

# This Generation, at Fifty, Lacks the Stamina of Fathers

William Muldoon, Noted Trainer of Men, and Dr. Dudley A. Sargent Agree That Modern Play Is Killing

Men at any age like to persuade themselves that they are superior in staying powers, either physical or mental, to their forebears at the same age. This is a consummation devoutly to be wished by all persons who would like to see the individual keep stride with the world, which, the optimists say, is always going a little better year by year, but there is a difference of opinion about the matter.

**Y**OU have got hold of a vital topic," said William Muldoon in the gymnasium of the Gedney Farm Hotel just before he went on the floor to direct the exercises of a class of mature men. "It is one that should have wide notoriety, for to thrust it out carefully will work many important changes."

"But any one who starts with the purpose of proving that the old men of to-day are better in any sense than men corresponding in age were twenty-five years ago has not hold of the thing by the wrong end. Nothing is to be gained by deceiving ourselves, however pleasant it may sound to say nice things. Let us tell the truth as we see it." This famous rebuilder of men was born in 1845. At an age when many men most men are thinking of retiring he is making new plans for enlarging the scope of his own hard work. In fact, he is a living demonstration of the positive side of the mooted question. Muldoon is a big man, exhibiting fine muscular development without leanness or fat. His movements are deliberate but finished, mind and body correlate. Excellent as his physique is at 75, it is his head, it is the "cut of his lip" that really proclaims the strong man. And, indeed, whatever hand moulded this compelling face did it in one stroke. Nothing finicky about that sculptor.

"Men of 60, 70 or over better than the men of that age twenty-five years ago. That is absurd. The average man of 50 today is not in physique what his father was at the same age. The age which led up to that period of life was not likely to produce duplicates of the old Romans." **Calls Life Too Easy Now**

**And Weakness Too Common.** "Life has been made too easy for men. Wishy-washy public sentiment palliates their weaknesses, has harmed them. The average man of 50 of to-day—or may be I should say yesterday, for I notice advance since the war due to the war that gives me courage to face to-morrow—the average man of 50 is played out. He has nothing to offer to repay the world for his experience. For from 50 on men ought to begin to pay back. The men of the older generation recognized this debt and paid it. The new ones are mostly insolvent. There are exceptions. We know them. We count them on our fingers. They are too few. The old men who are leaders to-day had beginnings which prepared them for long years of work." Muldoon uttered an ejaculation significant of scorn as he said: "What do these men of 50 know about work? They attribute all their ills to overwork. Sedition is there such a thing. But there's plenty of overplay. "Work," he continued, "never hurt anybody. Too much play, and the wrong kind, kills. In my time what is called work has changed so it is hardly recognizable. Mechanical progress has made this change. With all the aids it provides, 80 per cent of real work has been taken away from the worker. And for the 20 per cent left he hasn't enough physical and mental strength." The athlete smiled and added, as if it were an afterthought: "Then he comes to me suffering from what he calls 'overwork.'" "Speaking in round numbers I have had under me for physical retraining 17,000 men. Invariably, whatever name the doctors give for the cause of their run down condition, their own excuse is 'overwork.' Not 5 per cent of the number had a right to that excuse."

**After Business Pleasures Are What Prove Harmful**

"It isn't the work a man does in business hours that pulls him down. It's what he does after business hours. If I outline the home life of an average man of to-day I guess you'll acknowledge the truth of the picture. He inherits a business, usually, and usually, too, he's bright enough to carry it on successfully if he made his homelife help. "But he doesn't. He doesn't go home after business to spend an hour relaxing in his library, and then dining quietly with his family, taking plenty of time to it and cutting out tobacco at the meal. Then to spend a couple of hours or so with his family at any quiet amusement. This would be sensible and he would go to bed reasonably and wake up normal and refreshed, ready to do some real work."

"Is this anything like what the modern man of family does? No. In the first place he doesn't choose a wife that will give him a family; he picks out a pretty face and dresses the owner of it like a doll in order that other men will envy him and try to take her away from him. If they don't try he ceases to value her. Well, the pat; spend the evening at the theatre after a rich and hasty dinner, and after that at the 'Rounders' or a cabaret show dancing themselves, probably, till they're breathless then a supper and into bed between 2 and 3 o'clock. "The doll goes on making plans of this kind for him. How else is she going to prove that she's his wife? She can stay in bed till noon, a maid massages her, brings her a tempting breakfast; she can pick up energy for the next similar evening. "But it's other wise with the man. He, poor boy, has to get up at 7 and take any kind of breakfast a sleepy servant is willing to do for him. Right away he has to light up a pipe usually offered to try to prove that

strong cigar. His nerves crave the narcotic effect. "Well, what is an effect like this of tobacco? It subdues the nerves; that is, it makes the man subnormal. And that's the man that goes down town to attend to his business. He's a subnormal man. In a short time he's overworked. In fact, he's a neurasthenic case. **Cites Case of One Youth Who Was Victim of Alcohol** "These are the mild ones. I can tell you of others that are not so mild, yet so frequently met with as to be almost types. A fine old lady came to see me the other day to get me to take her son in hand. She told me his history, which was an old story to me. I had to tell her that she had come to the wrong man, for I don't take alcoholics. "The son a man of 35, married, with four children, had been left by his father, a successful self-made man of the old school, in entire charge of a big business. During the war this business had more than quadrupled. Then the founder of it died. His heir came right to New York and began buying whiskey at \$20 a quart until he found that he could buy it by the case for \$140. Then he shut himself up in his hotel room and tended strictly to liquor until the hotel doctors took him in hand. "His mother told me that if her son took all the powders and pills and other things prescribed for him he would be taking medicine every five minutes. She had to laugh herself in spite of her trouble, as she said: 'The doctors give me my own stuff to put him



WILLIAM MULDOON.

Overwork a Myth, Say Physical Culture Experts Who Have Watched Fathers and Sons Grow Old and Die

ing at home, all passive in its nature, and ever shunning anything that suggests personal effort on his part. He wants to be amused, perhaps, to enjoy himself, but insists somebody else should do it. He is perfectly willing to pay for the hiring of talent, but begs so "excused from doing anything himself." "How," says Dr. Sargent, "are we going to get healthy physiques by such tactics?" If Dr. Sargent had his way, he would have the average business man walk, not ride, to and from his business, and when the distance from his home to his office is too great to permit of his walking he would have the man walk the final mile or two, thereby getting the benefit of one of the healthiest of exercises, walking in the open air. He would have the same man walk up and down stairs occasionally, instead of utilizing the escalator and elevator every time they have a flight to travel. He would have them devote a few minutes on rising in the morning to the simplest of athletic exercises. He firmly believes that a fair trial of this would result in a nation of walkers rather than riders, and would develop men who loved athletics for the exercise they afforded, rather than view athletics as a spectacle to be enjoyed, but not to be indulged in. In short, it would result in men who could challenge the best when it came to fitness, good health and fine physique.

**Many Noted Boston Men Are Active Despite Years**

Boston has a few men who share Dr. Sargent's belief. Such men for instance as Dr. Charles W. Elliot, president emeritus of Harvard; Bishop Lawrence, head of the Episcopal Church in eastern Massachusetts; Gen. Charles H. Taylor, publisher of the Boston Globe, and Thomas N. Hart, banker and ex-Mayor of Boston. All these men are firm believers in exercise as a means to perfect health and all enjoy excellent health. Mr. Hart, dean of the group, now in the eighties, maintains walking is the best of exercise.

until his death, which occurred in his seventy-fifth year. Dr. J. R. Buchanan was 85 when he died. Keeley, founder of the "Keeley cure," died at 68. Delancey Floyd-Jones, a soldier and one of a famous family, lived to 78 years. Archbishop Corrigan died at 63. William M. Everts at 82. Benjamin F. Ayer at the age of 78. Rear Admiral John H. Russell died at 70 and Rear Admiral L. P. Lee, U. S. N., at 85.

**Next Generation Under 70.**

**But Facts Are Not Conclusive** A comparison of the necrology of the generation following this one reveals the prevailing death age to be considerably under 70, and while such comparisons are far from being convincing still the impression is that men born in the period of the civil war died at a much earlier age than their forebears.

Of the generation of to-day, using that date as a mean, there are happily many left, and of these the names that come most quickly to mind are those still active in the world's business and, though they have passed the meridian of life by a lustre or so, they remain creators and directors of thought and action.

In such a list appear the names of two who should be counted by right in an earlier generation. One is Joseph Cannon, "Uncle Joe," born in 1836. And the other is John Wanamaker, whose birthday was July 11, 1838.

Mr. Wanamaker at 82 is still the head of his gigantic business affairs in Philadelphia and New York. His day is as busy and varied by as many duties as the youngest assistant manager's could possibly be. He is at his store here or in Philadelphia among the earliest arrivals of his clerks and he attends personally to a large number of letters that have been sorted out of the mail for him. Moreover, he sees buyers, leads conferences wherein he listens to suggestions of policy and gives the deciding vote on them, and whenever he has an hour or less free from appointments he delights to stroll about his great store, studying its various departments and learning at first hand their needs and where they may be enlarged, eliminated or improved.

Henry Clews is one of the youngest old men in Wall Street, but also a survival of a forgotten era—the Jay Gould era. Memories do not hamper him or prevent his being strictly in the atmosphere of to-day, as a listener to his five minute talks uttered spontaneously as occasion prompts them in his Broad street office will agree. Born in Staffordshire, England, eighty years ago, he still looks like an Englishman in spite of his many American years and varied activities, in which he has been author, dry goods merchant, banker and lecturer.

**Edison Breaks Health Laws And Is a Notable Exception**

Thomas Alva Edison, born in the middle West February 11, 1847, is an honored member of this famous generation and as persistently inventive and scientifically curious to-day as when many years ago Paris crowned him as "The Electric King." This wonderful man has broken all his life every prescription for long living, working at the least seventeen hours every day. Going to bed early, which is one of the leading articles in these prescriptions, is one he carries out by frequently going to bed at 6 A. M. after a long, studious night in his laboratory at Orange, Exercise, another rule of health never to be broken without dire results, Edison takes by strolling occasionally through his plant.

The inventor of the phonograph, telephone transmitter, incandescent light and more things of an eric nature than can be easily inventoried is working now with the ardor and ambition of a boy on a delicate little instrument intended to help the spirits on the other side of life in their supposedly honest efforts to communicate with the living. In pursuing what many persons think is a will of the wisep Edison carries out his usual programme of concentrated, well nigh uninterrupted work. He comes, it is true, of a long lived family; his father lived to be 94 and his grandfather passed the hundred mark.

At the office of Chauncey M. Depew in the New York Central Railway office building on Lexington avenue, an office which has the word "chairman" painted on its door, that octogenarian is to be found every business day when he is in town. Of all the "young old" men of his generation, Mr. Depew shows how lightly rest the years when they have been devoted to work of an agreeable kind in which intensive interest drives away worry. A strong political bent and a variety of tastes have lightened life for him, while his own humorous bent fostered on human understanding couldn't fail to keep him young.

**Two Old Young Men Who Disregard Statistics**

John Burroughs and Luther Burbank, famous as naturalist and arboriculturist, are both what the statisticians call old men, but they do not recognize statistics. The discoverer or creator of various spinel and thornless and seedless fruits is the junior of the poet-naturalist by ten years. Both do something every day and do it well. One more instance to glorify the generation of '45 may be pardoned, although nothing new remains to be said of Elihu Root, born in Clinton, N. Y., his youth and early education were what those things have been in the lives of most of his contemporaries. Although he had been admitted to the bar when he came to New York, what he sought then was a clerkship, not the opportunity to practise and incidentally starve while waiting for clients.

Labor, early and late, has been from that time to this his life, and he has never found it drudgery. Secretary of War, Secretary of State, this man's fidelity to clients saw no change when that client was his country. At his office in Nassau street he is to be found every day devoting his high talents in the whole souled and efficient way that has marked his entire career.

It would be impossible to find in the lives of the generation that had reached or passed the allotted age of man in 1895 examples more remarkable than the men enumerated and briefly considered above. Perhaps they would not be found to be surpassed by representatives of any generation since these States joined in a union. But will the generation immediately following them or the generations crowding that one take up "the wondrous tale" and repeat it to the admiration of the children just born?



Four men active in world affairs who belie the general opinion of famous physical trainers that the modern man is past his best efforts at the age of fifty. At left is "Uncle Joe" Cannon, born in 1836, and still a power in Congress; next is John Burroughs, naturalist, born in 1837, active mentally and physically; then there is Thomas A. Edison, whose routine of work and little sleep is unparalleled; at right is Elihu Root, 75 years old, dean of statesmen and authority in international affairs.

to sleep and he drinks whiskey to keep himself awake! "That's a case of inherited big business falling into bad hands that can be duplicated by almost any man's experience. Now, would you put this young man in the class with his father, who made the business originally?"

Here was an opening made to ask Muldoon what he thought of prohibition. He said: "I approve of it, but think that there will be laws made to soften it. The law against the Anti-Saloon League may be considered too drastic. I don't know. There are considerations of personal choice that need to be and will be considered. The worst enemy of drunkenness is public opinion. Make it a crime, a social crime, to be drunk and there won't be many drunken men. We are a nation could take a leaf from the book of France, where it's always been considered disgraceful for a man to be seen under the influence."

"That has been one of the faults of our virtues—refusing to learn from old peoples who have many centuries of experience behind them. We are confident, sometimes a little bombastic, in our attitude toward these social subjects. We refuse to learn, because we say old, effete nations can't teach us anything."

**Men of England and France Prove Themselves in World Affairs**

"It is my opinion that the old men of England and France are in the main better physical specimens than this country can present. You can read the brightness of their intellect, the modernness of their minds in the conferences that have been of international interest. Our younger statesmen have been hard put to keep up with them. The vitality of the British statesman has been recognized for centuries, and it comes from his paying some kind of reasonable obedience to very simple natural laws."

"Nature is a long suffering creditor. She never sends in a bill, but she invariably collects one. Just owe her something for a break in one of her laws. She'll go on patiently lulling you to sleep until you think the debt is outland. Then in a minute down she pounces."

"If you had asked me at the start if the sexagenarians of Great Britain of to-day were equal mentally and physically to the men of the Victorian era, at that age I would have taken a chance and said they were, because of what I know about the steady British temper and his customary obedience to health laws."

"In part our breakdown in this matter comes from not giving these laws attention and in part from our more nervous temperament. But there is no sense in believing that we cannot restrain the latter and learn to observe the former."

"We're a democratic people and we need the expert's view. Parents insist upon a lot of book learning for their children, while taking it for granted that the physical side of their nature will develop itself. Dr. Sargent maintains that the proper corrective is the compulsory physical training of our

young men what physical perfection meant. They lower thought of it before. Exactly as New York itself improves, because it is now the custom to put up solid, everlasting buildings, so New Yorkers will begin at the beginning and build boys up into strong men who will live long enough to repay the country for what it has given them."

"I guess," said Muldoon with a quizzical smile, "you've got some recollection of the leaky old tank that used to occupy the Fifth Avenue end of Bryant Park. Now they have a marble library there that will stand for who knows how many hundred years. The country has got to get rid of the bad, leaky old ways of bringing up boys and put a fine foundation in them before it can have the race of old men it deserves and needs."

**Dr. Dudley A. Sargent an Example Of What Regular Exercise Can Do**

**A**RE American men in their sixties and seventies in better shape today than they were twenty-five years ago? was the question put to Dr. Dudley A. Sargent. "Certainly not," he flashed back. "Why should they be, with by far the larger part of the men of to-day using the automobile, taxi, trolley car or escalator to save themselves steps?"

The noted physical training instructor admitted that you could put your hand on a man here and there to-day whose fine physical condition for one of his advanced years would have a tendency to make the average man envious. Such a man seemingly gives the lie to the statement that the average is lower rather than higher. But Dr. Sargent maintains that these men are the exception that prove the rule, the very attention they attract when on the street by their evident health proves they are the exception. It is the unusual, not the commonplace, that catches the eye.

Dr. Sargent cites the Government experience in the world war, that 33 per cent of the young men called to the colors had to be rejected as unfit, as evidence that the American men are deteriorating, physically speaking. That draft called up the pick of the country, young men between 20 and 30 years of age, yet fully one-third had to be sent home because they lacked the physique that practically every young man of those years should enjoy, and would if he had been given proper physical training.

America runs too much to the brain and too little to the body, according to the Harvard expert's view. Parents insist upon a lot of book learning for their children, while taking it for granted that the physical side of their nature will develop itself. Dr. Sargent maintains that the proper corrective is the compulsory physical training of our

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He makes it a practice to never ride when he can walk. Bishop Lawrence is another who prefers walking to riding, and can be seen any day when his time permits, walking from his home on Commonwealth Avenue down to the doocan house on Beacon Hill. Like Gen. Taylor and Mr. Hart, he banks a whole lot on the delightful walk down Commonwealth Avenue, across the Public Garden and over Boston Common. Dr. Elliot, while a great walker, in spite of his advanced years, admits a fondness for the bicycle. He holds it is better than the limousine, as it combines exercise with the open air, while too often in the machine one is practically shut in. Francis Peabody, prominent Boston lawyer, while somewhat younger than this group, can be fairly classed with them in his love for the open air. His particular hobby is horse-back riding. He is a familiar figure on the streets of the Boston park system.

**What the Records Indicate Among Prominent Men of United States**

In the necrology of the generation covering the birth years from 1815 to 1890, a noticeable fact is the length of days granted to it. Few of the notable men who were still active in 1895 and who said farewell to earth between that year and 1900 were less than 65 at the time of demise, and many of this generation lived beyond their 80th year. Length of days seemed to be the rule with this generation, and the necrological study need not be very deep to prove it. A few instances may be sufficient if they embrace the professions:

Charles A. Dana, noted journalist, died in 1897; he was born in 1819. Junius Henri Brown, a contemporary writer, died at 69; Austin Corbin, born in 1829, died in 1902; Daniel Butterfield, a distinguished soldier, died at 70. Dr. William Henry Draper, at 71; Amos R. Eno, born in 1815, lived to be 81; Charles Henry Adams died at 78; William Henry Appleton, publisher, was born in 1814 and died in 1890; Philip D. Armour, born in 1832, died in 1901; Rear Admiral George E. Belknap, U. S. N., was 75 at his death.

The Catholic Archbishop Fochan died at 75; Thomas Gallaudet lived to be 80; Dr. Richard Judson Gatliff, the inventor, died at 85; Abram S. Hewitt, Mayor of New York, died at 81; Samuel French, publisher, lived to be 80; Senator Ingalls was 67 and Robert G. Ingersoll 66 when they died.

A famous architect, Napoleon Le Brun, kept active to the day of his death, when he was 89 years old; Max Marzok, celebrated in musical annals, died at 76; John Satrian, a painter of the Hudson River school, wielded the brush to 89; Secretary of the Navy Thompson lived to be 91; the Episcopalian Bishop Whipple died at 78; Charles Geoffrey Leland, a legendary literary genius, died when he was 79; Senator Thurman of Ohio lived to be 82.

George Bilas, well known New York banker, was 80 when he died. "Oliver Optic," beloved of boys, whose author he was, wrote