

¶If you love eating, read this—

GLUTTONY DE LUXE

THE most flagrant disobedience of the law of nature, "In Rome eat as the Romans do," is the case of about 150 Indian pearl merchants who live in Paris, and who, criminally unaware of the fact that fate has put them in the paradise of gourmets, insist on eating their own food, the material for which is imported direct from India. Besides lentils and rice and condiments, they import salt and tins of biscuits untouched by human hands. This small colony is a wholesale victim of dire dyspepsia.

Another instance, known to those who have visited Florence, is of retired English colonels and old maids, who haunt the English eating places of *Via Tornabuoni*, drink strong tea and eat roast beef, when almost next door, at Pauli's, in a vaulted room painted with frescoes depicting the delights of epicureanism, they could have had *bistecca*, the Italian adaptation of their national dish, innumerable kinds of *paste*, and finish off the meal with that most delicious of temperance beverages, the Italian coffee *a l'espresso*. Italy and France and some bits of Spain towards the Mediterranean are the countries where,

even in the humblest of inns, you are sure to find some preparation of fish, bird, or eggs which will satisfy you. Of course being a bird-lover I disapprove of the Italian dish of larks serve on toast or, worse still, roasted nightingales. It is distressing to find in the country of the gentle St. Francis this cruelty towards these innocent creatures who would make life still more joyful under the most beautiful of skies.

But whoever has lived in Rome can never forget the *Ulpiana*, a marvellous restaurant situated in the vaulted aisle of a ruined cathedral or the Castello of the Maltese Cavaliers on the top of the Aventino hill, a medieval castle from where, in the evenings, you can watch the lights of Rome spread beneath you and, in the half-light, see the shadows of the massive ruins of the Imperial Palaces on the Palatine. Though in Central Europe they specialise in situating their beer-halls over beautiful scenery, for the view and its soothing influence on conversation, which is a necessary concomitant of good food, the only place I know which can compare with the Roman Castle restaurant in the

Tour d'Argent of Paris, overlooking the marvellous gothic pile of *Notre-Dame*, with the river flowing below. Yes, good food, like other things which give aesthetic delight, should have its setting of beauty and should be enjoyed in the company of congenial spirits.

Now, living in India, I long for the *borsh* of Russia, the *goulash* of Hungary, the *vertep* of Poland, the *shorbe* of Bulgaria; I still think of the time when I ate the most refined of *pilafs* under the shadow of the magnificent Mosque of Bayazid at Istanbul, or when, at Nanking, that picturesque dish, the lacquered duck, the skin of which only should be eaten, was brought to me at the end of a long iron rod and thumped on the floor, and I, as a barbarian, wanted also not to miss the flesh, drawing on me the decorous disapproval of Chinese customers.

I must confess that, fond as I am of good food, wherever it might come from and whatever it might be composed of, I have a soft corner, shall I say, in my stomach for the Persianised dishes of India. I know that this conglomerate food, to which the Iranian Nomads, the Turki hordes, Byzantium, India and the magnificent Persian courts have so largely contrib-

uted, is suited more to the climatic conditions of Central Asian uplands than to India. As a rule I, too, give preference to ordinary Bengali, Hindu or Punjabi food, which is delicious as well as healthy. But, by way of exception, what more wonderful feast for the eye or the stomach than a richly laid Mogul dinner with its sobreness of *kakabs* and *kormas* and the gold of its *palaos* and *patathas*.

If in anything America is callow, it is in food matters. What cultured palate can delight in ice-creams, sandwiches and in salads, fantastic in their composition it is true, but barbarous mixtures of opposing flavours? What cultured animal-lover can eat a pair of lean sausages called hot dog!

The best American dish to my palate is lobster *a l'Americaine*. Americans are as ignorant of this dish in their country as Russians are of Russian salad, or Indians of, what is called in England, Indian curry.

One can make a meal out of *hors-d'oeuvres*, but not in those fanciful eating places in London. For that you have to go to Super-Cannes in the south of France, the hill standing between earth and sky, or to Avignon, rich in the romantic traditions of Provence, and revel in stuffed capsicums, fresh tun-

ny fish, *foie-gras* pasties, ingenious salads and picturesque sausages. Or you could sit at Naples on a jetty protruding out

on to the bay, and devour curious plates of *vangole*, and moist it all with a translucent Capri.—*Shahid Suhrawardy, condensed from New Review, Calcutta.*

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Ruling the World

UNTIL men realize that they will have to improve mentally and physically at as fast a rate as women are improving, the possibility of the supremacy of women will persist.

The facts do not point so much towards an increase in the mentality of women as to a decrease in the mentality of men.

Count in chance and fate, which in a world shuddering before the winds of war are no mean forces, and you have a weird pile-up of circumstances, giving women tremendous grants of power—pushing her towards superiority over men.

War, which may be the determining factor for the future, was one of the first forces that helped turn women's efforts towards freedom into a power-potent force.

Because of brutal economic forces women are downing men in industry. Secretarial, clerical, and confidential jobs in modern business go largely to women. The great sex-interest motive, added to women's natural ability, and their lower wage level, now excludes men from a field that was once theirs. The effect is more devastating in the industrial world, where lower wages have put women in place of men in all but the heavier work.

Meantime, women even need not have children unless they wish. This is their powerful women in an onslaught on home bondage, which, until recently, enslaved them. Their public power is growing.

Could women really rule the world? Even now they are powers behind thrones; and "understudies" to dictators.

Suppose war did blast its way through the world again. There are two results open to women. They could be left as a majority or a minority. As a majority they would be instantly ready to take the reins when they were dropped—and probably, by common wisdom among women, bring about the peace they desire.

As a minority, they would be precious beyond all things. Man's gaudy worship of this day would be changed to some goddess-cult.—*Woman, Australia.*