

A GRASSHOPPER ROAST.—Among the choice delicacies with which the Digger Indians regale themselves during the summer season, says the Empire County *Argus*, is the grasshopper roast. Having been an eyewitness to the preparation and discussion of one of their feasts of grasshoppers, we can describe it truthfully.—There are districts of California, as well as portions of the plains between the Sierra Nevada and Rocky Mountains, that literally swarm with grasshoppers, and in such astonishing numbers that a man cannot place his foot to the ground while walking among them, without crushing great numbers. To the Indian they are a delicacy, and are caught and cooked in the following manner: A piece of ground is sought where they most abound, in the centre of which an excavation is made, large and deep enough to prevent the insect from hopping out when once in. The entire party of Diggers, old and young, male and female, then surround as much of the adjoining grounds as they can, and with a green bough in hand, whipping and thrashing on every side, gradually approach the centre, driving the insects before them in countless multitudes, till at last all, or nearly all are secured in the pit.

In the meantime smaller excavations are made, answering the purpose of ovens, in which fires are kindled and kept up till the surrounding earth, for a short distance, becomes sufficiently heated, together with a flat stone large enough to cover the oven. The grasshoppers are now taken in coarse bags, and after being thoroughly soaked in salt water for a few moments, are emptied into the ovens and closed in. Ten or fifteen minutes suffices to roast them, when they are taken out and eaten without further preparation, and with much apparent relish, or as is sometimes the case, reduced to powder and made into soup. And having from curiosity tasted, not of the soup but of the roast, really if one could but divest himself of the idea of eating an insect as we do an oyster or shrimp, without other preparation than simple roasting, they would not be considered very bad eating, even by more refined epicures than the Digger Indians.