,
Besides beere and ale, and ipocras fine,
In every country, region, and nation,
Chefely at Billingsgate, at the Salutation,
And Bore's Head, neere London Stone;
The Swan at Dowgate, a taverne well knowne;
The Miter in Cheape; and then the Bull Head,
And many like places that make noses red;
The Bore's Head in Old Fish Street, Three Cranes in
the Vintree,
And, now of late, St. Martin's in the Sentree;
And Windmill in Lothbury, the Ship at the Exchange,
King's Head in New Fish Streete, where roysters
do range;
The Mermaid in Cornhill, Red Lion in the Strand,
Three Tuns, Newgate Market, Old Fish Street at
the Swan."[1]

One of the most famous of the taverns was Dunstan's, which later became the Devil Tavern, whose sign was the devil peeping over the shoulder of St. Dunstan. Here was the famous club over which Ben Jonson presided as perpetual chairman, and at which Shakespeare, Beaumont, Fletcher, Herrick and other literary lights of the day assisted. The Apollo room of the tavern was the permanent meeting place and it was barred to all but members. Over the chimney, engraved in marble and gold, were the "Convivial Laws for the Tavern Academy," drawn up in Ben's most elegant Latin:

As the fund of our pleasure, let each pay his shot,
Except some chance friend, whom a member brings in,
For hence be the sad, the lewd fop, and the sot;
For such have the plagues of good company been.

Let the learned and witty, the jovial and gay,
The generous and honest, compose our free state;
And the more to exalt our delight whilst we stay,
Let none be debarr'd from his choice female mate.

[1] Beaumont and Fletcher, Wits without Money, note p. 43.

Let no scent offensive the chamber infest,
Let fancy, nor cost prepare all our dishes.
Let the caterer mind the taste of each guest,
And the cook, in his dressing comply with their wishes.

Let's have no disturbance about taking places,
To shew your nice breeding, or out of vain pride.
Let the drawers be ready with wine and fresh glasses.
Let the waiters have eyes, though their tongues must be
ty'd.

Let our wines without mixture of stum, be all fine,
Or call up the master, and break his dull noodle,
Let no sober bigot here think it a sin,
To push on the chirping and moderate bottle.

Let the contest be rather of books than of wine.
Let the company be neither noisy nor mute.
Let none of things serious, much less of divine,
When belly and head's full, profanely dispute.

Let no saucy fiddler presume to intrude,
Unless he is sent for to vary our bliss.
With mirth, wit, and dancing, and singing conclude,
To regale every sense, with delight in excess.

Let raillery be without malice or heat.
Dull poems to read let none privilege take.
Let no poetaster command or intreat
Another extempore verses to make.

Let argument bear no unmusical sound,
No jars interpose, sacred friendship to grieve,
For generous lovers let a corner be found,
Where they in soft sighs may their passions relieve.

Like the old Lapithites, with the goblets to fight,
Our own 'mongst offences unpardon'd will rank,
Or breaking of windows, or glasses, for spight,
And spoiling the goods for a rakehelly prank.

Whoever shall publish what's said, or what's done,
Be he banish'd for ever our assembly divine.
Let the freedom we take be perveted by none,
To make any guilty by drinking good wine.[1]

The Mermaid Tavern, likewise a popular meeting place of the poets, is often referred to in the literature of the day. Francis Beaumont in his Letter to Ben Jenson speaks of it:

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[1] Ben Jonson, Works, London, 1816, pp. 85-86.

> In this warm shine
> I lie and dream of your full Mermaid wine.[1]

The Mitre was another tavern widely patronized by writers. Evidently it was known for good food, for in A Mad World My Masters, an excellent meal is called "a right Mitre supper."[2]

Taverns were identified by a bush. In The Maid's Tragedy by Beaumont and Fletcher occurs a reference to this custom:

> Good wine requires no bush, they say.
> (Prologue, p. 51).

Donald Lupton in his London and the Countrey carbonadoed, 1632, writes:

> If these houses (ale-houses) have a box-bush, or an old post, it is enough to show their profession. But if they be graced with a sign complete, it's a sign of a good custom."[3]

The tavern could also be identified by a green or red lattice, in use before the days of glass. In II Henry IV by Shakespeare, Falstaff's page says:

> A' calls me e'en now, my lord, through a red lattice, and I could discern no part of his face from the window; at last I spied his eyes....
> (II, ii, 84)

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1. Beaumont and Fletcher, Works, op.cit., p. 433.
2. Jonson, Every Man out of His Humour, note pl 182.
3. John Dover Wilson, op.cit., p. 106.

Evidently this lattice was used to afford the drinkers within the tavern some privacy.

Taverns were haunted by itinerant musicians, very appropriately referred to as "one noise of fiddler or other," in Ben Jonson's The Silent Woman. Their companies usually consisted of three and took their names from the leaders of the little bands. Thus we hear of "Mr. Sneak's noise," "Mr. Creak's noise," and of "Mr. Spindle's noise." "These names were probably the invention of Shakespeare and other writers, but they prove the existence of the custom."[1]

It was the fashion of the period to give names to particular rooms in the taverns. "The custom prevailed as late as Goldsmith who makes his pseudo-barmaid in She Stoops to Conquer say: 'Attend the Lion there; pipes and tobacco for the Angel; the Lamb has been outrageous this half-hour."[2]

In The Captain by Beaumont and Fletcher, the tavern boy is ordered to:

> Take a gallon of sack, and a pint of olives to the
>   Unicorn.
> Look into the Nag's-head there.
> Score a quart of claret to the Bar;
> And a pound of sausages into the Flower-pot.
> And fetch tobacco for the Peacock.
>   (IV, ii, 211).

Pompey says in Shakespeare's Measure for Measure:

>   'twas in the Bunch of Grapes,
> Where indeed you have a delight to sit, have you
>   not?   (II, i, 33).

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1. Ben Jonson, Epicoene, or The Silent Woman, op.cit., p.402.
2. Wm. J. Rolfe, Measure for Measure, New York, 1898, note 164.

Thomas Dekker in The Guls Hornbook gives advice on "How a Gallant should behave himself in an Ordinary." He instructs:

> An inventorie of the Kitchen should be called for, for it were most Tailor-like, and to be suspected you were in league with some Kitchen-wench, to descend your selfe, to offend your stomach with the sight of the Larder, and happily to grease your Accoustrements. Having therefore received this bill, you shall have many Sallads stand on your table, as it were for blankes to the other more serviceable dishes: and according to the time of year, vary your fare, as Capon is a stirring meate sometime, Oysters are a swelling meate sometimes, Trowt a tickling meate sometimes, greene Goose, and Woodcock, a delicate meate sometimes, especially in a Taverne."[1]

Advice is likewise given the young gallant as to his choice of liquor:

> Let not your Physitian confine you to any one particular liquor: for as it is requisite that a Gentleman should not alwaies be plodding in one Art, but rather bee a general Scholler, (that is, to have a licke at all sorts of learning, and away) so 'tis not fitting a man should trouble his head with sucking at one Grape, but that he may be able (now there is generall peace) to drink any stranger drunke in his own element of drinke, or more properly in his own language."[2]

It was a custom at this time to send presents of wine from one room of the tavern to another. In The Merry Wives of Windsor, Bardolph informs Falstaff:

> There's one Master Brook below would fain
> Speak with you: and hath sent your worship
> A morning's draught of sack.
> (II, ii, 62).

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1. Dekker, Thomas, The Guls Hornbook and The Belman of London, 1804, p. 56.
2. Ibid, p. 57.

There were two expressions in common usage which referred to hospitality. "Jack Drum's entertainment was a phrase signifying ill treatment or turning an unwelcome guest out-of-doors. In The Wise Woman of Hogsdon by Dekker, Senoer inquires:

> And, Taber, are you appointed to give us Jack
> Drum's entertainment?
> (II, ii, 275).

The other expression, "dining with Duke Humphrey," meant not to dine at all. In The Rape of Lucrece by Heywood:

> The beggar to the Bush, then meet
> And with Sir Humphrey dine.
> (II, v, 365).

A very good picture of the idler's life in London is sketched in Davies's Epigrams:

> First, he doth rise at ten; and at eleven
> He goes to Gyls', where he doth eat till one;
> Then sees a play till six, and sups at seven:
> And after supper straight to bed is gone:
> And there till next day he doth remain,
> And then he dines, and sees a comedy,
> And then he sups, and goes to bed again:
> Thus round he runs without variety."[1]

The Court of Queen Elizabeth was characterized by formal and elaborate ceremony. Her love of intricate form is well illustrated in an account by a German traveller, Paul Hentzner, of the serving of the Queen's dinner:

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[1] H. D. Traill, op.cit., p. 780.

> A gentleman entered the room bearing a rod, and along with him another who had a table cloth, which after they had both kneeled three times, with the utmost veneration, he spread, upon the table, and after kneeling again, they both retired. Then came two others, one with the rod again, the other with a salt-cellar, a plate and bread; when they had kneeled, as the others had done, and placed what was brought upon the table, they too retired, with the same ceremonies performed by the first.
>
> At last came an unmarried lady (we were told she was a countess) and along with her a married one, bearing a tasting knife; the former was dressed in white silk, who, when she had prostrated herself three times in the most graceful manner, approached the table, and rubbed the plates with bread and salt, with as much care as if the Queen were present; when they had waited there a little time, the yeomen of the guard entered bare-headed cloathed in scarlet with a golden rose upon their backs, bringing in at each turn a course of four and twenty dishes, served in plate, most of it gilt; these dishes were received by a gentleman in the same order they were brought, and placed upon the table, while the lady taster gave to each of the guard a mouthful to eat, for fear of any poison. During the time that this guard, which consists of the tallest and stoutest men that can be found in all England, being carefully selected for this service, were bringing dinner, twelve trumpets and two kettle-drums made the hall ring for half-an-hour together. At the end of this ceremonial, a number of unmarried ladies appeared, who, with particular solemnity, lifted the meat off the table, and conveyed it into the Queen's inner and more private chamber, where after she had chosen for herself, and the rest goes to the ladies of the Court.[1]

It is interesting to remember in reading this tedious ceremony of the serving of the Queen's dinner, that she was not even within sight of all the ritual.

The royal banquets of Elizabeth differed from those of Henry VIII in that a pedantic air characterized them, classical fable and inventions of heathen mythology being mixed up in the pageantry of her feastings. "When she paid a visit to the house of one of her nobles, at the entering of the hall she was saluted by the 'Penates' and conducted to her privy chamber by 'Mercury.'

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[1] Frederick Hackwood, op.cit., pp. 127-128.
Also. Mary I. Curtis, England of Song and Story, New York, 1931, pp. 283-285.

At dinner select transformations of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* were exhibited in the confectionery. The icing of an immense 'plomb-cake,' would be embossed with a basso-relievo of the Fall of Troy,"[1] and mythological creations were constructed in sugar and custard to meet the Queen's pleasure.

Nicholls records that he was present at a banquet, after a sumptuous supper, where the destruction of Troy was

> livelie described in a marchpane pattern; there was alse a goodlie sight of hunters, with full crie of a kennel of hounds; Mercurie and Iris descending and ascending, from and to a high place, the tempests wherein it hailed small confects, rained rosewater, and snew an artificial kind of snow, all strange, marvellous, and abundant.[2]

This extravagance was satirized by Beaumont and Fletcher's *The Bloody Brother*, or *Rollo* in the speech of the cook:

> I'll make you a standing lake of white-broth,
> And pikes come plowing up the plums before them;
> Arion on a dolphin, playing Lachrymae;
> And a brave king herring with his oil and onion
> Crown'd with a lemon peel, his way prepared
> With his strong guard of pilchers.

[1] Frederick Hackwood, *op.cit.*, 125.
[2] *Ibid*, p. 129.

I'll bring you in the lady-lion-o'-veal,
With the long love she bore the Prince of Orange:
A full vine bending like an arch, and under,
The blown god Bacchus, sitting on a hogshead,
His altar here; before that, a plump vintner
Kneeling, and offering incense to his deity,
Which shall be only this, red sprats and pilchers.
(II, ii, 151).

CHAPTER II.

FOOD OF THE AGE OF ELIZABETH

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In the days of Queen Elizabeth all were "square eaters"[1] of solid food and "large tabling and belly cheer" were considered by foreigners as prevailing English characteristics.[2] William Harrison, however, notes a great improvement in over-eating and drunkenness, and speaks of the "moderate eating and drinking that is daily seen."[3] Which to a twentieth-century reader seems a comparative statement indeed!

Breakfasts were not eaten generally save by those who arose early. The majority of people were content with a little bread and butter washed down with a pot of ale. There are only a few references to breakfasts in the plays of this time. Eyre, the shoemaker in Dekker's *The Shoemaker's Holiday*, loudly complains:

> Is't seven a clock, and my men's breakfast not ready? (II, iii, 70).

In Green's *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay*, Lacy in-

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1. Beaumont and Fletcher, *op.cit.*, *Bonduca*, (II, iii, 50).
2. H. D. Traill, *op;cit.*, p. 558.
3. William Harrison, *op.cit.*, p. 59.

quires of the keeper:

> What have you fit for breakfast?
> (V, i, 295).

Circumstances in both instances seem to reveal that those demanding breakfast had risen at an early hour. Ordinarily a morning draught was considered sufficient to bridge the gap until dinner.

In Massinger's The Great Duke of Florence, Petrucchio, servant to the duke, says:

> Let us take them
> Our morning draught. Such as eat store of beef,
> Mutton, and capons, may preserve their healths
> With that thin composition called small beer,
> As, 'tis said, they do in England.....
> (II, ii, 233).

It is recorded, however, that Queen Elizabeth did eat breakfast and that her morning meal usually consisted of "fine wheaten loaves and cakes, ale, beer and wine, pottage made with mutton or beef, chines of beef (probably cold), rabbits and butter. In one of her progresses through the country, three oxen and one hundred and forty geese were furnished for the Sunday morning's breakfast for her retinue."[1] No mention is made of the fact, but perhaps Elizabeth and her courtiers had risen early too.

Dinner for the upper classes was the large meal of the day. It generally consisted of three courses: first meat; the second, game; the third, sweets. The last course,

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1. J. D. Andrews, op.cit., p. 5.
2. Also W. S. Davis, op.cit., p. 68.

called the banquet, was often served in an arbour or summer-house, from which, after time spent in conversation, the family adjourned until the supper hour.

The first course of an elaborate dinner usually began with a marshalling of the sallets in their proper order:

> The grand sallet, the green sallets, the boiled sallets- then some of the smaller compound sallets. Then followed the fricasses, collops, rashers, etc. The boiled meats which come next in order are to be accompanied by the broths, both simple and stewed. The simpler kind was in fact the water in which the joint or joints had been boiled with a handful of herbs added, while richer material of meat, calves' head or fish would be included in the stewed broth. All sorts of roast meats would next be placed on the table, beginning with the inevitable chine of beef, or a sirloin and leg of mutton, leading on to veal, a pig, or capons, a goose and a swan.
>
> Room on the table must be found for the hot baked meats, fallow-deer in a pasty, chicken or calves'-foot pie; also for the cold baked meats, pheasants, a turkey, goose, woodcock, etc., and the first course concludes carbonadoes, both simple and compound. Fresh water fish 'soused' was served with the sallets, fried fish with the fricassees, fish 'stewed hot, but dry,' among the roast meats, sea fish, among the baked meats, and broiled fish among the carbonadoes."1

The second course, another more than amply satisfying meal in itself, was to consist chiefly of poultry:

> First the lesser wild fowl, mallard, teal, snipe, etc., and then the lesser land fowl, pigeons, partridge, raits, chicken, young pea-hens. Then came the great wild fowl, bittern, crane, bustard and the greater land fowls, peacock(which, however, were beginning to be regarded as a decoration than a delicacy), pheasants and gulls. The second course closed with hot baked pies

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1. Rose Bradley, op.cit., p. 72.

> and tarts of marrow bone, quince and other luscious material, and cold baked pies of red-deer, hare, gammon of bacon, roe and wild boar, etc."[1]

The third course or banquet usually consisted of sweetmeats, marmelade, fruit, and marchpanes or marzipan, a mixture of sugar, ground almonds, and a little flour, flavored with rosewater.

This feast described above was more of a state banquet. For an ordinary dinner suitable for a "family not too large, Markham has said that "sixteen dishes of meat and sixteen dishes of salad and vegetables, would, if properly distributed, be sufficient."[2] Naturally, there were more simple meals served amongst the less wealthy country gentlemen and merchants. Harrison wrote:

> In number of dishes and changes of meat the nobility of England do most exceed. No day passes but they have not only beef, mutton, veal, kid, pork, coney, capon, pig, or so many of them as the season yields, but also fish in variety, venison, wild-fowl and sweet."[3]

He likewise mentions that gentlemen and merchants contented themselves with four, five or six dishes, of there be no guests, with three at most.[4]

The dinner that Young Lionel plans with his servant, Reignald, in The English Traveller by Heywood, is probably a typical example of the country-gentleman's home mid-day

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1. Rose Bradley, op.cit., pp. 72-73.
2. Henry T. Stephenson, The Elizabethan People, op.cit., pp. 397-398.
3. William Harrison, op.cit., p. 88.
4. Ibid, p. 88.

meal:

> A duck, a capon, a turkey, green plover, snipe,
> partridge, lark, cock, pheasant, a widgeon,
> caviare, sturgeon, anchoves, pickle-oysters,
> and a potato pie.
> (I, ii, 167).

Supper was usually a lighter repast. A very moderate one might consist of shoulder of mutton, fried rabbit, bread, ale or unlimited beer, and for each guest present, a pint of mild claret.[1] In King Henry IV, Part I, the bill of reckoning found in Falstaff's pocket shows that he had eaten for his supper:

a capon	2s, 2d
sauce	4d
sack, two gallons	5s, 8d
anchovies and sack after supper	2s, 6d
bread	ob(half a penny).

(III, i, 486).

Justice Shallow in King Henry IV, Part II, orders that William, cook, prepare him for supper:

> Some pidgeons, a couple of short-legged hens,
> a joint of mutton, and any pretty little tiny
> kickshaws. (V, i, 534).

If the menus of the rich seem excessive, it must be remembered that in the halls of the nobility it was still usual for the chief servants of the household to dine with the family and guests. The food that was left after the serving-men and other domestics had eaten, was given to

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[1] W. S. Davis, op.cit., p. 79.

"the poor which lie ready at the gates in great numbers to receive same."[1]

As can be noted from the menus of the period, the greater part of the diet of the upper classes consisted of flesh. By far the majority of references to food in the literature of the period concern meat - "portly meat, bearing, substantial stuff, and fit for hunger."[2] An amusing but dreadful description of the "massacre of meat" that took place at Young Lionel's feast, is retailed by Wincott's clown in The English Traveller.[3] Such a slaughter of fowl, fish and flesh is appalling to a modern reader.

Unfortunately, the fresh meat diet of the Elizabethans was interrupted in winter, since it was impossible to put down enough fodder to keep cattle fat and desirable from November until spring. Martlemas day(November 11th) was the day for the slaughter of animals. The beef was salted and smoke-dried in the farmhouse chimneys for winter. Countless are the allusions to soused or pickled meat and to dried or powdered meat.[4] Says George in The Pinner of Wakefield by George-a-Greene:

> Why then to honour George-a-Greene the more,
> Vouchsafe a piece of beef at my poor house;
> A piece of beef hung up since Martlemas....
> (II, iii, 369)

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1. William Harrison, op.cit., p. 88.
2. Beaumont and Fletcher, Works, op.cit., The Knight of the Burning Pestle, (II, iv, 359).
3. Heywood, op.cit., The English Traveller, (II, i, 175-177).
4. John Webster, op.cit., The Weakest Goeth to the Wall, (III, ii, 260).
   Also- Beaumont and Fletcher, The Sea Voyage, (III, i, 389).

Chough in A Fair Quarrel by Thomas Middleton says to Vapour:

> You rusty piece of Martlemas bacon!
> (IV, i, 260)

As William Harrison has recorded, beef, mutton, veal, lamb, kid, pork, coney(rabbit), capon, pig, venison, and geese were All included in the English diet. Beef was eaten with mustard in this period, for in The Taming of the Shrew, Grumio questions Katharine:

> What say you to a piece of beef and mustard?
> (IV, iii, 23).

The English love of mutton with capers extends back to the time of Shakespeare, for in Twelfth Night Sir Andrew remarks:

> Faith, I can cut a caper.
> Sir Toby: An I can cut the mutton to 't.
> (I, iv, 129).

Roast pig was a delicacy particularly enjoyed at St. Bartholomew's Fair, the scenes of which are described at length by Ben Jonson in his play of the same name. There pig "roasted with fire o' juniper and rosemary branches," was the food of the day. Veal, eaten with "green sauce" seems to have been prized as a good dish. Allwit in A Chaste Maid of Cheapside "longs especially for veal and green sauce."[1] Green sauce is mentioned with other meats as well. It was made from sorrell, crushed gooseberries, wine, butter, and the ever-present sugar.[1]

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[1] Thomas Middleton, op.cit., (II, ii, 197).

Roast capon and chicken were favorite supper dishes. Both in Shakespeare and Beaumont and Fletcher plays, "short-legged hens" seem to have been preferred. "Cold hen's a pretty meat, sir," exclaims Incubo in Love's Pilgrimage by Beaumont and Fletcher.[2] In fact, when one reads through the description of meals both great and small and realizes the place that meat held in the English diet of the 17th century, the words of Calipso in The Guardian appear to have been the expression of a national sentiment:

> 'Tis a point of folly
> To be coy when meat is set before you!
> (III, v, 233, Massinger).

Cullis is a broth that is mentioned a great many times in the plays. According to a note, "cullis was a strong and savoury broth of boiled meat, strained, for debilitated persons, sometimes made with a piece of gold amongst its ingredients."[3] Probably this was the potent brew that Furnace, cook, mixed for his young master in A New Way to Pay Old Debts by Massinger:

> Furnace: ....the ingredients are cordial,
> And this the true elixir; it hath boiled
> Since midnight for you. 'Tis the quintessence
> Of five cocks of the game, ten dozen of sparrows
> Knuckles of veal, potatoe-roots and marrow,
> Coral and ambergris.......

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[1] George H. Ellwanger, The Pleasures of the Table, New York, 1902, p. 278.
[2] Beaumont and Fletcher, Love's Pilgrimage, (I, i, 312.
[3] John Webster, op.cit., Vol. 2, p. 196.

> .....I warrant you, though your journey's long,
> You may ride on the strength of this till to-
> morrow morning.[1]
> (III, iii, 150).

Brewis was bread soaked in gravy. It was probably used as a meat extender by the poorer people. Petillus, the Roman captain, calls the English soldiers in Bonduca:[2]

> Ye eating rascals whose gods are beef and
> brewis! (I, ii, 22).

Fish is never spoken of with the same ardor as is meat in Elizabethan literature. In order to help the national industries, fishery was encouraged by the legislative enforcements of fasts. Records in The Elizabethan Journals indicate that the city fathers had some difficulty in enforcing the statutes prohibiting the sale and use of meat on fast days.[3]

In Queen Elizabeth's time the papists were held to be enemies of the government. "Hence the proverbial phrase of 'He's an honest man, and eats no fish,' to signify that he's a friend to the government and a protestant."[4]

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1. Also Massinger, The Guardian, (I, i, 198).
   Beaumont and Fletcher, Bonduca, (IV, ii, 84.)
   Ibid, Knight of the Burning Pestle, (II, iv, 357).
2. Also, Beaumont and Fletcher, The Prophetess, (I, iii, 251)
   Thomas Dekker, The Shoemaker's Holiday, (V, iii, 76).
3. G. B. Harrison, A Second Elizabethan Journal, New York, 1931, pp. 28 - 43.
4. Beaumont and Fletcher, op.cit., The Woman Hater, note p. 95.

In King Lear one of Kent's reasons for self-recommendation is that he "eats no fish."[1] Julia in The Woman Hater by Beaumont and Fletcher exclaims:

> He should not have eaten under my roof for twenty pounds; and surely I did not like him when he call'd for fish.
> (III, i, 56).

In The Dutch Courtesan by Marston:

> I trust I am none of the wicked that eat fish a Fryday.[2]

A large number of derogatory comparisons using fish are to be noticed in the plays. Says shoemaker Eyre in The Shoemaker's Holiday by Dekker:

> You soused gurnet! Away!
> (II, v, 24).

> You dog-skin-faced rogue, pilcher, you Poor-John![3]

In I Henry IV, Falstaff says to the Prince:

> ....you may buy land now as cheap as stinking mackerel.
> (II, iv, 394).

A fast dinner of ceremony shows the wide variety of fish available at the time:

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1. Shakespeare, King Lear, (I, iv, p. 1059).
2. Beaumont and Fletcher, op.cit., The Woman Hater, (note p. 96.)
3. Beaumont and Fletcher, op.cit., Love's Cure, (II, 1, 67).

First Course

Oysters if in season
1. Butter and eggs
2. Barley pottage
3. Stewed oysters
4. Buttered eggs on toast
5. Spinach sallet boil'd
6. Boil'd Rochet or Gurnet
7. A jule of Ling
8. Stewed Carp
9. Oyster chewits
10. Boil'd Pike
11. Roast Eels
12. Haddocks and fresh Cod or Whitings
13. Eeel or Carp Pie
14. Made dish of Spinach
15. Salt Eels
16. Souc'd Turbut

Second Course

1. Fried Soles
2. Stewed Oysters in Scallop Shells
3. Fried Smelts
4. Conger's Head boil'd.
5. Oyster pie of Potatoes
6. A Spitchcock of Eels
7. Quince Pie or Tarts royal
8. Buttered Crabs
9. Fried Flounders
10. Jules of Fresh Salmon
11. Fried Turbut
12. Cold Salmon Pie
13. Fried Skirrets
14. Souc't Conger
15. Lobster
16. Sturgeon[1]

Certainly there was no dearth of a selection.

Doubtless the English missed in fish the heartiness of meat. They may have believed, as did Philip II of Spain when he gave as a reason for not eating fish, that "They are nothing but element congealed, or a jelly of water."[2]

As fish was not highly esteemed and as it was very cheap, it was the mainstay in the diet of the poor. Stock-fish (dried cod-fish) and poor-John (salted hake) were eaten the year around.

Vegetables occupied a very insignificant place in the Elizabethan menu, although the use of "herbs" had increased since the days of Henry VIII, when vegetables were "supposed to be a food more fit for hogs and savage beasts than for Christian men."[1] They were mainly used as "sallets" to supplement meats. Dekker in _The Guls Hornbook_ calls sallets "blankes to the other more serviceable dishes."[2]

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[1] J. C. Andrews, op.cit., p. 98.
[2] Ibid. p. 98.

Gardening, which had practically passed away since the Wars of the Roses and the dissolution of the monasteries, was being revived. Cabbages had recently come into England from Holland; and carrots, lettuce, rhubarb, artichokes, cauliflower, potatoes, and tomatoes had been imported since the beginning of the 16th century.

A glance at a menu for Christmas day as given by Robert May in his book, _The Accomplished Cook, or The Art and Mastery of Cookery_, published for the third time in 1671, shows the unimportant role that vegetables played in the dietary of the period:

A Bill for Christmas Day and how to put the Meat in order:

1. A coller of Brawn
2. Stewed Broth of Mutton marrow bones
3. A grand Sallet
4. A pottage of caponets
5. A breast of veal in fleffade
6. A boild partridge
7. A chine of beef, or sirloin roast
8. Minced pies
9. A Jegote of mutton with anchove sauce
10. A made dish of sweet breads
11. A swan roast
12. A pasty of venison

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[1] W. S. Davis, _op.cit._, pp. 81-82.
[2] Thomas Dekker, _The Guls Hornbook_, _op.cit._, p. 56.

13. A kid with a pudding in his belly
14. A steak pie
15. A hanch of venison rosted
16. A turkey roast and stuck with cloves
17. A made dish of chickens in puff paste
18. Two brongeese roasted, one larded
19. Two large capons, one larded
20. A custard[1]

"Sallets" were of two types - simple and grand or compound. The simple kind was generally made of a single "herb" or vegetable, boiled and served with vinegar, oil and sugar. A grand "sallet" was a mixture of "young Buds and knots of all manner of whilesome Herbs at their first springing," mixed with red sage, mint, lettuce, violets, marigolds, spinach, to which on great occasions were added almonds, raisins, figs, capers, olives, currants, and slices of oranges and lemons. Rose leaves were also often used.[2] Both types of "sallets" were more regarded as decorations than foods for serious eating.

In *Bonduca*, Beaumont and Fletcher, Petillius inquires scornfully:

> Are sallads fit for soldiers?
> (I, ii, 26).

In Dekker's *Northward Hoe*, Bellamont states:

> ......he that lives upon Sallades without Mutton, feeds like an Oxe (for hee eates grasse, you know......
> (I, i, 19).

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1. Robert May, *The Accomplished Cook*, London, 1671, p. 12-A.
2. Rose Bradley, *op.cit.*, p. 92.

In *The Sun's Darling* by John Ford:

> Can you feed upon salads and tansies?
> Eat like an ass upon grass every day?
> (II, 1,)

Onions and garlic appear to have been the favourite vegetables of the period. Onions, cultivated in cottage gardens in the reign of Henry III and commended by Piers Plowman,[1] were used in many ways other than as medicine and as seasoning. In *Volpone* by Jonson occurs a very curious passage, in which Sir Politick-Would-Be tells of his tests to determine whether a ship newly arrived from Syria be "guilty of the plague:"

> ....and where they used
> To lie out forty, fifty days, sometimes,
> About the Lazaretto, for their trial;
> I'll save that charge and loss unto the merchant,
> And in an hour clear the doubt.
> ....It will cost me in onions
> Some thirty livres-one pound sterling.
> Besides my waterworks; for this I do, sir.
> First I bring in your ship 'twixt two brick walls;
> But those the state shall venture. On the one
> I strain me a fair tarpauling, and in that
> I stick my onions, cut in halves; the other
> Is full of loopholes, out of which I thrust
> The nose of my bellows; and those bellows
> I keep, with waterworks, in perpetual motion,
> Which is the easiest matter of a hundred.
> Now, sir, your onion, which doth naturally
> Attract the infection, and your bellows blowing
> The air upon him, will show instantly,
> By his changed colour, if there be contagion;
> Or else remain as fair as at the first.
> (IV, 1, 89).

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[1] H. B. Traill, *op.cit.*, p. 489.

Onions seem to have been used in the theatre for a ready supply of tears. In The Taming of the Shrew;

> If the boy have not a woman's gift
> To rain a shower of commanded tears,
> An onion will do well for such a shift,
> Which in a napkin being close convey'd
> Shall in despite enforce a watery eye.
> (Induction ii).

Also in Anthony and Cleopatra:

> ......the tears live in an onion that should
> water this sorrow.
> (I, ii, 176).

Evidently onions and garlic had the same potency as now, for in A Midsummer's Night Dream, Bottom gives this warning to his fellows;

> ....and most, dear actors, eat no onions
> nor garlic,
> For we are to utter sweet breath.
> (IV, i, 162).

Sly in John Webster's The Malcontent, indulges in a little whimsy:

> I have an excellent thought. If some fifty of the Grecians that were crammed in the horse's belly had eaten garlic, do you not think the Trojans might have smelt out their knavery?
> (I, ii, 145).

In Westward Hoe by John Webster:

> Doll to Bellamont: If you have a sweet breath,
> you may draw nearer.
> Bellamont: I am no friend to garlic, madam.
> (III, i, 215).

An unknown poet in The Philosopher's Banquet, 1633, grows facetious on the subject of onions and garlic:

> If Leekes you like, but do their smelle dis-leeke,
> Eat Onyons, and you shall not smelle the Leeke;
> If you of onyons would the scent expelle,
> Eat Garlicke, that shall drowne the Onyons'
> smelle.[1]

Both onions and garlic appear to have been eaten raw along with bread or cheese. States Hotspur in I Henry IV:

> I had rather live
> With cheese and garlic in a windmill, far,
> Than feed on cates........
> (III, i, 162).

Radishes with salt commonly accompanied wine. In Every Man in His Humour by Jonson:

> We will have a bunch of radish and salt to
> taste our wine.
> (II, i, 40).

William Harrison writes of the new vegetables out of strange countries which the nobility "adventure upon....some of which are dangerous and hurtful such as mushrooms."[2] Along the same line, Gerard's Herball quotes Galen, who has affirmed that "mushrooms are all very cold and moist, and therefore to approach unto a venomous and murthering facultie, and ingender a clammy, pituitous, and cold nutriment if they are eaten. To conclude, few of them

[1] George H. Ellwanger, op.cit., p. 106.
[2] William Harrison, op.cit., p. 26.

are good to be eaten, and most of them do suffocate and strangle the eater. Therefore I give my advice unto those that love such strange and new fangled meates, to beware of licking honey among thornes, least the sweetnesse of the one do not countervaile the sharpnesse and pricking of the other."[1]

If gardening had been neglected before the time of Elizabeth, fruit-growing in England had been encouraged. Apples and pears grew in great variety, as did plums, peaches and cherries. During the Tudor period orchards were supplied with apricot, almond, peach, fig and cornel trees, and there were even efforts made to grow oranges and lemons.[2] Fruits are frequently mentioned in the plays, especially as part of the sweet course at dinner.

In The Merry Wives of Windsor, Evans is made to say:

> I will make an end of my dinner: there's pippins
> and cheese to come.
> (I, iii, 339).

Apple-johns, a kind of apple that kept two years but which became wrinkled and withered, are referred to several times. Says Falstaff:

> I am withered like an old apple-John

In II Henry IV, Shallow speaks of these apples:

> ...we will eat a last year's pippin....with
> a dish of caraways. (V, iii, 147).

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1. John Gerard, op.cit., p. 248.
2. William Harrison, op.cit., Forewords, p. xxxiv.

Prunes were not held in high esteem. Falstaff in _I Henry IV_, says accusingly:

> There is no more faith in thee than in a
> stewed prune.
> (III, iii, 129).

For some reason, prunes were always associated with brothels in this period and often dishes of them were placed in the windows.

All food was highly seasoned with spices. Nutmegs, cloves, ginger, cinnamon and many other kinds of spice were credited with medicinal value. In Gervase Markham's _Maister-peece, or Of Cures Chururgicall_, cinnamon is named as comfortable in all inward sicknesses.[1] Cloves he writes are "very comfortable to the inward parts."[2]

Nutmegs were sometimes gilded and carried as love philtres. In Jonson's masque, _The Gipsies Metamorphosed_, Meg wails:

> And I have lost an enchanted nutmeg, all gilded
> over, was enchanted at Oxford for me, to put
> in my sweet-heart's ale a' mornings.[3]

Mention of gilded nutmegs and ginger also occurs in _The Affectionate Shepherd_, 1594, and in other poems of the period.[4]

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1. Gervase Markham, _Markham's Maister-peece_, London, 1631,562.
2. _Ibid_, p. 563.
3. Jonson, _op.cit._, p. 404.
4. Ibid, _op.cit._, note p. 405.

Merrythought of The Knight of the Burning Pestle claims that:

> Nutmegs, and ginger, cinnamon, and cloves,
> Gave me this jolly red nose.
> (I, iii, 171).

Of all the "made dishes" on the Elizabethan table, pies of all kinds were the most popular. Every creature of the sky, the sea and the land appears to have been put into crust. Not only was almost every specie of the animal kingdom made into a pasty, but the vegetable realm too was well represented. After a reading of the Elizabethan cookery books, one concludes that besides the inevitable sugar and spice, raisins and dates were customary ingredients in all pies. In Shakespeare's Troilus and Cressida is an allusion to the ever-present date:

> Ay, a minced man: and then to be baked
> With no date in the pie, for then the
> man's date is out.
> (I, ii, 279).

Lady Capulet in Romeo and Juliet commands the nurse:

> Hold, take these keys, and fetch more spices,
> nurse.
> Nurse: They call for dates and quinces in the
> pastry.
> (I, iv, 1).

When the pie crust for the filling covered the sides and the bottom of the dish as well as the top, the pasty was then called a "coffin." An old recipe gruesomely instructs how to prepare a chicken pie:

> To bake a chicken pye, after you have trust your chicken, then broken their legs, and brest bones, and raised your crust of the best paste, you shall lay them in the coffin close together, with their bodyes full of butter: then lay upon them, and underneath them, currents, great Raisins, Prunes, Cinamon, Sugar, whole mace and salt: then cover all with great store of Butter, and so bake it: after powre into it the same liquor you did in your Marrow-bone pye, with yolkes of two or three Eggs beaten amongst it, and so serve it forth.[1]

The liquor referred to is white wine, rose-water, sugar, cinnamon, and vinegar mixed together!

So into the "coffins" went bird, beast and fish; fruit, vegetables and custard. In The Taming of the Shrew, Petruchio looks with disfavor upon Katharine's new chapeau:

> Why, thou say'st true: it is a paltry cap,
> A custard-coffin, a bauble, a silken pie.
> (IV, iii, 81).

In Titus Andronicus is a more macabre reference:

> Titus: I'll make a paste,
> And of paste a coffin I will rear
> And make two pasties of your shameful heads....
> (V, iii, 188).

It is said that the word coffin was in ill repute under Elizabeth:

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1. Sir Kenelm Digby, The Closet of the Eminently Learned Sir Kenelm Digby, Opened, London, 1677, p. 65.

> The good queen as the call for one to inclose the dearest morsel of the earth became more pressing, grew more solicitious to exclude all thoughts of it. She would chide her lords if they mentioned the coffin of a pie before her, and would make them say crust, for she loved not words of sad omen.[1]

Tarts differed from pies or pasties in having a top crust twisted into an open-work pattern. Petruchio in criticising Katharine's gown, scoffs:

> What's this? a sleeve? 'tis like a demi-cannon:
> What, up and down, carved like an apple-tart?
> (IV, iii, 86).

Queen Elizabeth was often served with a large pie, from which, when opened, flew a covey of birds. Thus literally and historically did the nursery rhyme of the "four and twenty black birds" come true. In Beaumont and Fletcher's Rollo, or The Bloody Brother is proof that such a pie existed:

> ....and a dozen of larks
> Rise from the dish and sing all suppertime.
> (II, ii, 151).

In an old MS book of cookery has been found a novel and simple method of leavening the "pye:"

> And now cover the coffyn, but save a littel hole, to blow into the coffyn, with thy mouth a gode blast; and sodenly stoppe, that the wynde abyde withynne to ryse up the coffyn that it falle nott down.[2]

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1. Ben Jonson, op.cit., The Devil is an Ass, note p. 209.
2. William Shakespeare, The Taming of The Shrew, ed. by W. J. Rolfe, New York, 1898, note p. 163.

And what a fascinating picture it makes! A portly Elizabethan cook, his fat cheeks purple with effort, as he blows "a gode blast" into the pie to make the coffin "ryse up!"

A common oath of this period was the expression "by cook and pie."[1] Says the page to Slender in The Merry Wives of Windsor:

> By cook and pie! You shall not choose, sir.
> (I, iii, 14).

Some think that the oath had its origin in the magnificent feasts of chivalry when a roasted peacock was presented to each knight who then made his chosen vow.[2] Roasted peacocks, used often at feasts by the Normans and nobles of the medieval period, were comparatively rare in Elizabethan England save on very festive occasions. It was customary to remove the plumage from the bird before roasting. Afterwards, the skin and feathers were sewed back on the cooked bird and its comb was gilded. Sometimes the peacock was made into a pie, at one end of which the head appeared above the crust in all its plumage, its head richly gilded; at the other end the gorgeous tail was rampant. In the 16th century pictures of the cock and pie were common signs for ale houses.

[1] Shakespeare, II Henry IV, (IV, i, 1).
The Tempest, (V, i).
[2] Wm. J. Rolfe, notes to The Tempest, p. 157.

The saying "to eat humble pie" appears to have originated from the practice of calling the liver, kidneys, and other organs of the deer "Humbles" - which portions always fell to the keeper, and hence were frequently made into pie. To eat humble pie then, was to eat not of the best but of the inferior parts of the deer.[1]

Of all the staggering variety of pies mentioned in the plays, red-deer pies[2], partridge pies,[3] oyster pies,[4] pippin pies,[5] warden (pear) pies,[6] turkey pies,[7] potato pie,[8] egg pie,[9] and even parsnip-pie,[10] herring pie seems to have been a universal favorite. The subject of pies cannot be dropped without a glance at a recipe for herring pie found in The *Accomplished Cook.*

> Take salt herrings, being watered; wash them between your hands, and you shall loose the fish from the skin; take off the skin whole and lay them in a dish; then have a pound of almond-paste, two of the milts or roes, five or six dates, some grated manchet, sugar, sack, rosewater and saffron; make the composition somewhat stiff, and fill the skins; put butter in the bottom of your pie, lay on the herring, and on them dates, gooseberries, currants, barberries, and butter, close it up and bake it; being baked, liquor it with butter, verjuice, and sugar.[11]

[1] Robert Greene, *op.cit.*, *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay*, note p. 348.
[2] Shakespeare, *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, (I, ii, 115).
[3] Beaumont and Fletcher, *The Double Marriage*, (V, i, 109).
[4] Jonson, *Cynthia's Revels*, (II, i, 199).
[5] Beaumont and Fletcher, *The Elder Brother*, (III, iii, 430)
[6] Shakespeare, *Winter's Take*, (IV, 3, 43)
[7] Beaumont and Fletcher, *The Beggar's Bush*, (IV, v, 195).
[8] Thomas Heywood, *The English Traveller*, (I, ii, 167).
[9] Dekker, *Northward Hoe*, (I, i, 18).
[10] Middleton, *The Witch*, (I, i, 121).
[11] J. C. Andrews, *op.cit.*, p. 95.

As has been before stated, the banquet or last course of the dinner was made up of sweet dishes. Gaspare requests in The Witch by Middleton:

> Please you withdraw yourself to yong private parlour;
> I'll send you venison, custard, parsnip-pie
> For banqueting stuff, as suckets, jellies, sirups.
> (I, i, 121).

In The Taming of the Shrew the function of the banquet is pointed out:

> My banquet is to close our stomachs up
> after our great good cheer.
> (V, ii, 9).

In Dekker's The Witch of Edmonton:

> Oh, sweet bits! banqueting stuff.
> (III, i, 428).

From A Chaste Maid of Cheapside:

> What store of sugar, biscuits, comfits, and caraways,
> marmalade and marchpane, with all kinds of sweet
> suckets and superfluous banqueting stuff.......
> (Dekker-Bachelor's Banquet)[1]

Everyone was extravagantly fond of sugar as well as meat. Elaborate pastries were features of large banquets, as well as marchpanes moulded into fantastic shapes. Mention is made in Beaumont and Fletcher's Wit Without Money to the "building of marchpanes." Actually many of them were architectural achievements. Marchpane was the prized con-

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1. Dekker, Bachelor's Banquet, note p. 211.

fection of the day. The servants in Romeo and Juliet speak of it during preparations for the banquet:

> Good thou, save me a piece of marchpane.
> (I, v, 9).

In The Great Duke of Florence by Massinger, Petronella says:

> Here's a castle
> Of march-pane, too.
> (IV, ii, 272.)

And in Middleton's Women Beware Women there is a "colt of marchpane."[1]

Besides the marchpanes there were custards of every size, shape and kind, "fifty-angled" and plain. In Beaumont and Fletcher's A Wife For a Month, appears a castle custard, a dish that was always part of the celebration of triumph day:

> With castle-custards..........
> And their artillery..........
> (Prologue, p. 137).

Castruccio in Beaumont and Fletcher's The Double Marriage complains of the meal proferred him:

> .....no marchpanes, custard-royals, subtilities?
> Am I a plough-man,
> That you pop me up with porridge? Hang the
> cooks! (III, v, 1).

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[1] Thomas Middleton, op.cit., Women Beware Women, (III, ii, 272).

Subtilities, figures and devices, originally made of sugar or pastry, and later of painted cardboard, were a survival of the medieval dining table. They merely represented the desire for color, which partly in Elizabethan times had its outlet in the coloring of food with saffron and other dyes.

Custards were customary at city feasts; and in earlier days when the City kept a fool, it was expected that at public entertainments he leap into an immense bowl of custard set for the purpose.

> He may perchance, in tail of a sheriff's dinner
> Skip with a rhyme on the table, from New-nothing,
> And take his Almain-leap into the custard.
> (Jonson-The Devil is An Ass, (I, i, 14).

Likewise in All's Well That Ends Well, Lafeu chides Parolles with having "run into his displeasure:"

> You have made shift to run into 't, boots and spurs and all, like him that leaped into the custard.
> (II, v, 39).

Besides the marchpanes and custards, there were wet and dry suckets or sweetmeats, kissing comfits,(evidently perfumed sweetmeats of some sort), jellies, marmalades, all sorts of biscuits and fruits, and often sliced oranges and lemons to make up the sweet course of the meal.

At the merchants' great feasts, Harrison notes that the dishes of the banquet "include jellies of all colours, mixed with a variety in the representation of sundry flowers, herbs, trees, forms of beasts, fish, fowls, and fruits, and thereunto marchpane wrought with no small curiosity, tarts of divers hues, and sundry denominations, conserves of old fruits, foreign and home-bred, suckets, codinacs, marmalades, marchpane, sugar-bread, florentines... etc."[1]

It is necessary to quote a description of a banquet served to the Queen at Elvethan to give a clear picture of the magnificence of hospitality offered by her nobles.

> After supper, the two delights prepared were curious fireworks and a sumptuous banquet. During the time these fireworks were being watched from the pond, two hundred of the Earl's gentlemen served the banquet, all in glass and silver, every one carrying so many dishes that the whole number amounted to a thousand: and there were to light them in their way a hundred torchers. The dishes in the banquet were:-The Queen's arms and the arms of the Nobility in sugar work; men, women, castles, forts, ordnance, drummers, trumpeters, soldiers of all sorts, lions, unicorns, bears, horses, damsels, bulls, rams, dogs, tigers, elephants, antelopes, dromedaries, apes, and all the other beasts: eagles, falcons, cranes, bustards, heronshaws, bitterns, pheasants, partridges, quails, larks, sparrows, pigeons, cocks, owls and all birds; snakes, adders, vipers, frogs, toads, and all kinds of worms; mermaids, whales, dolphins, congers, sturgeons, pikes, carps, breams, and all sorts of fishes. All of these were in sugar work, some in standing dishes, some in flat work. There were also in flat sugar work and marchpanes, grapes, oysters, mussels, cockles, periwinkles, crabs, lobsters, as well as apples, pears and plums of all kinds, preserves, suckets, jellies, leaches, marmalades, pastes, and comfits.[2]

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1. William Harrison, op.cit., p. 92.
2. John Lyly, Works, op.cit.,pp. 437-8.

In the plenty of the Elizabethan age, poor men were beginning to look for more meat, and to expect a greater variety than before. In the past a serving man was well content with a piece of beef to last the whole week long, if there was sufficient bread and beer to fill out the vacancies. Everywhere, the poor made the greater part of their scanty meals on poor-John and other salt fish.

For the countrymen, fowls, pigeons, and all sorts of game was cheap and easily obtained. Milk, butter, and cheese, which were known as white meats, "were wont to be accounted one of the chief stays throughout the island, and are now," Harrison writes, "reputed as food only for the inferior sort." Many poor shepherds lived on nothing but bread, "milk, sour milk, and whey."[1]

In A Looking Glasse for London and England by Robert Greene, Alcon, a poor man whose cow is about to be taken from him by the usurer, cries:

> Why, sir, alas, my cow is a commonwealth to me! for first, sir, she allows me, my wife, and son, for to banquet ourselves withal, butter, cheese, whey, milk and butter-milk.
>
> ....
>
> No cow, sir! alas, that word 'no cow' goes as cold to my heart as a draught of small beer in a frosty morning! 'No cow,' sir! alas, alas, Master Usurer, what shall become of me, my wife, and my poor child? (I, iii, 93).

Plowmen and artisans on Thursday and Sunday nights sometimes had cheap necks and points of beef on their table, but the remainder of the time their diet consisted of fish, "white meat," and a little bacon.[1] Massinger in The City Madam speaks of folk in like circumstance:

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[1] H. D. Traill, op.cit., p. 223.

> .....his family fed on roots and livers,
> And necks of beef on Sundays.....
> (I, i, 408).

As contrasted with the fine wheaten bread or manchets of the upper classes, the loaves of the poor consisted of barley and rye, often supplemented when times were hard, by beans, peas, oats and even acorns. Sometimes these loaves were referred to as "horsebread" since horses at this time were often given their provender made into bread. Says Harrison: "Sometimes the poor labouring man is driven to content himself with horse corn, beans, peas, oats, tares, and lentils, and therefore it is a true proverb that 'Hunger setteth his first foot into the horse-manger.'"[2] Ben Jonson, in his Sordido, makes reference to:

> You thread-bare, horse-bread-eating rascals....
> (III, ii, 188).

Sometimes the bread of the poor was called "cheate." The Earl of Oxford in writing of the labouring man said:

> The manchet fine falles not unto his share,
> On coarser cheat his hungry stomacke feeds.[3]

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[1] W. S. Davis, op.cit., p. 81.
[2] Ben Jonson, The Masque of Augurs, note p. 433.
[3] Ibid, p. 433.

Also in Whitney's Emblems, 1586, is an allusion of the same typ :

> The manchet fine, on high estates bestowe,
> The coarser cheate, the baser sort must prove.[1]

"The very poor, if they had an acre of ground wherein to set cabbages, parsnips, radishes, carrots, melons, pumpkins, lived on such-like stuff as their principal food."[2] It is interesting to note that the poor man's diet, consisting as it did of milk products, vegetables and coarse grains, was much better balanced from a nutritional standpoint that that of the rich man. If records were available, a fascinating study could be made by comparing the afflictions that beset the too-amply nourished with the diseases visited upon those of more meager fare.

The more prosperous country folk enjoyed such bucolic desserts as those in Jonson's The Sad Shepherd:

> Fall to your cheese-cakes, curds, and clouted
>   cream,
> Your fools, your flawns.
> (I, i, 273).

Fools were gooseberries boiled and eaten with cream; while flawns were custards. Gingerbread, or "comfortable" bread was also an unsophisticated country cake.[3]

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[1] Ben Jonson, The Masque of Augurs, note p. 433.
[2] H. B. Traill, op.cit., p. 539.
[3] Ben Jonson, Bartholomew Fair, (II, i, 49).

That's meat and drink to me! (*As You Like It*, V, i, 11).

In an age when men's thoughts dwelt so steadily on the creature comforts of life, it is to be expected that many of the proverbial expressions of the day concerned food. So filled is the literature with these diverting and pertinent colloquialisms, that it is exceedingly hard to pick and choose. Sometimes the sayings are topical, with the meaning obscure, but more often the allusions are amusingly self-evident.

Since roast beef was beloved by the English, it is natural to find it represented in the common expressions of the day. "Oh, my sweet beef!" says Falstaff to the hostess of the Boar's Head.[1] "Farwell, and cry not roast beef," which means to boast of anything you have so as that another shall take it from you, is found in Beaumont and Fletcher's *The Little French Lawyer*.[2] "You civil dish of sliced beef!" is used by Sebastian in *Monsieur Thomas*, Beaumont and Fletcher, in speaking to his son.[3]

Since chicken was a dish held in high favor, "chicken" used in referring to a person is a term of affection. "Be very merry, chicken," says Tony in *A Wife for a Month*.[4] "Alas, poor chicken!" in *Benduca*.[5]

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1. Shakespeare, *I. Henry IV.* (III, iii, 198).
2. (II, iii, 164).
3. IV, iv, 519).
4. Beaumont and Fletcher, *op.cit.*,(III, iii, 194).
5. *Ibid*, *Benduca*, (II, ii, 39).

Terms involving fish were generally insulting. "You dog-skin-faced rogue, pilcher, you Poor-John! "[1] "You soused conger."[2] "O poor shrimp!"[3]- "Kiss like two Kentish oysters;"[4] "As ready for a reward as an oyster for a fresh tide;"[5] and "I'll make no more conscience to undo thee than to undo an oyster," were expressions dealing with sea foods.

Eggs and dairy products are well represented. "I'll walk on eggs this pace;"[6] "Will you take eggs for money?" or "Will you let yourself be duped?"[7] and "To have eggs on the spit!"[8] which means to have business to attend to, conclude the egg group of phrases. "I know what's what. I know on which side my bread is buttered," appears in John Ford's *The Lady's Trial.* "To sweat like a butterbox,"[9] was a common expression, as was "an honest butterbox,"[10] meaning a Dutchman. "I looked pale as a new cheese to see him!"[11] says Sybil in *The Shoemaker's Holiday*, and "You Banbury cheese!"[12] cries Falstaff to Slender in *The Merry Wives of Windsor*.

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1. Beaumont and Fletcher, *op.cit.*, *Love's Cure,* (II, ii, 416).
2. Dekker, *The Shoemaker's Holiday*, (I, iv, 24).
3. John Webster, *The Famous History of Sir Thomas Wyat*, p.25.
4. Thomas Nashe, *The Unfortunate Traveller*, p. 34.
5. Greene, *James the Fourth*, (V, vi).
6. Heywood, *A Woman Killed with Kindness*, (IV, v, 52).
7. Shakespeare, *Winter's Tale*, (I, ii, 161)
8. Ben Jonson, *Every Man in his Humour*, (III, vi, 47).
9. Beaumont and Fletcher, *A Wife for a Month*, (II, vi, 179).
10. Webster, *Westward Hoe,* (II, iii, 103).
11. Dekker, *The Shoemaker's Holiday*, (II, v, 24).
12. Shakespeare, *op.cit.*,(I, i,128).

Woodcock was a popular term used for a person utterly brainless,[1] as was "You custard pate! to indicate a fool.[2] Those with "Wits as thick as Tewkesbury mustard,"[3] would also not be known as too intelligent. "Here's an almond for a parrot!"[4] which meant a trifle for the amusement of a silly person, appears several times in the plays.

Says Slipper in Greene's *James the Fourth*: "A good word...is like a warm caudle to a cold stomach."[5]

"Mushroom" was used to indicate a newly and quickly made gentleman. "That we should stoop to such a mushroom!"[6] is found in Massinger's *Duke of Milan*. Other expressions of scorn for counterfeit gentlemen occur in Webster's *The Duchess of Malfi*: "A count! he's a mere stick of sugar candy!"[7]- and in *A Fair Quarrel* by Middleton: "Thou outside of man! thou cinnamon tree, that but they bark hast nothing good about thee!"[8]

Other expressions for unmanly gentlemen include: "You quailing grape!"[9] from John Ford's *The Broken Heart*; "Thou milk-sop! Thou man of marchpane!" from *The Knight of Malta*; and "He melts like marmalade!"[10]

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1. Shakespeare, *All's Well That Ends Well*,(IV, 3, 88).
2. Beaumont and Fletcher, *Rollo*, (III, ii, 187).
3. Shakespeare, *II Henry IV*, (II, iv, 262).
4. Dekker, *The Honest Whore*, (V, ii, 183).
5. Greene, *James the Fourth*, (III, i, 89).
6. (II, i, 29).
7. (III, i, 202).
8. (III, ii, 249).
9. (IV, iii, 153).
10. Beaumont and Fletcher, *The Chances*, (II, iii, 47).

Phrases used to express an involvement of affairs are: "My hand was in the pie, my lord."[1] says Orlando to the Duke in Dekker's *Honest Whore*. Vows Penelope Whorehound in the same play: "I was never in this pickle before."[2] "What a cold pickle, and that none of the sweetest, do I find my poor self in!" complains Malfort in Beaumont and Fletcher's *The Lovers' Progress*.[3]

"You need not be so crustie; you are not so hard bak't,"[4] declares Silena of *Mother Bombie* by John Lyly. "You pasty footed rascal!"[5] from *Northward Hoe* describes a petty rogue. "My brains will work without barm,"[6] from *The Humorous Lieutenant*. Barm was the old word for yeast.

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1. Dekker, *The Honest Whore*, (V, ii, 274).
2. *Ibid.* (V, ii, 281).
3. (IV, iii, 513).
4. John Lyly, *Mother Bombie*, (II, iii, 190).
5. John Webster, *Northward Hoe*, (I, ii, 183).
6. Beaumont and Fletcher, *The Humorous Lieutenant*,)II, iv, 398).

CHAPTER III

DRINK OF THE AGE OF ELIZABETH

CHAPTER III

THE DRINK OF ELIZABETHAN ENGLAND

"Good drinke is a medicine for all diseases."
(The Unfortunate Traveller).

In this prodigal day of feasting in England, tea and coffee were unknown, but wine flowed into the country from all Europe. There were over a hundred varieties on the market - Greek, Italian, Rhenish - but the greater part came from France, with Spain a close second. William Harrison records that from 20,000 to 30,000 tuns of wine were imported yearly to quench the thirst of his fellow countrymen. This included claret, white, red, French, etc., which amounted to fifty-six sorts, according to the regions whence they came; also thirty kinds of Italian, Grecian, Spanish, Canarian, etc., "whereof vernage, catepument, raspis, muscadell, romnie, bastard lire, osy capri, clary, and malmesey, are not least of all accompted of, because of their strength and valeur."[1]

Also mixtures such as meath or metheglin, hipocras, and other beverages were brewed in the home in addition to ale made from malt, which might be termed the national drink. However, since early in the century when the use of hops was introduced from Flanders, adding a distinctive tang and flavor unknown earlier, the improved liquor was sometimes known as beer. Some of this particular mixture brewed in March and used at noblemen's tables, was called "March beer."[1]

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[1] William Harrison, op.cit., p. 93.

> I'll send thee a cold capon a-field and
> a bottle of March beer.
> (V, iii, 536).[2]

Ale brewing was almost as common an activity of the household as the baking of bread. Harrison along with his wife's recipe for the family ale, gives the quantity made - three hogsheads or ten score gallons or more - which indicates the prodigious amount consumed in the ordinary home. Ale was freely given to young children, although wine was rigorously kept from them.

Meath was probably made from a recipe similar to the one found in Sir Kenelm Digby's cookbook, *The Closet of the Eminently Learned Sir Kenelm Digby, Knt. Opened, Whereby is Discovered Several ways of making of Metheglin, Syder, Cherry Wine, etc.*

> Take three gallons of water, a quart of honey,
> if it be not strong enough you may add more; boil it

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1. James Shirley, *The Lady of Pleasure*, *op.cit.*, (I, i, 295).
   Beaumont and Fletcher, *The Women's Prize*, (IV, ii, 357).
2. Beaumont and Fletcher, *op.cit.*, *Knight of the Burning Pestle*.

> space an hour and scum it very clean; then take it off, and set it a working at such heat as you set Beer; with good yeast; then put it in a rundler and at three days end draw it out in stone bottles, into every one put a piece of Limon-peel, and two Cloves. It is only put into the rundler while it worketh, to avoid the breaking of the bottles.[1]

Hipocras, often used as a drink at weddings, is mentioned in Beaumont and Fletcher's The Scornful Lady:

> Were the rosemary branches dipp'd and all
> The hippocras and cakes ate and drank of?

Gervase Markham in The English Housewife gives his recipe for making "Ipocras:"

> To make Ipocras take a pottle of wine; two ounces of Cinamon, half an ounce of Ginger, nine Cloves, six Pepper-corns, and a Nutmeg, and bruise them, and put them into the wine with some Rosemary flowers and so let them steep all night, and then put in Sugar a pound at least, and when it is well setled, let it run through a woollen bag made for the purpose; thus if your Wine be Claret, the Ipocras will be red, if white, then of that colour also.[2]

Markham's recipe is practically the same as that given in Arnold's Chronicles of London. The flannel bag used as the strainer was called "Hippocrates's sleeve." There is a woolen bag so called, used by the apothecaries to strain syrups and decoctions for clarification.[3]

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1. Dr. Kenelm Digby, The Closet of, etc., London, 1677, pp. 49-50.
   Jonson, Cynthia's Revels, (I, i, 242).
2. Gervase Markham, The English Housewife, Printed at the Sign of the Bible on Ludgate Hill, London, 1683(9th printing), p. 88.
3. Beaumont and Fletcher, op.cit., The Scornful Lady, note p. 146.

Wine was naturally a more aristocratic drink than ale or beer. "Good quickening wine that will make you caper,"[1] was served in the loving cups at the great banquets. In *The Shoemaker's Holiday*, wine at banquets is mentioned:

> Firk: Come, my fine shoemakers, let's to our master's, the new lord mayor, and there swagger this Shrove-Tuesday. I'll promise you wine enough.
> (V, iii, 76).

Among wines mentioned in the plays are Imprimus, charnico, Leatico,[2] neat Allegant,[3] muskadine,[4] and burnt-wine[5] or brandy. In Heywood's *The Fair Maid of the West*, Clem, the vintner's apprentice, offers a variety of wines to his customers:

> You are welcome, gentlemen. What wine will you drink? Claret, metheglin, or muscadene? Cider, or perry to make you merry? Aragoosa, or peter-see, Canary, or charnico. But, by your nose, sir, you should love a cup of malmsey: you shall have a cup of the best in Cornwall.
>
> If you prefer the Frenchman before the Spaniard, you shall have either her of the deep red grape, or the pallid white. You are a pretty tall gentleman: you should love high country wine: none but clerks and sextons love Graves wine.
> (III, iv, 119-120).

Wine was often seasoned with ambergris. In *The*

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1. Beaumont and Fletcher, *op.cit.*, *A Wife for a Month*, (V, iii, 242).
2. Dekker, *The Honest Whore*, (II, IV, iii, 262).
3. Webster, *A Cure for A Cuckold*, (III, i, 59).
4. Massinger, *The City Madam*, (II, i, 420).
5. Beaumont and Fletcher, *The Coxcomb*, (I, iii, 21).

Custom of the Country by Beaumont and Fletcher:

> The wines be lusty, high, and full of spirit,
> And amber'd all.
> (III, ii, 328).

Lamb's wool was made of ale with sugar, nutmeg and the pulp of a roasted apple, usually a crab-apple. The name of this popular drink was derived from the "fluffy looking pulp of the apple, which came bursting through the skin during the roasting process."[1]

The origin of Lamb's wool was in the ancient Celtic practice of celebrating a feast called La-mas Ubhal, the day of the apple fruit, when roasted apples were bruised and mixed in ale, milk, or wine.[2]

> Lay a crab in the fire to roast for lamb's wool.
> (Old Wives Tale-George Peel(no act or scene,p.25)

> When roasted crabs hiss in the bowl,
> Then nightly sings the staring owl.
> (Love's Labour's Lost, (V, ii, 934).

> And sometime lurk I in a gossip's bowl,
> In very likeness of a roasted crab,
> And when she drinks, against her lips I bob
> ....
> (A Midsummer-Night's Dream, (II, i, 200).

Sack is mentioned frequently. It was properly a dry sweet wine from Spain or the Canaries. It was

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1. Mary I. Curtis, op.cit., p. 282.
2. William Walsh, Curiosities of Popular Custom, Philadelphia, 1897., p. 981.

usually served in a cup nearly half full of sugar, so that the drinker partook of a kind of heady syrup. Often it was heated and seasoned with spices.

> We'll drink a cup of sack together
> Physicians say it doth prepare the appetite
> And stomach against dinner.
> (Heywood-The English Traveller-(III, iv,175).

In II Henry IV, Falstaff discourses at length on the noble qualities of sack; ending with the statement:

> If I had a thousand sons, the first humane
> principle
> I would teach them should be,
> To forswear thin potations and to addict
> themselves to sack.
> (IV, iii, 145).

Sack was often made into a posset, a drink similar to our Christmas egg nog. It seems to have been popularly used as a night cap. Lady Macbeth drugged the possets of the grooms on the night of the murder of Duncan.[1] Falstaff in The Merry Wives of Windsor orders a pottle of sack brewed finely:

> Bard: With eggs, sir?
> Falstaff: Simple of itself; I'll no pullet-
> sperm in my brewage. How now!
> (III, v, 31).

A recipe for a Sack-Posset from A True Gentleman's Delight is quoted by Staunton:

[1] Shakespeare, Macbeth, op.cit., (II, ii, 6).

> To Make a Sack-Posset-take two Quarts of pure good Cream and a Quarter of a Pound of the best Almonds. Stamp them in the Cream and boyl, with Amber and Musk therein. Then take a Pint of Sack in a basin, and set it on a Chafing-dish till it be blood warm; then take the Yolks of Twelve Eggs, with four of them Whites, and beat them well together, and so put the Eggs into the Sack. Then stir all together over the coals, till it be as thick as you would have it. If you now take some Amber and Musk and grind the same quite small with sugar, and strew this on top of your Posset, I promise you that it will have a most delicate and pleasant taste.[1]

Ale remained the great common drink. In Webster's The Weakest Goeth to the Wall, Barnaby Bunch, a botcher-(mender of old clothes)-sings the praises of ale:

> Well fares England, where the poor may have a pot of ale for a penny; fresh ale, firm ale, nappy ale, nippitate ale, irregular, secular ale, courageous, contagious ale, alcumistical ale.
> Oh! for one pot of mother Bunch's ale, my own mother's ale to wash my throat this misty morning! It would clear my sight, comfort my heart, and stuff my veins......
> (I, ii, 229).

When the poorest classes could not afford ale, whig made from whey was used. In The English Traveller:

> Reignald, servant: Adieu, good cheese and onions; stuff thyself with speck and barley-pudding for digestion.
> Drink whig and sour milk, whilst I rinse my throat with Bordeaux and canary.
> (I, ii, 162).

The age of Elizabeth was no freer from chicanery

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1. Shakespeare, The Merry Wives of Windsor, ed. by Wm. J. Rolfe, New York, 1910, pp. 188-189.

than is today. Lime or soap was sometimes surreptitiously put into the bottom of a tankard as a trick of tapsters, in order to make old liquor foam when drawn. In I Henry IV, Falstaff shouts:

> You rogue, there's lime in this sack.
> (II, iv, 137).

A sharp customer could outwit the tricky tapster by "watching his opportunity and rubbing the inside of his tankard with the skin of a red herring."[1]

An amusing scene occurs in Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay by Greene, wherein Miles inquires of the devil is there be not good tippling houses in hell.

> Miles: May not a man have a lusty fire there, a pot of good ale, a pair(pack) of cards, a swinging piece of chalk, and a brown toast that will clap a white waistcoat on a cup of good drink?
>
> Devil: All this you may have there.
>
> Miles: I know hell is a hot place, and men are marvellous dry, and much drink is spent there; I would be a tapster.
>
> Devil: Thou shalt.
> (V, ii, 297).

Which scene would indicate that Elizabethan England could not fancy a satisfactory after-life without drink.

Many customs were observed as a part of drinking in this period. Gallants were particularly extravagant in their toasting of friends and mistresses.

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[1] Shakespeare, I Henry Iv, ed. by Wm. J. Rolfe, New York, 1910, note p. 158, Cotgrave's Wits Interpreter.

> A toast! here's to your wench!
> (Beaumont and Fletcher, *The Coxcomb*,)
> (I, v, 24)

Pricking a vein and drinking the blood along with the wine was considered very fashionable. This custom occurs in *A Trick to Catch The Old One* by Middleton:

> ....stabbing the arms for a common mistress...
> (V, ii, 81).

In Green's *Tu Quoque*:

> ....open a vein to drink a full health to
> you. (note p. 380, *Cynthia's Revels*, Jonson).

Also in *Cynthia's Revels* by Jonson:

> From stabbing of arms, flapdragons
> healths, whiffs, and all such swaggering humours,
> Good Mercury defend us!
> (V, iii, 380).

Flapdragons or snapdragons refer to an old drinking rite supposed to have originated in Holland, wherein plums or raisins placed in a shallow dish filled with lighted spirits, were dextrously snatched with the mouth. Gallants frequently used to toast their mistresses in this way.

> Give me that flap-dragon!
> (Dekker, *The Honest Whore*, I, V, ii, 182).

Falstaff, speaking of the gay habits of Prince Henry and Poins, refers to this custom of:

> Drinking off candle-ends for flap-dragons.....
> (*II Henry IV,* (II, iv, 67).

Also says Costard in *Love's Labor's Lost*:

> Thou are easier swallowed than a flap-dragon.
> (V, i, 45).

Also in *Monsieur Thomas* by Beaumont and Fletcher:

> Carouse her health in candle-ends.
> (II, ii, 446).

To drink super-nagulum, according to a note from Nashe's *Pierce Pennilesse*, was to use a "devise of drinking new come out of France; which, is after a man hath turned up the bottom of the cup, to drop it on his nails, and make a pearl with what is left; which if it slide, and he cannot make it stand on, by reason ther's too much, he must drink again for his pensee."[1]

In Dekker's *The Honest Whore, I*, reference is made to this custom:

> ..'ha' done you right on my thumb naile.
> (I, i, 22).

Another type of drinking rite was upsy-freesy or upsee-freese, which appears to have been a manner of tippling

[1] Massinger, *The Virgin Martyr*, note pl 304.

imported from Holland. In *The Rape of Lucrece* by Heywood, Brutus says:

> Thou hast been in the German wars; if thou
> lovest me drink upsee-freeze.
> (III, iii, 373).

In *The Virgin Martyr* by Philip Massinger:

> Bacchus god of brewed wine, upsy-freesy
> tipplers and super-naculum takers.
> (II, i, pp. 26-27).

And another reference from *The Rape of Lucrece*:

> Bacchus the god of brewed wine and sugar, grand
> patron of rob-pots, upsy-freesy tipplers and
> super-naculum takers; this Bacchus who is head
> warden to Vinters'-hall, ale conner, mayor to
> all victualling-houses.
> (II, i, 26).

In general the term was used as an euphenism for tipsiness and is often used to mean hard drinking.

Often gallants knelt in drinking pledges. In *Westward Hoe* by Dekker:

> My master and Sir Goslin are guzzling:
> They are dabbling together fathom deep. The
> knight has
> Drank so much healths to the gentleman yonger,
> on his knees
> That he hath almost lost the use of his legs.
> (Beaumont and Fletcher, *The Coxcomb*,
> note p. 24.)

Again in Marmion's *Antiquary*:

Drank to your health, whole nights in Hippocras,
Upon my knee, with more religion
Than e'er I said my prayers, Heaven forgive me![1]

In The Honest Whore by Dekker, Bats asks:

Will you fall on your marrow bones to drink
this health?
(IV, iii, 264).

The wassail-bowl mentioned in many of the plays, particularly in the drinking songs, was a loving cup that was passed in drinking healths. Originally, wassail meant a pledge drunk between friends. The word is now applied generally, to a festive occasion or meeting where drinking and toasting are the order of the hour and also to the liquor used thereat. The wassail-bowl was also used at weddings, as in The Fancies Chaste and Noble by John Ford:

The wassail-bowl!
Hark, the wedding-jullity!
With a bride-cake on my life to grace
the nuptials!
(I, iii).

Sometimes the bowl was of silver, but more often it was made of maple and was called a maser.

God Lyaeus, ever-young,
Ever-honoured, ever sung,
Stained with blood of lusty grapes,
In a thousand lusty shapes,
Dance upon the mazer's brim,
In the crimson liquor swim;
From thy plenteous hand divine,
Let a river run with wine.[2]

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[1] Beaumont and Fletcher, The Coxcomb, note p. 24.
[2] Ibid, Valentinian, (V, viii, 496).

As we find expressions involving food in the plays, there are also terms involving drink. Among the many terms for intoxication was "To pluck a hair of the same wolf today," a proverbial phrase implying successive drunkenness with the same liquor.[1] "Fried" was also a term for intoxication; as in Beaumont and Fletcher's Wit Without Money:

> You've fried me soundly.
> (V, ii, iii).

"Parcel-drunk" meant half-drunk, a term which has been explained in connection with the parcel-gilt salt cellars. John Fletcher has used this expression in The Chances:

> She is parcel-drunk.
> (IV, iii, 89).

Also in the same play:

> She is a little gilded over.
> (Iv, iii, 92).

Alonso in The Tempest says:

> And Trinculo is reeling ripe; where should they
> Find this grand liquor, that hath gilded them?
> (V, i, 26).

To be "Foxed" also meant to be drunk. In The Fair Maid of the Inn by Beaumont and Fletcher:

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[1] Ben Jonson, op.cit., Bartholomew Fair, note p. 19.

Your Dutchman is foxed.
(II, iii, 432).

The common invitation meaning to "have a drink" was "crush a pottle of ale with me"[1]- or "come and crush a cup of wine."[2] And needless to say, these phrases are found with great frequency.

A most graphic description of a feast with its attendant carousing is given by Young Geraldine in The English Traveller:

> In the height of their carousing, all their brains
> Warmed with the heat of wine, discourse was offered
> Of ships and storms at sea; when suddenly
> Out of his giddy wildness, one conceives
> The room wherein they quaffed to be a pinnace,
> Moving and floating; and the confused noise
> To be the murmuring winds, gusts, mariners:
> That their unsteadfast footing did proceed
> From rocking of the vessel; this conceived,
> Each one begins to apprehend the danger,
> And to look out for safety. 'Fly.' saith one,
> 'Up to the main-top, and discover;' he
> Climbs by the bed-post to the tester, there
> Reports a turbulent sea and tempest towards,
> And wills them if they'll save their skip and lives,
> To cast their lading overboard; at this
> All fall to work, and hoist into the street,
> As to the sea, what next come to their hand-
> Stools, tables, trestles, trenchers, bedsteads, cups,
> Pots, plate, and glasses; here a fellow whistles,
> They take him for the boatswain; one lies struggling
> Upon the floor, as he swam for life:
> A third takes the bass-viol for the cockboat,
> Sits in the belly on't, labours and rows,
> His oar the stick with which the fiddler played;

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1. Robert Greene, The Blacke Bookes Messenger, London, 1924, p. 5.
2. Shakespeare, Romeo and Juliet, (I, iii, 86).

> A fourth bestrides his fellows thinking to scape
> As did Arion on the dolphin's back,
> Still fumbling on a gittern.
> (II, i, pp.175-177).

Thomas Hashe in _Piers Penniless, His Supplication to the Devil_, 1592, has classified the different types of drunkards of his day:

> Nor have we one or two kinds of drunkards only, but eight kinds. The first is ape drunk, and he leaps and sings and hollows and danceth for the heavens; the second is lion drunk, and he flings the pots about the house, calls his hostess whore, breaks the glass windows with his dagger, and is apt to quarrel with any man that speaks to him; the third is swine drunk, heavy, lumpish and sleepy and cries for a little more drink and a few more clothes; the fourth is sheep drunk, wise in his own conceit, when he cannot bring forth the right word; the fifth is maudlin drunk, when a fellow will weep for kindness in the midst of his ale, and kiss you, saying, "By God, Captain, I love thee; go thy ways, thou doest not think so often of me as I do of thee, I would-(if it please God) I could not love thee so well as I do!" and then he puts his finger in his eye and cries; the sixth is martin drunk (like a scurrilous Puritan pamphleteer), when a man is drunk and drinks himself sober ere he stir; the seventh is goat drunk, when in his drunkenness he hath no mind but on lechery; the eight is fox drunk, when he is crafty drunk, as many of the Dutchmen be, that will never bargain but when they are drunk. All these species and more I have seen practiced in one company at one sitting, when I have been permitted to remain sober amongst them, only to note their several humours.[1]

As an aid to the tippler, there appeared in 1594 in Platt's _Jewel House of Nature_, a simple recipe for thwarting drunkenness: "The person is adviseth to drink a good large draught of salad oil, for that will fleet

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1. G. B. Harrison, _England in Shakespeare's Day_, _op.cit._, pp. 130-131.

upon the wine which you shall drink and suppress the spirits from ascending into the brain."[1]

Throughout the plays are songs in praise of the "nut brown ale" or the more fashionable wine, and there is no doubt that real roisterers making merry in real taverns and real country folk at play lifted their voices in these refrains. Most of these jolly verses are echoes of the happy, well-nourished life of the working classes, but on occasion a gentleman breaks into song. For the tavern was a democratic place and drink a leveling institution.

The apprentices in The Shoemaker's Holiday by Dekker sing The Shoemakers' Song in honor of St. Hugh:

Cold's the wind, and wet's the rain,
    Saint Hugh be our good speed:
Ill is the weather that bringeth no gain,
    Nor helps good hearts in need.

Trowl(pass) the bowl, the jolly nut-brown bowl,
    And here, kind mate, to thee:
Let's sing a dirge for Saint Hugh's soul,
    And down it merrily!

Rean a down, hey down a down
    Hey derry derry, down a down:
Ho well done: to me let come!
    Ring, compass, gentle joy.[2]

In The Knight of Malta[3] the soldiers sing:

Sit, soldiers, sit and sing, the round is clear,
And cock-a-loodle-loo tells us the day is near,
Each toss his can, until his throat be mellow,
Drink, laugh, and sing; the soldier has no fellow!

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1. G. B. Harrison, The Elizabethan Journal, op.cit., pp371-2.
2. Dekker, op.cit., (V, iv, 78).
3. Beaumont and Fletcher, op.cit., (III, i, 314-315).

To thee a full pot, my little lance-prisade,
And when thou hast done, a pipe of Trinidado!
Our glass of life runs wine, the vintner skinks it,
Whilst with his wife the frolic soldier drinks it.

The drums beat, ensigns wave and cannons thump it;
Our game is ruffe, and the best heart doth trump it:
Each toss his can, until his throat be mellow,
Drink, laugh, and sing; the soldier has no fellow.

I'll pledge thee, my corporal, were it a flagon;
After, watch fiercer than George did the dragon;
What blood we lose i' th' town, we gain i' th' tuns:
Furr'd gowns and flat hats, give the wall to guns.
Each toss his can, until his throat be mellow,
Drink, laugh, and sing; the soldier has no fellow.

In *The Sun's Darling* by John Ford is *Folly's Song*, after each verse of which it was customary to drink:[1]

Castaway care; he that loves sorrow
Lengthens not a day, nor can buy to-morrow:
Money is trash; and he that will spend it,
Let him drink merrily, Fortune will send it.
Merrily, merrily, merrily, O, ho!
Play it off stiffly, we may not part so.

Wine is a charm, it heats the blood too;
Cowards it will arm, if the wine be good too;
Quickens the wit, and makes the back able;
Scorns to submit to the watch or constable.

(Chorus, merrily, merrily, etc.)

Pots fly about, give us more liquor.
Brothers of a rout, our brains will flow quicker;
Empty the cask; score up, we care not:
Fill all the pots again; drink on, and spare not.

(Chorus, merrily, merrily, etc.)

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[1] John Ford, *op.cit.*, (IV, i, p. 152).

In _The Spanish Curate_ by John Fletcher is a song by the curate's neighbors:

Let the bells ring, and let the boys sing,
 The young lasses skip and play;
Let the cups go round, till round goes the ground,
 Our learned old vicar will stay.

Let the pig turn merrily, merrily, ah,
 And let the fat goose swim;
For verily, verily, verily, ah,
 Our vicar this day shall be trim.

The stewed cock shall crow, cock-aleedle-loo,
 A loud cock-a-leedle shall he crow;
The duck and the drake shall swim in a lake
 Of onions and claret below.

Our wives shall be neat, to bring in our meat
 To thee our most noble adviser;
And pains shall be great, and bottles shall sweat,
 And we ourselves will be wiser.

We'll labour and swink, we'll kiss and we'll drink,
 And tithes shall come thicker and thicker;
We'll fall to our plough and get children enow,
 And thou shalt be learned old vicar.[1]

Rollo or The Bloody Brother contains a yeoman's refrain:

Come, Fortune's a whore, I care not who tell her,
Would offer to strangle a page of the cellar,
That should by his oath, to any man's thinking
And place, have had a defence for his drinking;
But thus she does still when she pleases to palter
Instead of his wages, she gives him a halter.

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[1] Beaumont and Fletcher, _op.cit._, (III, ii, pp. 279-280).

Chorus: Three merry boys, and three merry boys,
And three merry boys are we,
As ever did swing in hempen string
Under the gallows tree![1]

The cook in this same play is also not silent in his drinking:

Drink today and drown all sorrow,
You shall perhaps not do it tomorrow,
But while you have it use your breath:
There is no drinking after death!

Wine works the heart up, wakes the wit,
There is no cure 'gainst age but it.
It helps the head-ach, cough and ptisic,
And it is for all diseases physic.

Then let us swill, boys, for our health;
Who drinks well, loves the commonwealth
And he that will to bed go sober,
Falls with the leaf, still in October![2]

Praise is sung to the "nut-brown ale" in verses attributed to Marston:

The nut-brown ale, the nut-brown ale,
Puts down all drink when it is stale!
The toast, the nutmeg, and the ginger
Will make a sighing man a singer.
Ale gives a buffet in the head,
  But ginger under-props the brain;
When ale would strike a strong man dead
  Then nutmeg tempers it again.
The nut-brown ale, the nut-brown ale,
Puts down all drink when it is stale![3]

1. Beaumont and Fletcher, *op.cit.*, (III, ii, 190)
2. *Ibid*, (II, ii, 153).
3. George Reuben Potter, *Elizabethan Verse and Prose*, New York, 1928, p. 168.

One of the most rollicking of the songs is a pattern after which many of our Kentucky mountain ballads are made:

Back and side go bare, go bare,
   Both foot and hand go cold;
But, belly, God send thee good ale enough,
   Whether it be new or old.

I cannot eat but little meat,
   My stomach is not good;
But sure I think that I can drink
   With him that wears the hood.
Though I go bare, take ye no care,
   I am nothing a-cold;
I stuff my skin so full within
   Of jolly good ale and old.

I love no roast but a nut-brown toast,
   And a crab laid in the fire;
A little bread shall do me stead
   Much bread I not desire
Nor frost nor snow, nor wind I trow,
   Can hurt me if I wold
I am so wrapt, and thoroughly lapt,
   Of jolly good ale and old.

And Tib my wife that as her life
   Loveth well good ale to seek,
Full oft drinks she, till ye may see
   The tears run down her cheeks.
Even doth she trowl to me the bowl
   Even as a maltworm shold;
And saith, 'Sweetheart, I took my part
   Of this jolly good ale and old.

And let them drink, till they nod and blink
   Even as good fellows should do;
And they shall not miss to have the bliss
   Good ale doth bring men to
And all poor souls that have scour'd bowls,
   Or have them lustily trowled,
God save the lives of them and their wives
   Whether they be young or old.[1]
  (Still(?) or Stevenson(?).)

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[1] George Reuben Potter, *op.cit.*, p. 160.

With all the feasting of the 17th century, obesity must have been general, but there is little on record to show that it caused any undue comment. However, "In a new book of Mr. Thomas Lodge entitled A Fig for Momus, being sundry satires, ecologues, and epistles.....there is an epistle to a lady that wrote to him asking both the cause and the remedy of pursiness and fat. Giveth this remedy:

> Much sitting, and long abstinence from care,
> Drinking of oily wines our fat prepare;
> Eggs, white meat, pottage, do increase the same
> And bring the waxing body out of frame.
> Let therefore men grown fat by gluttony
> (For to the rest no medicine I apply)
> Open a vein; or if that seem too sure
> Use cuppings, and oft rubbings evermore.
> Live in that air which is both hot and dry,
> Watch much, and sleeping little, hardly lie.
> Walk much, and toss, and tumble in the sun,
> Delight to ride, to hawk, to hunt, to run;
> Drink little, gargarize, fly grosser food,
> Or if some deem a hare or partridge good,
> Feed modestly thereon, and if he hath
> Some crowns to spend, go often to the Bath![1]

Nevertheless, he is of an opinion that fatness is no deformity, for fat, slick, fair and full, is better lik'd than lean, lank, spare and dull."[2]

In this same strain is the sentiment expressed in Old Fortunatus by Dekker:

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[1] G. B. Harrison, A Second Elizabethan Journal, op.cit., p. 23.
[2] Ibid, p. 23.

Andelocia: ...a lean diet makes a fat wit.
Shadow(servant). I had rather be a fool and
wear a fat pair of cheeks!
(I, ii, 305).

CHAPTER IV

FOOD AND DRINK AS A PART OF FEASTS AND CELEBRATIONS IN ELIZABETHAN ENGLAND.

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Prosperity, long periods of peace, excitement created by the discovery of new lands across the sea, and the rapid changes caused by increasing contact and trade with other nations all contributed to the joyous, carefree spirit that characterized the time. A feeling of joie de vivre permeated the entire country, from the poorest to the noblest citizen. At no time since this period has life in England been so gay. No later age has crowded so many holidays and celebrations into the calendar.

Along with the regular church holidays were festivals that had come down from pagan times. These added to the ordinary feasts such as accompanied weddings, christenings, and other celebrations formed a considerable number.

One particularly interesting holiday was Shrove Tuesday, known as Pancake Day, which marked the beginning of Lent. During Elizabeth's time, the religious aspect of the holiday lost its importance, but it remained a great occasion especially for school-boys and apprentices.

The eating of pancakes probably became a custom of Shrove Tuesday because it was necessary for every household to use all the grease and drippings on hand before the beginning of Lenten fasting. Therefore pancakes reigned supreme. They were always turned by tossing them in the air and catching them in the pan with the uncooked side downward. There was great rivalry as to who could most adroitly toss them.

This old custom still survives in some of the schools of England. Boys selected from every form try to catch a pancake that the school cook tosses over a bar in the schoolroom. The boy retrieving it unbroken is given a prize by the school head.[1]

In Dekker's The Shoemaker's Holiday, the shoemaker apprentices hear with joy the ringing of the pancake bell:

> All: The pancake-bell rings, the pan-cake bell!
> Trilill, my hearts!
> Firk: Oh brave! Oh sweet bell! O delicate pan-cakes!
> Open the doors, my hearts, and shut up the windows!
> keep in the house, let out the pancakes!

The apprentices hasten to the new great hall where the new lord mayor is giving a feast. Firk continues to exult:

> Every Shrove-Tuesday is our year of jubilee;
> and when the pancake-bell rings, we are as free
> as my lord-mayor; we may shut up our shops,
> and make holiday.
> (V, ii, 76).

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[1] William S. Walsh, Curiosities of Popular Customs, Philadelphia, 1897, p. 884.

In anticipation of the feast that is awaiting them at the Lord Mayor's feast, Firk gloats:

> O musical bell, still!......There's cheer for the heavens; venison-pasties walk up and down piping hot, like sergeants; beef and brewiss come marching in in dry-vats, fritters and pancakes come trowling in in wheel-barrows, hens and oranges hopping porters'-baskets, collops and eggs in scuttles, and tarts and custards comes quavering in malt-shovels.
> (V, ii, 77).

John Taylor, the Water Poet, in his Jack-a-Lent, 1630, vigorously attacks Pancake Day:

> Commonly before nine there is a bell rung called the Pancake-bell, the sound whereof makes thousands of people distracted and forgetful either of manners or humanitie. Then there is a thing cal'd wheat'n flowre, which the sulphory, necromanticke cookes doe mingle with water, eggs spice, and other tragicall, magicall inchantments, and then they put it little by little into a frying-pan of boyling suet, where it makes a confused dismal hissing-like the Lernean snakes in the reeds of Acheron, Stix, or Phegeton-until at last, by the skill of the cooke it is transformed into the forme of a flap-jack, which in our translation is call'd a pancake, which omnious incantation the ignorant people doe devoure very greedily....whereupon their wits forsake them, and they runne starke mad, assembling in routs and throngs, numberlesse of ungovernable numbers, with uncivil commotions.[1]

Pancakes are also mentioned in All's Well that Ends Well in the answer of the clown:

> fit as
> A pancake for Shrove-Tuesday.
> (II, ii, 25).

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[1] W. S. Walsh, op.cit., p. 884.

Sheep-shearing day, particularly in southern England, was the occasion for much feasting. After the shearing a plentiful dinner was provided for the shearers, their briends and the villagers. In Tusser's Five Hundred Points of Husbandry, under "The Ploughman's Feast-days," are the following lines referring to the festivity:

> Wife, make us a dinner, spare flesh neither corne,
> Make wafers and cakes, for our sheepe must be shorne;
> At sheepe shearing, neighbors none other things crave
> But good cheere and welcome like neighbours to have.[1]

The clown in The Winter's Tale lists the supplies that are to be bought for the sheep-shearing feast:

> Let me see; what am I to buy for our sheep-
>   shearing feast?
> Three pound of sugar, five pound of currants,
>   rice,-
> What will this sister of mine do with rice?
> But my father hath made her mistress of the
>   feast, and
> She lays it on. She hath made me four and
>   twenty nosegays
> For the shearers, three-man-song-men all, and
>   very good ones.
> ....
> I must have saffron to colour the warden pies;
>   mace and dates?-
> None, that's out of my note; nutmegs, seven;
>   a race or two of ginger,
> But that I may beg; four pound of prunes, and
> As many raisins o' the sun.
> (IV, iii, 36).

Christenings were always attended with much feasting, and it appears to have been the custom for the

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1. John Brand, Observations on the Popular Antiquities of Great Britain, London, 1874, p. 34.

women to carry away as many of the confections as they pleased. In The Batchellor's Banquet, Dekker:

> What cost and trouble it will be to have all things fine against the Christening Day; what store of sugar, biskets, comfits, and caraways, marmalet, and marchpane, with all kinds of sweet suckers and superfluous banqueting stuff, with a hundred other odd and needless trifles, which at that time must fill the pockets of dainty dames.[1]

It was often customary at christenings to present the baby with spoons, usually apostle spoons, so called because of the figures of the Twelve Apostles carved on the tops. Since spoons and caudle cups formed almost the only articles of plate possessed by the middle classes, they were considered handsome presents. In The Magnetic Lady by Jonson, Compass says:

> I come to invite your ladyship
> To be a witness; I will be your partner,
> And give it a horn-spoon, and a treen-dish.[2]

And in Bartholomew Fair:

> And all this for the hope of two apostle-spoons.
> (I, i, 584).

Bride-ales, from which the word bridal is derived, are wedding celebrations mentioned in many of the plays. Cakes and wine were brought to the church and played

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1. H. T. Stephenson, Elizabethan People, op.cit., p.289.
2. Jonson, The Magnetic Lady, (IV, iii, 93).

a part in the wedding ceremony. In The Fancies Chaste and Noble by Ford appears the following:

> Hark the wedding-jullity!
> With a bride-cake, on my life to grace the
> nuptials!
> (II, ii, 400

And in Jonson's The Magnetic Lady:

> A man that's bid to a bride-ale, if he have
> cake
> And drink enough, he need not wear his stake.
> (I, i, 138).

Some cake, known as sops, was immersed in wine, and the cup passed to the bride, to the groom and to the rest of the company immediately after the ceremony. The allusions to this custom are numerous. In The Taming of the Shrew, Gremio describes the wedding of Petruchio and Katharine:

> But after many ceremonies done,
> He calls for wine: 'A health!' quoth he, as if
> He had been aboard, carousing to his mates
> After a storm: quaff'd off the muscadel
> And threw the sops all in the sexton's face.
> (III, ii, 171).

And in Beaumont and Fletcher's The Scornful Lady:

> If my wedding-smock were on
> Were the gloves brought and given, the licence come,
> Were the rosemary branches dipt, and all
> The hippocras and cakes eat and drunk off.
> (I, i,).

In Dekker's *Satiro-Mastix*:

> And when we are at our church
> Bring wine and cakes.[1]

Christmas was the great day of the year for feasting. All classes mixed in the merry-making and hospitality was universal over the land. An English country gentleman of the 15th and 16th centuries always held open house, and from daybreak his tenants and neighbors filled the hall.

The dinner was served "with especial sumptousness, with great attention paid to the 'dishes for show,' as Gervase Markham calls them, namely, fancy dishes representing objects got up with great elaboration, but not meant to be eaten."[2]

Inseparable from the Christmas feast was the boar's head, served upon a great platter garnished with rosemary and bay leaves. Queen's College, Oxford, has still maintained the old custom along with the singing of the ancient carol that has accompanied the bringing in of the boar's head for countless generations:

> The boar's head in hand bear I,
> Bedeck'd with bays and rosemary;
> And I pray you, my masters, be merry,
>   Quot estit in convivio,
>   Caput Apri defero
>   Reddens laudes Domine.

John Brand, *op.cit.*, p. 136.
H. T. Stephenson, *op.cit.*, p. 169.

The boar's-head, as I understand,
Is the rarest dish in all this land,
Which thus bedeck'd with a gay garland
Let us servire cantico.
Caput Apri defero
Reddens laudes Domino.

Our steward hath provided this
In honour of the King of Bliss,
Which on this day to be serv'd is
In reginensi atrio
Caput Apri defero
Reddens laudes Domino.[1]

Ben Jonson's *Masque of Christmas* introduces some of the traditional components of Christmas feasting. "Minced Pye" is present, as is the "Wassel" or loving-cup, "drest with ribands and rosemary." Usually the bowl held Lamb's wool and as it passed from hand to hand, each drinker shouted out "Wassail!" Eating and drinking continued until far into the night, and it is recorded that many of the guests were found among the rushes in the morning.

1. William Walsh, *op.cit.*, p.132.

CONCLUSION

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The important role played by food and drink in Elizabethan literature was probably a reflection of national interest in the subject stimulated by importations of new edibles, general prosperity, and a period of peace in which the citizenry had time for thought upon domestic matters. In addition, a well-nourished literary circle, whose poetic flights were never unaccompanied by the consideration of creature comforts, played an important part.

In this period there are few records of starving writers of any importance. In fact, some probably suffered from too much feasting as did Ben Jonson, who became obese and gouty from over-indulgence. Even Robert Greene, whose life was one of vicissitudes, is said to have died of a surfeit of red-herring and Rhenish wine. Perhaps there is a stronger connection than we can guess between the flowering of the realistic drama in the 16th century and national plenty. Perhaps some grains of truth lie in the words of a modern writer that: "The Muses must be fed generously. Good meats and sound wines fire and invigorate the brain. They heat the imagination into sending forth dazzling and glittering beams. An ascetic diet cramps and chills a poet's temper; it is a frost to the fancy, and nips the flower of poetry in the bud. The sustained inspiration necessary to a cadenza of divine poetry is often found in 'two mutton-chops well-peppered' and a hogshead of Canary-wine."[1]

In the same temper wrote John Taylor, the Water Poet, in 1630:

> A Poet by Water can never be fired;
> By the juice of the grape the Muse is inspired:
> Yet thy aiming at Wit deserveth some Praise:
> But Water ne'er nourished the Laurel or Bays.[2]

Whatever be the relation between the "capon-lined" stomach and a flourishing of literature, it is evident that the general air of *joie de vivre* that is the pervading characteristic of the comedies of this time, could scarcely have existed under the reign of the Puritans. The "eat, drink and be merry" philosophy of the Elizabethan period would undoubtedly have been chilled by the attitude toward life expressed in Mrs. Cromwell's pronouncement that "the kingdom of God is not meat and drink but righteousness and peace." A generation saturated with "nut-brown" ale could inconceivably have derived any non-alcoholic cheer from Mrs. Cromwell's punado, a prohibition beverage concocted from toast, water, and a few currants.

The many scenes in the inns, in the taverns, and

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1. Byron Steel, *O Rare Ben Jonson*, New York, 1928, p. 118.
2. *Ibid.* p. 118.

the many conversations about eating and drinking all gave an actuality and versimilitude that makes the drama of this period a faithful picture of manners. "Infinitely useful from a dramatic point of view is familiar reference, the sweeping up into the body of the dialogue of the everyday realities of the Elizabethan background. Food and drink and furniture of Shakespeare's plays (and even more so the work of many of his contemporaries), are all Elizabethan. Titania sleeps on a bank of wild thyme, o'ercanopied with English woodland flowers; Juliet's corpse is strewn with rosemary, like any properly coffined English maiden's; and the gardeners in Richard II bind up that Tudor newcomer of fruits, 'the dangling apricock.'"[1]

In A Looking Glasse for London and England, Adam at Nineveh, brushing shoulders with Oseas, the Prophet, chats of ale and red-herring with mustard. In The Honest Whore, locale Milan, we find cheese trenchers enscribed with poesies; and in The Rape of Lucrece, in Rome are taverns called the Mitre, the King's Head, and the Star; and the cries of the city include such an anglicism as:

> Bread and meat, bread and meat, for the
> tender prisoners of Newgate.

True to the tradition of English comedy since the days when the first humorous character appeared in the craft plays, and when there was recorded one of the first references to British food in drama,

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[1] Harley Granville-Barker, A Companion to Shakespeare Studies, New York, 1934, p. 193.

> Cayn: Harstow, (hearest thou) boy? Ther is a podyng (pudding) in the pot.[1]

it is the humble folk that are portrayed the more realistically. It is the servants - the pantlers, the cooks, and the waiting-men - the soldiers, the apprentices, the yeomen and the tradespeople whose conversation so often turns to the engrossing subject of eating and drinking. Or it is characters of the parasite type, taken over from the commedia d'el arti - Greedy of Massinger's *A New Way to Pay Old Debts*, Incube of Beaumont and Fletcher's *Love's Pilgrimage*, Slipper of Greene's *James the Fourth*, Calipso in Massinger's, *The Guardian*, and Lazarillo of The *Woman-hater* by Beaumont and Fletcher and others - who never rise above the thought of a laden table.

"It is interesting to note for "the detail that enables us to recreate the Elizabethan scene we go to a dozen of other writers than Shakespeare.....Where the ordinary Elizabethan writer is topical in the situation, characterization and dialogue of an entire scene, Shakespeare is topical only out of his superfluity in an aside, a simile, an image, a flourish, a jest. Whereas the contemporaneous

[1] Joseph Quincy Adams, *Chief Pre-Shakespearean Dramas*, New York, 1924, p. 999, *The Killing of Abel*, Glovers of Wakefield.

is of the very body of such a writer as Ben Jonson (also Dekker, Heywood, and others), it is with Shakespeare largely a matter of separable incident."[1]

In Dekker's The Shoemaker's Holiday is a detailed picture of life among the journeymen and apprentices on Pancake Day. In Shakespeare, Shrove Tuesday is merely mentioned in a simile: "Fit as a pancake for Shrove Tuesday." In taking the work of Shakespeare as a whole, there is little evidence of much interest in food and drink, save on the part of the gourmand Falstaff. Perhaps Shakespeare spoke of himself in the words of Longaville, a lord of Navarre, in Love's Labour's Lost:

> My mind shall banquet, though the body pine:
> Fat paunches have lean pates, and dainty bits
> Make rich the ribs, but bankrupt quite the wits!
> (I, i, 25).

Hence in reconstructing the gustatorial life of Elizabethan England, we turn less often to Shakespeare than to some of his contemporaries - writers who have given us so "faithful a picture of the manners of the day that their value as artists is distinctly second to their value as social documents."[2] It is to their wide use of the contemporary idiom of life and their recurrent reference to food and drink and customs pertaining thereto, that we are indebted for a priceless insight into a part of the social life of 16th century England.

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1. Harley Granville-Barker, op.cit., p. 187.
2. Ibid, p. 187.

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