

- 94 Do not will anything beyond your power: there is a bad falseness in those who will beyond their power.
Especially when they will great things! For they awaken distrust in great things, these subtle false-coiners and stageplayers:—
—Until at last they are false towards themselves, squint-eyed, whited cankers, glossed over with strong words, parade virtues and brilliant false deeds.
Nietzsche, *Thus Spake Zarathustra*, IV, 73
- 95 If my reader can succeed in abstracting from all conceptual interpretation and lapse back into his immediate sensible life at this very moment, he will find it to be what someone has called a big blooming buzzing confusion, as free from contradiction in its 'much-at-onceness' as it is all alive and evidently there.
William James, *Some Problems of Philosophy*, IV
- 96 Who can decide offhand which is absolutely better, to live or to understand life? We must do both alternately, and a man can no more limit himself to either than a pair of scissors can cut with a single one of its blades.
William James, *Some Problems of Philosophy*, IV
- 97 Men are not gentle, friendly creatures wishing for love, who simply defend themselves if they are attacked, but . . . a powerful measure of desire for aggression has to be reckoned as part of their instinctual endowment. The result is that their neighbour is to them not only a possible helper or sexual object, but also a temptation to them to gratify their aggressiveness on him, to exploit his capacity for work without recompense, to use him sexually without his consent, to seize his possessions, to humiliate him, to cause him pain, to torture and kill him. *Homo homini lupus*; who has the courage to dispute it in the face of all the evidence in his own life and in history?
Freud, *Civilization and Its Discontents*, V
- 98 Mankind likes to think in terms of extreme opposites. It is given to formulating its beliefs in terms of *Either-Ors*, between which it recognizes no intermediate possibilities. When forced to recognize that the extremes cannot be acted upon, it is still inclined to hold that they are all right in theory but that when it comes to practical matters circumstances compel us to compromise.
Dewey, *Experience and Education*, I
- 99 Happiness is the only sanction of life; where happiness fails, existence remains a mad and lamentable experiment.
Santayana, *Life of Reason*, I, 10
- 100 That life is worth living is the most necessary of assumptions and, were it not assumed, the most impossible of conclusions.
Santayana, *Life of Reason*, I, 10
- 101 Between the laughing and the weeping philosopher there is no opposition: *the same facts* that make one laugh make one weep. No whole-hearted man, no sane art, can be limited to either mood.
Santayana, *Persons and Places*, X
- 102 Nothing can be meaner than the anxiety to live on, to live on anyhow and in any shape; a spirit with any honour is not willing to live except in its own way, and a spirit with any wisdom is not over-eager to live at all.
Santayana, *Winds of Doctrine*, I

1.3 | *The Ages of Man*

YOUNG AND OLD

The quotations assembled here fall into two groups; on the one hand, statements about the general course of human life from birth

to death—its various stages or periods and its developmental pattern; on the other hand, considerations of the differences be-

tween youth and age—the advantages and disadvantages of each, as well as the contrasts and conflicts between them.

Different writers enumerate and characterize the stages of human life differently, but they all appear to agree about the general pattern of human development—its cycle of growth and decline. Each of the main periods of human life has its defenders and its detractors—those who praise the innocence, exuberance, and joy of infancy and childhood and those who condemn the savagery and self-indulgence of the young;

those who admire the full-bloom of human maturity, the calm of old age, the wisdom gained with years; and those who paint the opposite picture of crotchety and crabbed inflexibility in the aged, verging on the frailties and ineptitudes of the senile. A few quotations express the view that the best of human life lies in the middle years between youth and age.

Quotations on other aspects of the varying relationships between the young and the old will be found in Section 2.2 ON PARENTS AND CHILDREN.

1 For all our days are passed away in thy wrath: we spend our years as a tale that is told.

The days of our years are three-score years and ten; and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years, yet is their strength labour and sorrow; for it is soon cut off, and we fly away.

Psalm 90:9-10

2 Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth; and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thine heart, and in the sight of thine eyes: but know thou, that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment.

Therefore remove sorrow from thy heart, and put away evil from thy flesh: for childhood and youth are vanity.

Ecclesiastes 11:9-10

3 Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them;

While the sun, or the light, or the moon, or the stars, be not darkened, nor the clouds return after the rain:

In the day when the keepers of the house shall tremble, and the strong men shall bow themselves, and the grinders cease because they are few, and those that look out of the windows be darkened.

And the doors shall be shut in the streets, when the sound of the grinding is low, and he shall rise up at the voice of the bird, and all the daughters of musick shall be brought low;

Also when they shall be afraid of that which is high, and fears shall be in the way, and the almond tree shall flourish, and the grasshopper shall be a burden, and desire shall fail: because man goeth to his long home, and the mourners go about the streets:

Or ever the silver cord be loosed, or the golden

bowl be broken, or the pitcher be broken at the fountain, or the wheel broken at the cistern.

Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it.

Ecclesiastes 12:1-7

4 *Priam.* For a young man all is decorous when he is cut down in battle and torn with the sharp bronze, and lies there dead, and though dead still all that shows about him is beautiful;

but when an old man is dead and down, and the dogs mutilate

the grey head and the grey beard and the parts that are secret,

this, for all sad mortality, is the sight most pitiful.

Homer, Iliad, XXII, 71

5 *Penelope.* Men grow old soon in hardship.

Homer, Odyssey, XIX, 361

6 *Odysseus.* "My strange one, must you again, and even now, urge me to talk? Here is a plodding tale; no charm in it, no relish in the telling. Teirésias told me I must take an oar and trudge the mainland, going from town to town,

until I discover men who have never known the salt blue sea, nor flavor of salt meat—strangers to painted prows, to watercraft and oars like wings, dipping across the water.

The moment of revelation he foretold was this, for you may share the prophecy: some traveller falling in with me will say:

'A winnowing fan, that on your shoulder, sir?'

There I must plant my oar, on the very spot,

with burnt offerings to Poseidon of the Waters: a ram, a bull, a great buck boar. Thereafter

when I come home again, I am to slay
full hekatombs to the gods who own broad
heaven,
one by one.

Then death will drift upon me
from seaward, mild as air, mild as your hand,
in my well-tended weariness of age,
contented folk around me on our island.
He said all this must come."

Penélopê said:
"If by the gods' grace age at least is kind,
we have that promise—trials will end in peace."
Homer, *Odyssey*, XXIII, 264

- 7 *Chorus*. Since the young vigor that urges
inward to the heart
is frail as age, no warcraft yet perfect,
while beyond age, leaf
withered, man goes three footed
no stronger than a child is,
a dream that falters in daylight.
Aeschylus, *Agamemnon*, 76
- 8 *Chorus*. Though he has watched a decent age pass
by,
A man will sometimes still desire the world.
I swear I see no wisdom in that man.
The endless hours pile up a drift of pain
More unrelieved each day; and as for pleasure,
When he is sunken in excessive age,
You will not see his pleasure anywhere.
The last attendant is the same for all,
Old men and young alike, as in its season
Man's heritage of underworld appears:
There being then no epithalamion,
No music and no dance. Death is the finish.
Sophocles, *Oedipus at Colonus*, 1211
- 9 *Chorus*. The leathery follies of his youth once over,
What trouble is beyond the range of man?
What heavy burden will he not endure?
Jealousy, faction, quarreling, and battle—
The bloodiness of war, the grief of war.
And in the end he comes to strengthless age,
Abhorred by all men, without company,
Unfriended in that uttermost twilight
Where he must live with every bitter thing.
Sophocles, *Oedipus at Colonus*, 1230
- 10 *Deianira*. I see her youth is coming to full bloom
while mine is fading. The eyes of men love to
pluck
the blossoms; from the faded flowers they turn
away.
Sophocles, *Women of Trachis*, 547
- 11 Growing bodies have the most innate heat; they
therefore require the most food, for otherwise their
bodies are wasted. In old persons the heat is fee-
ble, and therefore they require little fuel, as it

were, to the flame, for it would be extinguished by
much. On this account, also, fevers in old persons
are not equally acute, because their bodies are
cold.

Hippocrates, *Aphorisms*, I, 14

- 12 Old people, on the whole, have fewer complaints
than young; but those chronic diseases which do
befall them generally never leave them.

Hippocrates, *Aphorisms*, II, 39

- 13 I [Socrates] replied: There is nothing which for
my part I like better, Cephalus, than conversing
with aged men; for I regard them as travellers
who have gone a journey which I too may have to
go, and of whom I ought to enquire, whether the
way is smooth and easy, or rugged and difficult.
And this is a question which I should like to ask of
you who have arrived at that time which the poets
call the "threshold of old age"—Is life harder to-
wards the end, or what report do you give of it?

I will tell you, Socrates, he said, what my own
feeling is. Men of my age flock together; we are
birds of a feather, as the old proverb says; and at
our meetings the tale of my acquaintance com-
monly is—I cannot eat, I cannot drink; the plea-
sures of youth and love are fled away: there was a
good time once, but now that is gone, and life is
no longer life. Some complain of the slights which
are put upon them by relations, and they will tell
you sadly of how many evils their old age is the
cause. But to me, Socrates, these complainers
seem to blame that which is not really in fault.
For if old age were the cause, I too being old, and
every other old man, would have felt as they do.
But this is not my own experience, nor that of
others whom I have known. How well I remember
the aged poet Sophocles, when in answer to the
question, How does love suit with age, Sopho-
cles—arc you still the man you were? Peace, he
replied; most gladly have I escaped the thing of
which you speak; I feel as if I had escaped from a
mad and furious master. His words have often oc-
curred to my mind since, and they seem as good
to me now as at the time when he uttered them.
For certainly old age has a great sense of calm
and freedom; when the passions relax their hold,
then, as Sophocles says, we are freed from the
grasp not of one mad master only, but of many.
The truth is, Socrates, that these regrets, and also
the complaints about relations, are to be attribut-
ed to the same cause, which is not old age, but
men's characters and tempers; for he who is of a
calm and happy nature will hardly feel the pres-
sure of age, but to him who is of an opposite dispo-
sition youth and age are equally a burden.

Plato, *Republic*, I, 328B

- 14 *Socrates*. In youth good men often appear to be
simple, and are easily practised upon by the dis-

honest, because they have no examples of what evil is in their own souls.

Plato, *Republic*, III, 409A

- 15 *Athenian Stranger*. Where old men have no shame, there young men will most certainly be devoid of reverence. The best way of training the young is to train yourself at the same time; not to admonish them, but to be always carrying out your own admonitions in practice.

Plato, *Laws*, V, 729A

- 16 A young man is not a proper hearer of lectures on political science; for he is inexperienced in the actions that occur in life, but its discussions start from these and are about these; and further, since he tends to follow his passions, his study will be vain and unprofitable, because the end aimed at is not knowledge but action. And it makes no difference whether he is young in years or youthful in character; the defect does not depend on time, but on his living, and pursuing each successive object, as passion directs. For to such persons, as to the incontinent, knowledge brings no profit; but to those who desire and act in accordance with a rational principle knowledge about such matters will be of great benefit.

Aristotle, *Ethics*, 1095^a2

- 17 The friendship of young people seems to aim at pleasure; for they live under the guidance of emotion, and pursue above all what is pleasant to themselves and what is immediately before them. . . . This is why they quickly become friends and quickly cease to be so; their friendship changes with the object that is found pleasant, and such pleasure alters quickly. Young people are amorous too; for the greater part of the friendship of love depends on emotion and aims at pleasure; this is why they fall in love and quickly fall out of love, changing often within a single day. But these people do wish to spend their days and lives together; for it is thus that they attain the purpose of their friendship.

Aristotle, *Ethics*, 1156^a32

- 18 Young men have strong passions, and tend to gratify them indiscriminately. Of the bodily desires, it is the sexual by which they are most swayed and in which they show absence of self-control. They are changeable and fickle in their desires, which are violent while they last, but quickly over: their impulses are keen but not deep-rooted, and are like sick people's attacks of hunger and thirst. They are hot-tempered, and quick-tempered, and apt to give way to their anger; bad temper often gets the better of them, for owing to their love of honour they cannot bear being slighted, and are indignant if they imagine themselves unfairly treated. While they love honour, they love victory still more; for youth is eager for superiority over

others, and victory is one form of this. They love both more than they love money, which indeed they love very little, not having yet learnt what it means to be without it. . . . They look at the good side rather than the bad, not having yet witnessed many instances of wickedness. They trust others readily, because they have not yet often been cheated. They are sanguine; nature warms their blood as though with excess of wine; and besides that, they have as yet met with few disappointments. Their lives are mainly spent not in memory but in expectation; for expectation refers to the future, memory to the past, and youth has a long future before it and a short past behind it: on the first day of one's life one has nothing at all to remember, and can only look forward. They are easily cheated, owing to the sanguine disposition just mentioned. Their hot tempers and hopeful dispositions make them more courageous than older men are; the hot temper prevents fear, and the hopeful disposition creates confidence; we cannot feel fear so long as we are feeling angry, and any expectation of good makes us confident. They are shy, accepting the rules of society in which they have been trained, and not yet believing in any other standard of honour. They have exalted notions, because they have not yet been humbled by life or learnt its necessary limitations; moreover, their hopeful disposition makes them think themselves equal to great things—and that means having exalted notions. They would always rather do noble deeds than useful ones: their lives are regulated more by moral feeling than by reasoning; and whereas reasoning leads us to choose what is useful, moral goodness leads us to choose what is noble. They are fonder of their friends, intimates, and companions than older men are, because they like spending their days in the company of others, and have not yet come to value either their friends or anything else by their usefulness to themselves. All their mistakes are in the direction of doing things excessively and vehemently. They disobey Chilon's precept by overdoing everything; they love too much and hate too much, and the same thing with everything else. They think they know everything, and are always quite sure about it; this, in fact, is why they overdo everything. If they do wrong to others, it is because they mean to insult them, not to do them actual harm. They are ready to pity others, because they think every one an honest man, or anyhow better than he is: they judge their neighbour by their own harmless natures, and so cannot think he deserves to be treated in that way. They are fond of fun and therefore witty, wit being well-bred insolence.

Aristotle, *Rhetoric*, 1389^a3

- 19 Elderly Men . . . have lived many years; they have often been taken in, and often made mistakes; and life on the whole is a bad business. The

result is that they are sure about nothing and *under-do* everything. They 'think', but they never 'know'; and because of their hesitation they always add a 'possibly' or a 'perhaps', putting everything this way and nothing positively. They are cynical; that is, they tend to put the worse construction on everything. Further, their experience makes them distrustful and therefore suspicious of evil. Consequently they neither love warmly nor hate bitterly, but . . . love as though they will some day hate and hate as though they will some day love. They are small-minded, because they have been humbled by life: their desires are set upon nothing more exalted or unusual than what will help them to keep alive. They are not generous, because money is one of the things they must have, and at the same time their experience has taught them how hard it is to get and how easy to lose. They are cowardly, and are always anticipating danger; unlike that of the young, who are warm-blooded, their temperament is chilly; old age has paved the way for cowardice; fear is, in fact, a form of chill. They love life; and all the more when their last day has come. . . . They are too fond of themselves; this is one form that small-mindedness takes. Because of this, they guide their lives too much by considerations of what is useful and too little by what is noble—for the useful is what is good for oneself, and the noble what is good absolutely. They are not shy, but shameless rather; caring less for what is noble than for what is useful, they feel contempt for what people may think of them. They lack confidence in the future; partly through experience—for most things go wrong, or anyhow turn out worse than one expects; and partly because of their cowardice. They live by memory rather than by hope; for what is left to them of life is but little as compared with the long past; and hope is of the future, memory of the past. This, again, is the cause of their loquacity; they are continually talking of the past, because they enjoy remembering it. Their fits of anger are sudden but feeble. Their sensual passions have either altogether gone or have lost their vigour: consequently they do not feel their passions much, and their actions are inspired less by what they do feel than by the love of gain. Hence men at this time of life are often supposed to have a self-controlled character; the fact is that their passions have slackened, and they are slaves to the love of gain. They guide their lives by reasoning more than by moral feeling; reasoning being directed to utility and moral feeling to moral goodness. If they wrong others, they mean to injure them, not to insult them. Old men may feel pity, as well as young men, but not for the same reason. Young men feel it out of kindness; old men out of weakness, imagining that anything that befalls any one else might easily happen to them. . . . Hence they are querulous, and not disposed to jesting or laughter—the love of laughter being the very opposite of querulousness.

Aristotle, *Rhetoric*, 1389^b13

20 As for Men in their Prime, clearly we shall find that they have a character between that of the young and that of the old, free from the extremes of either. They have neither that excess of confidence which amounts to rashness, nor too much timidity, but the right amount of each. They neither trust everybody nor distrust everybody, but judge people correctly. Their lives will be guided not by the sole consideration either of what is noble or of what is useful, but by both; neither by parsimony nor by prodigality, but by what is fit and proper. So, too, in regard to anger and desire; they will be brave as well as temperate, and temperate as well as brave; these virtues are divided between the young and the old; the young are brave but intemperate, the old temperate but cowardly. To put it generally, all the valuable qualities that youth and age divide between them are united in the prime of life, while all their excesses or defects are replaced by moderation and fitness. The body is in its prime from thirty to five-and-thirty; the mind about forty-nine.

Aristotle, *Rhetoric*, 1390^a28

21 *Cato*. The great affairs of life are not performed by physical strength, or activity, or nimbleness of body, but by deliberation, character, expression of opinion. Of these old age is not only not deprived, but, as a rule, has them in a greater degree.

Cicero, *Old Age*, VI

22 *Cato*. The course of life is fixed, and nature admits of its being run but in one way, and only once; and to each part of our life there is something specially seasonable; so that the feebleness of children, as well as the high spirit of youth, the soberness of maturer years, and the ripe wisdom of old age—all have a certain natural advantage which should be secured in its proper season.

Cicero, *Old Age*, X

23 *Cato*. The fact is that old age is respectable just as long as it asserts itself, maintains its proper rights, and is not enslaved to any one. For as I admire a young man who has something of the old man in him, so do I an old one who has something of a young man. The man who aims at this may possibly become old in body—in mind he never will.

Cicero, *Old Age*, XI

24 "Perhaps you may of Priam's fate enquire.
He, when he saw his regal town on fire,
His ruin'd palace, and his ent'ring foes,
On ev'ry side inevitable woes,
In arms, disus'd, invests his limbs, decay'd,
Like them, with age; a late and useless aid.
His feeble shoulders scarce the weight sustain;
Loaded, not arm'd, he creeps along with pain,
Despairing of success, ambitious to be slain!
Uncover'd but by heav'n, there stood in view
An altar; near the hearth a laurel grew,

- Dodder'd with age, whose boughs encompass
round
The household gods, and shade the holy ground.
Here Hecuba, with all her helpless train
Of dames, for shelter sought, but sought in vain.
Driv'n like a flock of doves along the sky,
Their images they hug, and to their altars fly.
The Queen, when she beheld her trembling lord,
And hanging by his side a heavy sword,
'What rage,' she cried, 'has seiz'd my husband's
mind?
What arms are these, and to what use design'd?
These times want other aids! Were Hector here,
Ev'n Hector now in vain, like Priam, would ap-
pear.
With us, one common shelter thou shalt find,
Or in one common fate with us be join'd.'
She said, and with a last salute embrac'd
The poor old man, and by the laurel plac'd.
Virgil, *Aeneid*, II
- 25 We should cherish old age and enjoy it. It is full of pleasure if you know how to use it. Fruit tastes most delicious just when its season is ending. The charms of youth are at their greatest at the time of its passing. It is the final glass which pleases the inveterate drinker, the one that sets the crowning touch on his intoxication and sends him off into oblivion. Every pleasure defers till its last its greatest delights. The time of life which offers the greatest delight is the age that sees the downward movement—not the steep decline—already begun; and in my opinion even the age that stands on the brink has pleasures of its own—or else the very fact of not experiencing the want of any pleasures takes their place. How nice it is to have outworn one's desires and left them behind!
Seneca, *Letters to Lucilius*, 12
- 26 At the same time came the disciples unto Jesus, saying, Who is the greatest in the kingdom of Heaven?
And Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them,
And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.
Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven.
And whoso shall receive one such little child in my name receiveth me.
But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea.
Matthew 18:1-6
- 27 Verily, verily, I say unto thee, When thou wast young, thou girdest thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldest: but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall
gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldest not.
John 21:18
- 28 How are you desirous at the same time to live to old age, and at the same time not to see the death of any person whom you love?
Epictetus, *Discourses*, III, 24
- 29 The innocence of children is in the helplessness of their bodies rather than any quality in their minds. I have myself seen a small baby jealous; it was too young to speak, but it was livid with anger as it watched another infant at the breast.
There is nothing unusual in this. Mothers and nurses will tell you that they have their own way of curing these fits of jealousy. But at any rate it is an odd kind of innocence when a baby cannot bear that another—in great need, since upon that one food his very life depends—should share the milk that flows in such abundance. These childish tempers are borne with lightly, not because they are not faults, or only small faults; but because they will pass with the years. This is clearly so: for though we bear with them now, the same things would not be tolerated in an older person.
Augustine, *Confessions*, I, 7
- 30 Lord, I do not remember living this age of my infancy; I must take the word of others about it and can only conjecture how I spent it—even if with a fair amount of certainty—from watching others now in the same stage. I am loth, indeed, to count it as part of the life I live in this world. For it is buried in the darkness of the forgotten as completely as the period earlier still that I spent in my mother's womb.
Augustine, *Confessions*, I, 7
- 31 Such is God's mercy towards the vessels of mercy which He has prepared for glory that even the first age of man, that is, infancy, which submits without any resistance to the flesh, and which has not yet understanding enough to undertake this warfare, and therefore yields to almost every vicious pleasure (because though this age has the power of speech, and may therefore seem to have passed infancy, the mind is still too weak to comprehend the commandment), yet if either of these ages has received the sacraments of the Mediator, then, although the present life be immediately brought to an end, the child having been translated from the power of darkness to the kingdom of Christ, shall not only be saved from eternal punishments, but shall not even suffer purgatorial torments after death. For spiritual regeneration of itself suffices to prevent any evil consequences resulting after death from the connection with death which carnal generation forms. But when we reach that age which can now comprehend the commandment, and submit to the dominion of law, we must declare war upon vices and wage

this war keenly, lest we be landed in damnable sins. And if vices have not gathered strength, by habitual victory they are more easily overcome and subdued; but if they have been used to conquer and rule, it is only with difficulty and labour they are mastered.

Augustine, *City of God*, XXI, 16

- 32 Few indeed are they who are so happy as to have passed their youth without committing any damnable sins, either by dissolute or violent conduct, or by following some godless and unlawful opinions.

Augustine, *City of God*, XXI, 16

- 33 Youth is a cause of hope for three reasons. . . . And these three reasons may be gathered from the three conditions of the good which is the object of hope—namely, that it is future, arduous and possible. . . . For youth has much of the future before it, and little of the past; and therefore since memory is of the past, and hope of the future, it has little to remember and lives very much in hope. Again, youths, on account of the heat of their nature, are full of spirit, so that their heart expands, and it is owing to the heart being expanded that one tends to that which is arduous; therefore youths are spirited and hopeful. Likewise they who have not suffered defeat, nor had experience of obstacles to their efforts, are prone to count a thing possible to them. Therefore youths, through inexperience of obstacles and of their own shortcomings, easily count a thing possible, and consequently are of good hope.

Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, I-II, 40, 6

- 34 Human life is divided into four ages. The first is called adolescence, that is, the 'increasing' of life. The second is called 'manhood,' that is to say, the age of achievement, which may give perfection, and in this sense it is itself called perfect, because none can give aught save what he hath. The third is called old age. The fourth is called decrepitude. . . .

As to the first, no one hesitates, but every sage agrees that it lasts up to the twenty-fifth year; and because up to that time our soul is chiefly intent on conferring growth and beauty on the body, whence many and great changes take place in the person, the rational part cannot come to perfect discretion; wherefore Reason lays down that before this age there are certain things a man may not do without a guardian of full age.

As for the second, which is truly the summit of our life, there is great diversity concerning the period to be taken; but passing over what philosophers and physicians have written about it, and having recourse to my own argumentation, I say that in the majority (on whom every judgment about a natural phenomenon may and should be based) this age lasts twenty years. And the argument which gives me this is that, if the apex of our

arch is at thirty-five, the age under discussion should have as long a period of descent as it has of ascent; and this rising and descending may be likened to the sustained height of the arch wherein but slight bending is to be discerned. We have it, then, that the prime of life is completed at the forty-fifth year.

And as adolescence lasts twenty-five years, mounting up to the prime of life, so the descent, that is, age, is a like period, succeeding to the prime of life; and so age ends at the seventieth year.

But inasmuch as adolescence (taking it as we have done above) does not begin at the beginning of life, but some eight months after, and inasmuch as our nature is eager to rise and hangs back from descending (because the natural heat is reduced and has small power, and the humid is thickened, not in quantity but in quality, and so is less easily evaporated and consumed) it comes to pass that beyond old age there remains perhaps to the amount of ten years of our life, or a little more or a little less. And this period is called decrepitude. Whence we have it of Plato—whom (both in the strength of his own nature, and because of the physiognomiseope which Socrates cast for him when first he saw him) we may believe to have had the most excellent nature—that he lived eighty-one years, as testifies Tully in that *Of Old Age*. And I believe that if Christ had not been crucified and had lived out the space which his life had power to cover according to its nature, he would have been changed at the eighty-first year from mortal body to eternal.

Dante, *Convivio*, IV, 24

- 35 *Pandar*. Remember time is wasting every hour
Some share of all the beauty now we see,
And thus, ere age shall all they charms devour,
Go love, for old, none will have aught of thee!
This saying may a lesson to you be,
'It might have been,' said Beauty, beauty past.

Chaucer, *Troilus and Cressida*, II, 57

- 36 For true it is, age has great advantage;
Experience and wisdom come with age;
Men may the old out-run, but not out-wit.

Chaucer, *Canterbury Tales*: Knight's Tale

- 37 But I am old; I will not play, for age;
Grass time is done, my fodder is rummage,
This white top advertises my old years,
My heart, too, is as mouldy as my hairs,
Unless I fare like medlar, all perverse.
For that fruit's never ripe until it's worse,
And falls among the refuse or in straw.
We ancient men, I fear, obey this law:
Until we're rotten we cannot be ripe;
We dance, indeed, the while the world will pipe.
Desire sticks in our nature like a nail
To have, if hoary head, a verdant tail,
As has the leek; for though our strength be gone,

Our wish is yet for folly till life's done.
For when we may not act, then will we speak;
Yet in our ashes is there fire to reek

Four embers have we, which I shall confess:
Boasting and lying, anger, covetousness;
These four remaining sparks belong to eld.
Our ancient limbs may well be hard to wield,
But lust will never fail us, that is truth.
And yet I have had always a colt's tooth,
As many years as now are past and done
Since first my tap of life began to run.
For certainly, when I was born, I know
Death turned my tap of life and let it flow;
And ever since that day the tap has run
Till nearly empty now is all the tun.
The stream of life now drips upon the chime;
The silly tongue may well ring out the time
Of wretchedness that passed so long before;
For oldsters, save for dotage, there's no more.

Chaucer, *Canterbury Tales*: Reeve's Prologue

- 38 But Lord Christ! When I do remember me
Upon my youth and on my jollity,
It tickles me about my heart's deep root.
To this day does my heart sing in salute
That I have had my world in my own time.
But age, alas! that poisons every prime,
Has taken away my beauty and my pith;
Let go, farewell, the devil go therewith!
The flour is gone, there is no more to tell,
The bran, as best I may, must I now sell;
But yet to be right merry I'll try.

Chaucer, *Canterbury Tales*:
Wife of Bath's Prologue

- 39 And though your time of green youth flower as
yet,
Age creeps in always, silent as a stone;
Death threatens every age, nor will forget
For any state, and there escapes him none:
And just as surely as we know, each one,
That we shall die, uncertain are we all
What day it is when death shall on us fall.

Chaucer, *Canterbury Tales*: Clerk's Tale

- 40 Young fellows are tempted by girls, men who are
thirty years old are tempted by gold, when they
are forty years old they are tempted by honor and
glory, and those who are sixty years old say to
themselves, 'What a pious man I have become!'

Luther, *Table Talk*, 1601

- 41 Youth is impertinent. So we see lawyers who in
their first year are masters of all laws, in their
second year are Justinians, in their third year are
licentiates, in their fourth year give formal opin-
ions, and in their fifth year finally become trem-
bling students. This is the way a boy acts in a
bowling alley. First he expects to strike twelve
pins, then nine, then six, then three, and at last
he's satisfied with one, and probably misses the
alley at that. It would be a good thing if young

people were wise and old people were strong, but
God has arranged things better.

Luther, *Table Talk*, 4091

- 42 Gargantua, from three years upwards unto five,
was brought up and instructed in all convenient
discipline, by the commandment of his father;
and spent that time like the other little children of
the country, that is, in drinking, eating, and sleep-
ing: in eating, sleeping, and drinking: and in
sleeping, drinking, and eating. Still he wallowed
and rolled himself up and down in the mire and
dirt: he blurred and sullied his nose with filth; he
blotted and smutched his face with any kind of
scurvy and stuff; he trod down his shoes in the
heel; at the flies he did often times yawn, and ran
very heartily after the butterflies, the empire
whereof belonged to his father.

Rabelais, *Gargantua and Pantagruel*, I, 11

- 43 It is possible that in those who employ their time
well, knowledge and experience grow with living;
but vivacity, quickness, firmness, and other qual-
ities much more our own, more important and
essential, wither and languish. . . . Sometimes it
is the body that first surrenders to age, sometimes,
too, it is the mind; and I have seen enough whose
brains were enfeebled before their stomach and
legs; and inasmuch as this is a malady hardly per-
ceptible to the sufferer and obscure in its symp-
toms, it is all the more dangerous. For the time, I
complain of the laws, not that they leave us at
work too long, but that they set us to work too
late. It seems to me that considering the frailty of
our life and how many ordinary natural reefs it is
exposed to, we should not allot so great a part of it
to birth, idleness, and apprenticeship.

Montaigne, *Essays*, I, 57, Of Age

- 44 This fault of not being able to recognize oneself
early and not feeling the impotence and extreme
alteration that age naturally brings to both body
and soul, and in my opinion equally, unless the
soul receives more than half of it, has ruined the
reputation of most of the world's great men.

Montaigne, *Essays*, II, 8,
Affection of Fathers

- 45 Old age puts more wrinkles in our minds than on
our faces; and we never, or rarely, see a soul that
in growing old does not come to smell sour and
musty. Man grows and dwindles in his entirety.

Montaigne, *Essays*, III, 2, Of Repentance

- 46 The whiles some one did chaunt this lovely lay:—
Ah! see, who so fayre thing doest laine to see,
In springing flowre the image of thy day;
Ah! see the virgin rose, how sweetly shee
Doth first peepe foorth with bashful modestee,
That fairer seemes, the lesse ye see her may;
Lo! see soone after, how more bold and free
Her bared bosome she doth broad display;

Lo! see soone after, how she fades and falls away.

So passeth, in the passing of a day,
Of mortall life the leafe, the bud, the flowre,
Ne more doth flourish after first decay,
That earst was sought to deck both bed and bowre
Of many a lady, and many a paramowre:
Gather therefore the rose, whilest yet is prime,
For soone comes age, that will her pride deflowre:
Gather the rose of love, whilest yet is time,
Whilest loving thou mayst loved be with equall
crime.

Spenser, *Faerie Queen*, Bk. II, XII, 74–75

- 47 *Chief Justice*. Do you set down your name in the scroll of youth, that are written down old with all the characters of age? Have you not a moist eye? a dry hand? a yellow cheek? a white beard? a decreasing leg? an increasing belly? is not your voice broken? your wind short? your chin double? your wit single? and every part about you blasted with antiquity? and will you yet call yourself young? Fie, fie, fie, Sir John!

Falstaff. My lord, I was born about three of the clock in the afternoon, with a white head and something a round belly. For my voice, I have lost it with halloing and singing of anthems. To approve my youth further, I will not: the truth is, I am only old in judgement and understanding; and he that will caper with me for a thousand marks, let him lend me the money, and have at him!

Shakespeare, *II Henry IV*, I, ii, 201

- 48 *Shallow*. O, Sir John, do you remember since we lay all night in the windmill in Saint George's field?

Falstaff. No more of that, good Master Shallow, no more of that.

Shal. Ha! 'twas a merry night. And is Jane Nightwork alive?

Fal. She lives, Master Shallow.

Shal. She never could away with me.

Fal. Never, never; she would always say she could not abide Master Shallow.

Shal. By the mass, I could anger her to the heart. She was then a bona-roba. Doth she hold her own well?

Fal. Old, old, Master Shallow.

Shal. Nay, she must be old; she cannot choose but be old; certain she's old; and had Robin Nightwork by old Nightwork before I came to Clement's Inn.

Silence. That's fifty five year ago.

Shal. Ha, cousin Silence, that thou hadst seen that that this knight and I have seen! Ha, Sir John, said I well?

Fal. We have heard the chimes at midnight, Master Shallow.

Shal. That we have, that we have, that we have; in faith, Sir John, we have: our watchword was

"Hem, boys!" Come, let's to dinner; come, let's to dinner: Jesus, the days that we have seen! Come, come.

Shakespeare, *II Henry IV*, III, ii, 206

- 49 *Falstaff*. Lord, Lord, how subject we old men are to this vice of lying!

Shakespeare, *II Henry IV*, III, ii, 325

- 50 *King*. I know thee not, old man: fall to thy prayers;

How ill white hairs become a fool and jester!

Shakespeare, *II Henry IV*, V, v, 51

- 51 *Jaques*. All the world's a stage,

And all the men and women merely players:

They have their exits and their entrances;

And the man in his time plays many parts,

His acts being seven ages. At first the infant,

Mewling and puking in the nurse's arms.

And then the whining school-boy, with his satchel

And shining morning face, creeping like snail

Unwillingly to school. And then the lover,

Sighing like furnace, with a woeful ballad

Made to his mistress' eyebrow. Then a soldier,

Full of strange oaths and bearded like the pard,

Jealous in honour, sudden and quick in quarrel,

Seeking the bubble reputation

Even in the cannon's mouth. And then the justice,

In fair round belly with good capon lined,

With eyes severe and beard of formal cut,

Full of wise saws and modern instances;

And so he plays his part. The sixth age shifts

Into the lean and slipper'd pantaloon,

With spectacles on nose and pouch on side,

His youthful hose, well saved, a world too wide

For his shrunk shank; and his big manly voice,

Turning again toward childish treble, pipes

And whistles in his sound. Last scene of all,

That ends this strange eventful history,

Is second childishness and mere oblivion,

Sans teeth, sans eyes, sans taste, sans everything.

Shakespeare, *As You Like It*, II, vii, 139

- 52 *Clown*. What is love? 'tis not hereafter;

Present mirth hath present laughter;

What's to come is still unsure:

In delay there lies no plenty;

Then come kiss me, sweet and twenty,

Youth's a stuff will not endure.

Shakespeare, *Twelfth Night*, II, iii, 48

- 53 *Polonius*. What do you read, my lord?

Hamlet. Words, words, words.

Pol. What is the matter, my lord?

Ham. Between who?

Pol. I mean, the matter that you read, my lord.

Ham. Slanders, sir: for the satirical rogue says

here that old men have grey beards, that their

faces are wrinkled, their eyes purging thick amber

and plum-tree gum and that they have a plentiful

- lack of wit, together with most weak hams.
Shakespeare, *Hamlet*, II, ii, 193
- 54 *Hamlet*. Rebellious hell,
If thou canst mutine in a matron's bones,
To flaming youth let virtue be as wax,
And melt in her own fire.
Shakespeare, *Hamlet*, III, iv, 82
- 55 *Regan*. O, sir, you are old;
Nature in you stands on the very verge
Of her confine. You should be ruled and led
By some discretion that discerns your state
Better than you yourself. Therefore, I pray you
That to our sister you do make return;
Say you have wrong'd her, sir.
Lear. Ask her forgiveness?
Do you but mark how this becomes the house:
"Dear daughter, I confess that I am old;
Kneeling.
Age is unnecessary. On my knees I beg
That you'll vouchsafe me raiment, bed, and
food."
Reg. Good sir, no more; these are unsightly
tricks.
Shakespeare, *Lear*, II, iv, 148
- 56 *Macbeth*. I have lived long enough; my way of life
Is fall'n into the sear, the yellow leaf;
And that which should accompany old age,
As honour, love, obedience, troops of friends,
I must not look to have; but, in their stead,
Curses, not loud but deep, mouth-honour, breath,
Which the poor heart would fain deny, and dare
not.
Shakespeare, *Macbeth*, V, iii, 22
- 57 *Cleopatra*. My salad days,
When I was green in judgment, cold in blood,
To say as I said then!
Shakespeare, *Antony and Cleopatra*, I, v, 73
- 58 *Hermione*. Come, I'll question you
Of my Lord's tricks and yours when you were
boys.
You were pretty lordings then?
Polixenes. We were, fair Queen,
Two lads that thought there was no more behind
But such a day to-morrow as to-day,
And to be boy eternal.
Her. Was uot my lord
The verier wag o' the two?
Pol. We were as twinn'd lambs that did frisk i'
the sun,
And bleat the one at the other. What we changed
Was innocence for innocence; we knew not
The doctrine of ill-doing, nor dream'd
That any did. Had we pursued that life,
And our weak spirits ne'er been higher rear'd
With stronger blood, we should have answer'd
heaven
- Boldly, "Not guilty."
Shakespeare, *Winter's Tale*, I, ii, 60
- 59 Thou art thy mother's glass, and she in thee
Calls back the lovely April of her prime.
So thou through windows of thine age shalt see
Despite of wrinkles this thy golden time.
Shakespeare, *Sonnet III*
- 60 When I consider every thing that grows
Holds in perfection but a little moment,
That this huge stage presenteth nought but shows
Whereon the stars in secret influence comment;
When I perceive that men as plants increase,
Cheered and check'd even by the self-same sky,
Vaunt in their youthful sap, at height decrease,
And wear their brave state out of memory;
Then the conceit of this inconstant stay
Sets you most rich in youth before my sight,
Where wasteful Time debateth with Decay,
To change your day of youth to sullied night.
Shakespeare, *Sonnet XV*
- 61 That time of year thou mayst in me behold
When yellow leaves, or none, or few, do hang
Upon those boughs which shake against the cold,
Bare ruin'd choirs, where late the sweet birds
sang.
In me thou see'st the twilight of such day
As after sunset fadeth in the west,
Which by and by black night doth take away,
Death's second self, that seals up all in rest.
In me thou see'st the glowing of such fire
That on the ashes of his youth doth lie,
As the death-bed whereon it must expire
Consumed with that which it was nourish'd by.
Shakespeare, *Sonnet LXXIII*
- 62 To me, fair friend, you never can be old,
For as you were when first your eye I eyed,
Such seems your beauty still.
Shakespeare, *Sonnet CIV*
- 63 When my love swears that she is made of truth
I do believe her, though I know she lies,
That she might think me some untutor'd youth,
Unlearned in the world's false subtleties.
Thus vainly thinking that she thinks me young,
Although she knows my days are past the best,
Simply I credit her false-speaking tongue:
On both sides thus is simple truth suppress'd.
But wherefore says she not she is unjust?
And wherefore say not I that I am old?
O, love's best habit is in seeming trust,
And age in love loves not to have years told.
Shakespeare, *Sonnet CXXXVIII*
- 64 Crabbed age and youth cannot live together:
Youth is full of pleasance, age is full of care;
Youth like summer morn, age like winter
weather;

Youth like summer brave, age like winter bare.
 Youth is full of sport, age's breath is short;
 Youth is nimble, age is lame;
 Youth is hot and bold, age is weak and cold;
 Youth is wild, and age is tame.
 Age, I do abhor thee; youth, I do adore thee.

Shakespeare, *The Passionate Pilgrim*, XII

- 65 Come, my Celia, let us prove,
 While we can, the sports of love;
 Time will not be ours forever;
 He at length our good will sever.

Jonson, *Come, My Celia*

- 66 Young men are fitter to invent than to judge; fitter for execution than for counsel; and fitter for new projects than for settled business. For the experience of age, in things that fall within the compass of it, directeth them; but in new things, abuseth them. The errors of young men are the ruin of business; but the errors of aged men amount but to this, that more might have been done, or sooner. Young men, in the conduct and manage of actions, embrace more than they can hold; stir more than they can quiet; fly to the end, without consideration of the means and degrees; pursue some few principles which they have chanced upon absurdly; care not to innovate, which draws unknown inconveniences; use extreme remedies at first; and, that which doubleth all errors, will not acknowledge or retract them; like an unready horse, that will neither stop nor turn. Men of age object too much, consult too long, adventure too little, repent too soon, and seldom drive business home to the full period, but content themselves with a mediocrity of success.

Bacon, *Of Youth and Age*

- 67 Alonso of Arragon was wont to say, in commendation of age, That age appeared to be best in four things: *Old wood best to burn; old wine to drink; old friends to trust; and old authors to read.*

Bacon, *Apophthegms*, LXXV

- 68 The proportion of the body to the extremities in children after their birth continues excessive until they begin to stand and run. Infants, therefore, resemble dwarfs in the beginning, and they creep about like quadrupeds, attempting progressive motion with the assistance of all their extremities; but they cannot stand erect until the length of the leg and thigh together exceeds the length of the rest of the body. And so it happens, that when they first attempt to walk, they move with the body prone, like the quadruped, and can scarcely rise so erect as the common dunghill fowl.

William Harvey, *Animal Generation*, 56

- 69 Age doth not rectifie, but incurvate our natures, turning bad dispositions into worsen habits, and (like diseases) brings on incurable vices; for every

day as we grow weaker in age, we grow stronger in sin; and the number of our days doth make but our sins innumerable. The same vice committed at sixteen, is not the same, though it agree in all other circumstances, at forty, but swells and doubles from the circumstances of our ages, wherein, besides the constant and inexcusable habit of transgressing, the maturity of our judgement cuts off pretence unto excuse or pardon: every sin the oftner it is committed, the more it acquireth in the quality of evil; as it succeeds in time, so it proceeds in degrees of badness; for as they proceed they ever multiply, and like figures in Arithmetick, the last stands for more than all that went before it. And though I think no man can live well once, but he that could live twice, yet for my own part I would not live over my hours past, or begin again the thred of my days: not upon *Cicero's* ground, because I have lived them well, but for fear I should live them worse.

Sir Thomas Browne, *Religio Medici*, I, 42

- 70 Confound not the distinctions of thy Life which Nature hath divided: that is, Youth, Adolescence, Manhood, and old Age, nor in these divided Periods, wherein thou art in a manner Four, conceive thyself but One. Let every division be happy in its proper Virtues, nor one Vice run through all. Let each distinction have its salutary transition, and critically deliver thee from the imperfections of the former, so ordering the whole, that Prudence and Virtue may have the largest section. Do as a Child but when thou art a Child, and ride not on a Reed at twenty. He who hath not taken leave of the follies of his Youth, and in his maturer state scarce got out of that division, disproportionately divideth his Days, crowds up the latter part of his Life, and leaves too narrow a corner for the Age of Wisdom.

Sir Thomas Browne, *Christian Morals*, III, 8

- 71 How soon hath Time the subtle thief of youth,
 Stolen on his wing my three and twentieth year!
 My hasting dayes flie on with full career,
 But my late spring no bud or blossom shew'th.
 Perhaps my semblance might deceive the truth,
 That I to manhood am arriv'd so near,
 And inward ripenes doth much less appear,
 That som more timely-happy spirits indu'th.

Milton, *How soon hath Time the subtle thief of youth*

- 72 This is old age; but then thou must outlive
 Thy youth, thy strength, thy beauty, which will change
 To withered weak & gray; thy Senses then
 Obtuse, all taste of pleasure must forgoe,
 To what thou hast, and for the Aire of youth
 Hopeful and cheerful, in thy blood will reign
 A melancholly damp of cold and dry

To waigh thy spirits down, and last consume
The Balme of Life.

Milton, *Paradise Lost*, XI, 535

- 73 The childhood shews the man,
As morning shews the day.

Milton, *Paradise Regained*, IV, 220

- 74 *Dollabella*. Men are but children of a larger
growth;
Our appetites as apt to change as theirs,
And full as craving too, and full as vain.

Dryden, *All for Love*, IV, 43

- 75 *Mirabell*. An old woman's appetite is depraved like
that of a girl—'tis the greensickness of a second
childhood; and like the faint offer of a latter
spring, serves but to usher in the fall and withers
in an affected bloom.

Congreve, *Way of the World*, II, iv

- 76 He [the interpreter] gave me a particular account
of the Struldbruggs among them. He said they
commonly acted like mortals, until about thirty
years old, after which by degrees they grew mel-
ancholy and dejected, increasing in both until
they came to fourscore. This he learned from their
own confession; for otherwise, there not being
above two or three of that species born in an age,
they were too few to form a general observation
by. When they came to fourscore years, which is
reckoned the extremity of living in this country,
they had not only all the follies and infirmities of
other old men, but many more which arose from
the dreadful prospect of never dying. They were
not only opinionative, peevish, covetous, morose,
vain, talkative; but incapable of friendship, and
dead to all natural affection, which never de-
scended below their grand-children. Envy and
impotent desires, are their prevailing passions.
But those objects against which their envy seems
principally directed, are the vices of the younger
sort, and the deaths of the old. By reflecting on
the former, they find themselves cut off from all
possibility of pleasure; and whenever they see a
funeral, they lament and repine that others are
gone to a harbour of rest, to which they them-
selves never can hope to arrive. They have no re-
membrance of any thing but what they learned
and observed in their youth and middle age, and
even that is very imperfect: and for the truth or
particulars of any fact, it is safer to depend on
common traditions, than upon their best recollec-
tions. The least miserable among them, appear to
be those who turn to dotage, and entirely lose
their memories; these meet with more pity and
assistance, because they want many bad qualities
which abound in others.

If a Struldbrugg happen to marry one of his
own kind, the marriage is dissolved of course by
the courtesy of the kingdom, as soon as the youn-
ger of the two comes to be fourscore. For the law

thinks it a reasonable indulgence, that those who
are condemned without any fault of their own, to
a perpetual continuance in the world, should not
have their misery doubled by the load of a wife.

As soon as they have compleated the term of
eighty years, they are looked on as dead in law;
their heirs immediately succeed to their estates,
only a small pittance is reserved for their support,
and the poor ones are maintained at the publick
charge. After that period, they are held incapable
of any employment of trust or profit; they cannot
purchase lands, or take leases; neither are they
allowed to be witnesses in any cause, either civil
or criminal, not even for the decision of meers and
bounds.

At ninety they lose their teeth and hair; they
have at that age no distinction of taste, but eat
and drink what ever they can get, without relish
or appetite. The diseases they were subject to, still
continue without encreasing or diminishing. In
talking, they forget the common appellation of
things, and the names of persons, even of those
who are their nearest friends and relations. For
the same reason, they never can amuse themselves
with reading, because their memory will not serve
to carry them from the beginning of a sentence to
the end; and by this defect, they are deprived of
the only entertainment whereof they might other-
wise be capable.

The language of this country being always
upon the flux, the Struldbruggs of one age, do not
understand those of another; neither are they able
after two hundred years, to hold any conversation
(farther than by a few general words) with their
neighbours the mortals; and thus they lye under
the disadvantage of living like foreigners in their
own country.

Swift, *Gulliver's Travels*, III, 10

- 77 They [the Yahoos] are prodigiously nimble from
their infancy; however, I once caught a young
male of three years old, and endeavoured by all
marks of tenderness to make it quiet; but the little
imp fell a squalling, and scratching, and biting
with such violence, that I was forced to let it go;
and it was high time, for a whole troop of old ones
came about us at the noise; but finding the cub
was safe, (for away it ran) and my sorrel nag
being by, they durst not venture near us. I ob-
served the young animal's flesh to smell very rank,
and the stink was somewhat between a *weasel* and
a *fox*, but much more disagreeable. I forgot another
circumstance, (and perhaps I might have the
readers pardon, if it were wholly omitted) that
while I held the odious vermin in my hands, it
voided its filthy excrements of a yellow liquid sub-
stance, all over my cloaths; but by good fortune
there was a small brook hard by, where I washed
myself as clean as I could; although I durst not
come into my master's presence, until I was suffi-
ciently aired.

Swift, *Gulliver's Travels*, IV, 8

78 Invention is the Talent of Youth, and Judgment of Age; so that our Judgment grows harder to please, when we have fewer Things to offer it: This goes through the whole Commerce of Life. When we are old, our Friends find it difficult to please us, and are less concern'd whether we be pleas'd or no.

Swift, *Thoughts on Various Subjects*

79 No wise Man ever wished to be younger.

Swift, *Thoughts on Various Subjects*

80 Every Man desires to live long; but no Man would be old.

Swift, *Thoughts on Various Subjects*

81 Man has other enemies more formidable, against which he is not provided with such means of defence: these are the natural infirmities of infancy, old age, and illness of every kind, melancholy proofs of our weakness, of which the two first are common to all animals, and the last belongs chiefly to man in a state of society. With regard to infancy, it is observable that the mother, carrying her child always with her, can nurse it with much greater ease than the females of many other animals, which are forced to be perpetually going and coming, with great fatigue, one way to find subsistence, and another to suckle or feed their young. It is true that if the woman happens to perish, the infant is in great danger of perishing with her; but this risk is common to many other species of animals, whose young take a long time before they are able to provide for themselves. And if our infancy is longer than theirs, our lives are longer in proportion; so that all things are in this respect fairly equal; though there are other rules to be considered regarding the duration of the first period of life, and the number of young, which do not affect the present subject. In old age, when men are less active and perspire little, the need for food diminishes with the ability to provide it. As the savage state also protects them from gout and rheumatism, and old age is, of all ills, that which human aid can least alleviate, they cease to be, without others perceiving that they are no more, and almost without perceiving it themselves.

Rousseau, *Origin of Inequality*, I

82 Fix your eyes on nature, follow the path traced by her. She keeps children at work, she hardens them by all kinds of difficulties, she soon teaches them the meaning of pain and grief. They cut their teeth and are feverish, sharp colics bring on convulsions, they are choked by fits of coughing and tormented by worms, evil humours corrupt the blood, germs of various kinds ferment in it, causing dangerous eruptions. Sickness and danger play the chief part in infancy. One half of the children who are born die before their eighth year. The child who has overcome hardships has

gained strength, and as soon as he can use his life he holds it more securely.

This is nature's law; why contradict it? Do you not see that in your efforts to improve upon her handiwork you are destroying it; her cares are wasted? To do from without what she does within is according to you to increase the danger twofold. On the contrary, it is the way to avert it; experience shows that children delicately nurtured are more likely to die. Provided we do not overdo it, there is less risk in using their strength than in sparing it. Accustom them therefore to the hardships they will have to face; train them to endure extremes of temperature, climate, and condition, hunger, thirst, and weariness. Dip them in the waters of Styx. Before bodily habits become fixed you may teach what habits you will without any risk, but once habits are established any change is fraught with peril. A child will bear changes which a man cannot bear, the muscles of the one are soft and flexible, they take whatever direction you give them without any effort; the muscles of the grown man are harder and they only change their accustomed mode of action when subjected to violence. So we can make a child strong without risking his life or health, and even if there were some risk, it should not be taken into consideration. Since human life is full of dangers, can we do better than face them at a time when they can do the least harm?

Rousseau, *Emile*, I

83 The new-born infant cries, his early days are spent in crying. He is alternately petted and shaken by way of soothing him; sometimes he is threatened, sometimes beaten, to keep him quiet. We do what he wants or we make him do what we want, we submit to his whims or subject him to our own. There is no middle course; he must rule or obey.

Rousseau, *Emile*, I

84 Every old man complains of the growing depravity of the world, of the pectulance and insolence of the rising generation. He recounts the decency and regularity of former times, and celebrates the discipline and sobriety of the age in which his youth was passed; a happy age which is now no more to be expected, since confusion has broken in upon the world, and thrown down all the boundaries of civility and reverence.

Johnson, *Rambler No. 50*

85 He that would pass the latter part of life with honour and decency, must, when he is young, consider that he shall one day be old; and remember, when he is old, that he has once been young.

Johnson, *Rambler No. 50*

86 To youth . . . it should be carefully inculcated, that to enter the road of life without caution or reserve, in expectation of general fidelity and jus-

tice, is to launch on the wide ocean without the instruments of steerage, and to hope that every wind will be prosperous and that every coast will afford a harbour.

Johnson, *Rambler* No. 175

- 87 *Rasselas* rose next day, and resolved to begin his experiments upon life. "Youth, cried he, is the time of gladness: I will join myself to the young men, whose only business is to gratify their desires, and whose time is all spent in a succession of enjoyments."

To such societies he was readily admitted, but a few days brought him back weary and disgusted. Their mirth was without images, their laughter without motive: their pleasures were gross and sensual, in which the mind had no part; their conduct was at once wild and mean; they laughed at order and at law, but the frown of power dejected, and the eye of wisdom abashed them.

Johnson, *Rasselas*, XVII

- 88 The old man trusts wholly to slow contrivance and gradual progression: the youth expects to force his way by genius, vigour, and precipitance. The old man pays regard to riches, and the youth reverences virtue. The old man defies prudence: the youth commits himself to magnanimity and chance. The young man, who intends no ill, believes that none is intended, and therefore acts with openness and candour: but his father, having suffered the injuries of fraud, is impelled to suspect, and too often allured to practice it. Age looks with anger on the temerity of youth, and youth with contempt on the scrupulosity of age.

Johnson, *Rasselas*, XXVI

- 89 There are few things that we so unwillingly give up, even in advanced age, as the supposition that we have still the power of ingratiating ourselves with the fair sex.

Johnson, *Miscellanies*, 11

- 90 *Johnson*. Sir, I love the acquaintance of young people; because, in the first place, I don't like to think myself growing old. In the next place, young acquaintances must last longest, if they do last; and then, Sir, young men have more virtue than old men; they have more generous sentiments in every respect. I love the young dogs of this age: they have more wit and humour and knowledge of life than we had; but then the dogs are not so good scholars. Sir, in my early years I read very hard. It is a sad reflection, but a true one, that I knew almost as much at eighteen as I do now. My judgement, to be sure, was not so good; but I had all the facts. I remember very well, when I was at Oxford, an old gentleman said to me, 'Young man, ply your book diligently now, and acquire a

stock of knowledge; for when years come upon you, you will find that poring upon books will be but an irksome task.'

Boswell, *Life of Johnson* (July 21, 1763)

- 91 *Goldsmith*. "I think, Mr. Johnson, you don't go near the theatres now. You give yourself no more concern about a new play, than if you had never had any thing to do with the stage." *Johnson*. "Why, Sir, our tastes greatly alter. The lad does not care for the child's rattle, and the old man does not care for the young man's whore." *Goldsmith*. "Nay, Sir, but your Muse was not a whore." *Johnson*. "Sir, I do not think she was. But as we advance in the journey of life, we drop some of the things which have pleased us; whether it be that we are fatigued and don't choose to carry so many things any farther, or that we find other things which we like better." *Boswell*. "But, Sir, why don't you give us something in some other way?" *Goldsmith*. "Ay, Sir, we have a claim upon you." *Johnson*. "No, Sir, I am not obliged to do any more. No man is obliged to do as much as he can do. A man is to have part of his life to himself. If a soldier has fought a good many campaigns, he is not to be blamed if he retires to ease and tranquillity. A physician, who has practised long in a great city, may be excused if he retires to a small town, and takes less practice. Now, Sir, the good I can do by my conversation bears the same proportion to the good I can do by my writings, that the practice of a physician, retired to a small town, does to his practice in a great city." *Boswell*. "But I wonder, Sir, you have not more pleasure in writing than in not writing." *Johnson*. "Sir, you may wonder."

Boswell, *Life of Johnson* (1766)

- 92 John Anderson, my jo, John,
When we were first acquent;
Your locks were like the raven,
Your bonnie brow was brent;
But now your brow is beld, John,
Your locks are like the snow;
But blessings on your frosty pow,
John Anderson, my jo.

Burns, *John Anderson, My Jo*

- 93 The constitution of New York, to avoid investigations that must for ever be vague and dangerous, has taken a particular age as the criterion of inability. No man can be a judge beyond sixty. I believe there are few at present who do not disapprove of this provision. There is no station, in relation to which it is less proper than to that of a judge. The deliberating and comparing faculties generally preserve their strength much beyond that period in men who survive it; and when, in addition to this circumstance, we consider how few there are who outlive the season of intellectual vigour, and how improbable it is that any consid-

erable portion of the bench, whether more or less numerous, should be in such a situation at the same time, we shall be ready to conclude that limitations of this sort have little to recommend them. In a republic, where fortunes are not affluent and pensions not expedient, the dismissal of men from stations in which they have served their country long and usefully, on which they depend for subsistence, and from which it will be too late to resort to any other occupation for a livelihood, ought to have some better apology to humanity than is to be found in the imaginary danger of a superannuated bench.

Hamilton, *Federalist* 79

- 94 We are moved in the presence of childhood, but it is not because from the height of our strength and of our perfection we drop a look of pity on it; it is, on the contrary, because from the depths of our impotence, of which the feeling is inseparable from that of the real and determinate state to which we have arrived, we raise our eyes to the child's determinableness and pure innocence. The feeling we then experience is too evidently mingled with sadness for us to mistake its source. In the child all is disposition and destination; in us all is in the state of a completed, finished thing, and the completion always remains infinitely below the destination. It follows that the child is to us like a representation of the ideal; not, indeed, of the ideal as we have realized it, but such as our destination admitted; and, consequently, it is not at all the idea of its indigence, of its hindrances, that makes us experience emotion in the child's presence; it is, on the contrary, the idea of its pure and free force, of the integrity, the infinity of its being. This is the reason why, in the sight of every moral and sensible man, the child will always be a sacred thing; I mean an object which, by the grandeur of an idea, reduces to nothingness all grandeur realized by experience; an object which, in spite of all it may lose in the judgment of the understanding, regains largely the advantage before the judgment of reason.

Schiller, *Simple and Sentimental Poetry*

- 95 *Faust*. I'll feel, whatever my attire,
The pain of life, earth's narrow way.
I am too old to be content with play,
Too young to be without desire.
What can the world afford me now?
Thou shalt renounce! Renounce shalt thou!
That is the never-ending song
Which in the ears of all is ringing,
Which always, through our whole life long,
Hour after hour is hoarsely singing.

Goethe, *Faust* I, 1544

- 96 *Mephistopheles*. II, unadulterate, one says to youth
What does not please the callow brook—the
truth!

And later after many a tide
They learn it painfully on their own hide,
Each fancies then it came from his own head;
"The Master was a fool!" is what is said.

Goethe, *Faust*, II, 2, 6744

- 97 *Bachelor of Arts*. This is youth's noblest message
and most fit!

The world was not till I created it.
'Twas I that led the sun up from the sea;
The moon began its changeful course with me.
The day put on rich garments, me to meet;
The earth grew green and blossomed, me to greet.
At my behest in that primeval night
The stars unveiled their splendour to my sight.
Who, if not I, your own deliverance wrought
From fetters of Philistine, cramping thought?
I, as my spirit bids me, with delight
I follow onward mine own inner light.
Swift I proceed with mine own raptured mind,
Glory before me, darkness far behind.

Goethe, *Faust*, II, 2, 6793

- 98 —*A Simple Child*,

That lightly draws its breath,
And feels its life in every limb,
What should it know of death?

Wordsworth, *We Are Seven*

- 99 My heart leaps up when I behold

A rainbow in the sky;
So was it when my life began;
So is it now I am a man;
So be it when I shall grow old,
Or let me die!
The Child is father of the Man;
And I could wish my days to be
Bound each to each by natural piety.

Wordsworth, *My Heart Leaps Up
When I Behold*

- 100 There is a Flower, the lesser Celandine,
That shrinks, like many more, from cold and rain;
And, the first moment that the sun may shine,
Bright as the sun himself, 'tis out again!

When hailstones have been falling, swarm on
swarm,
Or blasts the green field and the trees distress,
Oft have I seen it muffled up from harm,
In close self-shelter, like a Thing at rest.

But lately, one rough day, this Flower I passed
And recognised it, though an altered form,
Now standing forth an offering to the blast,
And buffeted at will by rain and storm.

I stopped and said with inty-muttered voice,
"It doth not love the shower, nor seek the cold:
This neither is its courage nor its choice,
But its necessity in being old.

- “The sunshine may not cheer it, nor the dew;
It cannot help itself in its decay;
Stiff in its members, withered, changed of hue.”
And, in my spleen, I smiled that it was grey.
Wordsworth, *The Small Celandine*
- 101 There was a time when meadow, grove, and
stream,
The earth, and every common sight,
To me did seem
Apparelled in celestial light,
The glory and the freshness of a dream.
It is not now as it hath been of yore;—
Turn wheresoe'er I may,
By night or day,
The things which I have seen I now can see no
more.
Wordsworth, *Ode: Intimations of Immortality*, I
- 102 Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting;
The Soul that rises with us, our life's Star,
Hath had elsewhere its setting,
And cometh from afar:
Not in entire forgetfulness,
And not in utter nakedness,
But trailing clouds of glory do we come
From God, who is our home:
Heaven lies about us in our infancy!
Shades of the prison-house begin to close
Upon the growing Boy,
But He beholds the light, and whence it flows,
He sees it in his joy;
The Youth, who daily farthest from the east
Must travel, still is Nature's Priest,
And by the vision splendid
Is on his way attended;
At length the Man perceives it die away,
And fade into the light of common day.
Wordsworth, *Ode: Intimations of Immortality*, V
- 103 And O, ye Fountains, Meadows, Hills and
Groves,
Forebode not any severing of our loves!
Yet in my heart of hearts I feel your might;
I only have relinquished one delight
To live beneath your more habitual sway.
I love the Brooks which down their channels fret,
Even more than when I tripped lightly as they;
The innocent brightness of a new-born Day
Is lovely yet;
The Clouds that gather round the setting sun
Do take a sober colouring from an eye
That hath kept watch o'er man's mortality;
Another race hath been, and other palms are
won.
Thanks to the human heart by which we live,
Thanks to its tenderness, its joys, and fears,
To me the meanest flower that blows can give
Thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears.
Wordsworth, *Ode: Intimations
of Immortality*, XI
- 104 Bliss was it in that dawn to be alive,
But to be young was very Heaven!
Wordsworth, *The Prelude*, XI, 108
- 105 What is the worst of woes that wait on age?
What stamps the wrinkle deeper on the brow?
To view each loved one blotted from life's page,
And be alone on earth, as I am now.
Byron, *Childe Harold's
Pilgrimage*, II, 98
- 106 'Tis true, your budding Miss is very charming,
But shy and awkward at first coming out,
So much alarm'd that she is quite alarming,
All Giggle, Blush; half Pertness and half Pout;
And glancing at *Mamma*, for fear there's harm in
What you, she, it, or they, may be about,
The Nursery still lips out in all they utter—
Besides, they always smell of bread and butter.
Byron, *Beppo*, XXXIX
- 107 Oh, talk not to me of a name great in story;
The days of our youth are the days of our glory;
And the myrtle and ivy of sweet two-and-twenty
Are worth all your laurels, though ever so plenty.
Byron, *Stanzas Written on the Road
Between Florence and Pisa*
- 108 Age generally makes men more tolerant; youth is
always discontented. The tolerance of age is the
result of the ripeness of a judgment which, not
merely as the result of indifference, is satisfied
even with what is inferior, but, more deeply
taught by the grave experience of life, has been
led to perceive the substantial, solid worth of the
object in question. The insight then to which—in
contradistinction from those ideals—philosophy is
to lead us, is, that the real world is as it ought to
be, that the truly good, the universal divine reason,
is not a mere abstraction, but a vital principle
capable of realizing itself.
Hegel, *Philosophy of History*,
Introduction, 3
- 109 Among the Greeks we feel ourselves immediately
at home, for we are in the region of spirit; and
though the origin of the nation, as also its philo-
logical peculiarities, may be traced farther—even
to India—the proper emergence, the true palin-
genesis of spirit must be looked for in Greece first.
At an earlier stage I compared the Greek world
with the period of adolescence; not, indeed, in *that*
sense, that youth bears within it a serious, antici-
pative destiny, and consequently by the very condi-
tions of its culture urges towards an ulterior
aim—presenting thus an inherently incomplete
and immature form, and being then most defect-
ive when it would deem itself perfect—but in *that*
sense, that youth does not yet present the activity
of work, does not yet exert itself for a definite in-
telligent aim, but rather exhibits a concrete fresh-

ness of the soul's life. It appears in the sensuous, actual world, as incarnate spirit and spiritualized sense—in a unity which owed its origin to spirit. Greece presents to us the cheerful aspect of youthful freshness, or spiritual vitality. It is here first that advancing spirit makes *itself* the content of its volition and its knowledge; but in such a way that state, family, law, religion, are at the same time objects aimed at by individuality, while the latter is individuality only in virtue of those aims. The man, on the other hand, devotes his life to labor for an objective aim; which he pursues consistently, even at the cost of his individuality.

Hegel, *Philosophy of History*, II, Introduction

110 He who lives to see two or three generations is like a man who sits some time in the conjurer's booth at a fair, and witnesses the performance twice or thrice in succession. The tricks were meant to be seen only once; and when they are no longer a novelty and cease to deceive their effect is gone.

Schopenhauer, *Sufferings of the World*

111 A man's life begins with the illusion that a long, long time and a whole world lie before him, and he begins with the foolish conceit that he has plenty of time for all his many claims. The poet is the eloquent, inspired advocate of this foolish but beautiful conceit. But when in the infinite transformation a man discovers the eternal so near to life that there is not a single one of its claims, not a single one of its evasions, not a single one of its excuses, not a single one of its moments at a distance from what *he must do* at this very moment, this very second, this very instant: then he is in the way of becoming a Christian. The sign of childishness is to say: "*Me wants, me—me*"; the sign of youth is to say: "*I*,"—and "*I*"—and "*I*"; the sign of maturity and the introduction to the eternal is to will to understand that this "*I*" signifies nothing if it does not become the "*thou*" to whom eternity unceasingly speaks, and says: "*Thou shalt, thou shalt, thou shalt.*" The youth wishes to be the only "*I*" in the whole world; maturity consists in understanding this "*thou*" for itself, even if it is not said to any other single man. Thou shalt, thou shalt love thy neighbor. O my hearer, it is not *you* to whom *I* speak; it is to me, to whom eternity says: "*Thou shalt.*"

Kierkegaard, *Works of Love*, I, 2C

112 What pretty oracles nature yields us on this text in the face and behavior of children, babes, and even brutes! That divided and rebel mind, that distrust of a sentiment because our arithmetic has computed the strength and means opposed to our purpose, these have not. Their mind being whole, their eye is as yet unconquered; and when we look in their faces we are disconcerted. Infancy conforms to nobody; all conform to it; so that one babe commonly makes four or five out of the

adults who prattle and play to it. So God has armed youth and puberty and manhood no less with its own piquancy and charm, and made it enviable and gracious and its claims not to be put by, if it will stand by itself. Do not think the youth has no force, because he cannot speak to you and me. Hark! in the next room his voice is sufficiently clear and emphatic. It seems he knows how to speak to his contemporaries. Bashful or bold then, he will know how to make us seniors very unnecessary.

Emerson, *Self-Reliance*

113 A boy is in the parlor what the pit is in the playhouse; independent, irresponsible, looking out from his corner on such people and facts as pass by, he tries and sentences them on their merits, in the swift, summary way of boys, as good, bad, interesting, silly, eloquent, troublesome. He cumber himself never about consequences, about interests; he gives an independent, genuine verdict. You must court him; he does not court you. But the man is as it were clapped into jail by his consciousness. As soon as he has once acted or spoken with *éclat* he is a committed person, watched by the sympathy or the hatred of hundreds, whose affections must now enter into his account.

Emerson, *Self-Reliance*

114 It is time to be old,
To take in sail:
The gods of bounds,
Who sets to seas a shore,
Came to me in his fatal rounds,
And said: "No more!
No farther shoot
Thy broad ambitious brauches, and thy root.
Fancy departs: no more invent;
Contract thy firmament
To compass of a tent."

Emerson, *Terminus*

115 My mariners,
Souls that have toil'd, and wrought, and thought
with me,—
That ever with a frolic welcome took
The thunder and the sunshine, and opposed
Frec hearts, free foreheads,—you and I are old;
Old age hath yet his honor and his toil.
Death closes all; but something ere the end,
Some work of noble note, may yet be done,
Not unbecoming men that strove with Gods.
The lights begin to twinkle from the rocks;
The long day wanes; the slow moon climbs; the
deep
Moans round with many voices. Come, my
friends.
'Tis not too late to seek a newer world.
Push off, and sitting well in order smite
The sounding furrows; for my purpose holds
To sail beyond the sunset, and the baths

- Of all the western stars, until I die.
It may be that the gulfs will wash us down;
It may be we shall touch the Happy Isles,
And see the great Achilles, whom we knew.
Tho' much is taken, much abides; and tho'
We are not now that strength which in old days
Moved earth and heaven, that which we are, we
are,—
One equal temper of heroic hearts,
Made weak by time and fate, but strong in will
To strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield.
Tennyson, *Ulysses*
- 116 Practically, the old have no very important advice to give the young, their own experience has been so partial, and their lives have been such miserable failures, for private reasons, as they must believe; and it may be that they have some faith left which belies that experience, and they are only less young than they were. I have lived some thirty years on this planet, and I have yet to hear the first syllable of valuable or even earnest advice from my seniors. They have told me nothing, and probably cannot tell me anything to the purpose. Here is life, an experiment to a great extent untried by me; but it does not avail me that they have tried it.
Thoreau, *Walden: Economy*
- 117 The youth gets together his materials to build a bridge to the moon, or perchance a palace or temple on the earth, and at length the middleaged man concludes to build a wood-shed with them.
Thoreau, *Journal (July 14, 1852)*
- 118 How earthy old people become—mouldy as the grave! Their wisdom smacks of the earth. There is no foretaste of immortality in it. They remind me of earthworms and mole crickets.
Thoreau, *Journal (Aug. 16, 1853)*
- 119 Old age, calm, expanded, broad with the haughty breadth of the universe,
Old age, flowing free with the delicious near-by freedom of death.
Whitman, *Song of the Open Road, XII*
- 120 Grow old along with me!
The best is yet to be,
The last of life, for which the first was made:
Our times are in his hand
Who saith, "A whole I planned,
Youth shows but half; trust God: see all, nor be afraid!"
Browning, *Rabbi Ben Ezra*
- 121 He [Alyosha] was to some extent a youth of our last epoch—that is, honest in nature, desiring the truth, seeking for it and believing in it, and seeking to serve it at once with all the strength of his soul, seeking for immediate action, and ready to sacrifice everything, life itself, for it. Though these young men unhappily fail to understand that the sacrifice of life is, in many cases, the easiest of all sacrifices, and that to sacrifice, for instance, five or six years of their seething youth to hard and tedious study, if only to multiply tenfold their powers of serving the truth and the cause they have set before them as their goal—such a sacrifice is utterly beyond the strength of many of them.
Dostoevsky, *Brothers Karamazov, Pt. I, I, 5*
- 122 Prince Vasili seized Pierre's hand and said to Anna Pávlovna: "Educate this bear for me! He has been staying with me a whole month and this is the first time I have seen him in society. Nothing is so necessary for a young man as the society of clever women."
Tolstoy, *War and Peace, I, 4*
- 123 Natasha had not had a moment free since early morning and had not once had time to think of what lay before her.
In the damp chill air and crowded closeness of the swaying carriage, she for the first time vividly imagined what was in store for her there at the ball, in those brightly lighted rooms—with music, flowers, dances, the Emperor, and all the brilliant young people of Petersburg. The prospect was so splendid that she hardly believed it would come true, so out of keeping was it with the chill darkness and closeness of the carriage. She understood all that awaited her only when, after stepping over the red baize at the entrance, she entered the hall, took off her fur cloak, and, beside Sónya and in front of her mother, mounted the brightly illuminated stairs between the flowers. Only then did she remember how she must behave at a ball, and tried to assume the majestic air she considered indispensable for a girl on such an occasion. But, fortunately for her, she felt her eyes growing misty, she saw nothing clearly, her pulse beat a hundred to the minute, and the blood throbbed at her heart. She could not assume that pose, which would have made her ridiculous, and she moved on almost fainting from excitement and trying with all her might to conceal it. And this was the very attitude that became her best.
Tolstoy, *War and Peace, VI, 15*
- 124 Consider well the proportions of things. It is better to be a young June-bug than an old bird of paradise.
Mark Twain, *Pudd'nhead Wilson's Calendar, VIII*
- 125 *The same space of time seems shorter as we grow older—that is, the days, the months, and the years do so; whether the hours do so is doubtful, and the minutes and seconds to all appearance remain about the same. . . . In youth we may have an absolutely new experience, subjective or objective, every*

hour of the day. Apprehension is vivid, retentiveness strong, and our recollections of that time, like those of a time spent in rapid and interesting travel, are of something intricate, multitudinous, and long-drawn-out. But as each passing year converts some of this experience into automatic routine which we hardly note at all, the days and the weeks smooth themselves out in recollection to contentless units, and the years grow hollow and collapse.

William James, *Psychology*, XV

126 With the child, life is all play and fairy-tales and learning the external properties of "things"; with the youth, it is bodily exercises of a more systematic sort, novels of the real world, boon-fellowship and song, friendship and love, nature, travel and adventure, science and philosophy; with the man, ambition and policy, acquisitiveness, responsibility to others, and the selfish zest of the battle of life. If a boy grows up alone at the age of games and sports, and learns neither to play ball, nor row, nor sail, nor ride, nor skate, nor fish, nor shoot, probably he will be sedentary to the end of his days; and, though the best of opportunities be afforded him for learning these things later, it is a hundred to one but he will pass them by and shrink back from the effort of taking those necessary first steps the prospect of which, at an earlier age, would have filled him with eager delight. The sexual passion expires after a protracted reign; but it is well known that its peculiar manifestation in a given individual depend almost entirely on the habits he may form during the early period of its activity. Exposure to bad company then makes him a loose liver all his days; chastity kept at first makes the same easy later on.

William James, *Psychology*, XXIV

127 Men do not live long enough: they are, for all the purposes of high civilization, mere children when they die; and our Prime Ministers, though rated as mature, divide their time between the golf course and the Treasury Bench in parliament. Presumably, however, the same power that made this mistake can remedy it. If on opportunist grounds Man now fixes the term of his life at three score and ten years, he can equally fix it as three hundred, or three thousand, or even at the genuine Circumstantial Selection limit, which would be until a sooner-or-later-inevitable fatal accident makes an end of the individual. All that is necessary to make him extend his present span is that tremendous catastrophes such as the late war shall convince him of the necessity of at least outliving his taste for golf and cigars if the race is to be saved. This is not fantastic speculation: it is deductive biology, if there is such a science as biology. Here, then, is a stone that we have left unturned, and that may be worth turning. To make the suggestion more entertaining than it

would be to most people in the form of a biological treatise, I have written *Back to Methuselah* as a contribution to the modern Bible.

Shaw, *Back to Methuselah*, Pref.

128 *Conrad*. We're not blaming you: you hadn't lived long enough. No more had we. Cant you see that three-score-and-ten, though it may be long enough for a very crude sort of village life, isnt long enough for a complicated civilization like ours? Flinders Petrie has counted nine attempts at civilization made by people exactly like us; and every one of them failed just as ours is failing. They failed because the citizens and statesmen died of old age or over-eating before they had grown out of schoolboy games and savage sports and cigars and champagne. The signs of the end are always the same: Democracy, Socialism, and Votes for Women. We shall go to smash within the lifetime of men now living unless we recognize that we must live longer.

Shaw, *Back to Methuselah*, II

129 *The Maiden*. Clothes are a nuisance. I think I shall do without them some day, as you ancients do.

The Ancient. Signs of maturity. Soon you will give up all these toys and games and sweets.

The Youth. What! And be as miserable as you?

The Ancient. Infant: one moment of the ecstasy of life as we live it would strike you dead.

Shaw, *Back to Methuselah*, V

130 Is there an infantile sexuality? you will ask. Is childhood not rather that period of life which is distinguished by the lack of the sexual impulse? No, gentlemen, it is not at all true that the sexual impulse enters into the child at puberty, as the devils in the gospel entered into the swine. The child has his sexual impulses and activities from the beginning, he brings them with him into the world, and from these the so-called normal sexuality of adults emerges by a significant development through manifold stages. It is not very difficult to observe the expressions of this childish sexual activity; it needs rather a certain art to overlook them or to fail to interpret them.

Freud, *Origin and Development of Psycho-Analysis*, IV

131 To be sure, if it is the purpose of educators to stifle the child's power of independent thought as early as possible, in order to produce that "good behaviour" which is so highly prized, they cannot do better than deceive children in sexual matters and intimidate them by religious means. The stronger characters will, it is true, withstand these influences; they will become rebels against the authority of their parents and later against every other form of authority. When children do not receive the explanations for which they turn to their elders, they go on tormenting themselves in secret with

son. Your new shoes pinch you, and you are secretly racked by hopeless desires.

Santayana, *Persons and Places*, II

140 The young man who has not wept is a savage, and the old man who will not laugh is a fool.

Santayana, *Dialogues in Limbo*, III
