

Some Letters from Fasters

London, Ontario, May 2, 1910.

Dear Sir,—Your article in a recent magazine very greatly interested me. My sister, on her way home from a five-and-a-half-weeks' visit in Boston and New York, where she had been endeavoring to discover the causes of her frightful headaches, bought that number of the magazine and read your experience, with, as you can well imagine, a deep interest. In Boston she had consulted one of the two physicians supposed to head the profession (as consultants) in that city. This man told her she had Bright's disease and leakage of the heart, and he gave her ten years to live—if she was very careful. As she has five children under twelve years of age, this was a sad outlook. She weighed 122 pounds when she left—and this was the lowest weight since early girlhood—but on her return, weighed on the same scales in the same clothing, she was only 108 pounds. She looked very bad, and her spirits were at zero.

Your article appealed to her, and she would have unhesitatingly tried your remedy, but that she was pregnant, and thought it would probably[Pg 106] mean the child's death. The Boston obstetrician, who was consulted, said, if the other doctor's diagnosis was correct, the child would have to be taken at eight months.

After reading your experience, I said to my sister: "You cannot perhaps follow Mr. Sinclair's example, but you can approximate to it. If you go to your own doctor he will undoubtedly send you to some sanatorium where the patients are fairly stuffed. Suppose you come over to my place each noon and take dinner, having eaten only a very light breakfast; then rest from two to five, take a long bath when you rise, go for a walk from six to six-thirty, and then to your own home for tea, taking only a shredded wheat biscuit for that meal."

My sister consented, and on Saturday was weighed. On that light diet, and in twelve days, she had gained fourteen pounds. Her color is returning, she does not tire as she did, and we are full of hope that she may recover.

My object in writing was to thank you for your frank recital of ills and aches and their cure, and to get from you the names of the books to which you referred.

Several of my friends have read your articles on my recommendation, and one at least is seriously considering a lengthened fast. Reading the article took me back to the "no-breakfast régime," which I followed for five years, and then, for no especial reason, abandoned. Already I feel much better.

Sincerely and gratefully,
M. R. T.

[Pg 107]

Skowhegan, Maine, May 30, 1910.

Dear Sir,—I read your article in the Cosmopolitan with deep interest, and am to-day on my seventh day's fast. My sensations thus far are exactly like yours. I shall fast until hunger returns, if it take a month.

My age is forty-eight, and I have enjoyed the best of health nearly all my life. Even now my digestion is all right, but for five years or so I have been troubled with rheumatism, not the painful, swelling sort, but lame joints.

I tried "Fletcherism," and for the last nine months have done my best to live up to his suggestions, but fell down, exactly as in your own case. I can't tell what to eat, or when I have eaten enough.

Whether this fast of yours does me any permanent good or not, my joints certainly move better to-day than for six months, and I have every confidence in the theory. The physicians here to a man all laugh at me, likewise my friends. I had lost ten pounds in weight at the end of the sixth day; I lost three the first, two each for the next two days, and a pound a day for the next three days.

You speak of an unmistakable appetite. I could eat, of course, now, though I have no appetite, and I am wondering how I shall know when a real appetite returns. Mrs. W. is as keen to try the fasting cure as I, and her condition is very like Mrs. Sinclair's, but I thought one member of the family was enough for the first try-out. Please pardon [Pg 108]a total stranger for encroaching upon the time of a busy man, but in the hunt for health, without which life is not worth living, one will do things he would not otherwise think of. For your information I will say that I have attended to my office and business every day since my fast began, walking to my home and back at least three times daily, for the exercise; driving a touring-car nights and Sunday, for pleasure, exactly as though there had been no change in my habits. The strangest part of the experience is that I feel so well, and except for a slight faintness, feel perfectly well to-day. Say—but I was hungry for the first two days!

Yours truly,
Herbert Wentworth.

Clyde Park, Mont., May 17, 1910.

Dear Sir,—I was much interested in your article in the Cosmopolitan on "Starving for Health's Sake." For some time before I read it I had been troubled with a coated tongue and a nasty, bitter

taste in my mouth. When I read the article my complaint was probably at its worst. I consulted a doctor, who gave me some capsules to clean out my intestinal canal, so he said. I asked him what I could eat and he said, "The less you eat the better." So I ate nothing for a week. Everything connected with my fast for that week was just as you described it—a ravenous hunger on the second day and after that no hunger at all. However, the coated tongue was still there, and when I next saw the doctor I mentioned your article and said you recommended rectal injections.[Pg 109]

He said he read your article and approved of it, and said after a thorough examination that I had an impaction of the colon. He said he would give me something to work on my colon and also added that if I fasted long enough the impaction would move out of itself. He also recommended injections. On the 25th day, although the coated tongue and nasty taste were still with me, I commenced eating again, as there was so much work to do on the ranch, and I had to do it, as hired help was scarce. I drank nothing but tepid water and very thin lemonade, slightly sweetened, during my fast of twenty-four days. I dropped from 175 pounds to 143 pounds.

It is a week now since I broke my fast and I am rapidly gaining weight. Yesterday I weighed 152 pounds. However, as I said, I still have the coated tongue, although not so bad as formerly, and when I regain more weight, I'm going to begin another fast. I am fifty-three years of age, and have never used tea, coffee, whisky, or tobacco. I want to read up on the subject, so that when I begin again I'll know what to do. Your article was all the literature I had on the subject, and it may have been incomplete in a great many important particulars.

Respectfully yours,
Robert Aitkin.

Chicago, Ill., May 22, 1910.

Dear Sir,—I think you will be interested to learn the experience of my wife, who tried your[Pg 110] fast, with the same results as your wife, over which we are very much delighted.

Allow me to say that it was all done on the quiet, and no one knew of it until it was all over. And then, of course, every one thought she was raving crazy, but she has since shown her friends that it was just the thing to do.

In the first place it appealed to her, and she went into it with faith. She fasted for eleven days, after the second day was never hungry at all, and really began to take nourishment before she was hungry.

The whole thing came out exactly as in your cases and was most interesting. She had temperature the first two days and ate crushed ice. After that, hot or cold water as desired. The tongue was coated very badly and her breath very bad. The tongue cleared very slowly and was quite discouraging, but after a few days was clear again. She lost over ten pounds, all of which has been regained and more, too, and she is gaining all the time. Complexion very clear, and the picture of health. Appetite great, eats everything, no aches or pains of any kind, and, best of all, no constipation, which was what she tried the fast for. She lost no strength to speak of and didn't have to take to bed at all; in fact, did everything about the house as usual.

Everything has been fine now for three weeks, and if the troubles return, she is to fast again and do it right, and will take no nourishment until the tongue clears.

She took internal baths nearly every day, and[Pg 111] was astonished at the results when nothing but water was being taken. While we don't recommend it for every one, it certainly has been a godsend in this case, and I believe because it was done right and with faith that it was just the thing for her. You certainly have one convert, and if this interests you, shall be pleased to know it.

Yours very sincerely,
C. D. F.

Knoxville, Tenn., June 5, 1910.

Dear Sir,—I wish to acknowledge my indebtedness to you for a restoration to such health of body and clarity of mind as I have not known since my sixteenth year, when first I entered the high school. That was twenty years ago.

I read your article, "Starving for Health's Sake," in the Cosmopolitan, and, as you may recollect, asked you for information as to certain books treating of the fast as a cure for disease.

Instead of answering me fully, you referred my case to the Bernarr Macfadden Institution in Chicago, for which I thank you, but I did not go there because I had neither time nor money for that purpose.

Through a local book-dealer I ordered a copy of "Fasting, Hydrotherapy and Exercise," but after two weeks of waiting it failed to arrive, so with your Cosmopolitan article as my only guide and sum total of knowledge as to the fast, I quit eating on May 13 and did not take anything except water until the morning of May 26. Even then I was not hungry, but as I did not care to[Pg 112] remain away from work any longer I broke the fast on the morning of the 26th. I lost thirteen pounds in weight, but was never too weak not to move around. I worked in the office for seven days, and the balance of the time remained at home, basking in the sunshine and reading constantly.

My health and appetite are in such perfect condition I can eat anything without fear of ulterior consequences.

As a result of the fast, I have sloughed off all my impedimenta of disease. Constipation of ten years' standing is gone as if by magic. Piles and resulting pruritis of eight years' tearing torture are nightmares of the past. Bronchitis and eczema of scalp have vanished. Asthma, due to nervous sympathy with the pneumogastric nerve, is no more. Catarrhal deafness, sore throat, intestinal catarrh, and a general neurasthenic condition have left me. Work was never so pleasant. I cannot get enough of physical exercise, it seems; my muscles seem to grow stronger as the exercise proceeds, and my weight is going upward about a pound daily. I am now three pounds heavier than I was before my fast began.

Life was never so beautiful, hope and joy never so green, the future for me and humanity's great movement toward a better day and higher good of existence never seemed so reasonable and

possible of every realization as now, in the full possession of physical health and mental strength which have come back to me.

Heretofore my work has been wrought out in pain.

[Pg 113]

I am through with drugs. I graduated from allopathy long ago, then took up homeopathy and have now discarded it. I have spent over \$500 in the last ten years trying to get well on medicines. These professional quacks bled me for a living and knew not how to cure me. Your article was written in the spirit of wishing to help suffering man. It cost me only thirty cents to use your method, viz.: six feet of rubber tubing to make a siphon to take two enemas daily. For that thirty cents I obtained relief a million-fold more beneficial than from \$500 worth of medicine. Nay more, from your fasting idea I got rid of \$500 worth of poisoning during ten years of medical superstition.

Sincerely yours,
H. E. Hoover.

Northwest Society Archaeological Institute of America

**Washington University, Seattle, Wash.
Nov. 5, 1910.**

Editor Cosmopolitan Magazine.

Am enclosing clipping which shows that prominent men up here in the great Northwest are not afraid to try out certain methods of fighting disease merely because they are thought to be "new" or "faddy" (tho' in truth the fast cure is as old as the Old Testament).

The value of Professor Colvin's fast experience seems to be that he has given to the world[Pg 114] the best method of breaking the fast and getting on to a solid-food diet. Upton Sinclair said the breaking of the fast is the most important part of it, and would be the most dangerous were it not for the great natural food, milk, which tides you over. But he fails to remember there are thousands with whom milk does not agree, sick or well.

Shortly after interview noted in enclosed clipping from Seattle Times, Professor Colvin attempted to begin to break the fast with orange juices and utterly failed. He then tried milk and was made so sick that he had to fast for three more days to get into a condition to break the fast. He then started in with a very light veal broth (not soup, nor tea). He soon got so he could take a cup of it every hour and a half. To get on to solid food he tried a few crackers with the broth, but found too much soda in the crackers and abandoned their use. Finally he hit upon the very thing that fitted the condition of his body, dry whole-wheat bread toasted. This toasted whole-wheat bread he had his cook crush with a rolling pin into a powder and each day mixed more of it with the cup of broth. After this he filled the cup three-fourths full of this toast powder and only poured in as much broth as the dust would absorb, making a solid gruel, which was very appetizing and nourishing (so much so that the professor continues to use it for breakfast food though his fast is closed). Now to this

gruel he added mashed baked potato from time to time (more each time) until he virtually [Pg 115] supplanted the toast dust. From this he went to baked apple, thence to raw eggs, thence to macaroni, thence to pigeon squab, and thence to solid earth.

It seems to me that his discovery of the broth-toast-gruel method is a great discovery. Especially so for those who live in the cities and cannot be sure as to the absolute purity of their milk. Even when the milk diet can be used it does not afford a solution for getting off of a liquid diet on to a solid food basis.

In your July number appears a letter from Mr. Buel of New York in which he says that it would be almost criminal to permit any one advanced in years to enter upon the dangerous folly of the "fast cure." I am enclosing you a clipping from the Oregonian, telling of the fasting experiences of Professor Colvin's friend, Rev. J. E. Fitch. Rev. Fitch is 81 years of age and a year ago took it into his head to out-fast Moses. Holy Writ says that Moses fasted 40 days, and to prove to his congregation that one did not have to be superstitious to believe some of these Old Testament tales, Rev. J. E. Fitch, at the age of 80, fasted fifty days; and instead of losing flesh towards the last part of his fast actually gained in weight. He is as vigorous to-day as he was at 21.

Your Mr. Buel spoke of fasters as cranks and faddists and intimated that your solid citizen would not thus be led astray. Professor Colvin is not a crank but one of our best citizens, being well known both in this country and Europe, and spoken[Pg 116] of as the probable president of the Pan-American University to be located in Porto Rico.

Very respectfully,
Thos. F. Murphy.

**210 Merriman Ave.,
Asheville, N. C., 9/11/10.**

Mr. Upton Sinclair,
Arden, Del.

Dear Sir,—After fasting for ten days I went off for ten days. Then on for seventeen days, during which time I got rid of a long list of troubles, except a cough, for which I underwent examination by a specialist. I found I had tuberculosis. The entire upper right lobe of my lung and about half of the left upper lung being affected. Now I am up here making a very rapid recovery. I consider that the fasts I took were the best things that could have happened for me, since they eliminated a bunch of troubles that are nearly always present with tuberculosis, such as indigestion, sore throat, rheumatism, etc. All of these left me, and I never felt better in my life than since fasting. I do not believe that such a rapid recovery as I am making could be possible had I not fasted. Fasting did not cure the tuberculosis, but it gave me an excellent stomach, with which to fight it, and tuberculosis will always give way to a good stomach. I did not know I had tuberculosis when I started fasting, but I now know, since learning more about the disease, that I had the trouble in an active state more than nine months before I fasted. My cough got very[Pg 117] tame during the fast and very nearly disappeared, but returned as I increased the amount of food I took after

breaking the fast, but at no time did it get as bad as it was previous to the fast. I weighed 172 lbs. in May, when I began my fasting and dropped to 148 lbs., and now weigh 180 lbs. and never felt better in my life. Have but a slight spot of the tuberculosis affection left in my right lung.

While I would not recommend others affected with tuberculosis to fast, I would ask that if you have any letters from consumptives who have fasted I would appreciate a copy.

Roland A. Wilson.

New Zealand, Sept. 10, 1910.

Dear Mr. Sinclair,—Your article "The Truth about Fasting" in August Physical Culture to hand this week has much interested me. The questions you ask at end of article will, I hope, receive many replies, and give much information regarding the fasting cure. I, personally, can supply a considerable amount of just such information as you require, but the fact that I am a druggist in business precludes the giving of such for publication until drugs and I part company. Let me explain. A little under four years ago I came upon a copy of Physical Culture. It interested me and I followed up the reading by subscribing, and obtaining various books—Dewey's, Hazzard's, Carrington's, Desmond's, Eales', Bell's and others. I became quite convinced that about 99 per cent of usual medical treatment was wrong,[Pg 118] and, in fact, actually detrimental, and often death-dealing to those who were in search of health. More and more I felt that I was doing a big injustice to those who applied to me for help, and an accessory in bad practice by the dispensing of physician's prescriptions. Yet I know that, like myself, the great bulk of the doctors and chemists were acting innocently and even conscientiously when recommending drugs and practicing the accepted drug and surgical treatments. The belief that drugs cure disease is so deeply rooted in the average human mind, and the teachings in medical and druggists' colleges so universal, and even thorough, that doctors and druggists can hardly be blamed for holding to their mother-loves.

However, I had an open mind, and a desire to hand out a square deal, and decided to make a practical test of the new teachings that had come my way.

I started by carefully selecting my patients—those who I believed had a fair amount of intelligence, and whose ailments had supplied them with a fairly long course of pain, worry and expense. Being a druggist in business, it would have been a very foolish thing for me to have wholly condemned drugs. And that is one reason why I selected chronics for a start—I was able to use the argument that as drugs had had a long and faithful trial, and had proven valueless in curing, a fast of nine or ten days would be, at least, worth a trial. My first case was a lady about thirty-five years of age.

Complaint, badly swollen, highly inflamed and ulcerated leg, extending from[Pg 119] two inches below knee to one inch above ankle, and more than half way around. She proved a good patient. The leg had been bad with more or less severity for fourteen years, and had been treated by several doctors, druggists, and others. She started on an immediate fast. Within twenty-four hours after fast commenced, the inflammation decreased; by the end of the fourth day it had entirely subsided, and by the end of the eighth day not a vestige of the trouble remained. This fast took place over two years ago—she has held reasonably well to the simple foods I advised, and so far there has been no return of the ailment. Her general health has very considerably improved.

Since then I have treated, perhaps, fifty cases by fasting, and many others by simple dieting. Many complete cures have been effected that ordinary medical methods had entirely failed to benefit. My list comprises many ailments, ranging from one to forty-five years in evidence, while the patients themselves have ranged in age from one year to eighty-five years.

X. —

Hastings, Mich., Sept. 11, 1910.

Editor, the Cosmopolitan.

Every reader of your magazine owes you a vote of thanks for the Upton Sinclair article on fasting.

Mr. Sinclair said, "There are three dangers attending the fast." In my case there were four—the danger of being sent to the Insane Asylum.

[Pg 120]

All my neighbors and relations had the utmost contempt for what they termed "my craziness." But notwithstanding all this, I fasted fourteen days, and stomach trouble, heart trouble, kidney trouble, chronic catarrh, and rheumatism, which for years had made life a burden, are no more. I do not have to tell my friends, at this date, that it was a success, they know it. My family physician has since said that it was probably the best thing I ever did in my life.

I consider myself greatly indebted to you for furnishing me so efficient a remedy, free of cost.

Gratefully yours,
Mrs. E. L. Raymond.

Upton Sinclair.

Dear Sir,—Yes, you may use my name in connection with my experience.

As I did not take a complete fast the first time, I began again Sept. 4th, and fasted thirteen days, when natural hunger returned. Had none of the unpleasant experiences of the first fast. Was able to be on my feet and work more than at any time in years.

Chronic rheumatism had caused sinewy swelling of my knee joints, that in turn had caused numbness of the feet and lower limbs, making it impossible for me to be on my feet. What I have suffered with them from jar of people walking across the room, or brushing against them, cannot be told. The first fast removed all the pain and soreness. The last fast has brought them down to normal or nearly so. I am confident that[Pg 121] I shall soon be able to walk any reasonable distance.

You are certainly entitled to a place among the public benefactors of the age for giving to the people the knowledge you had gained by the fast.

Gratefully yours,
Mrs. E. L. Raymond.

20 Bowdoin St., Boston, Mass.
Aug. 1, 1910.

Dear Sir,—I have just read with much interest your article in Physical Culture and am minded to send you a brief account of my experience, which has been in some respects more full than your own. In speaking thus, I refer to the fact that my fasts, though not of so long duration as many reported, were complete in this: that my blood and tissue had cleaned up, my mouth was sweet, tongue moist, and there were plenty of the digestive fluids and a call for good plain wholesome food, which was slowly eaten and perfectly digested, and my appetite was perfectly satisfied with a very moderate amount.

I suffered severely from indigestion and rheumatism, and made up my mind to try the effect of complete abstinence from food till I was better. I was familiar with the writings of Dr. Dewey and was well convinced that he was correct in his views. I was in my office the morning of Jan. 1st, and the bookkeeper remarked as to how ill I looked. Seven days after that (the first seven days of my fast) I was in again, and he spoke of my greatly improved appearance, said[Pg 122] I looked very much better. He did not know nor did I tell him the reason for the improvement. On the 12th day—the first after I had broken the fast—he said I looked much better, which was also true, but when I gave him an explanation of the reason, he would not believe in it at all.

In none of the four fasts which I have taken have I set any time limit or taken it as a stunt at all, but only have been guided by conditions as they developed. In no instance have I failed, and in no case was food a temptation to me until natural hunger returned. It seems to me an error to attempt to gauge the length of the fast. We ought to be governed by nature's direction. A "wise dog" knows when he needs to fast, and fasts till he wants food. It seems to me when we get to that point of wisdom, to know as much as the dog, we will know enough to go by intelligent needs instead of the clock.

My experience is not in accord with the view expressed in your article as regards weakness of stomach and lack of peristalsis after fasting. It is my experience that after a complete fast any plain food desired can be taken without harm. I do not favor imprudence, of course, but I do not think that there is any good reason for being compelled to take fluid foods unless one desires to. My longest fast was nineteen days.

C. D. Norris.

39 Rue Singer, Paris, France.

Dear Sir,—I read your article in the May Cosmopolitan and was very much impressed with[Pg 123] the ideas you advocated. I had for twenty years been troubled with constipation, which caused colds and grippe, besides making me very sluggish. Being a singer and teacher, these things were great handicaps on my work, so after reading your article I decided to try it. I was in Paris studying singing with Oscar Seagle and Jean de Reszke, and of course I needed to be at my very best all the

time, but I wasn't. I couldn't keep from taking cold, which always knocked me out of a week or two of work. So when my teachers went away for their vacation, I decided to start the fast, and on July 31 I did so. Being a coffee "toper," it made it very hard for me to give up my breakfast cup of strong black coffee, but I did it and the first three or four days I nearly lost my mind. Never experienced anything in my life that required so much will power. However, I stuck to it, but I was very hungry and had a splitting headache for four days, after which it got a little better. Then about the fifth day, as my hunger began to leave me, I began to break out as if I had measles—this kept up for five or six days. To add to that, my mouth and throat became inflamed and very sore, and that didn't cure up until about the twelfth day of the fast. I was exceedingly miserable all these days, but I realized how much I needed something of the kind to get the terrible poison out of my system, so I just held on and drank much water, and walked in the sunshine all I could. My tongue had a thick coat on it and I had a terrible bilious taste in my mouth for twelve days. I believed it would take about[Pg 124] twenty days to fix me up just right, so I was going ahead when I suddenly decided to make a hurried business trip back to Texas; so on the fourteenth day I sailed from Cherbourg without having broken my fast.

I carried a dozen oranges on board with me to make sure. When I began to breathe the salt air I got hungry, so on the fifteenth day I began to eat oranges and kept it up for a day and a half and then tried to get some milk, but could get none that was good, and most of what I got was of the condensed variety. I did the best I could for four days, when my system rebelled and became clogged up and I took another cold as usual. So I decided not to eat another mouthful on that ship, and I kept the fast up until I got to Ft. Worth. Then I went at the matter according to your instructions, and the results were perfect. I took up oranges for two days, then went on the milk diet for two days, then began on the boiled wheat. The results have been highly satisfactory. Going from a cold climate like Paris into a veritable inferno like Texas in summer made it very hard on me, but the wheat diet did everything for me and gave me unusual strength and vigor even in that hot climate where vigor doesn't abound much in hot weather. All my troubles seemed to disappear. I had not sung a tone since I began the first fast in Paris, so I began to practice again, and I never realized such a change in anything. Everything went so easy and all my friends said that they never saw such improvement in a human voice. I have never even desired to taste coffee.[Pg 125]

I am living on wheat, nuts, all kinds of fruit and vegetables, and the result is everything you said it would be. I have completed my business in Texas and will start back to Paris to-day. I am preparing myself for the journey this time. I have a large "thermos" bottle which I have filled with wheat and will carry plenty of fruit and nuts.

I thank you very much for your information along the line of health. You have been a great blessing to me, and I am sure you have been also to thousands of others.

Andrew Hemphill.

Omaha, Neb.

Dear Mr. Sinclair,—I was so fascinated with the story of your fast that I immediately made the experiment for myself, abstaining entirely from food of any kind for five days.

I had no particular ailment which seemed to need the fast cure, but felt impelled to do a little investigating on my own account.

I kept a diary in which I recorded each day's experience, including loss in weight, effect of cold bath, amount of exercise taken, etc. Without going into details, I can simply say I was astonished by the results. While in one respect my experience differed from yours, in that the desire for food did not entirely cease at any time, I was surprised to find how easily it could be controlled after the first day. Since the fast I have kept on drinking large quantities of pure water—resulting in a gain in weight of twelve pounds, increased[Pg 126] digestive powers and a wonderfully improved appetite.

I am frank to say I was never so pleased with, nor so greatly benefited by anything ever previously extracted from a magazine article.

R. E. Wheeler.

**750 Penobscot B'ld'g, Detroit,
Oct. 19, 1910.**

Dear Mr. Sinclair,—Complying with your suggestion, will hurriedly and briefly group my experiences through a fast which I took largely because of your persuasive article on that subject. I absorbed the information you gave as well as I could, and having been a great sufferer for over twenty years with stomach and bowel troubles, began a fast which I continued for nearly eleven days, adhering scrupulously to the program outlined by you, in so far as I could practically do so, except I took only one bath (tepid) daily before retiring and omitted the enemas after the fifth day. Am fifty-seven years of age, powerfully built and athletic in habit and practice. Normal weight around two hundred pounds, height six feet one and one-half inches. Various causes reduced my weight some four years ago to about one hundred and eighty-five pounds, and almost constant non-assimilation of foods prevented my regaining normal weight. Weight an hour previous to my last lunch prior to the fast, one hundred and eighty-six pounds; lost fourteen pounds during the fast, eight of which fell off me the first three days. My[Pg 127] indigestion had for years been accompanied by distressing, persistent constipation. This did not yield until the afternoon of fourth day of fast, when my entire intestinal functions seemed to become normal, and although I had taken no food, solid or liquid, no fruit juices, coffee, tea or milk, absolutely nothing in fast except Detroit River water, hot or cold, as fancy suggested, after the fourth day the bowels inclined to movement at least twice during each twenty-four hours. Lost strength gradually throughout fast, but looked after essentials in my office from six down to three hours the last day. I had no pronounced desire for food from first to last. Tongue remained heavily furred throughout the fast, breath offensive, even to myself. I sat at table at breakfast and evening meals, serving same, but using only a cup or two of hot water as my portion. Voice lost resonancy and timbre, and I finally felt so enervated that I broke the fast—juice of an orange first evening, and of five oranges the second day; of six oranges the third day, during which I also sipped a quart of rich milk, hot. Fourth day ate six oranges, two quarts milk, slice of old bread and about three-fourths pound juicy steak, after which I soon began to eat more than the usual quantity of wholesome food. For over four months had no indigestion, bowels regular and normal.

I am hoping to see my way clear to fast again soon, for am needing a brace physically.... I owe you grateful thanks for inciting me to undertake the remedy.

[Pg 128]

With best wishes for your continued success, usefulness and happiness.

Sincerely,
M. E. Hall.

In my discussion of the question of what to eat, I have referred to the meat diet, and also to the raw-food diet. By way of throwing further light upon the problem, I reprint here two letters, one by a follower of Dr. Salisbury, and the other by a man whom I was instrumental in starting upon raw food. The latter article is reprinted from Physical Culture, by courtesy of Mr. Bernarr Macfadden. The reader may find it difficult to understand how two people can have had such apparently contradictory experiences. I myself, however, have no doubt of the literal truth of their statements, for I know dozens of people who are thriving upon each of these diets. It is to me only a further proof of the fact that our knowledge of this subject is as yet in its infancy, and that all one can do is to experiment, and find out what system best agrees with his own organism.

**504 West Second St.,
Los Angeles, Cal., July 28, 1910.**

Dear Sir,—As you say in the August Physical Culture that you would like to hear the [Pg 129] experiences of fasters, I will tell you of mine. In 1889-1890 I was very sick with catarrh of the stomach and bowels, which developed into consumption of the bowels accompanied by inflammatory rheumatism. On May 1st, 1890, I went to the office of Dr. James H. Salisbury and treated with him for one year. During the first nine months I ate nothing but Salisbury steaks, beginning with one ounce per meal and increasing gradually as I could assimilate it to one pound per meal, and drank a pint of hot water an hour and a half before meals and at bedtime. Salisbury steak, as you probably know, is beef pulp,—round steak with all fat and fibres removed. I dropped weight rapidly, going from 140 pounds to 90 pounds as this loss was diseased flesh. I then gained as rapidly on beef alone and this was good hard flesh. During the next three months he allowed me a slice of toasted bread at two meals daily in addition to the meat. For the past twenty years I have eaten meat three times a day with other foods, consequently have not needed a physician in that time. I have foolish spells occasionally and indulge in fruit, vegetables and cereals, and destroy the proper ratio, viz: 2/3 of meat to 1/3 of other foods, then I begin to get out of shape and this brings me to my fasting experiences,—about eight of them in the last seventeen years and lasting from five to fifteen days according to the time it took for my tongue to clear off. I find that the more hot water I drink the quicker it clears; during the last fast three years ago I drank one quart every two hours[Pg 130] through the day. I got my stomach so clean that the water tasted sweet—this is the test of a clean stomach.

Fasts have benefited me and I recommend them, as few people will live on beef till their blood gets pure; that an exclusive diet of beef will make pure blood I saw demonstrated in New York at Dr.

Salisbury's by microscopic tests of my own blood and that of others. When you are in this condition you can expose yourself as much as you like without danger of taking cold. If people suffering with stomach and intestinal troubles, Bright's disease, diabetes, rheumatism, sciatica, or tuberculosis, would eat nothing but beef pulp and drink hot water before meals they would be cured in nine cases out of ten, as this was Dr. Salisbury's average of cures when they stuck to the treatment. I acknowledge that one gets rid of a lot of diseased tissue while fasting, but not more rapidly than on the beef diet, and the latter has the advantage that one is making good blood all the time. I consider that you are doing a great work in recommending the fast cure, and agree with you that Hamburg steak is not the best food to break a fast with, as it contains $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{3}$ of fat and "animal fat is a lower form of organization, in fact is often a process of degeneration." I have seen several Salisbury patients have slight bilious attacks from eating over-fat beef, but they quickly recovered by eating leaner beef. Beef pulp is the best thing to eat after a fast as it is absorbed quickly into the circulation and I never saw a patient whose stomach was too weak to digest it in small [\[Pg 131\]](#)quantities, well broiled. I believe in dry foods, well masticated,—no slops.

Dr. Salisbury said to me "a man whose food is beef can live in a hole in the ground and be healthy." His last words to me were, "Stick to beef and hot water the rest of your life and nothing but old age will kill you barring accident." I asked him how long he had lived on this diet, he replied, "thirty years."—"Do you expect to die of old age?" "Sure." He died August 23rd, 1905, at the age of eighty-two from the result of an accident. He was a most scientific and successful practitioner; but nearly all physicians, aside from those he cured, called his treatment a farce and a delusion because his teachings if generally followed would put the majority of them out of business. One New York doctor told me while I was on the diet "unless you give up beef and hot water you will not live five years—you will wear your kidneys out." I replied, "you doctors say I am going to die anyway, so I might as well die clean." I immediately increased my hot water from one pint to one quart before each meal and have kept it up ever since. When I began drinking hot water I had a slight kidney and bladder trouble; this has disappeared; the constant flushing has strengthened these organs,—I am now sixty-four.

Cold water before meals is better than none, but is not as good as hot water, as the latter does not chill the stomach or gripe one, and acts as a tonic on the internal organs; is more quickly absorbed and starts perspiration, causing the skin to[\[Pg 132\]](#) share with the kidneys the work of eliminating waste matter. If a person is not very sick he can eat his round steak (after removing the fat) ground without removing the fibre. For a regular Salisbury steak leave the knife loose and clean the grinder frequently.

You have a large contract in trying to force medical men to recognize the fast cure. They even told me, "while we think you are honest, you are mistaken; you did not see Dr. Salisbury perform the cures you think you saw." The Doctor considered me one of his star patients; he said I was as far gone as any man he ever saw cured by the treatment, and that he would rather have three cases of tuberculosis of the lungs than one like mine, my disease being in the last stage.

You can do as you like with this letter. I write simply to strengthen you. Persist, you are on the right track at last. You are no "shallow sensationalist." I like your writings.

Very sincerely,
Jas. Y. Anthony.