**Old Age**

One feels frightened when one hears people seriously calling one an old man for the first time. This is probably due to old age being the final phase of a man's life. That is why an old man tends to think that liveliness, strength, and youth do not depend on age, but rather on mood and health. Perhaps this is true to a large extent. In fact, it is truth itself. Some people are born old, and others never get old. For such people, grey hair is not evidence of the age of the heart. Indeed, says Pindar, "a graceful, respectful, old age is only the childhood of the immortal." This means that anyone having childhood in one's heart will never get old. Richter says, "old age is like winter. As winter strips off the leaves of the trees around us so that we could see distant areas that were blocked by leaves, so old age strips off our pleasures to broaden our hope of the coming eternity." Thus, the golden age goes ahead of us, rather than follows us.

On the other hand, old age is an expensive school, because it is a storehouse of human experience. The truth is that experience charges high school fees, but it is better than any other school. An old man can be of great benefit to the community through his personal experience, which he could formulate into literary works, biographies, sketches of art, or interesting talks.

Probably, the experience of old people and the vivacity of young people would be the best combination. I do not think that such a combination would be impossible. It depends on the old man himself, who could imagine life as a spring of merriness and pleasure, listen to nature calling us in numberless songs, feel that the banquet of nature is the banquet of love itself, and that life void of love would be trivial for the young and the old alike. Then, an old man would be able to invest the years of his life into enjoying life. Accordingly, old age might be synonymous with youth in such a way that people would look upon it as a form of progressive vividness.