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Does Social Practice Alter Man's Nutrition?

Nutrition and diet are separate and distinct. Nutrition is a state reflecting the sum total of the metabolic processes, both prenatal and postnatal, which defines the adequacy of a particular living entity. Diet, on the other hand, made up of individual nutrients, is the food intake of the individual, a very important factor in determining his nutrition. In its broadest aspect, as it applies to man, nutrition depends upon the adequacy of the progenitors, the factors of climatic drive, the quality of his food intake, as well as his education, emotional factors, illnesses and stresses to which he is subjected during growth and maturity. It is not every soil that produces forage for the winning race horse, and students of animal husbandry in the field of racing have spent large sums of money to obtain the right factors of soil fertility to produce the food, as well as the means for exercise, training and care recognizing full well that minor factors can make the difference in the horse's total nutrition. Groups of people from various parts of the world, representing different hereditary backgrounds, eating food produced on different soil types and following different social customs, produce individuals whose nutritional characteristics are recognizable to the astute anthropologist.

There is a trend in present day social thinking that the equalization of mass dietary should be the goal of society. The food provided man by agricultural practices of the day in quantity are assumed to be of adequate quality. Therefore, the nutrients available to the American public should in no way produce a nutritional deficiency. The effects of agricultural practice on the nutrition of human beings in the long run: such as the use of synthetic chemicals as part of the ration of animals, the use of hormones, the use of pesticides and practices for forcing growth (increase in size) that produce products beautiful to look on, free from pest damage, have not been studied long enough to determine their ultimate effect on the human being. In a similar manner, we are just beginning to be aware of the effect of pollution on the nutrition of mankind by our two most necessary and voluminous adjuncts to life, air the oxidizer and water, the solvent.

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Automotive transportation and advertising have altered the dietary of the growing youth of America by changing his demand for basic food to produce energy and total development. The increase in the use of carbohydrates with snacks rather than foods high in protein, the fears that have been expressed about over-weight, partly dictated by fashion, and the alleged ill effect of animal fats have altered the nutritional pattern of millions of Americans. Some of the effects of modern dietary selection of our youthful citizens can produce deficiencies that will not be confined to the present generation alone, but will be passed on to future generations. Diets adequate in vitamins, proteins, fats and carbohydrates without supplementation are available to the American who chooses his food carefully. The dietary practices of individuals desiring to reduce, of teen-agers who do not want breakfast or who wish to remain trim, may seriously alter their nutrition so that they never can enjoy robust health. The effect of the continued increment of a small amount of chemical poison, both in our food, air and water supply has never been fully determined and may be the most serious contribution to the failure of some individuals to obtain optimum nutrition, in a country assumed to possess the outstanding food supply of the world.

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