

You have lived your life in contact,—shall I say, in communion with nature, with humanity, with yourself, with literature. What from your experiences have you culled and given in charge to memory? The traveller Niebuhr, in his last days, days of old age and of blindness, spoke often of seeing again, returning to him in the loneliness of his wakeful nights, the solemn splendours of his oriental vigils, when in the black-blue depths of Syrian skies all the lamps of God were lighted. What have you read in the book of nature? What beauty of sky, or meadow, or forest, or river, or ocean, what forms or grace or hues of loveliness, returning from by-gone experiences, will cheer your hours of decay? In some aspects Milton's Paradise Lost might be called "Recollections of a Blind Old Man." What did he recall of the scenes through which he had wandered in his youth? How many recollections of calm summer evenings are blended in this delightful passage from the fourth Book!

Now came still evening on, and twilight gray  
 Had in her sober livery all things clad;  
 Silence accompanied; for beast and bird  
 They to their grassy couch, these to their nests  
 Were slunk, all but the wakeful nightingale,  
 She all night long her amorous descant sung,  
 Silence was pleased; how glowed the firmament  
 With living sapphires: Hesperus, that led  
 The starry host rode brightest, till the moon,  
 Rising in clouded majesty, at length,  
 Apparent queen, unveiled her peerless light,  
 And o'er the dark her silver mantle threw.

If you have not begun to do so, lose not another moment, but search as for hidden treasure for the inexhaustible beauty of the world into which you have had the privilege to be born. If you have not seen it, look for it and you will find it, for your eyes will find their sight, and your starved sense of beauty will expand and develop, until you know what Wordsworth felt, when he said,

To me the meanest flower that blows can give  
 Thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears.

You have lived in the world of men and women. You have mingled with your fellows. You have marked their actions. You have read their character. Do you sum them up as Byron does?