then it ceased to find favour, and finally its name was erased from the Pharmacopœia. It is an expensive medicine, as the cost in a single case of typhoid fever sometimes amounts to five pounds sterling; so says the *British Medical Journal*, March, 1898.

Musk has a decided action on the sexual organs. Hempel tells of a robust man who had been completely impotent for four years past through a cold, recovering his virile powers by grinding up musk for his employer.

OILS, ANIMAL.

See also "Animal oil," "Butter," "Cod-liver oil," "Marrow," "Pig," and "Tallow" (with Glycerine).

THE closer the similarity between the fat of the food and the fat of the body the more readily is dietetic fat absorbed, and utilised for the bodily wants. Food fats vary in usefulness according to the particular part of the animal from which they are taken. Thus, mutton fat is harder than beef fat, and in each case the fat around the kidneys differs from the general fat beneath the skin. Again, the yellow marrow found in the central cavity of bones is another distinct fat; each of these having its own melting point according to the proportion of stearin which it contains. Beef marrow remains fluid at a lower temperature than any of the ordinary animal fats, which makes it superior for ready absorption when taken for nutritive sustenance.

Sir Henry Holland advocated the practice of anointing the harsh dry skin of dyspeptic patients with warm oils, those of a bland animal sort being preferable for this purpose; they assimilate more nearly to the bodily fat than vegetable oils, which, moreover, contain water. Lanoline, the purified fat of sheep's wool, has a special

affinity for the skin, and becomes very readily absorbed by it.

> "In my youth, said the Sage, as he shook his grey locks,
> I kept all my limbs very supple
> By the use of this ointment—one shilling the box:
> Allow me to sell you a couple."
>
> —*Alice in Wonderland.*

Oils are fixed, or volatile, all fatty substances employed as food belonging to the former class, and being slow of digestion, much more so than the vegetable oils. Animal fats contain volatile fatty acids, the evolution of which when they are taken as food causes in many persons subsequent distress. Mutton fat contains hircic acid, butter contains butyric and caproic acids, and train oil contains phocenic acid. Heat in cooking renders these acids specially objectionable for persons with weak stomachs, so that to prepare any such fatty foods by frying will make them disagree. The fixed oils give off, while boiling, an acid volatile oil, acreoline, and the fatty acids are set free. The fat of cured bacon is less injurious to dyspeptic persons than fresh animal fats. The yolk of egg, the livers of poultry and fish, and the brains of animals all abound in oily matter: likewise salmon, herrings, sprats, eels, and mackerel are rich with the same ingredient. Gall stones consist of a fatty matter, and occur because more fat is taken than can be digested. Experiments have shown that the utilisation of bacon as a fatty food within the body is less than that of butter, probably because the butter fat is not enclosed in cells. One great purpose served by fat is to lessen the necessity for so much lean flesh meat as would be needed without it. Fat helps materially to support under muscular fatigue. If not supplied as food it may be formed at the expense of the flesh. Easily absorbed fats are of special requirement by scrofulous

children, but animal fats of whatever sort should be reduced to the minimum for gouty persons.

A curious oyl (of paper) is commended by Sir Richard Boyle (1696), as "A potent, but smarting medicine for things growing in the eye: take white paper and let it flame away on a clean pewter platter till there remain so much oyl behind as you think you shall need. Blow off the cinders of the paper, and with a little of your spittle mixt by your finger with the oyl make up a kind of oyntment: which being taken up with a feather is to be applied once or twice a day, as need shall require (and as the patient can bear) to the affected eye: which course is to be continued till the cure be compleated."

Similarly in *A Thousand Notable Things* (1815), it is ordered to "make oil of paper," a little whereof is to be put on a clean feather into the eye that is sore, or dimsighted, and it will help the same marvellously. Burn fair paper on a clean pewter dish, or saucer; or hold a piece of fair paper folded on a knife's point, and set fire on the nethermost end thereof, and hold the same nigh unto the saucer, and out thereof will come a little moist oil, and be on the saucer.

Neat's-foot oil is again an admirable animal fat for inunction by the skin as helping to restore flesh and warmth in atrophy from chronic indigestion; though, saith Grumio to Katharina (*Taming of the Shrew*), "What say you to a neat's foot? I fear it is too choleric a meat." The famous surgeon John Hunter advocated the external application of oils in disease. "Lawran" was a sort of oil used formerly to anoint the ears of deaf persons. Gilbert White relates that oil is extracted from Cockchafers in Kent by boiling these creatures, which are collected by labourers for the purpose.

The Apothecaries of old used to possess themselves of human fat as part of their stock in trade. Pomet (1712) writes: "Everybody knows in Paris that the public executioner sells it, and the druggists vend a sort of it prepared with aromatic herbs, which is without comparison much better than that which comes from the guillotine." This human fat was highly esteemed for rubbing purposes in cases of rheumatism, and similar complaints.

A whimsical Latin line concerning the fat oblations of Scriptural burnt offerings, runs forward as an hexameter, to signify Abel's sacrifice, and backwards as a pentameter, to represent Cain's sacrifice.

> "Sacrum pingue dabo, non macrum sacrificabo;
> Sacrificabo macrum: non dabo pingue sacrum."

Ecclesiastics are peculiarly prone to fatness, perhaps because of their sedentary habits. The poet Thomson tells thus in his Seasons, "Winter," about:

> "A little round fat oily man of God."

OX.

THE Ox is the classic *Bos*, or *Taurus*: Bull. In the *Rich Storehouse of Medicines* (1650) we read: "A good remedy for the strengthening the back is to take in quantity a quart of the pith of an Ox-back, and a quart of muscadine, and boyl them together until they be thick; then take the same, and strain it through a fair linen cloth, and let the party grieved drink five or six spoonfuls thereof at a time every morning fasting, for the space of four or five days together: and it will do him exceedingly much good." This precept was another illustration of an animal extract used curatively of old by intuition for disease of the same animal part in a sick person, such as is scientifically advocated in the present

day. Similarly the urine of the Ox was given for uric acid stone in the bladder of a patient.

As a more whimsical method of cure an old woman in Cornwall had long suffered from great weakness, and was thought to have been ill-wished : so she went to the Teller who was able to lay ghosts, and hobgoblins. He bade her buy a bullock's heart, and get a packet of pound pins. She was to stick the heart as full of pins as she could, and the body that had ill-wished her felt every pin which was run into the bullock's heart as sharply as if it was being run into herself; the spell was broken off, and the old lady grew strong.

A popular practice of former years is still pursued in some rural districts, of straightway applying a piece of raw beef over the part injured by a fresh contusion or bruise. It certainly happens that subsequent blackness (ecchymosis) is much prevented by this Animal method.

"An Ox because he hath been gelded doth live twenty years ; a bull liveth fifteen years." Sextus Placitus in *Saxon Leechdoms* wrote : "For bad gripings of the bowels let one drink in heated wine a bull's marrow—that amendeth him. For every sore let one take bull's dung fresh in hot water ; soon it healeth." "To remove ugly marks from the face smear with bull's blood, it taketh away all the marks."

The Ox, an emblem of the priesthood, has been awarded to Saint Luke the physician. An entry is to be found in the Bishop's Account Roll (*History of Durham*, A.D. 1426–27) : "Paid to Thomas Egliston for marking sixteen of my lord's Oxen with the mark of Saint Wilfrid, to the intent that they may escape a certain infirmity called the moryn (murrain)."

In *The Rich Storehouse of Medicines* (1650), there is given as "An excellent medicine for the gout: to take shoemaker's spelts, or pieces of ox-hide leather, and fry out all the grease of them; and then lay some of the same grease upon a brown paper, and warm it a little at the fire, and so apply it to the place grieved, and it will take away the pain in one night." Again, Robert Boyle ordered (1696), as "An experienced medicine for the pain of the hemorrhoids: take the sole of an old shoe worn by some man that walks much; cut it in pieces and burn it hot to white or gray ashes, but to a fryable and tender coal; reduce this to impalpable powder, and then with a sufficient quantity of unsalted lard make it into an unguent, wherewith the part affected is to be anointed from time to time."

A "cock and bull story" is said to have originated through a sorry painter drawing a mis-shapen Cock upon a signboard, and writing under it "This is a bull."

Dr. Edward Jenner, in Gloucestershire (1776), as is well known, found that Cows were liable to the occurrence on their udders of certain eruptive vesicles; and that persons who milked such cows, by coming into manual contact with these weeping vesicles, were thereby rendered insusceptible of inoculation by small-pox, or of taking the disease This was a striking instance of virus cultivated through an animal, and generating in such animal a serum protective to the human subject against small-pox. It led to the inestimably beneficent practice of *vaccination*: for the efficient and safe performance of which public proceeding pure lymph is now cultivated in sound heifers, and preserved enduringly with incorruptible glycerine, being freely provided for general uses at the National cost.

OYSTER.

THE Oyster (*Ostræa edulis*) is a well-known and highly popular mollusc, specially rich in phosphates which serve to replenish defective structures, and to restore vital forces in the body: it is easily digestible by most persons, and therefore specially suited to invalid stomachs. The Oyster has been extolled for its nutritive qualities since the old Roman days of Horace and Martial, and of the oyster beds at Baiæ, which was the Brighton of the Roman Empire. British oysters were celebrated by Juvenal; and the Romans when in Britain obtained them chiefly from Rutupiæ (Richborough). Nero at the first taste, says Juvenal, knew whether the oysters served at his table had been bred at Circœi, or at the Lucrine rock, or in the beds of Rutupiæ. The following lines were written of him (or of some other Roman epicure) who:—

> "Circœis nata forent, an
> Lucrinum ad Saxum, Rutupinove edita fundo
> Ostræa, callebat primo deprendere morsu."

> "At the first bite each oyster's birth-place knew,
> Whether a Lucrine or Circœan one he'd bitten,
> Or one from the Rutupian deeps in Britain."

Apicius in the reign of Trajan possessed a particular receipt for fattening oysters; they were probably pickled, being washed with vinegar, and preserved in jars smeared over with pitch. Athenian *gourmets* ate raw oysters, the shells being dextrously opened by a slave at the table in the presence of the guests, for whom the fattest and best of the bivalves had been kept separately in a light purple net.

Greek Restaurants became established in Rome at which oysters from Cape Pelorus were served with a dressing of Marsh Mallows and fine herbs. At the Latin Eating Houses a favourite sauce with oysters was a

mixture of pepper and alisander, yolks of eggs, vinegar, garum (a condiment made of pickled fish), wine, and honey.

Oysters contain albuminous, gelatinous, and fatty matters, muscular filaments, and creatin. One of these molluscs is composed, speaking roughly, of water eighty-five parts, organic matter one and a half parts, with mineral matters and silica two and three quarter parts. The principal constituent of the shell is carbonate of lime, its remaining organic elements being phosphate and sulphate of lime and magnesia, silica, oxide of iron, and alumina.

By helping to cure pulmonary disease through the action of its iodine, iron, sulphur, and marine lime salts, whilst promoting at the same time the general vitality by its special nutriment, the oyster is an admirable combination of food and physic. The liquor with which it is found to be furnished inside the shell when opened, is particularly rich in these curative and restorative constituents; it has a composition quite different from that of sea water, containing a notable amount of albumen, besides flocculent vegetable matter, and numerous animalculæ. The physiologist Payen computed that sixteen dozen oysters of moderate size would furnish enough protein (food of primary requirement) to suffice for one day's subsistence of a male adult.

Among the antiquities discovered at Cirencester was a Roman oyster knife, which was presented to the British Association in 1856.

Ambrose Paré, a noted French doctor in 1550, wrote a treatise on oysters as medicinally strengthening, in which he further advocated their application in the shell directly over any inflamed, or angrily sore part. Harry Monmouth was partial to oysters: in a

cookery book compiled during his reign was ordered a "dariolet" to be served at the Coronation banquet, this being a sort of gigantic oyster patty, the molluscs in which were dressed with a rich cream. George the First preferred stale oysters.

Five years are needed for the oyster to attain its full growth. A French writer has said there is no alimentary substance, not even excepting bread, which does not produce indigestion under given circumstances; but the oyster never. Warm milk is drunk with oysters in Paris; it is believed to be their *seul dissolvant.*

> "The herring loves the merry moonlight,
> The mackerel loves the wind;
> But the oyster loves the dredging song,
> For they come of a gentle kind."

Raw oysters to be thoroughly enjoyed must be literally lapped from the concave half shell—liquor and all. Epicures declare it barbarous to squeeze fresh lemon juice over oysters, or to employ vinegar with pepper for this purpose; nevertheless it is to be remembered that the oyster consists largely of albumen, which is aided in its digestion by the addition thereto of some vegetable acid, or else it may become hard and leathery in the stomach. The great Dr. Johnson (as Mrs. Piozzi relates in one of her letters to Mr. Duppa) poured oyster sauce over his plum pudding. Dando, the notorious tavern bilk, swallowed sixteen dozen oysters easily in a day; but he never paid for his voracious entertainment.

"Happy the man" says John Philips in the *Splendid Shilling*, written 1703, as a parody on the epic style of Milton:—

> "Happy the man who, void of cares and strife,
> In silken or in leathern purse retains
> A Splendid Shilling. He nor hears with pain
> New oysters cried, nor sighs for cheerful ale."

"Felix cui modicâ non deficiente crumenâ
Tinnulus argenteo splendescit lumine nunmus:
Ostrea non frustra gratam venalia cœnam
Nunciat impranso raucus per compita prœco,
Nec gemit optatos, ceu Tantalus alter, ad haustus."

Formerly a "whistling oyster" was exhibited at a small shop in Vinegar Yard, Drury Lane, and made the house for a time very popular.

The Oyster (Yeo) consists chiefly of a soft and a hard portion; the soft part is the liver, which is very digestible; the hard part is the muscle which binds the shells together, and is not nearly so wholesome, so that it should not be eaten by those of weakly digestive powers. Oysters found near Milton, in Kent, are known as "Natives;" they are small, round, plump, and white. The age of an oyster is chronicled by the layers, or plates, of the shell, each of which marks a year. In scalloped, or stewed oysters the heat coagulates their albumen, and wrinkles up the fibrin, thus rendering them less easily soluble by the gastric juice of the stomach; also the melted butter often served as an accompaniment adds to the indigestibility. Dr. Johnson compared scalloped oysters to "children's ears dressed in sawdust."

A local proverb, says Fuller in his *Book of Worthies*, tells that "The Mayor of Northampton opens oysters with his dagger." He adds, "this town being eighty miles from the sea its shell fish may be presumed to be stale thereat." Heliogabalus (in common with George the First) liked his fish a trifle stale, not caring for oysters till their shells began to gape spontaneously. King James was wont to say, "He must have been a very valiant man who first adventured on the eating of oysters: most probably mere hunger put men first on that tryal."

Oysters are the only meat which men devour alive, and yet count it no cruelty. The oyster by a paradox lives in its bed, and dies when taken out of it.

A property of stimulating the sexual impulses is ascribed to oysters. So Byron avows in Don Juan: "Oysters and eggs are amatory food." "What capital things," said a wit, "oysters would be, if we could only feed our servants on the shells." The "beard" is the branchiœ or gills. Emsworth oysters are mentioned in *Domesday Book*."

St. James the Great of Spain was the patron Saint of these molluscs: and there is a vulgar superstition that whoever eats oysters on August 4th, St. James's Day, will never want money. This is the traditional day for first opening the oyster; and children then make grottoes of the shells in the streets, and collect pence from the passers-by, with a customary refrain of "Please remember the grotto"; which is really a memorial of the shrine of St. James at Compostella. For invalids oyster sauce out of which the cooked oysters (which become tough when boiled) have been first removed, is a highly nutritious condiment containing all the liquor, and the best principles of the oyster. It was Voltaire who said of the English people, "They cut off their kings' heads, and their horses' tails; they have a hundred religions, and only one sauce."

Within the last five or six years a mistrust of oysters has possessed the public mind because of the fact that certain water-borne diseases, especially typhoid fever, have been undeniably conveyed by such oysters, and other molluscs, through the access of crude sewage to their beds. In January, 1895, Sir William Broadbent recorded twelve cases of typhoid fever, each of which was convincingly traceable to eating oysters; and the

same calamitous result has clearly resulted from a like cause in many other instances within recent years. In a report on this important subject subsequently made by the British Medical Association it was stated that undoubtedly large numbers of dead oysters are daily consumed by the public, oysters that have died in the fishmonger's shop, or supper room, and recognisable, at any rate for a few days, only by an expert or an epicure. Nevertheless, the effect of eating merely stale, or simply unwholesome oysters would not be a gradual development of specific typhoid fever (after hatching this from eight to twelve days), but rather the speedy onset of sickness, diarrhœa, or even choleraic symptoms.

It would seem that oyster cultivators on some of our shores, finding that a certain admixture of fresh water proves favourable to fattening and delicacy of flavour, though an excess thereof causes rapid deterioration, had placed the oyster beds near the mouths of rivers, or of enclosed arms of the sea into which is discharged the sewage of large towns, or of numerous villages; and when the report now alluded to was drawn up it had been certainly found that in some localities sewage made its way into highly suspicious proximity to the oyster beds, and the molluscs were eaten raw with more or less of the water enclosed.

But on the whole the inquiries and inspections instituted are "decidedly reassuring," and show that "so far as the Kentish and Essex fisheries are concerned the beds in which the oysters are laid out to fatten are not in the majority of instances exposed to any appreciable risk of sewage pollution." "At the same time it could not be asserted that the mischief had arisen through imported oysters," for the so-called "dutch natives," scarcely inferior to those of Colchester, are laid down

on the shores of the Zuyder Zee, where sewers remain unknown, and where all excrement is applied directly to the soil. Any suspected oysters before coming to table should first be put for several days into salt and water, without food, to scour themselves from ptomaines which may possibly be present; and then the oyster can be eaten with impunity.

Dr. Peter Hood has succinctly related the case of an old lady in Hertfordshire who, after having suffered from positive cancer of the breast, caused it to entirely separate by a steady perseverance in the medicinal use of oyster-shell powder. At the same time she lived principally upon bread and milk, seldom eating meat. She was led to take these steps because of a similar cure which came within her knowledge on a gentleman who had a tumour in his cheek, of the size of a small orange, which was pronounced by Sir Astley Cooper to be a cancerous tumour, he advising its prompt removal, and saying that unless this were done the patient would not live six months. But under treatment by oyster-shell powder in less than six months the tumour had entirely disappeared, and perfect health was restored. The old lady, aged eighty, lived for two years after Dr. Hood had seen her. The wound, he adds, resulting from the separation of the breast never entirely healed, but she did not complain at any time of discomfort from it. When Dr. Hood inspected it this was comparatively dry, with only a slight sanious discolouration of the linen with which she kept it covered. Sir Spencer Wells broached the view, about which he had become convinced, that a starvation of fibroid tumours by lime slowly deposited in the blood-vessels feeding them, may be often produced (resembling the spontaneous change which sometimes occurs in such

tumours) by giving calcareous elements medicinally. He had read some years previously Dr. McClintock's observations on the chloride of lime, and had in consequence been led to prescribe lime freely in the treatment of tumours. He added (as Dr. Hood relates) his opinion that if the lime were continued too long, all the arteries of the body, and not only those going to the tumour, would begin to degenerate, the first evidence being the formation of a white calcareous ring round the pupil of the eye.

To prepare the oyster-shell powder bake a quantity of the shells, using those which are concave, half a peck or more, for three nights in a slow oven; then scrape out the small white part within each shell; powder these parts finely, and take as much of the powder as will lie on a shilling once or twice a day in a little warm water, or tea. If this seems to affect the system at all uncomfortably, then desist for a day or two, and afterwards commence again. Should an ointment be thought desirable, mix some of the powder with unsalted lard, or cream, or quite fresh butter, and apply it. This treatment generally requires perseverance for three or four months before its curative effects begin to be perceived.

Dr. Hughes, Brighton, thinks that a specific remedial effect is produced by triturated lime in oyster shells on the constitution at large, over and above any calcification of blood vessels, such as is problematical.

Oyster-shell lime dissolved in vinegar to a saturated solution was given by Hahnemann to four provers. It produced in each instance much acidity of the stomach, with a severe cold headache of the migraine character. For the radical cure of this latter evil, so often intractable, the tincture (H.) of *Calcarea acetica* (vinegar of lime) has been eminently useful.

Again, if equal parts of finely powdered clean oyster-shell and quite pure precipitated sulphur powder are mixed together and the mixture is kept heated to white heat for ten minutes in a crucible hermetically closed, the resulting compound will be a sulphide of calcium, or liver of sulphur (*Hepar sulphuris calcareum*). This substance, being a combination of two great constitutional medicines, sulphur and lime, possesses points of medicinal resemblance to each element, affecting the skin like sulphur, and the glands like lime, whilst exercising a third special, and separate action of its own. Thus it will often check the formation of matter when threatened as an abscess, or a suppurating boil, besides promoting its favourable course when this cannot be prevented, and bringing it to a speedy issue. For such a purpose Dr. Ringer, speaking with authority, finds even the eightieth part of a grain, given dissolved in water three or four times in the twenty-four hours, sufficient to produce these effects. But the solution must always be freshly made, as it quickly volatilises, and becomes inert.

The liver of sulphur can exert likewise a remedial influence on the lining membranes of the chest, and throat, and windpipe. Rubbed up with powdered sugar of milk, one part to ninety-nine, and given in ten-grain doses of this well mixed powder, it displays all such curative effects. To make the official oyster shells, "testœ ostreœ," the hollow shells are ordered to be used because they contain more carbonate of lime.

Some further notice of Sulphur as a medicament of leading importance for several curative purposes of much moment may well be here introduced. Paracelsus as far back as in his time taught how "to make oyle of sulphure, which is a great secret." After the elaborate proceedings which he directed had been brought to an

issue, "then hast thou an oyl the which is a great treasure, and the which keepe in a glasse, for it will helpe the poxe, and all outward sores, and ulcerations, and filthy sores the which will not be helpe; it is also excellent against the rose and the pestilence."

Sulphur, in the form of sulphurous acid, as obtained by burning it in the atmosphere, is a powerful disinfectant, and killer of germs; but if the fumes are respired strongly they will induce asthmatic breathing, just such as sulphur given medicinally in small diluted doses will serve to signally relieve. Even the Sulphurous Springs of Eaux Bonnes will sometimes cause blood-spitting in consumptive patients sent to them for curative relief, their stimulation being so strong that an artificial asthma is created. Sulphur quickens the circulation in the skin, and determines a venous turgidity of the lower bowel. Its tincture (H.) which has to be made with absolute alcohol, and then holds in solution only one per cent. of the substance, is remarkably curative (in small doses) of skin diseases, and of piles.

In massive doses sulphur is an aperient, of a mild character, but constipation presently follows. Toxic quantities of sulphur were found to produce in its provers pains closely resembling those of rheumatism, which caused troublesome wakefulness without ability to go to sleep again. For this sort of insomnia, as well as notably for rheumatism, quite moderate doses of the sulphur tincture always prove of true service. In nearly every chronic ailment the remedial treatment may be advantageously commenced with a few doses of diluted sulphur.

Dr. Hughes says he knows a physician in Saxony who has obtained a great reputation for curing divers obstinate maladies by adding, without understanding

why, flowers of sulphur to each one of his prescriptions. But the good effects of these large toxic doses are not lasting. Sir Benjamin Richardson wrote recently, "There is a peculiar offensive sulphur compound called mercaptan, a little of which when administered to anyone produces the most intense melancholy, tending well nigh to suicide;" and "we can sometimes detect a similar offensive substance in the breath of patients who are suffering from melancholia." The administration of this sulphur compound (sufficiently diluted, and thoughtfully regulated) in such cases may be very hopefully advised.

Respecting Sulphur, its consideration explains the probable rationale of cinder tea as given popularly in Lancashire by practical mothers to their flatulent babes. Doctors prescribe curatively for this infantine trouble hyposulphite of soda, which is a chemical combination of the corrective sulphur with the antacid soda; and practically cinder tea comes to the same thing, as the sulphur of the cinders (everyone knows their diabolical smell when wetted) and the alkaline potash, or lye, are medicinally present in the homely infusion. For corns and warts, which, though hypertrophied conditions of the skin locally, yet have behind them a constitutional bias, sulphur in small doses given at spare intervals will bring about the gradual eradication of these troublesome outgrowths.

Also sulphur cures piles by virtue of its general dynamic action upon the veins throughout the body, and upon the whole skin; not merely as a laxative to the lower bowel, as some suppose. So much then for this mineral!

Prepared earthy chalk is by no means an adequate substitute for such an animal preparation thereof as exists

in the oyster-shell, which contains phosphate as well as carbonate of lime; hence this is more acceptable to the stomach, more readily absorbed into the system, and less constipating. Richter taught that the animal carbonates in general derange the stomach less than chalky mineral medicines; and that they are therefore preferable cannot be controverted. As an ordinary dose, oyster-shell powder may be prescribed from five to thirty grains.

In Colchester an annual oyster feast is held on October 25th. One of the local poets has sung about the appetising mollusc:—

> "In spite of foes which everywhere abound
> The cool impassive oyster holds his ground:
> Tenacious, firm, in temper unexcelled,
> His mouth kept shut unless he be compelled,
> And then imparting only what he should,
> Not for his own, but for the public good."

Thackeray once ate an American oyster, "huge, long, and grey," which, said he, "made me feel as if I had swallowed a baby."

"Not worth an oyster" was a common saying in Chaucer's time, which signified a man so poor and humble as to be reduced to shell fish for sustenance. Thus the Sompnere:—

> "For many a muscle, and many an oistre,
> When other men have been full wel at ese,
> Hath been our food."

And Hood sang pathetically in the same strain:—

> "What different fates our stars accord!
> This babe to be hail'd, and wooed as a lord;
> And that to be shunned like a leper!
> One to the world's wine, and honey and corn;
> Another, like Colchester native, is born
> To its vinegar only, and pepper!"

PANCREAS.

THE Pancreas, or "Stomach-bread" of an animal (such as a Sheep, Calf, or Pig), is not the Sweet-bread, though