

I am inclined to think that early maturity is on the whole quite as full of pleasurable sensations as youth, though the pleasure is of less intoxicating a nature. The happiness of youth is largely made up of the mere physical delight of high animal spirits; that of maturity lies deeper. It is a fuller time of life, and the delights are largely emotional and intellectual. To every time there is a season, and it is well that youth should be joyous; especially should childhood be so. It seems to me that gaiety and sportiveness are as necessary for the environment of childhood as sunshine is to plant life: they help them to expand. As sings Wordsworth—

"Thou child of joy
Shout round me; let me hear thy
shouts, thou happy shepherd
boy!

Ye blessed creatures, I have heard
the call

Ye to each other make; I see
The heavens laugh with you in
your jubilee;

My heart is at your festival,
My head hath its coronal,
The fulness of your bliss, I feel—
I feel it all.

Oh, evil day! if I were sullen
While the earth itself is adorning
This sweet May-morning
And the children are pulling
On every side,

In a thousand valleys far and
wide,

Fresh flowers; while the sun shines
warm,

And the babe leaps up on his
mother's arm;—

I hear, I hear; with joy I hear!"
And yet Wordsworth impresses
upon us the great truth that the
graver feelings of maturity contain
also true happiness: less joyous,
perhaps, but more sublime.

"The thought of our past years in
me doth breed

Perpetual benediction: not indeed
For that which is most worthy to
be blest;

Delight and liberty, the simple
creed

Of childhood; whether busy or at
rest,

With new-fledged hope still flut-
tering in his breast:

Not for these I raise
The song of thanks and praise.
But for those obstinate question-
ings

Of sense and outward things:
Fallings from us, vanishings,
Blank misgivings of a creature
Moving about in worlds not
realised."

Early maturity has a happiness of
its own, differing in kind, yet in
degree as great—perhaps even
greater than that of childhood and
youth.

But in late maturity—in the
period under discussion, the period
of growing old, there is, I think,
a certain vein of sadness connected
with it from which probably the
other periods are comparatively
free. The peace of age has hardly
come upon us, while the delights of
the intellect are losing their first
freshness. We seem to have learnt
so little; our small achievements
seem so very small by the side of
that vast remnant still remaining
unconquered. With Omar Khay-
yam we feel inclined to lament—

"Myself when young did eagerly
frequent

Doctor and Saint, and heard great
argument

About it and about; but ever-
more

Came out by the same door as in
I went."

Even so great a genius as New-
ton's is said to have been over-