

The need for suitable housing for retired people is bringing about action to supply the demand. In addition to apartments and houses supplied by private builders, there is a slowly growing supply in some cities of public low-rental housing, co-operatives, and rental housing sponsored by non-profit groups.

The third item on the "must attend to" list is health. Even if a fine disregard for common sense in physical care has marked your pilgrimage so far, retirement is a milestone where an attempt should be made to balance the books.

It would be foolish to expect to be without some of the infirmities that come with the passing years, and it is folly to deny them. One's hair turns grey or disappears; one's walking gait changes; one is inclined to develop round shoulders; one has to take care to eat proper food and to get sufficient exercise.

Few people today would care to resort to the prescription for old age given in a book entitled *Old Settlers' Remedies*, compiled by Marion Robertson for the Historical Society at Barrington, Nova Scotia. It says: "Take tar-water morning and evening. Or, decoction of nettles: either of these will probably renew their strength for some years."

Everyone, young or old, has limitations within which he must live. Even the greatest of athletes cannot flout with impunity his own physical limitations without paying the price.

Family and friends

A man's family should become involved early in his retirement planning, not only because of their affectionate interest but because the plans he makes concern them. They have a stake in the success of his efforts.

There should be agreement between husband and wife on what they expect retired life to hold for them, and what they are going to do to prepare for it. Give and take, mutual adjustment, are as much a part of retirement years as they were of the honeymoon months.

Friendships should be maintained. Men and women are not built to function alone. They need contact with other people, the feeling that they matter, that they like and are liked.

The test for friendship is similarity of interests. Older people can have friendships with younger people, to the great profit of both, if they are genuinely interested in younger people, their hopes, fears, and activities.

But a person must remain an individual. He does not wish to become only a statistic upon his retirement, or an anonymous member of a class called "aged". Success in his job and the winning of status symbols were enough to tide him over his active adult years, but these props to his ego are now removed. It is futile to tell him when presenting him with the gold watch that he has done his share of the world's work and is now entitled to rest. He wants still to be useful and to feel

important; he feels the need for a sense of personal worth.

These he expects to find in his community, but communities differ greatly as to the opportunities they provide and the services they give. Public support is gradually increasing, not for the nursery school type of service — which the retired person does not want — but for friendly involvement in community life and provision of centres for meetings and activities.

Churches, synagogues, and other religious institutions are in ideal position to participate in this kind-hearted work because of their beliefs, their authority in their communities, and their resources of willing workers. A church, a young people's society, a service club or a recreation club may provide facilities, help in planning, suggest projects, assist in transportation, and join with groups interested in crafts.

If there is not a centre of activity for retired people, one may be started with the co-operation of a church, a school board, a service club, or by getting the editor of the local newspaper interested.

Don't let go

The vital thing for a retiring person is not to let go. Life consists in movement. In a world that moves as fast as ours, no one can keep his balance if he stands still. His life must have direction and purpose.

Activity as a primary human need is basic to the retired person just as it is to the youth leaving high school. Both need activity that will give them a feeling of adequacy, accomplishment, and usefulness.

Retirement is a time to take up new and useful occupations adapted to one's capabilities. A slack existence is the opposite of aliveness, and it contributes nothing to our continued need for dignity.

By the time they reach retirement age people have coped with many other situations requiring adjustment: entering and leaving school, the first job, marriage, having and raising children, and departure of the children. Retirement is just another occasion requiring us to adapt ourselves to a new place in the social scheme. Every part of life has its own advantages and disadvantages. Each has its qualities and conditions to be met and adjusted to.

The way to answer "What Then?" with assurance is to start now to notice things having to do with retirement and to find the answers to problems before they start nagging you.

No one need feel apprehensively sorry for himself as he steps out toward his second prime of life. Almost nothing can happen to him that can rival the hardships of body or mind that somehow he managed to live through in his earlier years.

Now, with his developed power of judgment untrammelled by the passion that often afflicts youth, he has the opportunity to display his dynamic maturity, to continue to live meaningfully, and to embrace what can be a most satisfying life.