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EUGENE LYONS
Editor

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Miss Ida Tarbell
120 East 19th Street
New York, N. Y.

Dear Miss Tarbell:

May I take the liberty of writing you a rather unconventional letter? If I am overstepping the bounds, I count on your indulgence.

You belong in the most select group on the face of the earth: those who have passed their eightieth birthday, yet retain an active interest in the everyday problems of their fellow-men.

To those of us who are still decades away from 80 and probably will never achieve it, this select group is an object of curiosity, some awe, occasionally even veneration. We wonder what the world looks like from the commanding heights of an octogenarian's vast experience. Does life in that stage hold its drama and beauty and excitement? Does one look forward eagerly to the years ahead? In what way are a man's or woman's interest, ambitions, enthusiasms and values affected by the rich accumulation of years? Does life, indeed, hold something for the octogenarian that younger people miss?

It seems to me that it would not only be deeply interesting, but useful, to attempt an answer to some of these questions. I have therefore screwed up my courage to the point of asking a dozen or so of the world's most distinguished octogenarians (Bernard Shaw, Daniel Frohman, Mrs. Carrie Chapman Catt, Senator Carter Glass, yourself, etc.) to tell our readers, in a brief letter or article, what life holds for the octogenarian.

I should be deeply grateful if you found it possible to write something (five or six hundred words perhaps) on the subject I have tried to indicate.

Cordially yours,

Eugene Lyons
Editor

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