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What People Eat Isn't the Problem

SOME time back a story was going around about a certain Stanley Clabberhorn, who was getting along just fine until he learned that being alive was hazardous to his health.

He gave up smoking when tobacco was linked to lung cancer and heart disease. He quit drinking when he found that alcohol damages the liver and the brain.

Stanley switched to sugar-sweetened colas until he was told that they made him fat and caused dental cavities. So he used diet colas until the cyclamate scare, when he changed to milk. That ended when some unidentified authority claimed that cholesterol causes arteriosclerosis.

Clabberhorn also gave up meats, fats and jelly products, which didn't leave him much to eat except raw fish, wheat germ and organic succotash. He tried vinegar and honey, stopped using salt and added enzymes to his liquid-protein supplement.

Stanley exercised to keep fit. But

he gave up jogging when he read that 1.3 per cent of all joggers are eventually run over by trucks or bitten by dogs. He retired to a bomb shelter in his backyard to avoid being hit by a meteorite.

He installed an air purifier to meet Environmental Protection Agency specifications and drank only distilled water. Unfortunately, he lost a lot of the joy of living when he heard that color television emitted radiation along with violence and sex-rated programs. But he stayed healthy and lived a long, boring life.

Most people don't take the business of living quite as seriously as the fictitious Stanley Clabberhorn, but few have escaped all of the uncounted diet fads that promise longer, healthier lives if we eat less of this or that.

Until modern times, people varied their diets by eating whatever they had at a particular season. Then the U.S. Department of Agriculture brought forth the idea of a balanced diet, emphasizing "The Basic

Seven" foods.

Others advocated vegetarianism, organically grown natural foods, reduced saturated fat diets and less carbohydrates. Any of these specialized diets might well be prescribed for individuals by physicians to remedy deficiencies or to correct imbalances, but their value as a mass course of action may be questionable.

Americans enjoy an abundance of wholesome foods, available all year in an amazing variety of meats, dairy products, fruits and vegetables. Most people eat what they want and are healthy.

What we eat isn't killing us off as a nation. Our population continues to grow at an alarming rate, and it is now estimated to be above 218 million.

As individuals, we may be in greater danger from the amounts we eat than from what we eat.

We consume enough food calories to do a hard day's work — and then sit while machines do our work for us!