

TV: 2 Paths to Fitness

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Physical Culturists Hills and La Lanne Couldn't Be Further Apart in Styles

By JACK GOULD

THE social liability of excessive weight is the concern of John Hills, physical culturist of Channel 4, and Jack La Lanne, Channel 9's consultant on erratic topography. Their styles could not be more different.

Mr. Hills follows the reassuring format that calisthenics are a drag on both spirit and body, and his attitude is one of bemused resignation over the whole idea of setting-up exercises. His twists, dips, and bends are done in studied slow motion, and not a trace of enthusiasm mars his performance.

Even in advertisements for his sponsor Mr. Hills seldom manages more than a wan smile and he does not hesitate to wear a T shirt that gets wrinkled around the middle. All in all, Mr. Hills could be any viewer's husband who got stuck with the job of repairing the profile of the super-market set, which probably explains his popularity.

On the other hand, Mr. La Lanne, who has the better figure, displays a numbing inter-

est in his work. He belongs to the school of the visible biceps and sternly commands his lagging charges to think of first one area and then another.

In addition to calisthenics, Mr. La Lanne is given to fairly intricate similes. On one occasion he suggested that the female physique needed to be firmed up in much the same manner as a truck is reinforced before going on an African safari, a parallel that seemed to be carrying candor a bit far.

Mr. La Lanne sells his own brand of pills, which are guaranteed to provide "vitamin protection all night long." He also inhales, exhales and sings, which is one way to realize it is 9 o'clock in the morning.

Incidentally, the widely publicized Debbie Drake, a young woman who has no need for exercise, is still demonstrating to out-of-town viewers the advantages of beginning with a head start; on yesterday's taped show in Hartford, Conn., her health appeared buoyant.