USAGES OF DOMESTIC LIFE IN THE MIDDLE AGES.

I. THE DINING-TABLE.

THE object of this paper is to give a slight sketch of the economy of the dining-table during the middle ages, or to speak more exactly, during the interval between the Conquest and the sixteenth century. It would not be difficult to write an ample essay on the subject; there are abundant materials for its illustration; chroniclers and moralists, romancers and satirists have all touched upon it, and there are in addition most precise details in household and cookery books, of various periods. It is to be hoped that at no distant time we may have a work on Domestic Economy in general, worthy of the importance of the subject. The ensuing remarks may be of some interest to general readers, to whom they are addressed rather than to antiquaries.

The furniture of the table and its accessories underwent so little change during the long period alluded to, that it is not generally necessary to give an exact date to every statement. For a long portion of the same time the manners of France and England presented no great points of difference, and therefore apt illustrations may be taken with propriety from the literature or art of either country.

As the kitchen was usually beside the hall or dining-chamber, and sometimes opened into it[a], a few remarks upon its arrangements will not be out of place. The fire was

[a] See an elaborate illumination in MS. Reg., 14 E. IV. fo. 244 b, representing an entertainment given to the Duke of Lancaster by the King of Portugal. The cook stands at a window opening into the kitchen, and is serving out soup or pottage. The date of this drawing is the latter part of the 15th century.

generally in an iron grate[b] in the centre of the room, under an opening, or *louvre*[c], in the roof for the escape of smoke. These grates were sometimes of vast dimensions. There is yet extant an order by King John for the erection of two furnaces in his kitchens at Marlborough and Ludgershall, each to be sufficiently large to roast two or three oxen[d]. Contemporary writers tell us that John was a bon-vivant and something more, although it may be doubted if the best specimen of the *cuisine* of his time would tempt a modern gourmet.

The method of roasting at these grates is shewn in the Bayeux tapestry; the spit seems to have revolved *above* the fire[e]. The profuse hospitality of the old time, when guests were often numbered by hundreds, rendered it necessary on great occasions to construct temporary kitchens. At the coronation of Edward the First, one of extraordinary size was built at Westminster, and from the builder's account, which is still preserved, we gain the unpleasant information that the boiled meats placed before the king's guests were prepared in leaden vessels[f]; no Accum had then arisen to detect "death in the pot." The ancient *batterie de cuisine* was by no means extensive; a writer of the thirteenth century has enumerated the articles considered necessary in his time; among them the ladle, peculiar ensign of the cook,

"The cook is yscaldit for al his longe ladil,"

occupies a conspicuous place[g], as well as the pestle and mortar.

It is not necessary to lead the reader through all the offices nearly allied to the kitchen; a good larder in ancient days was doubtless a pleasant apartment, especially a royal one, when the king held his Cour-plenière, crammed with herons, cranes, swans, and venison, in picturesque confusion, with lampreys and salmon from the Severn, and some exquisite morsels of blubber from the whale and porpoise.

[b] *Caminum ferreum.* Fire-places against the wall are sometimes represented in the little paintings which occur in the Kalendars of Missals, under the winter months. Among other drawings in which it occurs we may refer to a curious miniature in a French missal of the fifteenth century, representing the master of the house seated at dinner on a form with a long rail at the back, to which is suspended a circular wicker fire-screen, exactly resembling those now in use. Douce MS., 80. fo. 1. It is clear from existing remains that *flues* were constructed in the 14th and 15th centuries, if not earlier.

[c] Also called a *ventaille*. See Rot. Claus., p. 576.

[d] Ibid., p. 52.

[e] A very early representation of "boiling the pot" is engraved by Strutt. Horda &c., vol. i. pl. xvii. fig. 1.

[f] Rot. Pip. 1. Edw. I.

[g] Alex. Necham, "De nominibus utensilium," Cotton MS. Titus D xx.

The buttery was actually the cellar in which all liquors were kept, and in the sewery were deposited table-cloths and towels or maniples, hung on perches to keep them clean, and also to prevent the incursions of mice[h]; knives, salts, the cheese chest, candlesticks, sconces and baskets.

We may now enter the dining or great chamber where the "sovereign" took his repast, the household eating in the hall[i]. Many illuminations represent the floors of rooms paved with coloured tiles, although it is certain they were more frequently boarded and strewed with sand or rushes, dried or green according to the season[k]; in summer sweet herbs were mixed with rushes. If we presume the old limners to have faithfully represented the manners of their times, it was customary for guests to throw the refuse of their plates, as bones, &c. on the floor; two or three dogs grubbing about for such crumbs are not unfrequently introduced in ancient pictures of feasts. In the sixteenth century Erasmus described the disgusting consequences of this habit, then still prevalent in England; it had been condemned by native writers before him. It is almost unnecessary to observe that carpets did not come into general use, until a very recent period. They were first introduced in the thirteenth century[l], and were certainly used in the royal apartments during the reign of Edward the Third.

The furniture of the dining-chamber was simple and scanty, consisting only of standing-tables, or tables on tressels, and wooden forms for seats[m]. It is clear from numerous allusions in the old romance writers that the tables were removed after dinner; hence the convenience of tressels.

"Mes maintenant que mengie ont,
Et la table lor fu ostee." RECUEIL de MEON, vol. i. p. 31.

"Whan bordes were born a doun and burnes[n] hade waschen
Men mizt haue seie to menstrales moche god zif."
WILLIAM and THE WERWOLF.

[h] Ibid. fo. 5. See also Wynkyn de Worde's "boke of Keruynge," 1513.

[i] See the Northumberland Household Book. These names are frequently used, the one for the other, by old poets.

[k] Rot. Claus. p. 95, et passim "de camera regis junchianda."

[l] Household Expenses, &c. in England; presented to the Roxburgh Club by Beriah Botfield, Esq. Introd., p. lxi.

[m] "In the Hall foure tables with formes, one counter, one cupboard, xx.s." Inventory of Sir Thomas Hilton, of Hilton Castle, co. Durham, 1st. Eliz. Surtees Society, Wills and Inventories, p. 183. See also the Surveys of Leckinfield Manor House, and Wresil Castle in 1574; Northumberland Household Book.

[n] Men.

The table on the dais at which the entertainer and his superior guests sat was placed *across* the chamber;

> "Sone the semli segges[o] were sette in halle
> The real rinkes[o] bi reson at the heize dese
> And alle other afterward on the *side* benches
> And sete so in solas sadli ful the halle
> Eche dingneli at his degre to deme the sothe." IBID.

The dresser, (*dressoir*) now degraded to the kitchen, was once the chief ornament of the dining-room, and whatever plate the owner of the house might possess was arranged on it to the best advantage. It was placed either opposite the dining-table or at the back or side of the dais. The form of it varied; sometimes it is represented exactly like a modern dresser, but it generally appears as a tall square object with steps at the top (*à degrés*) covered with coloured cloth; at its base was a stepping-block, to enable the servants to reach any vessel that might be required. We still see china disposed above old-fashioned mantels, as in some of the rooms at Hampton Court, in the style that gold and silver plate was once exhibited on the dresser[p]. Little notion is entertained of the great quantity of plate which our ancient sovereigns and nobility possessed. We may give as an instance, the articles forming the service of plate presented by Edward the First to his daughter Margaret, after her marriage to the duke of Brabant. It consisted of forty-six silver cups with feet, for the butlery; six wine-pitchers, four ewers for water, four basins with gilt escutcheons for the hall; six great silver dishes for *entremets;* one hundred and twenty smaller dishes or plates, the same number of salts; one gilt salt for the duchess's own use; seventy-two spoons; three silver spice-plates, and one spice-spoon. The goldsmith's bill for this outfit amounted to £284. 15s. 4d.[q]

In the earliest illuminations tapestry or hangings appear behind the high table only at the back of the dais[r], as in the engraving at the head of this paper, copied from a MS. of the fourteenth century; it represents the entertainment of King Arthur by the felon and disloyal knight "Cueur de

[o] Men.

[p] There are some of the best illustrations extant of the ancient dresser in MS. Laud, K. 100. Bibl. Bodl. This volume contains also two admirable pictures of presence-chambers in the fifteenth century.

[q] Lib. Gard. 25 Edw. I.; A.D. 1297.

[r] Strutt's Horda &c., vol. i. pl. xvi. fig. 1.

Pierre," an incident in the romance of Meliadus de Leonnoys[s]. These hangings were suspended from hooks fixed in the wall, an arrangement very perceptible in our illustration, and were taken down and carried with the owner when he removed from one residence to another. Towards the end of the fifteenth century we find numerous instances of the chamber being entirely hung with tapestry, or stamped and gilded leather; at this period the principal seat on the dais is in the form of a long high-backed couch with elbows[t], covered with embroidered silks, although wooden forms still appear, appropriated to guests of inferior rank[u]. It is possible the same sort of couch was in use much earlier, and it may have been identical with the "lit" or bed mentioned by the old romancers. In the tale of "La Mule sanz Frain," the lady of the castle receives Sir Gawain seated on a magnificent bed or couch under a canopy, and places him by her side

"Trestot delez li, coste a coste,
Lo fet seoir la damoisele."

Le Grand d'Aussy says, the custom of eating on a sort of couch, after the fashion of the ancients, still subsisted in the twelfth century; his statements are generally well founded, and entitled to respect, but it may be questioned whether the practice existed in England after the Norman Conquest, or indeed, for some time before that event. We find no instances of it in Saxon manuscripts: on the Bayeux tapestry there is a representation of a feast, but the guests are seated in the ordinary way; and Le Grand himself has cited an incident to prove that it was not known among the Normans. Robert duke of Normandy, father of the Conqueror, made a pilgrimage to Jerusalem; when at Constantinople he was much surprised to see the emperor and his attendants take their repast on the ground, having neither tables nor forms. This was merely the oriental custom, but the duke, finding it inconvenient, had a table and seats made after the French fashion, and they appeared so convenient to the emperor and his subjects, that they adopted and learned to make them[v]. In some Saxon drawings, the dining-table is oval-shaped or

[s] Add. MS., 12,228, fo. 126.

[t] The corners being surmounted by gilded carvings like the poppy-heads on old church-seats; they were usually crests.

[u] See MS. Reg. 14. E. IV. ffo. 244 b., 265 *b*.

[v] Hist. de la Vie Privée des François, tom. iii. p. 153.

round[w], but its general form was oblong, as in the accompanying illustrations.

The use of white linen table-cloths may be ascribed to a very early period; they are represented in Anglo-Saxon illuminations. The fall of the cloth seems to have been studiously arranged; and in one instance it appears gathered up at either side of the table into a mass of plaits[w]; this, however, is perhaps a singular example of the kind. We find Henry the Third ordering five hundred ells of linen for table-cloths, previous to the Christmas feast at Winchester in 1219[x]; this was comparatively a large quantity, as linen was by no means plentiful at the beginning of the thirteenth century; six years before, in 1213, King John commanded the sheriff of Somerset and Dorset to buy him all the good linen he could find[y]. At a later period, the fine linen manufactured at Rheims was in great demand for the table. The diaper of the same place was in use in the fifteenth century, but more commonly in the sixteenth[z]. The dining-table being generally long and narrow, the table-cloth was sometimes of the same shape; the ends only fell over the board, which was left exposed in front; these ends were in some instances fringed with work resembling lace. It has been supposed that the cloth may have been laid on the table double, so that when one side was soiled the other might be turned up, whence the term "*doublier*," which occurs so frequently in the poems of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries[a]. It may be remarked, however, that *doublier* frequently signified a napkin only, or perhaps a surnap; in the following lines a clear distinction is drawn.

"Quant lavé orent, si s'asistrent,
Et li serjant les napes mistrent,
Desus les dobliers blans et biax,
Les salieres et les coutiax,
Apres lou pain, puis lo vin
Es copes d'argent et d'or fin."

Again,

"Quant mengié orent a plenté
Lors furent serjant apresté
Qui dobliers et napes osterent,
Et qui l'eve lor aporterent,
Et la toaille a essuier." LE CHEVALIER A L'ESPÉE.

[w] Strutt, vol. i. pl. xvi. fig. 1.
[x] Rot. Claus., p. 409.
[y] Ibid., p. 135.
[z] Two diaper board cloths, one five yards long, the other four, occur in the inventory of Elizabeth Hutton of Hunwick, in 1567. See Wills and Inventories (Surtees Society) *passim*.
[a] Vie Privee, vol. iii. p. 165.

Le Grand observes, that the table napkin is comparatively a recent introduction, and that he could find no evidence clearly establishing its ancient use[b]. The word occurs in English inventories of the sixteenth century. The surnap was a cloth doubled and laid upon the ordinary table cover, before the master of the house. The arrangement of it was a matter of form. In "serten artycles" for regulating his household, made by Henry the Seventh, in 1493, it is ordered, "the server to lay the surnape on the borde and the ussher to drawe hyt and to make the pleyghtes before the kyng[c]."

Having got the cloth on our table, we may take a glance at the implements provided to assist the process of eating; for many centuries they consisted only of knives and spoons. It seems extraordinary that an instrument like the fork, both useful and cleanly, should have continued out of use during so long a period; more especially as there are indications that it was known even in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. Our first Edward might have boasted the possession of *one;* it was kept among his jewels[d]. Piers Gaveston, the profuse minion of Edward the Second, had four, of silver, "for eating pears[e]," and John, duke of Britanny, used one, also of silver, to pick up "soppys" from his pottage mayhap[f]. Le Grand says forks are mentioned in an inventory of the jewels of Charles the Fifth, king of France in 1379; this is the only instance he cites, and the passage in which it occurs, concludes with this admirable observation,—apparently up to the time when they (forks) came into use, the knife was employed to convey food to the mouth, *as it still is in England*, where, for that purpose, the blades of knives are made broad and round at the end! Yet there can be no doubt that, uncivilized as we may have appeared to the learned Frenchman, forks were used as well as knives in the year 1782[g].

The consequences of the want of forks at table may be readily imagined. The carver who officiated served the company at the point of his knife, perhaps with the assistance of a spoon. In "the boke of Keruyng," before quoted, the

[b] He adds that people probably wiped their mouths and hands on the table-cloth, "as the English, who do not use napkins, still do." His work was published in 1782.

[c] Add. MS. 4712, fo. 3 *b.*; see also the "boke of Keruynge."

[d] Lib. Gard. 25 Edw. I., A.D. 1297.

[e] Fœdera, sub anno 1313. "Trois furchesces d'argent, pur mangier poires."

[f] Dom. Morice. Hist. Bret. Preuves, 1, 1202. "Item, ij. petits gameaux, et une forche d'argent a trere soupes." A.D. 1306.

[g] Vie Privee, tom. iii. p. 179.

following very necessary precepts are addressed to this household officer. "Set never on fyshe, flesche, beest ne fowle more than two fyngers and a thombe." Again; "your knyfe muste be fayre and your handes muste be clene, and passe not two fyngers and a thombe upon your knyfe." In a drawing of an Anglo-Saxon entertainment[h] one of the guests holds a small fish in his hand, being evidently about to cut it up, but his attention is diverted by an attendant who has brought some roasted meat *on a spit*[i], which he presents to him kneeling. At the other extremity of the table one of the company is cutting a slice from a spit held by a servant in a similar posture.

This illustration shews the antiquity of a custom which still prevailed in the thirteenth century, viz. that of placing an entire fish before a guest of distinction. The Chronicler of Lanercost narrates that Robert Grostête, bishop of Lincoln, reproved his seneschal who had given him a large sea-wolf and placed a small one before his visitor, the earl of Gloucester[k]. The "boke of Keruynge" furnishes directions for helping fish, from which we may infer that at the beginning of the sixteenth century, it was no longer fashionable to take one in the hand for the purpose of carving; not that it is at all clear that our ancestors generally indulged in the mode of handling fish at dinner exhibited by the Saxon bon-vivant: at tables supplied with spoons as well as knives, there could have been little difficulty in getting through the fish-course without recourse to their fingers.

T. H. TURNER.

[h] Engraved in Strutt's Horda, vol. i. pl. xvi. fig. 1.

[i] It seems probable that the "broches d'argent," or silver spits, mentioned in ancient inventories were brought to table with the meat.

[k] Chron. de Lanercost, p. 44.

THE DINING-TABLE.—PART II.

We take the first opportunity to continue our remarks on the ancient dining-table and its appendages.

Those of our forefathers who were opulent enough had plates and dishes of silver, although "treen," or wooden, spoons and platters for the table held their place for many a day in the domestic offices of the great and the dwellings of the humble. In the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries pewter[a] was applied to the manufacture of similar articles, but the price of that metal, which continued high even till the early part of the eighteenth century, prevented the general use of it among the lower classes. Harrison in his description of England, written about 1580, adverting to the reputation of English pewterers, says, "in some places beyond the sea a garnish of good fiat English pewter of an ordinarie making, ... is esteemed almost so pretious, as the like number of vessels that are made of fine silver; and in maner no lesse desired amongst the great Estates, whose workmen are nothing so skilful in that trade as ours." He tells us the "garnish" contained twelve platters, twelve dishes, and twelve saucers, and that its price varied from sixpence to eightpence the pound[b]; an excessive value when compared with that of beef and mutton at the same period.

Convenience of form as well as long usage have so accustomed us to round plates, that we may well be surprised they should ever have been made angular; yet they were fre-

[a] The company of Pewterers was incorporated 20th Jan. 1474; 13 Edw. IV.

[b] Prompt. Parvul., ed. Way, V. Garnysche; Holinsh. Chron., vol. i. p. 237.

quently copies, in a more precious material, of the square wooden trencher of the kitchen: at the same time circular plates are often represented in old drawings of feasts. Dishes were much of the same form as at present; the largest were called "chargers," and seem to have been shaped like shallow bowls.

The salt, that important and stately ornament of the middle-age table, was a conspicuous object before or on the right hand of the master of the house[c]. It appears in various shapes: sometimes as a covered cup on a narrow stem; occasionally in a castellated form; and at the caprice of the owner or maker it frequently took the figure of a dog[d], a stag, or some other favourite animal. The annexed cut represents a large silver salt of the early part of the seventeenth century, preserved among the plate at Winchester College; although of comparatively recent date, there is every reason to believe it was fashioned after a more ancient type. The three projections on the upper rim seem to have been intended for the support of a cover, perhaps a napkin, as it was considered desirable to keep the cover clear of the salt itself: "loke that youre salte seller lydde touche not the salte," saith the "boke of keruynge." It appears from numerous allusions to the fact, that the state salt was used by the "sovereign" or entertainer only; and it is not unlikely, from the great number of salts mentioned in old inventories, that when possible each guest also had one for his particular use. It is not easy to understand how any one at the upper or cross table could be seated "below the salt," as it was not customary to sit at the lower side of that board,

Ancient Salt.

[c] "The boke of keruynge;"—"than set your salt on the ryght syde where your souerayne shall sytte and on ye lefte syde the salte set your trenchours."

[d] Two are named in the will of Edmund Mortimer, earl of March, A.D. 1380; also "un saler en la manere d'une lyoun ove le pee d'argent susorrez." Royal Wills, pp. 112—114.

which was left unoccupied for the more convenient access of servants. The probability is, therefore, that this phrase, and the distinction it inferred, applied only when the company sat on both sides of a long table, where the position of a large salt marked the boundary of the seats of honour, or what may be termed the dais of the board.

So long as people were compelled to the occasional use of their fingers in dispatching a repast, washing before as well as after dinner was indispensable to cleanliness, and not a mere ceremony. The ewers and basins[e] for this purpose were generally of costly material and elaborate fabric:—

"L'eve demande por laver,
Li vilains maintenant lor baille
Les bacins d'or, et la toaille
Lor aporte por essuier."

LA MULE SANZ FRAIN.

The will of John Holland, duke of Exeter, date 1447, mentions "an ewer of gold, with a falcon taking a partridge with a ruby in its breast[f]."

In the days of chivalry it was high courtesy towards a guest to invite him to wash in the same basin:—

"Puis fist on les napes oster
Et por laver l'iaue aporter;
Li Chevalier tout premerains
Avec la Comtesse ses mains
Lava, et puis l'autre gent tout."

BARBAZAN, III. 109.

This however was perhaps a species of compliment naturally attendant on the equivocal honour of eating from the same plate with your host[g], though it should be observed, in justice to the poets who are our veracious authorities for the custom, that there was generally a lady in the case:—

"Trestot delez li, coste a coste,
Lo fet seoir la damoisele
Et mengier a une escuele."

RECUEIL de MEON, I. 31.

[e] In Strutt's Horda, vol. i. Pl. xvi. fig. 3, is an engraving of a Saxon drawing representing Lot entertaining the angels: an attendant bears a vase-shaped basin for washing, together with a long narrow maniple, which hangs over his left arm, and is fringed at the ends.

[f] Royal Wills, p. 284. In the inventory of the jewels of Edward the Third, is "a silver gilt ewer, triangular, enamelled with the images of the three kings of Denmark, Germany, and Aragon." Archæologia, vol. x. p. 252.

[g] For a more oppressive exercise of hospitality in old times the curious reader may consult St. Foix, "Essais Historiques sur Paris," vol. i. p. 98.

We may now glance at the drinking-vessels of ancient days. The warriors of the north drank from horns, as did the Homeric heroes ages before them, and as the people of most countries have done where horn-bearing animals were known. In the ninth century the Saxon king of Mercia gave the monks of Croyland his "table-horn, that the elders of the monastery might drink out of it on feast days, and sometimes remember in their prayers the soul of Wiglaf the donor[h]." The same Wiglaf gave to the refectory of Croyland his gilt cup, embossed on the exterior with "barbarous victors fighting dragons," which he was wont to call his "crucible," because a cross was impressed on the bottom, and on the four angles of it[i]. This was doubtless a specimen of that skill in working precious metals for which the Anglo-Saxons were famous, and for the exercise of which Eadred in 949 rewarded his goldsmith Ælfsige with a grant of land[j]. Horns continued to be appendages of the table until after the Conquest, although other drinking-vessels were in use also. We see them represented on the Bayeux Tapestry, and find from wills and other notices that they lingered on the board, or in the hall, for centuries after the date of that historic needlework. The mouth of the horn was not unfrequently fitted with a cover, like the old-fashioned Scotch mull. In the collection of antiquities in the British Museum is preserved a very large drinking-horn of the sixteenth century, so great indeed that it was evidently intended to try a man's capacity for wine. It is formed of the small tusk of an elephant, carved with rude figures of elephants, unicorns, lions and crocodiles, and mounted with silver: a small tube ending in a silver cup issues from the jaws of a pike whose head and shoulders inclose the mouth of the vessel. The following legend is engraved upon it: —

"Drinke you this and think no scorne
All though the Cup be much like a horne." 1599. Fine s.

The remains of an iron chain are attached to this horn, which was probably suspended in the hall of some convivial squire of the old time, whose guests were at times summoned to drain it, or to pay a shilling fine.

After the horn the commonest drinking-vessel of early times

[h] Codex Diplom. Ævi Saxonici, vol. i. p. 305. Mr. Kemble suspects the authenticity of this charter; it is at any rate of great antiquity.

[i] Ibid.

[j] Ibid., vol. ii. p. 299.

was, perhaps, the mazer-bowl; its name was undoubtedly derived from the maple wood[k], of which it was usually made, although like bowls of more costly material bore the same appellation, which seems ultimately to have been given to shape, without reference to substance. Mazers were of different sizes, great and little being named in the same inventories; sometimes they had covers[l], and a short foot or stem. The early wassail-bowl seems to have been shaped as a mazer. We give a cut of the "murrhine cup," presented to the abbey of St. Albans by Thomas de Hatfield, bishop of Durham, "which," says the recorder of the benefaction, "we in our times call 'Wesheyl[m].'" This vessel could not have been used in a very graceful manner; we perceive from illuminations that small ones were raised to the mouth in the palm of the hand; the larger sized would have needed both hands. The small mazer was called a "maselin," unless, indeed, Dan Chaucer borrowed this diminutive from the Latin to make a rhyme:—

Mazer with Cover.

"They fet him first the swete win,
And mede eke in a maselin."

THE RIME OF SIR THOPAS.

Our ancestors seem to have been greatly attached to their mazers, and to have incurred much cost in enriching them. Quaint legends, in English or Latin, monitory of peace and good-fellowship, were often embossed on the metal rim and on the cover; or the popular, but mystic Saint Christopher engraved on the bottom of the interior, rose in all his giant proportion, before the eyes of the wassailer as he drained the bowl, giving comfortable assurance that on that festive day, at least, no mortal harm could befal him. But we may believe that occasionally art made higher efforts to decorate the

[k] Dutch *maeser*. In that valuable record of the usual household effects of the middle classes at the beginning of the fourteenth century, the assessment of a 15th upon the borough of Colchester, in the 29th of Edward the First, (Rot. Parl., i. 245,) mazers are frequently mentioned—"i. ciphus de mazero parvus pretii vj.d."—"i. ciphus de mazero pretii xviiid."—the highest value at which one is assessed being two shillings, and that price must have been owing to its size and workmanship, for had the material been silver, the fact would have been stated. These we may fairly assume to have been wooden bowls.

[l] "One mazer with one cover duble gilt weyth xxix onces,—ix.li. xiij.s. iiij.d."—Wills and Inventories (Surtees Society), p. 339.

[m] MS. Cotton. Nero D. vii. fo. 87.

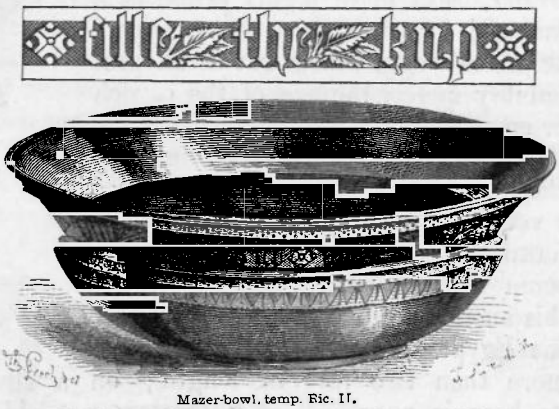
favourite cup. Witness Spenser's musical and vivid description of

"A mazer ywrought of the maple warre,
Wherein is enchased many a fayre sight
Of bears and tygers, that maken fiers warre;
And over them spred a goodly wilde vine,
Entrailed with a wanton yvy twine.

Thereby is a lambe in the wolves jawes;
But see, how fast renneth the shepheard swain
To save the innocent from the beastes pawes,
And here with his sheepehooke hath him slain.
Tell me, such a cup hast thou ever seene?
Well mought it beseeme any harvest queene."

THE SHEPHEARD'S CALENDER—AUGUST.

The latest of our poets who alludes to it is Dryden: in the seventeenth century it may have been still in use among the humbler classes. The annexed cut represents a very perfect mazer[n] of the times of Richard the Second; its material is a highly polished wood, apparently maple, and the embossed rim of silver gilt[o] bears this legend:—



Mazer-bowl, temp. Ric. II.

"In the name of the trinite
fille the kup and drinke to me."

In the lapse of time and advance of refinement, we find on the tables of the opulent, drinking-vessels of other forms and various names. The hanap, a cup raised on a stem, either with or without a cover; its form in the early part of the fourteenth century is shewn in the tail-piece, p. 180 ante; the cup said to have been given by King John to the corporation of Lynn is of the same species, as also the accompanying fine specimen of the sixteenth century from the collection of plate

[n] "One mazer w^th^ one edgle of sylver." Wills &c. (Surtees Society), p. 415.

[o] In the possession of Evelyn Philip Shirley, Esq., M.P., who has kindly permitted it to be engraved for this paper.

at Winchester College, represented here by permission of the Rev. the Warden. The godet, a sort of mug or cup; the juste (*justa*), which was rather a conventual than a secular measure, and so named from containing no more than a prescribed allowance of wine[p]; the barrel[q], and the tankard. Another frequently named in inventories, was, the "standing nut," or mounted nut-shell; the shell of the cocoa was imported into Europe, through Egypt, at an early period, and appears to have been held in some estimation. But a substance "*d'oultremer*," still more highly prized as a material for cups, was the "grype," or griffin's egg, which was in all probability merely the egg of the ostrich or emu[r]. As our forefathers believed the griffin to be of monstrous size, they had no hesitation in treasuring a very long horn as a specimen of its formidable claws. In the British Museum there is a curious example of this ancient credulity. It is a horn of the Egyptian Ibex, (*Capra Nubiana*,) more than two feet in length; on a silver rim around its base is engraved, in characters not older than the sixteenth century; ✠ GRYPHI VNGVIS DIVO CVTHBERTO DVNELMENSI SACER. The different vessels above enumerated were usually of silver, rarely gold, and sometimes of ivory; although it has been said that cups of crystal were not uncommon[s], some research convinces us that crystal beryl, or fine glass, and such substances, were rarer still than gold, and it was not until towards the close of the fifteenth century that glass came into use for drinking-cups. They were generally embossed or enamelled with the armorial bear-

Hanap, 16th cent.

[p] Prompt. Parvul. ed. Way, tom. i. p. 268.

[q] "Item, quatre barils de Ivoir, garniz de laton, od les coffins." Inv. of Piers Gaveston, A.D. 1313. Fœdera. "Duo barilli argenti deaurati cum zonis argenti minutis, pond. in toto xls." Wardrobe account 8 Edw. III. A.D. 1334. Cotton MS. Nero, C. viii. fo. 319 *b*.

[r] Prompt. Parvul. ed. Way, sub voce.

[s] Warton's Hist. of English Poetry, vol. ii. p. 254.

ings of their owners, parcel-gilt, sometimes set with jewels, and occasionally they bore designs of higher pretension. A cup of silver gilt and enamelled "*ove joeux des enfans*," the sports of children, is mentioned in the will of Edmund Mortimer earl of March, 1380; one of gold "with the dance of men and women" in the will of Richard Beauchamp, earl of Warwick, date 1435[t]; and another enamelled with dogs occurs in that of Katherine countess of Warwick, 1369[u]. Hearts, roses, and trefoils were devices generally enamelled or chased upon drinking cups, during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries[x].

It was customary to give names to particular drinking cups. Edmund earl of March, in 1380 bequeathed his son Roger a hanap of gold with a cover, called "Benesonne[y];" a name which is usually considered to have belonged to the "grace-cup." In 1392 Richard earl of Arundel and Surrey left his wife her own goblet called "Bealchier." Sir John Neville bequeathed to the abbey of Hautemprise in 1449 a cup called "ye Kataryne[z]." Large *standing* cups, as they were called, intended chiefly for the ornament of the table or dressoir, but also for wine, had their names; John, baron of Greystock, who died in 1436, left to Ralph his son and heir a very large silver cup and cover, called the "Charter of Morpeth[a]," a term which may recall to the reader's recollection the ruby ring, described as the "Charter of Poynings" in the will of Sir Michael de Poynings in 1368[b]. Besides these standing vessels, which were of large capacity, for we find them called "galoniers" and "demi-galoniers[c]," the table or buffet was decorated with silver "drageoirs," or "dragenalls" as they were named in England, for spices, made in many quaint shapes.

The most curious appendage however of the tables of princes and noblemen of high rank was the Ship, (*nef*,) which according to Le Grand, held the napkin and salt of its owner[d]:

[t] Testamenta Vetusta, p. 231.

[u] Ibid., p. 78. [x] Ibid., passim.

[y] Royal Wills, p. 112. The writer cannot help thinking that this name, literally "blessing," was given to objects which had been left with the blessing of a testator. The following passages seem to yield a clue to its origin:—"Item, une coupe d'or, enamaille od perie, que la Reigne Alianore devisa au Roi, qui ore est, od sa *beniceon*." Inv. of Piers Gaveston, A.D. 1313. John duke of Lancaster bequeathed to his son the duke of Hereford, afterwards Henry the Fourth, "un fermaile d'or *del veile manere*, et escriptz les nons de Dieu en chescun part d'ycelle fermaile, la quele ma treshonour dame et mier la reigne qe Dieu assoille me donna, en comandant qe jeo le gardasse ovecqe sa *benison*, et voille q'il la garde ovecqe la benison de Dieu et la mien." Royal Wills, p. 157.

[z] Testamenta Vetusta, p. 265.

[a] "Ciphum maximum." Wills and Inventories (Surtees Society), p. 85.

[b] Test. Vet., p. 73.

[c] Will of Cardinal Beaufort, Royal Wills, p. 325.

[d] Vie Privee, vol. iii. p. 188.

it may have done so, but there is little or no proof of the destination of this singular ornament, which by some antiquaries is conjectured to have been a box for spices and sweetmeats. The form of it was evidently borrowed from the *navette*, (naveta,) a ship-like vessel in which frankincense was kept on the Altar, and which may be traced to a greater antiquity than the table-ship. The use of the *nef* in England seems to have been less common than on the continent. The earliest mention of it in this country, of which we are aware, is in the inventory of the jewels of Piers Gaveston, in 1313. "Item a ship of silver with four wheels[e], enamelled on the sides." Among the royal jewels in the 8th of Edward the Third, 1334, was "a ship of silver with four wheels, and a dragon's head, gilt, at either end;" it weighed xij.li. vij.s. iiijd.[f] There are other species of ships named in old wills, as in that of William of Wykeham, 1403, "an alms-dish newly made in the form of a ship[g];" in that of John Holland, duke of Exeter, 1447, "an almes-diss the shipp;" and in that of George earl of Huntingdon, 1534, "a flat ship of silver gilt." These, perhaps, corresponded in intention with the alms-pots[h] (*pots à ausmosne*) into which, says Le Grand, pieces of meat were thrown from the table to distribute among the poor[i]. It is out of our power to elucidate further the purpose of the table-ship, but we incline to believe it was intended for confections and spices, and not for the salt. The annexed illustration, a servant bearing the ship to table, is taken from an elaborate illumination of the fifteenth century, representing a feast given by Richard the Second[k].

T. H. TURNER.

[e] So we venture to amend "roefs," the word as printed in the Fœdera for "rotes," or "roets."

[f] Cotton MS. Nero C. viii. fo. 319.

[g] Test. Vetust., p. 767.

[h] "Olla argentea magna costata pro elemosina, cum capite regis ex una parte et capite episcopi ex altera, ponderis xv. li. xlij. s. iv. d." Wardrobe Acc. 8 Edw. III., Cotton MS. Nero C. viii. fo. 319.

[i] Vie Privee, iii. 255. The alms-pot still holds its place in the hall of Winchester College: broken meat is placed in it for distribution to the poor, and it is under the management of one of the foundation scholars, who is styled "*ollæ præfectus.*"

[k] Royal MS. 14 E. IV. fo. 244 *b*.