

the impact of Italian food on our generation, Professor Zancani tells of the impressions it made on travellers in Italy in the past, adding new material and lively anecdotes, then going on to describe the arrival of Italians in London and beyond, from Guglielmo Alexis Jarrin and his ice-cream parlour in Bond Street, to the Contini family of Valvona and Crolla in Edinburgh to Ann and Franco Taruschio of the Walnut Tree in Abergavenny. This is a book to read cover to cover, or dip into, as one of the most worthwhile contributions to our enjoyment of Italian food and its history in recent years. The glossary is a strangely perfunctory listing of terms already explained in enjoyable detail in the text and notes, while the picture captions might have been helpfully expanded or put into a sadly missing list of illustrations, while the sixteen recipes which are embedded in the narrative could have been listed somewhere, as a guide to those of us wanting to locate and try out Apicius' melon salad with mint, or Jamie's version of *peposo*. But these are small quibbles, it remains an entertaining read, backed up by serious scholarship.

GILLIAN RILEY

Eugène Briffault: *Paris à table 1846*, translated and edited by J. Weintraub: Oxford University Press, New York, 2018: 212 pp., hardback, £16.99.

Another late review, I fear. Lots of people know this book, a guide to private and public eating in Paris in 1846 written by a high-living journalist, an even better *viveur* than England's own Bon Viveur (Fanny and Johnny Cradock). The original was also illustrated with some wit and panache by the artist Bertall. This is an English translation with an informative introduction and copious notes by the Chicago scholar Joseph Weintraub. It is for these two latter features the book should be purchased as they are excellent. The original text, while sometimes enlightening, is also the worst form of gastronomic literature, full of tiresome, hyperbolic gasbagery. It reads much better in French – no criticism of the translation – because when this is rendered into English it sounds like a drunken, pompous uncle who should know better. If you can practise reading as a peasant used to winnow his corn, throwing it up in the air to rid it of chaff and letting the grains of fact fall into a retentive brain, then you will derive much profit. Not half so much, however, as from the wide reading and citation of the editor/translator who has profitably gone through myriad volumes of contemporary description, the *littérature panoramique* and the *physiologies* of mid-century France, the bulk of which is too great for most of us to navigate.

Di Murrell: *A Foodie Afloat*: Matador, 2020: 256 pp., paperback, £12.99.

The sub-title is too long for the header, but it reads, 'A cook's journey through France on a barge. A secret world of canals and rivers. An enticing story of slow boats, slow food, small events and chance encounters.' That puts it in