

**FOOD AND FITNESS;
OR, DIET IN RELATION
TO HEALTH**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649381708

Food and fitness; or, Diet in relation to health by James Long

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JAMES LONG

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BY

JAMES LONG

AUTHOR OF "THE COMING ENGLISHMAN," "MAKING THE MOST OF
THE LAND," "BRITISH DAIRY FARMING"

LATE MEMBER OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE CENTRAL CHAMBER OF
AGRICULTURE; MEMBER OF THE SMALL HOLDINGS' COMMITTEE AND FORMERLY
PROFESSOR IN THE ROYAL AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE;
DANISH AND DUTCH MEDALLIST

LONDON

CHAPMAN AND HALL, LTD.

1917

PREFACE

MODERN investigation, both in science and practice, has demonstrated the fact so clearly that it cannot be mistaken, that health is very largely governed by the food we consume. That we eat too much is admitted by intelligent students of dietetics. That we eat carelessly, quickly, irregularly, and too often, and without regard to the essential importance of mastication and perfect digestion, is also admitted. When, however, we discuss with the average man the question of what we should eat and what we should avoid, we tread upon difficult ground. Preference and prejudice then come to the front, and thus, without understanding the principles of nutrition, and the reasons why some forms of food are so much better than others, argument loses its force in the presence of the belief inculcated by the example of parents and of general practice.

I am not a vegetarian, although I am conscious that flesh food is not essential to health or to strength, and that as we reach middle age it is a danger to both. There are many exceptions, but evidence proves that an enormous majority of meat-eaters, and especially of those who eat meat

—fish, flesh, or fowl, two or three times a day—acquire some form of disease which is practically foreign to the vegetarian or the temperate man.

To a large extent health is a matter of education. I have been engaged for a long series of years in a study of the feeding of the live-stock of the farm, both on its scientific and practical sides, and I find that the knowledge displayed by owners of horses, cattle, sheep, swine, and poultry is much more profound than that which applies to themselves. In relation to stock the object of the feeder is to provide what will ensure health and a profitable return. He supplies not what an animal would choose if it could, but what he thinks is the best for his purpose. With regard to himself it is quite the reverse. He consumes not what is the best food for his system, but what pleases his palate, eating as often and as much as he likes. Argument is futile, demonstration is hopeless, for most people insist that all things are good for their stomachs, or that one man's meat is another man's poison.

The number of deaths, between 60 and 70, of men who should live many years longer, from diseases attributable to excessive eating, or to eating improper foods, is probably greater than that which is due to the consumption of alcohol.

I have attempted, in the following pages, to

show why these appalling losses occur, how to avoid the diseases which cause them and the dangers which they are constantly threatening.

This is neither a purely scientific nor theoretical discussion of food in relation to health, but the result of a wide study of the scientific side of the subject, which I have applied in actual practice. Long-continued ill-health,—caused by consumption of inappropriate food,—which the most drastic medical treatment failed to restore to normal condition, induced me to apply the principles of nutrition—as I had studied them in relation to the domestic animal world—to myself. The result was immediate, and I never looked back from the moment of exchanging the usual diet with meat for one in which fruit plays the principal *rôle*. Robust health—which I was advised by the ablest of men could never return at a late period of life—strength, mental activity, and sleep, an almost unknown quantity, made life worth living once more. Yet a free hand is maintained, so that in case of necessity I can eat like the rest of the world. What has happened to me has happened to thousands, and will happen to many who have the desire, and are willing to test a system which cannot do harm, but will certainly be of assistance to those who honestly make the attempt. While I cannot undertake to answer the inquiries of the curious, my desire is

to be useful to those to whom, for similar reasons to mine, the joy of living is a thing of the past.

Life does not consist of eating and drinking with the result that to-morrow we die. God has a purpose with us all, and I believe that purpose is frequently marred by ourselves and our irrational habit of living. There is no form of vegetable food—bread, pulse, cereals, garden vegetables, or fruits—placed upon our tables which contain, or produce, poisonous substances. On the contrary, there is no flesh food, alcoholic liquor, coffee, or tea which do not. It is the act, perpetrated two or three times a day, which becomes the confirmed habit, of taking something which is deleterious, that tells in the end, and that is constantly robbing the world of lives before they have contributed their share for the general good in their day and generation.

I tender my grateful thanks to Prof. Chittenden of Yale, Dr. Bircher Benner of Zurich, and Dr. Hindhede of Copenhagen, all of whom may have the satisfaction of knowing that they have been the means of mending many broken lives by their teaching and example. I shall be amply repaid if I can be used in restoring one bruised being to that happy condition which is meant for us all.

The prices of foodstuffs are based chiefly upon pre-war quotations.

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