ABOUT FRUIT, VEGETABLES AND SALADS

P. E. NORRIS

Nature's Natural Cleansers

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CHAPTER ONE

WHY FRUIT IS GOOD FOR YOU

ORIGINALLY MAN must have been a fruitarian and an eater of herbs. Fruit appeared on trees and bushes in season and he plucked and ate it. In Asia Minor where we assume that Man first stood erect on two legs, there was fruit the year round.

Even those who take the Scriptures literally must accept the view that the apple with which Eve tempted Adam was a somewhat different species from that sold at the greengrocer's. The apple, incidentally, is not thought as highly of in Palestine as it is in England and when we are told in Deuteronomy 32 : 10 that "he led him about, he instructed him, he kept him as the apple of his eye," we must attribute this metaphor to the 47 learned divines appointed by King James in 1604 to compile the Authorised Version of the Bible, one of the rare occasions on which a committee has produced a work of great art. The apple is the finest English fruit.

Man can live on fruit alone and maintain health provided he can get enough of the right sort. If he supplements his fruit diet with nuts he can get down his intake of fruit and get all the nutriment needed for growth and repair of the body, and for energy to do his work.

In a civilised community it is difficult to buy enough fruit at an economic price, and as nuts are expensive, a purely fruit-and-nut diet is difficult to maintain.

But Man cannot live on flesh alone unless like the Eskimo he devours the glands, kidneys, liver, heart and other organs in the *raw* state, for when cooked, the essential vitamin C is destroyed or decreases almost to vanishing point.

Man did not eat vegetables, except roots, till he had lived for many centuries on a fruit-and-nut diet, for vegetables as we know them, simply did not exist.

Here it is our purpose to examine some of the more popular fruits, discover what nourishment they contain and why they are good for us. Our entire outlook, however, is bound to be changed utterly in a few years, when speed of transport will bring the luscious, exotic produce of the tropics to our tables within a matter of hours.

We stand on the threshold of a new age. Jet travel has shrunk the oceans and land masses till today one can breakfast in London, lunch in New York and return home for dinner. When atomic travel ousts the jet it may take an hour or two to reach the Americas, South Africa, India, Australia and Japan. This is no fantastic dream.

Then we shall get fresh dates and mangoes, papiyas for breakfast, and the fresh sweet juice of the toddy palm may take the place of orange juice as a breakfast drink. In the next 30 years or less kumquats, passion fruit, durians, jacks, custard apples and palm fruit will appear on British tables just as the avocado pear and lichi are now doing.

The alkaline elements in fruit, combined with fruit acids, act as natural laxatives by promoting the secretions of the glands. Fruit also helps to preserve the condition of the epithelium cells upon which regular peristalic action and bowel movement depend.

Eaters of fruit need less water than those who eat none or small quantities, for fruits are Nature's laboratories where water, distilled in a pure state acts as a solvent and

removes impurities from the body. In the tropics, where water is often polluted fruit and fruit juices are indispensable, and Europeans are sometimes struck down by epidemics because they refuse to live on the produce which Nature has so bountifully bestowed on those countries.

Europeans in the tropics maintain that fruit harbours germs, and so it does if cut and left to lie about. Nature has provided fruit with germ-proof coats and if these are not punctured or bruised germs cannot enter and the fruit is safe for eating. The banana, orange, melon, lemon, grapefruit, tamarind and in fact every tropical or semi-tropical fruit is perfectly protected and utterly safe.

Fruits are also natural sources of sugar in its best, purest and most digestible form. Grape-sugar and fruit-sugar exist in most of the sweet fruits and in honey. Though chemically the same, these sugars are not identical; their molecular structure is different, the same number of atoms being arranged in different ways.

Fruit-sugar makes fruit far superior as energy foods for children than sweets made from refined sugar, and children should be encouraged to eat dried fruits, which are even richer in sugar than fresh fruits.

The taste for sweet foods is a natural one and the beneficial effects of fruit-sugars may be seen particularly during the grape harvests in France, Spain and Portugal and the sugar cane harvest in the West Indies, when the harvesters eat to their fill of grapes, or chew the cane and extract the rich sweet juice. Health and energy are always more abundant at this time of the year than at any other.

Sugar in fruit is so diluted that one never gets too much of it. In sweets made from refined sugar, it is far too concentrated.

Sugar that is not needed immediately in the system is turned into glycogen by the liver and stored there for

future use. If the quantity of sugar is greater than that which the liver can control, however, fermentation is caused in the alimentary canal and alcohol, carbonic acid and acetic acid are produced, leading to digestive troubles and loss of appetite. That is why children go off their food if allowed too many sweets.

Fruit also provides bulk, and bulk is needed for the action of the bowels. That is one reason why people who eat a fair amount of fruit *never need purgatives* and aperients. Cellulose, mainly in the skins of fruits, provides the bulk.

Years ago it was held that cellulose was indigestible and scientists could find little reason for eating it, but within recent years it has been proved that *if thoroughly masticated* (mastication is important with all food) between 25-55 per cent of the cellulose *is digested.*

The cellulose that is not digested provides the bulk needed to give the muscular wall of the intestine the work Nature intended it to do. If it gets no work, it grows lazy and flabby as do all muscles that are idle, and in time becomes useless. Long before that happens the owner develops chronic constipation.

That is why purgatives are so harmful. They clean out the bowel without any effort on the part of the body. If purgatives become a habit the intestine grows lazy and useless and the result is chronic constipation. Stomach exercises, squatting and rising, regular walking at a brisk pace, acid fruits, fresh vegetables and wholemeal flour and wheat provide the cure.

Fruits with skin that can be eaten—apples, pears, gooseberries, grapes, plums, peaches, apricots, etc.—should not be peeled or skinned, but washed under running water to remove dust, dirt and chemicals. The pernicious system of spraying fruit is now almost universal, and you can be sure

of getting unsprayed fruit only if you grow it or buy it from friends or neighbours.

All fruit is rich in mineral salts, which though present in very small quantities in food, are essential for the growth and proper functioning of the body. Without mineral salts, we would die, and that is why it is far better to wash and eat fruit than to peel it.

In such matters you must use your commonsense; the skins of bananas, oranges, lemons, grapefruits and limes are not meant to be eaten—certainly not the coconut.

One of the most interesting discoveries of food scientists is that after digestion all foods leave either an acid or an alkaline ash in the body. So it isn't the AMOUNT of food that you eat that matters, but the KIND of food. A person can live on very little indeed and maintain excellent health, as was proved during the war when all the theories and fads of the scientists were knocked flatter than wafers. They maintained, after experiments with rats and other animals in their laboratories—experiments which of course, have their value—that Man could not live in sound health unless he consumed enough food to give him 3,000 calories a day.

J. C. Drummond and Anne Wilbraham state in *The Englishman's Food,* that " The Germans were restricted to diets of 1,500-1,700 calories a day for a long period during the blockade in 1916-17 and records show that many people lost 25-35 lb. in weight in the course of 7-8 months." Knowing how much most Germans over-eat and how fat some of them are, this probably did them the world of good. What probably affected them adversely was not their abbreviated diet but the fact that they did not get the proper health-giving foods.

Fifty million in Britain lived and fought and worked throughout the Second World War on from 2,000-2,500

calories; those in prison camps on as little as 1,500 and some in concentration camps survived on not more than 1,000 calories a day and when rescued suffered no grievous after effects. And the food they were given was not the right type for health.

Theories were knocked cock-eyed and much that food reformers and vegetarians had said for years was proved true: that one could live on far fewer calories than the number laid down by scientists, provided the right kinds of food were eaten. Now, once again in the midst of plenty, such ideas are either forgotten or pushed aside.

We talk about acidity or alkalinity of the blood, but in actual fact the blood can never become acid. Long before it did we would be dead.

Blood is said to be " acid " when it is less alkaline than it should be; when acids have accumulated and reduced the alkalinity of the blood beyond safety point.

When this happens you become exposed to all sorts of conditions that lead to hives, eczema, bronchitis, catarrh, acidosis, stomach troubles, gout, rheumatism, and other ills. The resistance of your body is lowered and the risk of invasion by harmful germs, increased.

One of the greatest advances in the field of nutrition has been the study of the chemical functions of the body and the foods that provide the necessary elements that bring about changes.

We have learnt that the human body consists of organs, muscles, bones, tissues, blood and other liquids; that the cells and tissues are composed of chemical elements which vary in quantity and proportion with the changing conditions of our lives and environment, and scientists have come to the conclusion that health depends upon the balance or equilibrium of those chemical elements.

Of these the acid-alkaline balance is perhaps the most

important. In our quest after strength and energy we are apt to each too freely of foods that deposit an acid-ash in the blood, and these acids are often not properly eliminated through the bowels, lungs, kidneys and skin. When too much acid accumulates we lay ourselves open to infection and disease. Our resistance is lowered.

According to some authorities (this will not meet with the approval of all doctors; but then, doctors are more concerned with ILLNESS than with HEALTH) your diet should consist of 20 per cent acid-ash foods and 80 per cent alkaline-ash foods, so for your benefit I give below a list of most of these foods.

ACID-ASH FOODS: Barley, beef, beef and calf's liver, meat extracts, white bread, wholewheat bread, buckwheat flour, all cheeses except cream cheeses, chicken, corn, cornmeal, biscuits of every kind, eggs, fish, lentils, oatmeal, peanuts, pork, oysters, all shellfish, all prepared meats, rice —polished as well as unpolished—turkey, walnuts.

ALKALINE-ASH FOODS: Almonds, applies, apricots, asparagus, bananas, beans (lima and string), beet, buttermilk, cabbage, carrots, cauliflower, celery, chard, cherries, cream cheese, cucumbers, dates, figs (dried as well as fresh), grape-juice, grapes, lemons, lettuce, milk (condensed, cultured, fresh and sour), melons, olives, onions, garlic, parsnips, peaches, pears, peas, pineapples, potatoes, sweet potatoes, prunes, pumpkin, radishes, raisins, raspberries, soya beans, spinach, squash, tomatoes and turnips. This is but a rough guide.

All *fresh* fruits and *fresh* vegetables leave an alkaline ash, help to maintain the balance of the blood and keep you fit.

This is one of the main reasons for eating plenty of fruit and fresh vegetables.

It does not mean, however, that you must not eat foods