

¶The secret of happiness in old age.

## I LOVE LIFE AT 70

ON MY 70th birthday the Advertising Club of New York gave me a party. During the previous month I had addressed five conventions, and before that I had made a strenuous 14,000-mile trip of 81 days' duration, during which, without missing an engagement, I had made 108 speeches. I had returned to New York feeling and, so people said, looking younger than when I left home.

At 50 I had not felt young. I recall perfectly the very morning that I sat straight up in bed, startled by the realization that old age was just around the corner. How was I going to spend it? My forebears had been long-lived; but they had had the means to retire gracefully and lead a contented, social life, while leisure interests and I parted company long ago.

So I deliberately set out to combat the ailments of old age—the degenerative diseases which cripple, infect, and weaken both men and women. Twenty years ago the complete physical examination was a novelty; but I had one; the diagnostician and I got to the root of all the old-age warnings that my body had sounded. My dizzy spells were traced

to eye strain; I consulted a progressive oculist. The rheumatic twinges were tracked to infected teeth. They came out. Intestinal poisoning, which makes most of the trouble we have to face from 50 on, I began to fight unremittingly with the help of osteopathy, hydrotherapy, exercise, and diet.

I began to study what food was good for me and what disagreed with me. No doctor can decide this very individual problem for you. You learn for yourself which foods will sustain your strength and which will create the discomfort, however slight, which eventually will weaken your entire digestive tract.

I decided that regular exercise was necessary, and even now, at 70, I still give 10 minutes a day to calisthenics. I follow this light routine: Before rising, while lying flat in bed, I flex certain muscles and joints—my fingers, wrists, elbows, and shoulders; then my toes, ankles, knees and hips. After rising, I do a few simple exercises to flex the neck. These are important for circulation, which affects the sight. Finally, I have three exercises for bending at the waistline and one for rising on

the toes to strengthen the arches of the feet.

I emphasize the importance of these exercises because without them I would have the same difficulty in getting in and out of cars, stepping off curbs, even stumbling and falling, that some of my old friends have.

Long ago I learned that the daily bath in the tub is a severe drain on the strength of an elderly person. I take a tub bath only every other day and a sponge bath on the alternate day.

At home I live like a luxury-loving tabby cat. I do not belong to the large group of women who have become habituated to self-denial and practice it when it is no longer necessary. For me the comforts, little luxuries, the delicacies of life which all women love, are not extravagant but are aids to efficiency and cheerful living. At 70 I outfit my toilet table with those articles which you might expect to find a young matron using, and today I have a clearer, fresher skin than I had at 60.

My philosophy may be all wrong, but I think that life owes me a lot. I don't mean by this that the world owes me a living. It is up to me to earn that—or marry it. I believe, however, that life owes me certain satisfactions and joy, and I can't have these if I am half sick and filled with fear for the

future. I have never been a rich woman. In fact, I have known when the chances of being able to pay the next month's rent seemed pretty dim. But there never was a time when the prospect was hopeless, or when I was afraid to take the next step, however hazardous it seemed; and this was because I had the venturesome spirit which dwells in a healthy body.

At 50, however, I suddenly realized that I had come to the parting of the ways. Not only had my youth gone but my children, who should now be allowed to live their own lives. It was up to me to fill the void left as they married and scattered into little worlds of their own. Happily I had work of absorbing interest. Not every woman is so fortunate, but every woman can have an absorbing hobby; and it matters little whether that hobby is gardening or bridge, travel, music, collecting early American glassware, or conducting a civic league.

The greatest foe to a comfortable and happy old age is selfishness. The woman who talks continuously about her operation or the crick in her back or the indifference of the family physician (who is probably bored to extinction with her complaints about her small

aches and pains) is headed for a lonely, fretful old age. Speaking from very satisfactory experience, I say to all women of 50, begin now to grow old gracefully. Be your age, but be

it rightly. Look your age if you must, but don't let it rub the smile from your lips or the laughter from your eyes.—*Anna S. Richardson, condensed from Physical Culture.*

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## *What Causes Pyorrhoea?*

WE OFTEN meet people who have never suffered from caries and whose teeth are intact, but who nevertheless have lost several teeth and whose remaining teeth are loose. When we press the gum, in such cases, pus flows out along the tooth; sometimes these teeth seem longer than the others because the gum has receded.

The tooth is implanted in a cavity of the bone, called the alveolus, and is attached to the walls of the alveolus by fibrous tissue. In pyorrhoea the tooth is not affected. The disease attacks the fibrous tissue, the bone constituting the alveoli and the gum. Pus forms along the tooth, the fibrous tissue is partly destroyed, the bone is affected, the gum is red and swollen, and when the bone is corroded, leaving the root uncovered, the gum also recedes. This destruction causes the tooth to become loose. When the pus can escape, there is seldom any pain, but when it cannot do so, painful abscesses occur.

Without a doubt, the deposit of tartar behind the lower teeth and the upper molars causes an irritation of the area which renders it susceptible to pyorrhoea.

Pyorrhoea almost always causes digestive disorders; firstly, because the pus is continually being swallowed and, secondly, because mastication is insufficient on account of the looseness of the teeth.

Finally, there is the ever-present danger of general infection of the blood stream which may cause severe and remote damage.

Many forms of rheumatism, foul breath, severe headaches, liver, stomach, and bowel disorders, gastric ulcers and serious heart affections are directly attributable to this insidious disease. If you have the slightest cause to suspect that you are suffering from pyorrhoea, consult your dentist without delay.—*Doctor.*