

THE WORD

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MOMENTS WITH FRIENDS.

What is taste in food?

Taste is a function of the form body for registering the values and qualities in liquids and solids. There is no taste in food until water has related the food with the tongue. As soon as water, moisture, saliva, has brought the food into relationship with the tongue, the organ of taste, the nerves of the tongue instantly convey to the form body the impressions of the food. Without water to make the connection between food and the nerves of the tongue, the nerves cannot convey the impressions of the food to the form body and the form body cannot perform its function of taste.

There is a subtle relationship between bodies having qualities of taste, the nerves and the form body, and water. The subtle relationship is the bond which causes the two parts of hydrogen and one part of oxygen to become what we call water, which is different from either of the characteristics of hydrogen or oxygen of which water is composed. There is water in every particle of food. The bond which unites the two gases to produce water is the same subtle bond which unites food, the nerves in the tongue, water, and the form body.

Whenever the physical water relates an article of food to the tongue, the subtle element in water is present and acts at once on the form body, if the nerves of the tongue are intact. The subtle element in the water which relates the food to the tongue is the same in the water and in the food and the tongue and the nerve. That subtle element is the real, the occult element water. The water which we know is only the outermost expression and manifestation of the subtle occult element water. This subtle water is the element of which the form body itself is chiefly composed.

Taste is a function in this form body of taking into itself through its own occult element water the essences or qualities contained in food. Taste is a function of the form body, but it is not the only function. Taste is one of the senses. The form body is the seat of all the senses. The form body registers all sensations. Sensations are experienced by man only through the form body. The form body relates each sense to the other. The purpose of the senses is that

each should contribute to the general good of the body, that the body may be a fit instrument for use by and development of the mind. The purpose of taste is that by it the form body might register the sensations produced by the food so that it can distinguish between them and refuse such food as is unnecessary and injurious, and select only such as is most suitable to the uses of the mind in building and maintaining the physical structure and the form body.

Taste would guide men and certain animals as to which foods are the most needed and useful for the body, if men and those animals lived in a normal and natural manner. But men are not normal and natural, and not all animals are, because of the influences which man has brought and brings to bear on them.

The sense of smell is more nearly related to food and to taste than any of the other senses because smell has to do directly with and corresponds to physical matter, and food is made up of the elements which enter into the composition of physical matter.

Has taste in food any value as nourishment apart from the food?

It has. The gross food nourishes the physical body. The subtle occult element, water, just referred to, is nourishment to the form body within the physical. The taste of that occult element is nourishment to a third something which is within and through the form body. In the human, this third something is not yet a form, though it is expressed in specialized forms by types of animals. This third something which receives nourishment in man from the taste in food is desire. Desire reaches into the senses and uses them to draw into itself the gratification which all the sensations afford. Each sense thus ministers to the desire. However, the special sense which corresponds to desire, and which desire uses to relate itself to the other senses, is touch or feeling. So desire relates itself through touch to taste, and draws through the sense of taste all the pleasures which it can experience from foods through taste. Were the form body allowed to perform its function of taste without having to obey the demands of desire, it would automatically select only such foods as it needs to maintain its form and the structure of the physical. But the form body is not allowed to select the foods most needed. The desire rules the form body and uses it to experience the gratification of the sensations which it cannot obtain without the form body. The taste which most pleases the desire, desire demands through the form body, and man, deluded into believing that the desire is himself, contrives as best he can to supply it with such

foods as it unreasonably demands through taste. So the taste is cultivated to gratify the desire, the unreasoning animal brute, which is a part of the make-up of man. By supplying the demands of desire through taste foods are taken into the body which are injurious to its maintenance, and in the course of time its normal condition is disturbed and ill health results. Hunger should not be confused with taste. Hunger is the natural craving of the animal for the satisfying of its needs. Taste should be the means by which an animal may select the foods needed for its maintenance. This animals in the wild state, and away from the influence of man, will do. The animal in man, man often confuses and then identifies with himself. In the course of time the tastes for food have been cultivated. The desire or animal in man has been nourished by the subtle tastes in food, and the animal breaks down the form body and prevents it from performing its natural functions in the maintenance of the health of the body as a whole and in serving as a reservoir of life on which man may call for use in his work in the world.

Taste has a value apart from the food. Its value is to nourish the desire, but to give it only the nourishment it needs, and not to increase its strength beyond that which the form body is able to bear.

A FRIEND [H. W. Percival]



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