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became cheap enough for the working classes to buy too, its consumption was viewed as a step forward. Tea from India and China was rapidly replacing ale as the standard working man's beverage, and to make tea, water must be boiled, thus greatly reducing the risk of water-related diseases. The lower classes drank their tea with milk and sugar and soon became addicted to that regular 'fix' of sweetness that the 'cuppa' provided.

With the Industrial Revolution came the industrialization of food, much of which was now produced in the factory, the birth place of 'junk food'. And it has continued. Clearly, Neil Buttery would have preferred to have ended his story on a positive note – as he says, he would like to write with words of hope about a 'brighter future'. He doesn't quite manage this, having little faith in big business changing its ways. What he does achieve though, through this very readable book, is to present his readers with a moral certainty: each of us can change or modify our own consumption of the sweet stuff. If we do, not only will our health improve, but in so doing we broadcast the message that we want ethically and environmentally sustainable ways of producing, and using, sugar now and in the future; that the days of exploiting others and being ourselves exploited could be over.

Di Murrell

Gillian Riley had been working for some time on a review of three books about seventeenth-century Neapolitan cooking when I contacted her with the news that one of them, Astarita's translation of Antonio Latini's *Lo Scalco alla Moderna*, was available from the remainder bookseller Postscript <https://www.psbooks.co.uk> for the bargain price of £14.99 – a fair reduction from £104. Unfortunately events have so fallen that Gillian was unable to complete her review in time for this issue but I give you a mere smidgeon of it so that you may take advantage of Postscript's offer before they run out of copies. The important take-away if that Ms Riley approves. The books in question are:

Tommaso Astarita: *The Italian Baroque Table, cooking and entertaining from the Golden Age of Naples*: ACMRS Tempe, Arizona, 2014: 308 pp., hardback, originally priced at £55, but currently available from Book Depository for £12.06.
Tommaso Asterita, ed. and trans.: *Antonio Latini's 'The Modern Steward, or the Art of preparing banquets well'. A complete English translation*: ARC Humanities Press, Leeds, 2019: 444 pp., hardback, was £104, but currently available at £14.99 from Postscript.
Antonio Latini: *Lo Scalco alla Moderna*: 2 volumes, Naples, 1692–1694: facsimile edition, from the copy in Harlan and Delia Walker's library, Bibliotheca Culinaria, Lodi, 1993: 606 and 256 pp., currently only available secondhand.
Lovers of Italian food will enjoy all four of these books from which two heroes

emerge: Antonio Latini himself, and his translator, Tommaso Astarita; together they make a formidable team. Astarita, a distinguished professor of history at Georgetown University in Washington, is Neapolitan born and bred, the ideal person to take us by the hand and lead us through the streets where Latini once wandered. Translating a cookery text from the past would always be a challenge, unlike the much simpler task of rendering the elegant prose of a fiction writer from one language to another. A gifted cook is rarely a brilliant writer, and translators struggle with the terminology and procedures of a craft manual, often clumsily expressed, told in the shorthand phrases of one professional talking to another. Quantities are given only occasionally, often implied, and rarely consistent. The tyranny of today's cookery editors has made us slavishly dependent on a pedantic insistence on numerical precision in specifying quantities, weights and measures, expressed in millimetres and grammes, when the old anthropomorphic way of saying a lump of butter the size of a walnut, or an egg, or little dumplings like chickpeas, or a handful of flour, or a pinch of salt, or a squirt of lemon juice, a slug of oil, a sprinkling of spices, or a piece of root ginger the size of your thumb, gives us an immediate image of what's needed. No need for precision scales when you can see at a glance what's intended. The Italian phrase *un po', un poco, …* is maddeningly imprecise but rendered with glee by Astarita as 'bit, a bit', or 'bits of…' which still leaves us baffled when it occurs several times in one sentence.

Mark Dawson and Janet Pickering, eds.: *Pigs*: Leeds Symposium on Food History and Traditions, 2022: 105 pp., paperback, £8.00 (copies may be obtained directly by emailing <secretary@leedsfoodsymposium.org.uk>).
This excellent volume contains papers from the 2009 and 2011 symposia, the subject of both of which was the pig. At the time, there were delays in gathering the contributions together so that a volume in Prospect Books' own series of Leeds proceedings never saw the light of day. The papers here include three characteristically thorough studies by Peter Brears of the boar's head, the sucking pig and hogs' puddings and white puddings. Brears' illustrations are always worth attention, and so are the practical and toothsome recipes. These are followed by a nicely turned essay on the use of lard and pig fat in early English cooking contributed by the late Laura Mason. Then there is a thought-provoking piece from Steph Mastoris, currently Head of Museums at Amgueddfa Cymru – National Museum Wales, on the image of the pig and its slaughter, particularly in Edwardian Britain (but in fact much more widely than that). Proceedings are rounded off by an account of pig butchery, especially in his home county, by the Lincolnshire master-butcher Eric Phipps. His contribution was in fact first published in *PPC* 91.