Students so often ask me regarding exercise, baths, food and similar subjects relating to personal hygiene that I will take this opportunity to briefly discuss a few of those questions, particularly that of exercise, in the hope that it will be of some help to those who are already interested in such matters, and perhaps awaken interest in others.

FOOD.

The form and quality is, of course, a matter largely regulated by individual taste and length of purse. A sufficient amount of wholesome food, with approximately the right proportion of the different food elements, is, however, within reach of almost everyone. To maintain perfect nutrition the proportions of proteid (albuminous) material, fats and carbohydrates (starches and sugars) should be in the neighborhood of $2:1$, varying somewhat with climate, work, and individual condition. Many people are inclined to eat more proteids than they need on the principle that food containing a large percentage of this element, such as meat, eggs and animal products in general, is more nutritious and concentrated than other classes of food. The latter is often true, but it does not follow that it is of advantage to ingest relatively larger quantities of this than of other less nutritious and more bulky food stuffs, such as vegetables, cereals, fruits, etc., which are considered of less value. A certain amount of coarse, bulky food, containing considerable indigestible matter is wholesome and indeed necessary, serving to stimulate the peristaltic movements of the intestines and giving them something to contract on. Variety in the diet is the simplest way of insuring a fairly correct proportion of food elements, required for perfect nutrition. It is also one essential for the maintenance of a good appetite, without which digestion and assimilation are not very well carried on. The sense of hunger and the enjoyment of one’s meals bear an important relation to the secretion of the digestive juices and to the absorption of the digested food from the intestines. For this reason a highly nutritious but unpalatable food may be of less value than one which is poorer in nutritious material but which is eaten with more relish.

The amount of food necessary for each individual cannot be regulated by any general rules. A healthy appetite and the individual digestive power are the best guides.

Eating between meals, except when actually faint, or when special reasons for it exist, is bad policy, and is apt to ruin a good appetite and to disarrange a digestion accustomed to regular work. This applies also to smoking shortly before meals. Eating something late in the evening, four or five hours after dinner is rational, if the stomach plainly demands it. Of course a heavy, hearty meal is not advisable just before retiring, as digestion is not very active during sleep; but a little bread and milk, or some fruits or a similar light lunch will do no harm to healthy persons. The supposed disturbances of sleep produced by it are worth risking in preference to lying awake from hunger. Indeed, to most people a light lunch at the end of an evening spent in hard study or other activity is conducive to good sleep, because the blood is thereby diverted in a measure from the head to the abdominal organs. The drowsiness after hearty meals with which we are all familiar, depends upon this. For this reason it is perhaps a good rule not to try to study immediately after such a meal. Not because the blood supply of the digestive tract is greatly interfered with by mental activity, for this is at least doubtful, but the brain’s blood supply being somewhat diminished during active digestion, this organ does not then work under favorable conditions.

The relation of physical exercise to meals will be discussed later.

BATHS.

The question of the morning bath is a vexed one, and the practice of taking them is often abused. An immersion in water of $45^\circ$ F. or less every morning throughout the winter is something in which only the strongest can afford to indulge. With all the vital activities of the body at a low ebb, the shock is too great, producing either overstimulation, lasting a comparatively short time, which is followed by lassitude for the remainder of the day; or else there is no reaction, or only a very feeble one,