Introductory

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INTRODUCTORY

For tonight we’ve invited a live potato to speak. Please welcome the potato. Elsie, over there, assisting, who also has spread herself wide for somebody’s butter & fork & says she has not liked it, will screen your written questions for redundancy, relevance, & courtesy. Pass them on in after.

Famine, then! —a staple poor people cultivate less worldwide, we hope, than formerly, may remind many in this audience of the potato. The history of vegetables, like that of animals & minerals, rides multiple shabby waves into our own, boggling upon prosperity. How does our uniquely qualified authority elaborate the point? Intent curiosity attends potatoes’ every appearance: we’ve fretted ourselves over what underground they prepare. Can we take a particular potato, becomingly scrubbed, as you see, reliably to represent the basic comestibles in variety, rice, say; manioc, the kernels, countless beans?

But enough! —programs shuffling! Undeservedly & twice favored this evening, we acknowledge it’s taken your committee quite some doing. Eyes gouged out, even boiled in oil, potatoes rarely confess & never give names, except, this once, suggested Elsie’s, who, the very moment we approached her, volunteered.