

CHURCH and HOME

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Past and Present.

Old men nearing the end of their life's journey tantalise those of a younger generation by continually asserting that things are not now as they were in their early days. As we read ancient books we find that depreciation of the present was a favourite pastime with all old people. Books of two or three thousand years ago tell us how the old men of that time asserted that men were neither so strong nor so wise, nor so upright as in their younger days. In all succeeding times some have been found to maintain the same idea. If our world has been so constantly degenerating what an awful difference must there be now between what it was and what it is. If the fond fancy of the aged of our race can be trusted then our object should be to reproduce again the glowing colours of the happy time and the highest wisdom would demand the conservation of the laws and practices of our forefathers.

But is the assertion really true? Some folks assert that the climate is not so genial nor so regular as in former times. Some say the average temperature is increasing, others hold it to be diminishing, but all agree that the old weather was better. Yet history does not sustain such assertions. No material alter-

ation has occurred in the external world except what man has caused by his own labour.

Again, men tell us that in former times the race was of greater bodily stature and strength. We now are puny representatives of the heroes and warriors of the golden age. Bones were found during excavations and we were told of the giants of olden days. Science has now demonstrated that these relics were the remains of mastodons, megatheriums and kindred quadrupeds now long extinct. Examination of human skeletons prove exactly the opposite. On the whole man's average stature has not varied to any great extent. The Egyptian mummies of three thousand years ago show very little difference in stature between the men of that day and our own. People, however, were said to be stronger then than now. We are shown arm our that could hardly be borne, and swords that cannot be wielded by men of our times. Yet history tells how these mailed warriors were often helpless from the very weight of their defences, and were easily defeated by troops equipped in a less cumbersome fashion. The victories of Bannockburn and Cressy, and the defeat of the French armies by the Swiss mountaineers, can all be cited against the usefulness of the old