

## Doctor Pottenger Answers a Letter

(A copy of this letter came to the office for filing. The contents were so educational, permission was requested for printing portions in this magazine. It was granted.)

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It is my general finding that in this "land of plenty" there is insufficient stimulation, either for the demand of one's bodily temperature control or his physical activity to require normal caloric intake. It has been my experience that people eat less and less each year. For example, when I was a boy, my father served to his patients steaks, chops, ham, eggs, baked potatoes, cereal, milk, cream, toast, butter in profusion for breakfast. Today it is very difficult to get a patient to eat that amount of food. In checking over old menus, I find that the food intake of our patients exceeded 4000 calories a day. Although I tried to build my basic diets around an intake of 3000 to 4000 calories a day, it is almost impossible to get the patient to consume more than 2500.

On the other hand, with children, I am in a position to be able to encourage them to a higher food intake partly by the stimulation of adequate exercise within the limits of the individual child. My experience with children over this period of time has been most gratifying. When dealing with their intellectual development, to quote but a single example, I had a young girl with a rather severe eczematoid dermatitis, who came to me when she was 16 years of age, had never had a passing grade but had always slipped by (it being the philosophy of California schools that you might interfere with the emotional life of a child if they are flunked). She was with me for a period of a little over a year, was placed on a very high caloric intake which amounted to approximately 4000 calories. Her eczematoid dermatitis was relatively controlled; and from an individual who was unable to keep up in anyway either physically or mentally

with her contemporaries, she became an outstanding student, graduated from high school with honors, and received a scholarship, unsolicited, for mathematics because of her scholastic excellence. She graduated from college in the upper third of her class. I could quote to you similar experiences. My experience in late years with younger people whom I know are living on substandard diets, for the most part, has been the tremendous lack of intellectual curiosity in any field other than their chosen major and that older men and women with liberal education of the past including Latin and Greek have a much broader outlook on life and it is my impression that a broader outlook upon life is a result of a more adequate nourishment.

I wish to thank you for the page from the Saturday Evening Post showing the prize prime steak on the hoof with a blue ribbon. The photograph shows two points that are of utmost importance: (1) poor fur, (2) a marked disturbance in the development of the skull. His photograph suggests that he suffers from turrecephaly, which means that he does not have enough room for his brains and that the upper portion of his head is pointed. Rather than being a true steerhead, this is a "steer-oid," lacking the proper steroids. Although the anthropometric development of an animal is of utmost importance to proper breeding (steers excepted), to the poor steer it makes little differences—we only have to consume him. We have been talking, above, about insufficient calories in the development of the intellect, this reproduction would show an even lower grade animal due to the fact that he is made to grow at an infantile rate too long!