

Victorian Restaurants in the West End

Yo Maenobo

The little man, with his quiet, rather nervous manner and big serious eyes, went from the management of the East room at the Criterion to the Washington in Oxford Street, then to the big hotel at Cimiez, and has now put the Café Royal into shape.

—Nathaniel Newnham-Davis

These Restaurant Dinners are comparatively recent institutions, so to speak, having come into vogue during the last few years, but they have become almost, if not altogether, the greatest feature of the Night Side of London high life.

—Robert Machray

Acknowledgement

I express my deep gratitude to Dr. James McMullen for providing me with the opportunity to collect my thoughts about the Western style restaurant in nineteenth century Japan, at the Oriental Institute of Oxford University on 9th February, 1999.

I also express my deep gratitude to Professor Joy Hendry who gave me an occasion to talk about that Japanese restaurant and Victorian restaurants at the Japan Interest Group on 25th November, 2004.

Finally I express my deep gratitude to Mr Martin Nuttall, Mrs Jane Chapman and Dr Rachel Payne, who have given me valuable advice on the composition of this manuscript ever since I came to Oxford Brookes University in 1997. This paper owes a debt to Mrs Chapman.



1. Preface

In 1860 *A Handy Book on Dinners. Dinners and Diners at Home and Abroad* by Edward Litt L. Blanchard (250 m.80) was published as the first guidebook for gourmets in London. The first edition of the well-known *Dickens's Dictionary of London* (Per. G.A.Lond. 16^o 168) was published in 1879 and was revised more than ten times before the end of the century. The lists of restaurants were essential to them. On 2nd July, 1892 *the Graphic* first provided recommendations of "Where to Dine" in its advertisement column.

Thus, the eyes of Victorian Londoners were fixed upon restaurants. *Black's Guide to London* (9th ed., 1891, G.A.Lond. 16^o 52) says, "Within recent years also the national love of privacy has manifested itself in the establishment of dining clubs — such as the Amphytrion in Albemarle Street — where the cult of *le haute cuisine* can be followed by its votaries in comparative seclusion. There are, however, several restaurants where the requirements of the most accomplished *gourmet* can be satisfactorily suited." (p.38)

And *Dickens's Dictionary of London* indicates in 1879 that "it was for very many years a popular delusion that west of Fleet Street chops and steaks could not be had — or, at all events, could only be had in a very inferior style." (p.50) In fact, according to <The Dining Directory> in *Dinners and Diners* in 1860, there are 41 restaurants in London's E.C., 10 in E., 11 in W., 8 in W.C. To sum up, 51 restaurants in the East End and 19 in the West End are selected.

In 1901 a new enlarged edition of *Dinners & Diners, Where and How to Dine in London* (1781 e.218) was published. It also has a list of 119 restaurants, but 103 of them are, in fact, located westward of the Temple Bar. The rise of the West End must have been striking in the late 1880s and early 1890s.

I would like to describe some themes of the restaurant scene in London around 1890, set in the context of the rise of the West End.

Explanatory Notes

P: *Punch*, L: *The Illustrated London News*, G: *The Graphic*, T: *The Table*, Ts: *The Times*.

D: Davis, Nathaniel Newnham- , *Dinners and Diners, Where and How to Dine in London*, 1899 (1781 e.118).

The dates of publication, titles, shelf marks at the Bodleian Library, pages and so forth are noted in round brackets. However, not all of them are necessarily noted. For illustrations pages are not usually indicated.

2. Mealtimes

When the Franco-Prussian War took place and Republicanism was declared in France in 1870, *the Illustrated London News* featured many illustrations in its reports of the war; one of these was titled <The War: French Refugees in London> (08/10/70L), in which we see a sincere-looking policeman surrounded by seven or eight people, including a gentleman wearing a top hat, and a lady holding a baby in her arms. In the foreground is the moving figure of a little girl, bracing her legs and looking up at the policeman. Her right hand is in her father's hand and she carries her belongings in her left hand.

The text read as follows: "They seem often to stand in need of friendly guidance, if not always in want of more substantial assistance; and we are glad to hear that efforts will be made to help them, in fit cases, to find accomodation in this strange city, and to provide for themselves during their temporary sojourn amongst us."

This contemporary illustration in the autumn of 1870 provides cultural historians

with useful material, in the details of the restaurant depicted in the background. The word "Dinners" can be seen on the upper part of the central glass panel with "À la carte" underneath. A menu is attached to the glass door on the right and the words "Table d'hôte" and "À 6 heures" are clearly visible.

Generally speaking, the time of dinner depended on the season especially in the age of candles. Looking at Thomas Rowlandson's <Tea> reprinted in *The Beauties of Boswell* (1942, 17075 b.27), it is clear that it was unusual to enjoy brandy and cigars till the small hours. However, according to the newspaper advertisements for London's Hotel Victoria in the 1890s, in January (03/01/91L, 16/01/92L), March (01/03/90L), October (22/10/92L) and December (20/12/90L) its restaurant was open "from 6 to 8.30 p.m." Its opening times clearly did not vary according to season.

The Hotel Victoria was located on Northumberland Avenue, Charing Cross and "the wandering groups of bewildered refugees" in 1870 were also "frequently to be met with in the neighbourhood of Leicester Square and other familiar quarters of London." Supposing that the restaurant in this illustration was located in Leicester Square, it was very close to the Hotel Victoria.

There are eight signatures printed in <Specimens of Mr. Punch's Signatures! (Fac-similes taken during the course of the evening)> (30/04/87P) in *Punch* in 1887. It is

amusing to see how the signature loses its shape as the night advances. The time of the first one is clearly given as: "This is before dinner, 7:30."



There is a dandy "who, when he is asked to dine at half-past six, thinks it fine to come at half-past eight." (15/01/59P)

Someone's message on the telegraph wires,

"Home to Dinner at 6 30," came off on Mrs Bluebag's linen (Punch's Almanack for '62). Another cartoon from *Punch* three years later shows a late and breathless gentleman talking with a head waiter at the London Tavern, producing his dinner ticket, and saying "I think it says six o'clock— ." (24/06/65P)

The clock of the Mansion House kitchen in *Wholesome Fare* (1878, 268 b.204) shows the time as four forty. Harry Furniss' first invitation from *Punch* in 1881 appearing in his autobiography, *The Confessions of a Caricaturist* (1st Vol., 1901, 17006 d.106, pp.217-218) shows that it was held at the Albion Tavern, 153, Aldergate Street at seven o'clock on January 25, and he also says, "The majority of people dine at various times ranging between seven o'clock and half-past eight." (2nd Vol., p.235)

When recollecting the late 1860s George Augustus Sala wrote in <Charles Dickens at Gad's Hill> in *Phil May's Summer Annual*, 1892 (Walpole e.1049), "I do not think that the institution known as five o'clock tea was known in those days." It is easy to imagine that the new institution of five o'clock tea could have interfered with six o'clock dinner. Or, the order may be reversed and five o'clock tea may have been introduced as a consequence of dinner being held at later time. The preparations at the Mansion House kitchen seems to be too late for a six o'clock dinner.

A *Punch* cartoon of 1869 shows a woman, Ellen, offering plum cake to visitors, saying, "Aren't you going to have any more tea, Kitty? There is nearly an hour before dinner!" (01/05/69P) It was their five o'clock tea and Ellen's dinner must have been scheduled for about half past six.

From this pictorial and textual evidence we can conclude that London dinner at home in the latter half of the nineteenth century was, both daily and on special occasions, taken around six o'clock or six-thirty and city dinners reflected this trend. We can, of course, find some exceptions. The clock of <The principal dining saloon

at the international exhibition, 1862> (28/06/62L), for example, shows before four.

This was also a convenient time for those who went to the theatre after their dinner, as Verrey's advertised in *Phil May's Illustrated Winter Annual*, 1896 (Walpole e.1054). They go to the Empire which reopened in November, 1894 (02/11/94Ts) after having enjoyed their dinner at Verrey's on Regent Street at the corner of Hanover Street.

The curtain went up at eight o'clock at six theatres of the nineteen London theatres listed in *the Times* on a certain Monday in the winter of 1887 (28/02/87Ts). The curtain went up at eight o'clock at seven of the seventeen London theatres on a certain Monday in the summer of 1887 (27/06/87Ts), and at eight o'clock at five of the eighteen theatres in London on a certain Monday in the autumn of the same year (31/10/87Ts). Where the time of the raising of the curtain is mentioned during 1894, it does not seem to be earlier in the winter season than in the summer*.

3. Lighting

Changes in lighting methods enabled people to have dinner later. There are only five or six candles on a fixture hanging from the back ceiling in Thomas Rowlandson's coloured etching <An Eating-house> appearing in *The English at Table* by John Hampson (1944, 178 d.124). The candles have not yet been lit. Judging by the shadows on floor, it seems that there may have been another light source in the left foreground, where a similar light fixture may have been hung. According to *The Art of Dining* by Sara Paston-Williams, this etching depicts a city chop-house of the 1790s, while Joseph Grego judged it to be a work of c.1815 in his work *Rowlandson the Caricaturist* (2nd Vol., 1880, 170 n.177)*. The men depicted in this busy scene appear able to afford beer and seem to be very happy at twenty-eight past four on a day of this changing period.

The cartoon entitled <A Good Meal> by Rowlandson shows a scene at home. It is described by Adrian Bury (*Rowlandson Drawings*, 1949. 17006 d.550) as follows: "A portly gentleman, in more senses of the word than one, about to enjoy the pleasures of the table, the napkin tied about his neck. His left hand holds a glass of foaming liquor. The table, already groaning with a heavy load of meat, is about to bear the further burden of a plum pudding immediately the well-proportioned cook can find a place for it. The already overfed dog and cat are hoping for the best. Port, madeira and claret stand ready on the floor to the right. Behind the diner, sundry other cordials and fruit on a what-not. The clock on the wall, left, background, stands approximately at twenty past one**; and a portrait of Wellington completes a drawing in which every line would seem to express the idea of peace and plenty."

Everything is plentiful and round. The fork is stuck into the roast and only a pineapple on the what-not is needed to complete the image of ideal and perfect contentment.

We can picture this scene on a peaceful afternoon. No light sources are depicted, but we must be careful not to overlook the Rowlandson dog and cat, who are eager to participate in the gastronomy. Their shadows and the shadow of a tub in which several bottles are being cooled would suggest that the man dined with only the natural light coming through the window opposite the door. The three windows of the eating house in the previous picture were also still bright enough to allow the patrons to eat by natural light.

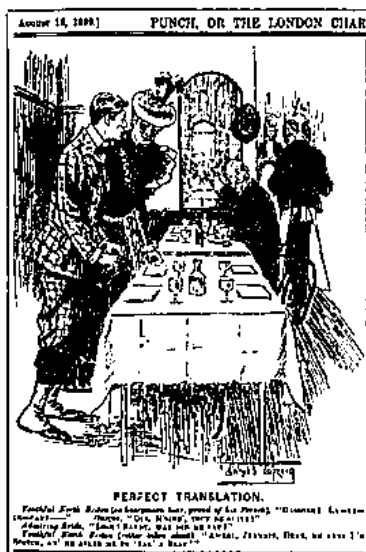
In c.1890 William John Gordon recorded the following. "Practically, oil is the light of the poor, and gas the light of the well-to-do; but that gas will eventually have to give electricity a large share in its lighting dominion is inevitable" (*How London Lives: the Feeding, Cleansing, Lighting and Police of London*, G.A.Lond. 8^o 661, p.109). An advertisement designed by Phil May appearing in his magazine, *Phil May's Illustrated Winter Annual* in 1896 (Walpole e.1054) illustrates this trend with

a tall "arctic lamp" extinguishing the flame of an old-fashioned bent candle.

Indeed, advertisements for the Hotel Victoria state, "Completely lit by Electricity." In *Phil May's Illustrated Winter Annual* in 1896 Romano's restaurant claims, "This palatial Restaurant has been entirely rebuilt, and lighted thoroughly by Electricity." However, electric light did have drawbacks and in 1894 the Savoy Hotel on the Strand, famous for its chef Monsieur Escoffier, had to advertise accordingly in *Fun, Frolic, & Fancy* by Byron Webber and Phil May (2705 e.95). "Electric Light everywhere (no Gas), including Bedside Lights, which can be turned off or on at all hours, day or night. The lights all shaded so as to cause no glare."

On the oblong table in <Grand banquet to Viscount Palmerston by the Reform Club> (27/07/50L) in 1850, we can see candelabra of various sizes***. However, the surroundings are in the darkness. Likewise, <Cramming> (18/11/93P) in *Punch* in 1893 and <In a London Restaurant> by Oscar Wilson (07/12/95L) in *the ILN* in 1895 also seem very dark without any candles.

<Charles Dickens at Gad's Hill> depicts Rule's Restaurant, a shell-fish supper room in Covent Garden, famous for the finest native oysters. The lights both on the walls and on the tables are, of course, shaded. Sala, Lemon, Thackeray and Leech are sketched by Phil May.



On December 22, 1894 James Greig's <Insult to Injury> appeared in the three pence illustrated weekly magazine titled *Lika Joko* (N. 2706 c.7) produced by Harry Furniss and in the picture we can see that the lights of the restaurant were all shaded. The wall behind the customer is very similar to the one in his caricature <Perfect Translation> in *Punch* in 1899 (16/08/99P) in which a hat is again hung

beside an oval arch through which other customers can be seen. We can see the wainscot very clearly in the *Punch* version, while in the *Lika Joko* version, the gentleman obstructs the view and we cannot see the lower part.

In these two pictures the lights are similar in shape, and presumably electric. In *Lika Joko* November 3, 1894, an advertisement for a London furnishing establishment includes an advertisement for two oil lamps. However, we rarely see such type of lights with their characteristic chimney in *Punch* illustrations at the end of the nineteenth century.

It was an electric age. <Punch's Fancy Portraits. — No.146> in 1883 (28/07/83P) shows the face of Sir C.W. Siemens in a light bulb. In *Hints for the Table: or the Economy of Good Living* by John Timbs (1859, 268 c.326, p.25) Sir Walter Scott's words are quoted. In 1823 when Scott introduced gas-lighting into the dining room at Abbotsford, he felt, "The eye was wearied, and the brow ached, if the sitting was at all protracted." In 1889 a caricature of a vocal recital full of paper umbrellas is explained as follows. "The Electric Light, so favourable to Furniture, Wall Papers, Pictures, &c., is not always becoming to the Female Complexion. Light Japanese Sunshades will be found invaluable." (20/07/89P)

It was generally thought at this time that the glare was unpleasant. As Verrey's lighted "the many square tables" with "wax red-shaded candles" (D), the nostalgic wavering light of a candle was felt to be more suitable for the dinner table****. Although, of course, I do not forget Richard Doyle's <A State Party> in his *Bird's Eye Views of Society* (1864, Arts a.18) recorded that "What can be more delightful to the eye and to the ear than a dinner-table, with its bright lights and beautiful flowers and pretty china, and surrounded by a party of friends sparkling with pleasant talk?"

4. Location of Table

Did the customers come into a restaurant and find a table on the ground floor, or did they have to go upstairs to dine? This is not an easy question to answer using evidence from illustrations. Neither Phil May in 1892 nor Wilson in 1895 depicted a staircase.

However, when silhouettes can be seen outlined against the window, as in <As clear as mud> (11/03/65P), we know it is the ground floor. <Afternoon tea in Regent Street> (*The Graphic Summer Number*, 1893) shows the bustle on a high street through open doors. A caricature in 1899 edition of *Punch* depicts a group of customers coming into A.B.C.'s tearoom, which is presumably on the ground floor (25/01/99P). In contrast, <City dinner> (24/06/65P) showed a conversation between the head waiter of the London Tavern and a customer on the landing. The back of a waiter going upstairs carrying a fancy dish can be seen, which suggests that people must be dining upstairs.

A benefit of dining upstairs is that diners can enjoy a good view with their meal. For example, people who dined at the Grand Hotel at Sydenham could enjoy the illuminated Crystal Palace all to themselves (12/09/85P). The Queen's Hotel at Upper Norwood, which was also close to the Crystal Palace, advertised as follows: "Ladies and gentlemen can make use of a most delightful coffee-room for meals, overlooking the beautiful grounds." (*Black's Guide to London*, 1891, G.A.Lond. 16^o 52)

"Overlooking the River and Embankment Gardens" described the Savoy Hotel and Restaurant according to its advertisement in *Fun, Frolic, & Fancy*. "Overlooking the Green Park" (D) was the Walsingham House Hotel & Restaurant in Piccadilly and the Criterion Restaurant advertised itself as overlooking Piccadilly (D).

The word "overlook" is not always used in the strictest sense. "Overlooking" need

not necessarily imply being upstairs and views above are not necessarily enjoyed from upper storeys. There are examples like Lovegrove's Tavern at Blackwall depicted in Richard Doyle's well-known picture (*Punch*, The Latter Half, 1849, p.102), whose pleasant view was the ground floor. The Ship, Greenwich, advertising "Public and private rooms facing the river" (D) was a three-storeyed



"house of nothing but dining-rooms." (D) However, the diners could watch "St. Paul's stand clear against the sunset" (D) from its ground floor.

Richard Doyle depicted a "hotel at the river-side" with a short piece in his *Bird's Eye Views of Society*. "Darkness comes gradually on; a light here and there is lit, perhaps a green or red one in some ship, and throws its bright reflection into the water. The stars come out, and the moon shines brightly in the Thames. And in case you don't care for whitebait, this, at least, was worth coming to see." (p.36)

The Gaiety Restaurant in the Strand let the customers know that luncheons and afternoon tea were served in the restaurant on the first floor (13/07/95G). We can therefore conclude that dining downstairs was common in restaurants in the West End. The Gaiety Restaurant advertised just "Dinners in restaurant" (13/07/95G) and did not refer to the ground floor especially.

In *London and its Environs* by Karl Baedeker published in 1889 (G.A.Lond. 16^o 42) Simpson's Dining Rooms have a "ladies' room upstairs" (p.12) and the Burlington provides "dinners on first and second floors." (p.13) Similarly, the Kühn's* has "restaurant upstairs" (p.13) and Three Tuns Tavern provides "Table d'hôte (upstairs)." (p.15) However, an overwhelming majority of restaurant have no adverts

for first floors. The restaurants may have been run just on the ground floor or there may not have been a big difference between the downstairs and upstairs eating areas.

According to the same guidebook, International Hall was "above the Cafe Monico." (p.43) Romano's had "the pretty Japanese room on the second floor." (D) And Verrey's provided "the private rooms upstairs." (D) Perhaps one may conclude that special rooms, if they were provided, were upstairs.

5. Tables

"The Savoy Dinner is served in the Salle a[sic] Manger from 6 to 8.30 at separate tables, 7s. 6d. Tables may be booked in advance." (*Fun, Frolic, & Fancy*, 1894.) "Service at separate tables" was one of the attractions of restaurants in 1890s, the other was having a dining room "Completely lit by Electricity." When the restaurant and the restaurant balcony of the Savoy Hotel (26/10/89L) are compared, for example, with Rowlandson's eating house, it is evident that the interior had undergone a major change in addition to the different means of lighting. In Rowlandson's illustration, people had to talk to their neighbours, sitting on a bench at an oblong table, if they did not want to be shut up in a small space behind a curtain. They may have been acquainted with each other, though.

These oblong tables and benches can still be seen in the Halls of Oxbridge Colleges today. However, "at the inaugural banquet in the new dining-hall of Balliol College, Oxford" (27/01/77G) in 1877 elegant chairs were used.

In 1867 Anne Bowman indicated that round tables became universal in "good society" in her *The New Cookery Book* (268 c.272, p.589) and *Punch* in 1860* depicted this type in a restaurant (14/04/60P). In 1878 a round table at a club and an oblong one at home both decorated the front cover of *Dinners at Home* (268 c.496) and in 1884 four of the five tables in <The Dining Room> (22/03/84P) were clearly

round in *Punch's* <Parliamentary Views: No. 5> by Harry Furniss. However, square tables covered with white tablecloths were the predominant style in restaurants in the latter half of the nineteenth century. <Scene – Restaurant in the Strand> in *Phil May's Illustrated Winter Annual*, 1893 (Walpole e.1051), James Greig's <Perfect Translation> and Tom Browne's <The Restaurant Dinner> in *The Night Side of London* by Robert Machray (1902, 247127 d.2) are evidence of this trend.

Phil May, the Artist & His Wit by David Cuppleditch (1981, 17006 c.376) shows photographs of the famous owner Alfonso Nicolino Romano in 1900** and the external appearance of his restaurant in 1893. The advertisement for his restaurant also appearing in this book can originally be found in Phil May's magazines after 1895.

In the same volume we can meet the artist's curved-chinned, long-faced portrait with his straight hair cut short. His full-length portrait by E.T. Reed (28/05/98P) is a living likeness and very close to the self-portrait that appeared in *the ILN* (12/12/96L)***. His self-portraits, which appear in unexpected scenes, impress us with his wit. For example, the witty little fellow in <A Sunday Dinner> (27/07/95P) is Phil May himself. In his caricatures children often weep, but here he is smiling at his family.

Cuppleditch writes as follows: "Romano had started out as a waiter at the Café Royal, opening his own doors in the 'seventies with the idea of running a bar along the lines of a French café. ... Before long the cooking at Romano's became excellent and the restaurant a great success. Although it was shaped like a rifle gallery, Romano's was a congenial rendezvous with its red velvet cushions and neat tablecloths." (p.27)

Needless to say, tablecloths cover both round tables and the oblong tables like those at Balliol College. They already covered all the tables at Rowlandson's eating house.

It was traditional to cover tables with linen and the English abroad also made it a rule to use linen, as seen in the picture <Afternoon tea on the stoep at the cape of Good Hope.> (24/11/83G)



The tablecloth in <Scene – A Restaurant near Leicester Square> (01/06/95P) is very short and the sturdy table leg supporting the square table at its centre is clearly visible. James Greig's depiction (16/08/99P) is similar and two delicate legs are visible. The hemline may have been raised over the years,

though on the cover illustration of *The Gourmet's Guide to London* (1779 f.14) in 1914 a very long tablecloth is depicted. However, the white space it provided is used for the title, and too short a tablecloth would have obstructed the words.

The ILN described the chairs in the restaurant at the Savoy Hotel as being "covered with red leather" (26/10/89L), which can be considered as particularly dignified, while those on the terrace are clearly more delicate. All of the chairs at the above-mentioned restaurants in 90s are of the latter type and the legs are extremely thin. Phil May's *Rule's*, Wilson's restaurant and James Greig's <Insult to Injury> are also very much alike. Presumably the taste changed towards Anglo-Japanese****.

<The Genial Season> (22/12/94P) a Christmas scene where a waiter is opening a bottle provides an interesting contrast. There is a wooden partition behind the portly gentleman. Although the curtain hung above the partition reminds us somewhat of Rowlandson's eating house, the combination of them is a rather new interior decoration. There is a space behind the curtain and frame where another table covered with a tablecloth must be. The chair on which the gentleman sits cannot be seen, perhaps it is a wooden bench joined to the partition, but the back of another

chair is seen on the opposite side of the table. The old style of bench is shown by Phil May depicts such a style in *Punch* in 1895 (17/08/95P) where the curtain is partly opened and clearly not a fixed fitting.

The history of the development of such restaurant interiors is quite evident in *Punch*. The oldest style with benches is seen in 1852, while a chair appears on August 5, 1865 and a round table is provided on April 19, 1890, though, as stated above, this is not the first appearance of a round table.

6. Flowers

Anne Bowman's reference to the new trend of round tables was, actually, in the context of the growing fashion of dinner à la Russe. She writes, "Modern taste is rapidly introducing the dinner, à la Russe, into good society, leaving the table, now almost universally a round table, covered only with choice fruit and flowers; and leaving the dishes, from the soups to the *fondus*, to be offered round by the servants, the guests being provided with the *menu*, or bill of fare." (268 c.272, p.589)

Here we also meet the idea of "choice fruit and flowers." However, as decorations topped with a pineapple had already appeared, for example, in <Banquet at Goldsmith's Hall> (02/07/42L) in *the ILN* immediately after this newspaper had been started and in Richard Doyle's <A Weddyng Breakfast> (*Punch*, The Latter Half, 1849, p.172), one of his <Manners and Customs> series, the idea was not so fresh. The pineapples themselves were sold fresh, as shown by <Sale of West India Pine Apples> (20/07/44L, 17/07/47L) and "the mode of retailing them in the streets of the metropolis" is depicted in <A penny a slice.> (06/09/45L) They took the place of cherries as the most popular imported fruits*.

In two plates from *The Art of Cookery and Pastry Made Easy and Familiar* by J. Skeat (4^o X 120 Jur.) published in c.1769, showing <First Course of the Mayor's

Feast at Norwich on the Guild-day> and <Second Course of the Same>, the tables are so crowded with dishes that there is no space for fruits and flowers. The tables of Thomas Rowlandson and Augustus Charles Pugin's <Egyptian Hall, Mansion House> in *Microcosm of London* by W.H. Pyne and W. Combe (2nd Vol., c.1810, Don. c.28, Johnson c.22) are similarly crowded with dishes.

For cookery books published before the middle of the nineteenth century, tables of the bill of fare were almost indispensable and beautiful coloured foldouts are often included. *Domestic Economy, and Cookery, for Rich and Poor, by a Lady* published in 1827 indexes "Russian table service" and its corresponding text explains the table of Emperor Alexander as follows. "The table was only six feet wide, and was dressed down the middle with vases, filled with natural flowers, intermixed with dishes of the dessert, which gave it much the look of our own tables before plateaux came into general use." (27.145, p.92)



In the 1860s, several authors, such as Charles Selby in 1860 (268 c.186) and Anne Bowman in 1867 mentioned above, began to be interested in this different style of service called "à la Russe." The caricature titled <Diner à la Russe> (08/03/62P) by John Leech is the first one in *Punch* which handles this dining style. In the same year, 1862, an

advertisement for china, earthenware and glass set in the Russian way appeared in Charles Elmé Francatelli's *The Royal English and Foreign Confectioner* (250 h.102).

We can assume that Mrs Isabella Mary Beeton contributed to this trend in England with her support of this foreign cultural style** of decorating the table with flowers. Here I quote her in *How to Dine, Dinners & Dining* (268 b.11) published

posthumously in c.1866*** as a volume of tiny yellow-covered one shilling series of *Beeton's House and Home Books*. While almost all the bills of fare are served "à la Francaise," there are also two menus with notes of service "à la Russe" for July and November.

"The table for a dinner à la Russe should be laid with flowers and plants in fancy flowerpots down the middle, together with some of the dessert dishes." (p.50) In another note she further recommends the enjoyment of this new style. In fact, these two notes originally appeared in *The Book of Household Management* (268 b.294) in 1861, by which she first earned her good reputation. Furthermore, the coloured illustration <Supper Table> decorated with flowers in *Beeton's Every-day Cookery and Housekeeping Book*, published in 1890, is truly beautiful.

However, as seen above, almost no flowers can be seen on the tables of Wilson, Phil May and Greig. No flowers can be seen on restaurant tables, though *Hints for the Table* recorded in 1859 that "flowers have, of late years, been introduced at table with delightful effect." (268 c.326, p.25) We can see some plants in pictures of the Savoy, but they are unusual even there and seem to be leaves rather than flowers. Tom Browne's <Dinner at the Cafe Boulogne, Soho> in *The Night Side of London* in 1902 shows a table with flowers, though the same artist does not decorate his table with flowers in <Supper at the Carlton> in the same book. Phil May depicted a modest floral arrangement in front of Sala on the Rule's table very discreetly, though. (To be concluded.)

Notes

2* A caricature by Phil May in *Phil May's Sketch-book, 50 Cartoons*, 1895 (17006 b.10) shows that the curtain rose at eight o'clock. This play ran from 11 December, 1893 to 17 February, 1894 and the curtain really rose at half past seven (11/12/93Ts, 17/02/94Ts). A very similar caricature in *Phil May's Illustrated Winter Annual* (1895,

Per. 2705 e.100, Walpole e.1053) shows that the curtain rose at a quarter past eight. This play ran from 18 April to 15 June, 1895 and the curtain really rose at nine, although it was preceded by another one at a quarter past eight (18/04/95Ts, 15/06/95Ts). These caricatures reflect not the facts but the socially accepted idea.

3* This depiction is printed in reverse and is followed by John Hampson's work.

3** Two illustrations of eating out at about twenty-five past one, <A coffee house> and <A City chop-house>, can be found in *Thomas Rowlandson* (London Museum Catalogue No. 9).

3*** A beautiful candelabrum decorates the front cover of *Dinners and Dinner-parties*, 1862 (250 f.46).

3**** The frontispiece of *The Handbook of Carving, with Hints for the Dinner-table*, c.1866 (268 c.9) is a dining scene with a candelabrum.

4* Kühn's was reopened as Restaurant Bertini in 1894. According to its advertisement in *Fun, Frolic, & Fancy* by Byron Webber and Phil May, G.P. Bertini had been the manager of the Criterion "for a period of twelve years."

5* During the previous year *Hints for the Table* had already observed as follows: "Circular Dining and Supper Tables are gradually coming into fashion." (p.24, 268 c.326)

5** According to the revised edition of *Dinners & Dinners* in 1901, the author was informed of Romano's death when its proof was in his hands.

5*** A loose print of <Mr. Phil May. — Drawn by Fred Hall> is in the Bodleian Library's *Phil May's Illustrated Winter Annual*, 1896 (Walpole e.1053).

5**** In <An English Christmas as Depicted by a Japanese Artist. Drawn by Kru-Shan-Ki> (25/12/80L) many Anglo-Japanese style chairs surround a dining table in the centre of which a luxurious Christmas pudding is seen.

6* Spain was also a source of supply with fruits for England.

6** According to *Hints for the Table* (268 c.326), this was originally a Roman custom. "The Romans, it is certain, considered flowers essential to their festal preparations." (p.25) And according to *Kettner's Book of the Table* in 1877 (268 b.182), Beauvilliers brought restaurant culture from England to Paris at the end of

the eighteenth century (p.380).

6*** In the same year, *Massey and Son's Biscuit, Ice, & Compote Book* wrote that this new custom had become "the universal fashion" by "promoting the comfort and convenience of the guests." (p.115, 268 b.8)