

# Nutrition Story

**A** DRAMATIC STORY of nutrition—good and bad—is told in Ruth M. Leverton's book "Food Becomes You." "Everything in your body was once in your food," says Miss Leverton. "Starting with a single cell, growing to your present size, and for as long as you live—food becomes **you**. Food becomes your blood and muscles, your bones and teeth, and every part of you. Food becomes your size, your strength, your energy, your stamina, and your ability to succeed. Food becomes your morale, your happiness, your personality and your attitude toward life.

"Moreover, the right kind of food is becoming to you, because it gives you poise, confidence and sparkle . . . Your nutrition can be a valuable asset or a dangerous obstacle, depending on whether it is good or poor. If it is good you are ambitious, enthusiastic and emotionally stable; you have a radiant personal appearance and abundant energy and health. But if your nutrition is poor you are seriously handicapped. You tire easily; you lack stamina, purpose and enthusiasm. You are a drudge and a drag; you are subject to discontent, worry and irritability."

The author of this book goes on to name the leading nutrients and to tell why the body needs them.

First there is protein, a vital part of every cell in the body and needed for building and repairing all body tissues, for energy and for forming antibodies in the blood to fight infection. We get most of our protein from meat, fish, poultry, eggs and whole milk, including cheese of course.

Calcium is also an essential part of every cell and is needed for making the cementing material that holds the cells together, for building bones and teeth, for blood clotting and for the contraction and relaxation of muscles, delaying fatigue and regulating the action of the heart muscle. Calcium is found largely in milk and milk products.

Vitamin D is needed to help convert calcium and phosphorus into bone. It is supplied mainly by butter and by adding cod liver oil to the diet.

Vitamin A helps in the growth and repair of bones, teeth and other tissues, keeps the lining of the mucous membranes of the nose, throat and other body cavities healthy and resistant to infection, protects the eyes against night blindness and in general has the effect of delaying old age. The best source of Vitamin A are liver and green and yellow vegetables.

Vitamin B or Thiamine tones up the gastrointestinal tract and the nervous system, pre-

venting irritability and general nervousness. It is also needed for fertility and for milk secretion in nursing mothers. Its outstanding source is pork, also fish, poultry, eggs, legumes and potatoes.

Riboflavin or Vitamin G has a special function in the health of the eyes, helping to prevent cloudy cornea, dimming vision, cataracts and sensitivity to light. Milk is our best source of this vitamin.

Vitamin C or Ascorbic Acid is needed for the health of the blood vessels, to prevent fragile walls and bleeding, for firm gums, good bones and teeth, wound and fracture healing, and helping to resist infection and prevent fatigue. It is supplied especially in citrus fruits, tomatoes, also in cantaloupe, broccoli, strawberries.

Minerals besides calcium, that are important to good nutrition, are: Iron, necessary to make the red substance or hemoglobin of the blood—found with most proteins and thiamin; Phosphorus essential to tissue building, found with protein and thiamin; Copper which follows most of the nutrients; and Iodine. Iodine is needed so that the thyroid gland can regulate the speed of body processes. It is found in sea food but most of it comes from the air which picks it up from the sea and drops it on the soil and into water supplies. It is likely to be lacking in areas far inland. When we don't get enough Iodine the thyroid gland works overtime, trying to make up the lack, but it can't. Instead it enlarges and forms a goitre. Iodized salt was developed to make up for the lack of iodine in places where there is no iodine brought in by the sea air.

With all of these foods having a specific function in health protection we also require Carbohydrate and fat for fuel or body energy and water to carry nutrients to cells and to carry waste products away. Canada's Food Rules recommend that part of our carbohydrate be supplied by a daily serving of whole grain cereal and at least four slices of bread. Whole grains also contain thiamine and riboflavin.

In the "Food Becomes You" book we are reminded that no one class of foods can do the nutrition job of another. We read: "The meat, fish and poultry team cannot supply the calcium and riboflavin supplied by milk. Milk cannot supply the ascorbic acid of citrus fruit nor the thiamine of pork. Moreover, a super-abundance of one kind of food cannot completely make up for the lack of another kind. If we do not use milk we cannot eat enough of any other group to supply our allowance of calcium; if we do not eat pork it is very difficult to eat enough of other foods to supply our thiamine need."

## Food Rules

On such a foundation of nutritional needs Canada's Food Rules were planned. They are simple and easy to follow. Each day's meals should provide:

Milk—For children up to twelve years at