

written while working as a development chef for Premier Foods. His views arise from his years working as a chef, his time earning a degree in biochemistry and his perception of the mismatch between our, or the state's, requirement for scientific validation from food manufacturers and processors and the wild and unsupported claims of advocates of diets and food-related lifestyles in their own literature or in the media in general. These advocates range from the relatively harmless, but still pernicious, Gwyneth Paltrow and her ilk, through the crazier claims of followers of the alkaline diet or paleo diet, to the unacceptable extremes of Natasha Campbell-McBride's GAPS diet to cure autism or the various proposals to cure cancer as promoted by the late Michio Kushi (macrobiotics) or William Kelley. His response to all of these is to ask, 'Where is the science?' His explanation of how they got there, which misapprehensions and logical jumps fuel their constructs, and how to explain dietary fads in general should be compulsory reading. A book in the tradition of Ben Goldacre's 'Bad science' columns in the *Guardian*. Excellent stuff.

Annie Gray: *The Greedy Queen – Eating with Victoria*: Profile, 2017: 390 pp., hardback, £16.99.

Annie Gray's star has been rising and is now a familiar sight and sound on any broadcast programme dealing with food history. She has academic training, and she has experience in historical re-enactment and public instruction through her work over many years at Audley End. Her first book is thoroughly entertaining and accessible. It is both a gastronomic biography of Queen Victoria and an account of the royal household and kitchen arrangements during her reign. It uses plenty of archive material as well as drawing on the multiple printed sources available: Victoria is, luckily for the author, much written about, and she has the added bonus of the Queen's own diaries. Annie Gray's descriptions of the royal kitchens – at Kensington Palace, Buckingham Palace, Windsor, Osborn and Balmoral – are especially useful. Her tracing of the careers of the many royal cooks is also of great interest, as is her telling of the reception and integration (or not) of the various Indian servants at the end of the reign. Chapters step smartly through Victoria's childhood (food and discipline), the service of dinner (à la française, à la russe), kitchens, cooks, Osborne and Balmoral, Victoria's family life, the general run of royal dining in the mid-century, state banquets and holiday food (especially in the south of France), something on the diet of the wider population, and finally, Victoria's old age (food and health). The style is easy, the pages turnable. Annie Gray has a nice eye for quotations. She manages to keep her eye on her main subject without provoking the reader into wishing she would stop banging on about food and talk about something important. If you start to think about that, it's quite an achievement.