

in the stomach depends largely on the fineness of its fibres. Thus beef is less digestible than mutton, because the fibres are longer and harder, and again mutton is less digestible than the breast of fowl. In fish the muscle fibres are very short and are arranged in flaky masses, which are easily separated from one another. Hence fish lends itself to comparatively speedy digestion. Of course, fish differ greatly in digestibility, the lean kinds being more readily disposed of than the fat, and salt fish; owing to the hardening of the fibre during salting, lingers longer in the stomach than fresh fish. Moreover fish is less stimulating as a food than meat, which is a matter of importance in these days of heavy nervous tension.

In this connection, however, an important feature must not be overlooked, viz. that, as in other foods, the digestibility and nutritive value of fish largely depends on the cooking of it.

COMPARATIVE VALUE OF FISH AS FOOD

As is explained in "Recipes for Sea Foods," although foods are so different in appearance and taste, analysis shows that they are made up of a comparatively small number of compounds. These are water and the so-called nutrients—protein or nitrogenous materials, fat, carbohydrates and ash or mineral matter. Familiar examples of protein are the lean of fish and meat, white of egg, casein of milk and gluten of wheat. Fat is found in the fat of fish and meat, in milk (butter) and oils. Starches, sugars and woody fibre or cellulose form the bulk of carbohydrates.

Food serves the twofold purpose of supplying the body with material with which it is built up and repaired and the energy for heat and muscular work. The value of a food depends upon the amount of digestible nutrients it contains, and the