



BANQUETING HALL, EDINBURGH CASTLE.

Old Age Pension.

In your heart of hearts you probably believe that you will round out the allotted span of three score years and ten, and that your declining days will be spent in peace, comfort and independence.

But it is one of life's tragedies that old men—and old women too, for that matter—are as a rule unable to end their days in the comfort and independence which earlier in life they desired and expected.

A professor of Columbia University, New York, recently made an investigation into the financial condition of men of advanced ages. He found that of men living at the age of sixty-five only three per cent. are self-supporting. These figures agree with results secured by similar investigations in other parts of the world, so that they may be taken as substantially correct.

So then, out of every hundred men aged sixty-five, ninety-seven are dependent for their means of subsistence, either in whole or in part, upon relatives, friends or public charity.

Yet every one of the ninety-seven thought in his younger years that when his productive period was over he would have a snug competence laid by which would carry him in comfort to the end of his days!

During his productive years, say from twenty-five to fifty-five or sixty, the average man has the opportunity to lay up sufficient store to take care of himself when advancing age saps his energies. The main reason why a man fails to make this provision is procrastination, born of thoughtlessness. There are so many present pleasures calling to him to lay out his money, and old age seems so far away, that he keeps putting off and putting off.

Then one day he wakes up to the realization that he is past his prime. Old age has crept stealthily upon him like a thief in the night. His productive power is impaired. Soon it is gone altogether, and he is left dependent, supported in an unsatisfying existence by the bounty, often the grudging bounty of others.

And even those who make honest and apparently adequate provision during the fat years of youth and vigour for the lean years of old age, are liable to find that all their precautions have been in vain. Investments may turn out badly, the savings of a lifetime may be sunk in some financial wreck, and the bleak prospect of indigent and even poverty-stricken old age may open up before the most deserving.

From the above considerations, it is obvious that some method is desirable which will in the