

PARSIMONY AND EXTRAVAGANCE

(a brief description of certain people' behavior in society)

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It seems that it was only sometime ago when my late father asked me to come over and sat in front of his table to hear him talk about how to become a good boy and able to show filial obedience towards his parents. At the same time he said "you had to be honest to your parents, yourself and other persons as well". "Honesty is the best policy", he said further. He admitted it was only due to his friends support in financial matters, like for instance giving him prolonged time of payment for the goods or commodities he had purchased. It was obvious at the beginning of his undertaking, he was certainly in short of capital money, and bank loan for the purpose at which time was out of question.

In the long run be concluded, that it was not so easy if not very hard to earn money for a living in a proper and honest way. He pointed out as an example: the cost of white sugar weighed \pm 102 kg per sack was approximately +10- and as a retailer to meet the consumers' need, we have to repack them in small paper bags of one kilogram each. It was then sold at the price of 1,10 per pack (kg). I knew the process should be time consuming with a profit margin of less than ten percent.

Now at my age of eighty-three, that momentary talk with my late father sometime reappears in my mind. This in some respect makes me understand, why should any body be parsimonious. May be they are just trying to make a balanced budget in their family spending or better still to make their saving accounts grow by the day, Well, there is nothing wrong of being parsimonious anyway. May be some shop-assistant may feel uncomfortable when dealing with this kind of customers. Anyhow it is up to the customers themselves to be very selective in spending their own money, isn't it? But to be very mean with money, especially those who are sufficient for their daily expenses, may somehow encounter unfavorable experiences someday. A certain cunning shopkeeper my probably take the opportunity of their meanness to cheat them with goods not in accordance with the required quality or specification, but given the price that seems to be cheaper.

Perhaps, it may be taken for granted that old people tend to be parsimonious or in some other cases, we might as well call them misers. Probably, this is due to the fact that most old people are not in a position to earn money as they used to be. If we have a look at the word parsimony in oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English, we will come across these words: "Parsimonious old man" yes, some old people tend to be mean with money, so it is said. Of course, the reasons are quite obvious and logical. Their monthly expenditure for living are mostly dependent on retirement pension, their life long savings if any, monthly allowance provided by their sons and daughters or relatives perhaps. In most cases this "subsidy" might not suffice for their daily needs; let alone for most senior or old people a fairly great sum of

money would be necessary to maintain a healthy life in the course of their aging. So we may say that parsimony could somewhat become a way of life for most old people. It is certainly a blessing for old people, who are in a relatively good health and in position of being sufficient in their financial needs. But we know that life is not so simple, daily problems either mentally or psychologically may exist from time to time. So parsimony, being another age-acquired attitude for most old people should be understood by people of younger generation when dealing with them, and be more tolerable in their feelings or at least do not take it as a nuisance. However, all people, men and women alike, whether you like it or not will become old someday; but their process of ageing may differ from one to another, and so are their behaviors in society.

To be in line with the subject matter we have discussed so far as afore-mentioned in this article, we will deal with the word extravagance as in : using or spending too much (money) only. Actually spending too much money it self is not a crime, provided it is done in a legal and proper way, But such a deed may mistakenly be taken as a gesture of showing off and could arouse the feeling of antipathy among people around. So a spendthrift, being a part of extravagance, is an act in society that may contradict with recent government officials' advice to live a common and moderate living.

Then, why should somebody or anybody be extravagant, may be it is just another phenomenon in society or just trying to initiate the way of life of certain celebrities. But to be able in becoming a spendthrift, one must be in a position of having a large sum of money, or owner of a large business enterprise, an industrialist, a banker, a capitalist or others of the sort; or else he or she could be in many persons' debt. But as far as we know, a real entrepreneur or businessman is very seldom in favor of such snobbery. On the contrary, corruptible government officials and corporate executives of private companies, become daily headlines of many newspapers nowadays for their corruptive deeds. In many cases, money earned in such an easy and illegal way, may lead the owner of being snobbish or extravagant, Even so, I dare not say that there is a certain relationship between corruption and extravagance. The only factor that may play as an important role in extravagance is of course money in possession and involved.

I have ever watched a film in cinema illustrating a story of very rich young man. Being a son of millionaire, he is in a position to get nearly everything he wants and live a very comfortable life. No doubt he is also a notorious spendthrift, and in the long last, feeling like never enough to cope with his way of living; eventually he will be involved in an illegal business venture. In as such, it seems that his financial problem could be solved temporarily; but then he has to face another more serious problem; he was brought to court for his criminal acts. That is part of the film story I could remember, and as usual there is a happy ending.

During my student's days in Junior High, I ever came across the proverb: "Life is but transitory, may you therefore make the best use of the fleeting hours "Now I really know how true it is. Well, since life is so short, depending on one's financial condition, should he or she be parsimonious in a "selective scale", or on the contrary be somewhat extravagant in a "smaller scale". To be honest I really do not know how to answer the question mentioned above. Most of all, let us pray and make every effort to be in good health, so as to enable us enjoy a happy life, full of laughter and happiness always. Then may I thank you for your time in reading this manuscript.

Surabaya, 5th of February 2014