

Osteopathy Complete
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DIETETICS

Dietetics, which, properly defined, is that branch of hygiene which relates to the proper use of food, so as to adapt the quantity and quality of the diet to the particular state of each person, and to extract the greatest quantity of nutriment from a given quantity of nutritive matter, is a subject of vast import to all, and altogether too generally disregarded.

Naturally, it has been copiously written upon, and while, as on most all other subjects, there have been not only slight variations of opinion, but complete conflict, many physiological truths have undoubtedly been evolved, and some things of importance, perhaps, discovered and set forth by nearly every thinker, observer, experimentalist, and author. However, there is no system of government, of religion, of ethics, of philosophy, or of science that is complete in the knowledge of men, nor can there be, in real sense, a perfect system outside of that which comprises all, and which is the Creator's handiwork, and is under the laws of the Omnipotent. Man is finite and limited in conception and execution. He gets but glimpses of the truth - the superficial view of things. He succeeds in tracing nothing to its beginning or ultimate termination, and rarely sees more than a few of the numerous sides, colors, and shapes.

But we are now in an age of intense progress. The social world is vigorously combating selfishness and injustice, and establishing systems of equity; the mechanical world is making gigantic strides; the scientific world is rapidly disengaging, itself from mere theories, hypotheses, and guess work, and, with Nature as a guide, applying her principles is effectually proving their efficacy by the results obtained. All are getting nearer to Nature.

There is, though, a tendency, and it is a thing to be regretted, that founders and practitioners of new methods, however good they may be, are unable or unwilling to perceive good in other methods than their own.

We ought ever to be on the watch for, and have our eyes and ears accessible to, truths, that we may be enabled to grasp and take possession of them, though they eject us from our fostered opinions or trodden paths of life. To decline to consider truth because not prevalent or popular, or because it appears antagonistic to the settled course of our past existence, is to render verdict without evidence.

No mere prejudice should be allowed to influence the osteopath in accepting or repelling established facts. There are methods of accelerating and effecting cures besides righting displacements, which students of therapeutics may easily discover. In considering the subject of dietetics, it may be divided into three parts, viz.:

1. When to eat.
2. What to eat.
3. How to eat.

Almost the entire attention of dietarians has been directed to the latter two, while the former has been regarded (or, rather, disregarded) as settled by the established habit of the people. But how fortunate for humankind that occasionally a Franklin swings wide the door, looks into the household, and discovers within the immutable workings of Nature.

The above division of the subject could well have begun with "Why" to eat. In everything we do, in order to perform the work properly, there must be an aim, an end to be accomplished. Nature in all her varied forms and functions has a definite object, the attainment of which we perceive everywhere in cause and effect.

To understand some of these important purposes, observation and investigation is being pursued now as never before, and the value of the discoveries rated by results rather than theory.

The taking of food, then, is designed to succor some special want.

History is so replete with reminders showing how mankind are wont to differ in opinions, even in regard to the simplest commonplace matters of life, that it can hardly be wondered at that people, even at the present time, are not familiar with the correct nature of these deeper subjects, and that they are often confounded. If in many matters we apprehended their true significance, undoubtedly our tactics would effectually change.

Too many, alas! think, or at least infer by their actions, that the sole object is attained if they can succeed in introducing food, as much of it as possible, and without regard to quality, into their perhaps delicate and overworked stomachs.

It is a common fault that vastly more food is taken than is physiologically required, thus not only affecting metabolic equilibrium, but overtaxing the digestive organs and the nervous system.

It is not the quantity or quality of food taken into the stomach, but the amount and kind digested, absorbed, and made use of in the economy, that gives us good blood, nerves, muscles, bones, and fat.

Perfect digestion will insure good assimilation and nutrition; but if poor, the blood is furnished half-digested, fermented material, irritating the nerves and organs. The result may be disease, the weakest part or organ giving way first.

Food replaces the waste of the body tissues - this is the end of food, the "'why' to eat." We get our exhausted strength back by rest and sleep - our waste restored by food.

To those of insight this fact will immediately present itself as a Principle of great meaning, and is especially a striking feature to be well considered by brain-workers who have but little manual labor to perform.

Much might be said as to the necessity of the requisite amount of sleep; and of the need of not permitting undue mental or physical work to directly impair digestive power. But the college of experience is a perpetual fountain of enlightenment.

In entering upon the consideration of when to eat, it is with the utmost confidence, inspired by those who have tested the "better way of living," and knowledge, gained through experience, that to abstain from all nutriment until the vital power within shall have put the living organism in such a normal condition as to demand pabulum for the renewal of wasted tissue, or a further supply for the production of animal heat through the medium of a divine-given instinct, is to clear the complexion; reduce surplus fat; restore lack of flesh; feel conscious of a better digestion; reveal the power of the soul within through the sparkling eyes; brighten the source of all physical, mental, and moral energy; disperse any tendency to fullness of the face and flushness in the head; bring keenness of appetite, and such enjoyment of meals as childhood days only knew; experience a lightness and quickness of step, a more elastic spring in all the limbs, and an absence of the fullness and unpleasantness after eating, so often felt before; and to know that the food does not lie so long in the stomach - the useful organ has gone out of the gas-producing business.

In illness, to urge nutriment prior to completion of "destructive assimilation" and the recurrence of a natural desire for food only tends to burden and retard vital action, and to lessen the chance of recovery for the sick.

There is a remedy, that is the greatest of all, to create hunger, a genuine appetizer, one that you will undoubtedly habitually make use of when you learn of its natural adaptability and effectiveness, for it never fails to cause the keenest hunger, relish, and delight, is absolutely safe in its operation, and available to all. By its constant use eating becomes a luxury.

The sense of refreshment does not come when food is taken without hunger, even in health, as there is restriction of both digestion and absorption.

The mucous lining of the stomach is both an excretory and absorbing membrane; it dispatches its wonderful solvent juices when hunger suggests the need. There is immediate digestion, immediate absorption, and an immediate and continuous feeling of refreshment until hunger is satiated, which is one of the most keenly delightful in human experiences.

But what is hunger? The identity of true hunger is so apt to be confused with acquired appetite or morbid craving that the uninitiated are likely to arrive at a too sudden conclusion. Dr. Dewey, the originator of the "no breakfast" method and author of "The New Science of Living: The New Gospel of Health," a grand book of life - a gleam of life in every sentence and on every page a glow of precious truth,- defines hunger as "a condition arising from general activities, attended with a sense of fatigue and a desire for nourishing food." In other words, it is a call for both rest and refreshment - rest first, food next. This need must always depend upon the degree of exhaustion of the brain batteries and the loss through the muscle activities. Hunger is a sense that is meant to express the degree of waste, but it is so involved with brain fatigue that it is seldom manifest in a natural way. Only the laborer in the free fresh air who has no mental taxing can have the most natural hunger.

As a rule, mind-workers eat vastly more than waste indicates.

What need can there be to tax the digestive powers and the power-house of the human plant - the brain - in the morning, after a night's sleep and rest which has recharged the electric batteries with renewed strength, restored the whole system to its physiological balance, and occasioned but very little waste of the body materials?

There is ample ground by which to determine that the omission of the morning meal is based on the soundest physiology. "But," you say, "I am hungry in the morning. I cannot give up breakfast. Breakfast is my best meal. I have always eaten breakfast. I could not do my forenoon's work if my breakfast were denied me. I would be too weak. I believe I would faint."

My friend, think.

Is it not possible that your morning desire is not a natural hunger, but seeming hunger, being only appetite, the acquired result of a life-long untimely meal, thus only an impetus of the force of habit?

We are such creatures of circumstances, such slaves to acquired habit.

If the tippler's craving for his morning dram, the smoker's draft of the stinging weed, or any of the numerous habitudes of the day which are not physiological, but still persisted in, because, even with the realization of their damnific traits they think they "cannot do without it," and will not appoint minds quartermaster over their sensualities, is any argument tending to convince that your morning impulse may be but the response to the impressive tinkling of Mr. Habit's bell, then couple this with the easily deducible fact that morning hunger, after a sufficient period of invigorating sleep, is a physiological impossibility.

By transferring the first meal to the noonday hour, or waiting until adequate waste-producing exertions to guarantee a

natural calling for pabulum, and insure a more vigorous digestion and rapid absorption, the changes for the better bodily and mentally, will soon decide the future course of action that should be pursued.

By following this physiological method of living your friends will soon notice the change that is being wrought within you, and it will require no scrutinizing to detect your increased store of cheerfulness.

Cheer of mind is a primal law of life. Cheer is to digestive energy what a current of air is to the flame. There cannot be even a slight dejection without proportionately reducing the supply of the supporting and constructive materials, by diminishing the very motive power of the digestive function, and causing not apparent, but real exhaustion or decrease of mental and physical power. It may be thought that if no breakfast is eaten, then a late supper would be advantageous. This is erroneous.

There should be completion of digestion before the condition of sleep is entered.

It is Nature's design that digestion should take place after the general muscular activities have generated a demand, and with the body in an upright attitude. To be performed aright, this is requisite; and the infliction of penalty for every non-observance of Nature's laws is infallible. The erect posture facilitates the circular movement, known as peristaltic action, of the food around the walls of the stomach. In the lying posture the pressure of the food affects the dependent portions of the stomach, and the mechanical operation is imperfect; besides, in this position, especially during sleep, there is the minimum necessity for digestive energy, there being so little waste from cell-destruction.

The sympathies and relations between the stomach and the batteries of the brain are very intimate, and a constant call is made upon these batteries to furnish power during the process of

digestion. Digestion is a tax upon the brain centers under the best of digestive conditions; one that involves loss of mental and physical energy during its active stage.

There can be no complete rest or recharging of the exhausted batteries if masses of fermenting food disturb and compel them to action.

Many are beginning to realize that the amount and the food to be passed through the alimentary canal, in order to produce rich blood, preserve the health of body and mind, and prolong life, must be from a physiological standpoint. Some who are living - and very well - on only one meal a day, taken at the meridional hour, would not turn back to the old way, and have indeed good reasons to be enthusiastic.

Good works can be procured on the quality and pureness of food, and it is desirable to have knowledge of their nature, but it will be a surprise to those who adopt the "better way" what a splendid judge of the bill of fare natural hunger is.

The food should be thoroughly masticated and mixed with saliva for reasons we all are familiar with, but too careless about. Abolishing the habit of drinking at meals will incite slower eating and more thorough mastication and insalivation.