

# FOOD AND DRINK

BY LOUIS UNTERMEYER

WHY has our poetry eschewed  
The rapture and response of food?  
What hymns are sung, what praises said  
For home-made miracles of bread?  
Since what we love has always found  
Expression in enduring sound,  
Music and verse should be competing  
To match the transient joy of eating.  
There should be present in our songs  
As many tastes as there are tongues;  
There should be humbly celebrated  
One passion that is never sated.  
Let us begin it with the first  
Distinction of a conscious thirst  
When the collusion of the vine  
Uplifted water into wine.  
Let us give thanks before we turn  
To other things of less concern  
For all the poetry of the table:  
Clams that parade their silent fable;  
Lobsters that have a rock for stable;  
Red-faced tomatoes ample as  
A countryman's full-bosomed lass;  
Plain-spoken turnips; honest beets;  
The carnal gusto of red meats;  
The insipidity of lamb;  
The wood-fire pungence of smoked ham;  
Young veal that's smooth as natural silk;  
The lavish motherliness of milk;  
Parsley and lemon-butter that add  
Spring sweetness unto river shad;  
Thin flakes of halibut and cod,  
Pickerel, flounder, snapper, scrod,  
And every fish whose veins may be  
Charged with the secrets of the sea;  
Sweet-sour carp, beloved by Jews;  
Pot-luck simplicity of stews;  
Crabs, juiciest of Nature's jokes;  
The deep reserve of artichokes;  
Mushrooms, whose taste is texture, loath

To tell of their mysterious growth;  
Quick, mealy comfort glowing in  
A baked potato's crackled skin;  
The morning promise, hailed by man,  
Of bacon crisping in the pan;  
The sage compound of *Hasenpfeffer*  
With dumplings born of flour and zephyr;  
Spinach whose spirit is the soil;  
Anchovies glorified in oil;  
The slow-gold nectar maples yield;  
Pale honey tasting of the field  
Where every clover is Hymettus;  
The cooling sanity of lettuce  
And every other herbal green  
Whose touch is calm, whose heart is clean;  
Succulent bean-sprouts, bamboo-shoots;  
The sapid catalogue of fruits:  
Plebeian apple, caustic grape,  
Quinces that have no gift for shape,  
Dull plums that mind their own affairs,  
Incurably bland and blunted pears,  
Fantastic passion-fruit, frank lemons  
With acid tongues as sharp as women's,  
Exotic loquats, sly persimmons,  
White currants, amber-fleshed sultanas,  
(Miniature and sweetened mannas)  
Expansive peaches, suave bananas,  
Oranges ripening in crates,  
Tight-bodied figs, sun-wrinkled dates,  
Melons that have their own vagaries;  
The bright astringency of berries;  
Crêpe-satin luxury of cream;  
Wedding-cake that fulfils the dream;  
Pepper, whose satire stings and cuts;  
Raw liberality of nuts;  
Sauces of complex mysteries;  
Proverbial parsnips; muscular cheese;  
Innocent eggs that scorn disguises;  
Languid molasses; burning spices  
In kitchen-oracles to Isis;  
Thick sauerkraut's fat-bellied savor;  
Anything with a chocolate flavor;  
Large generosity of pies;  
Hot puddings bursting to surprise;  
The smug monotony of rice;  
Raisins that doze in cinnamon buns;  
Kentucky biscuits, Scottish scones;  
Falstaffian tarts that mock the chaste  
Rose-elegance of almond-paste;  
Venison steaks that smack of cloisters;

Goose-liver for the soul that roisters;  
Reticent prawn; Lucullan oysters;  
Sausages, fragrant link on link;  
The vast ambrosias of drink:  
Tea, that domestic mandarin;  
Bucolic cider; loose-lipped gin;  
Coffee, extract of common sense,  
Purgative of the night's pretense;  
Cocoa's prim nursery; the male  
Companionship of crusty ale;  
Cognac as oily as a ferret;  
The faintly iron thrust of claret;  
Episcopal port, aged and austere;  
Rebellious must of grape; the clear,  
Bluff confraternity of beer—

All these are good, all are a part  
Of man's imperative needs that start  
Not in the palate but the heart.  
Thus fat and fibre, root and leaf  
Become quick fuel and slow grief.  
These, through the chemistry of blood,  
Sustain his hungering manhood,  
Fulfilling passion, ripening pain,  
Steel in his bone, fire at his brain. . . .  
So until man abjures the meats  
Terrestrial and impermanent sweets,  
Growing beyond the things he eats,  
Let us be thankful for the good  
Beauty and benison of food,  
Let us join chiming vowel with vowel  
To rhapsodize fish, flesh and fowl,  
And let us thank God in our songs  
There are as many tastes as tongues.

# AMERICANA

## ALABAMA

SCIENTIFIC note in the eminent Birmingham News:

*To the Editor The Birmingham News:*

It is with sorrow that I see so many friends passing away with the flu, when it can be avoided.

I am going to write my receipt down for you. It will not only cure the flu, but will prevent it. Although I know that my prescription is a violation of the Eighteenth Amendment, I am writing it herein so that many lives may be saved in this dire distress that has befallen the country.

Take a quart fruit jar and slice it full of red onions. Then fill it up with the best whiskey you can procure. Take a tablespoonful six times a day. Also on retiring peel an onion and hold it in your hand and the fever will be gone in the morning, or 24 hours thereafter. Keep the bowels open.

I know of 50 people it has cured.

JAMES ROY STULL,  
Rt. 5, Birmingham.

## CALIFORNIA

FURTHER progress of the great American Movie Culture, as reported by the Los Angeles correspondent of *Variety*:

A promoter has approached a number of studios for permission to photograph film stars and use the pictures for wall paper prints. Plan is to create a vogue for homes. Special combinations are being arranged for many moods and fancies. The Shebas may have a John Gilbert room, or a group of panels carrying portraits of many screen idols. Movie-struck sheik can have his selection of screen flaps. Hoot Gibson is being sought to fill the demands of the kid lovers of Westerns, and the prominent child players are being sought for decorating the nurseries. Chaney will look after the bad little boys and girls.

## DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

DITHYRAMBS appearing in the *Congressional Record*, and sponsored by the Hon. John J. Boylan, Congressman from the Fifteenth District of New York:

POET LAUREATE OF AMERICA

*By Horace C. Carlisle*

Everybody who reads the *Congressional Record*  
Reads the widest-read daily, perhaps, in the  
world,

For it carries, verbatim, the doings of Congress  
Wheresoever the Stars and the Stripes are  
unfurled—

And it ought to be read by a sovereign people  
In whom all the great powers of sovereignty  
dwell—

For Americans justly have boasted their freedom

Ever since independence rang liberty's bell.

But from that day to this there has one thing  
been lacking—

With the volumes of poems that have sung  
her renown

As a nation, our Congress has chosen no poet  
Yet to wear the unworn poet laureate's  
crown,

On its blank cover page, now subserving no  
purpose,

The *Congressional Record* might carry each day  
A short poem, effervescing with dynamic power,  
To America's heart in a national way.

What a great opportunity for a real service!

Like Niagara's waters, now running to  
waste!

On this now wasted page a nonpartisan poem  
Of American interest ought to be placed.

Who can say that this page was not left for this  
purpose,

In accord with the Infinite's unquestioned  
plan,

Until He, in His wisdom, could properly fashion  
For this wonderful service a suitable man?

THE HON. TOM HEFLIN entertains the  
Senate with his devoirs to the New Trinity: ✓

I think one of the greatest men in this country  
is Bishop Cannon, of Virginia. He is a man of  
superb intellect and great learning, a man of  
broad vision, and a man of fine moral courage  
and Christian character.

Doctor Straton, of New York, is an able and  
eloquent Baptist preacher, a man of fine parts  
and high ideals. He is one of the foremost and  
best-beloved leaders of Protestantism and Christianity in America.

Billy Sunday, the greatest evangelist since  
the days of Sam Jones, is a terror to liquor  
dealers and bootleggers and to all manner of  
sin and crime against our country. He is still  
going about doing good to those who love  
and serve our country.

## GEORGIA

POLITICAL announcement in the eminent  
*Augusta Chronicle*: