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B.A. (Part-I) Eng. (H) - Paper - II

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TOPIC: YOUTH AND AGE (S.T. Coleridge)
Critical appreciation

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Youth And Age is a nice poem composed by S.T. Coleridge, the pioneer of Romantic school. The poet composed this poem in later part of his life. He has described his experiences of youth and old age. ~~are~~ in two sections. of the poem.

In the first section of the poem, the poet describes the pleasant experiences of the youth. Soothing breeze is blowing amid the blossoms of flowers. Youth is a time of hope. Life in this part is very happy and delightful. Days pass very smoothly. In England it was customary during the middle Ages for both high and low to go out on the first May morning at an early hour to fetch the flowers' boughs. Hawthorn branches were also gathered and brought home about sunrise with accompaniments of horn and labor. The ceremony was called 'going a-maying'.

When the poet was young, he enjoyed the beauty of nature. There was hope in his life and he wrote poetry. He climbed the airy cliffs and glittering sand of deserts. He enjoyed the beauty of trim skiffs which was not known since long. The watching of beauty of winding lakes and wide rivers gave him much delight. He was so bold and courageous that he had no fear of wind or tide. Flowers look lovely to a youth. Love looks like a flower. Friendship is just like a tree which gives us shelter in the scorching rays of the sun. In youth, the joys of friendship, love and liberty come down like a pleasant shower of rain.

In the second section of the poem, Coleridge describes his experiences of the old age. When he becomes old, his pleasant experiences of the young age vanishes. He is always conscious that he is old and his youthful joys have disappeared. He becomes a realist to accept the pangs of life. Earlier the poet thought that his youth will stay. But now he feels that it was his foolish idea or imagination. Youth is disguise of old age. His hair has become as white as silver. His gait has become slow. He has become serious and thoughtful. In his old age, the dew drops - the gems of morning - look like tears of mourning. His life has become hopeless. It is full of grief. The poet compares his state with that of a poor guest who does not get proper reception at the place where he stays.

Thus the poet presents the ~~two~~ experiences of his life in two sections of the poem. His way of description is very lucid and simple. The readers also feel pleasure after going through the poem. The romantic touch in the expressions of the poem is indeed praisable.

