

## Comment by the Editor

### THOSE GOOD OLD DAYS

What is so rare as the past? It is gone forever and can not be restored at any price. Only in the memory of the living do the days that are gone have vitality. No amount of historical description can possibly clothe the events and conditions of other generations with the reality that comes from experience. After all, we live but once, no matter how familiar we may be with the biography of others. There is a vast difference between memory and imagination.

Both memory and imagination, however, contrive to embellish the past with the glamour of splendid achievements and better ways. The "Golden Age" is always past. "Oh God! Put back Thy universe and give me yesterday", is a common prayer of those who have lived long and not too wisely. The good old days were filled with happiness and romance because people tend to forget the sorrow and dull routine of life and cherish the beautiful and the good. In a sense this praise of the past is the proof of human aspiration: it is the instinctive response to St. Paul's admonition, "Prove all things: hold fast that which is good." It is natural that the old should extol the days of their youth, that the feeble

should yearn for the period of their vigor, and that the disappointed should hold dear the springtime of their hopes.

So it is among the people of Iowa who go back into their yesterdays, remembering those good old days when the endurance of hardship was a matter of course and economy was a common virtue; when singing schools and quilting bees were considered amusement; before cutters and sleigh-bells had given way to Fords with raucous klaxons; when dancing was buoyant and entertainment home-made and informal; when the saxophone was used as a musical instrument instead of a weapon; when dime novels were read surreptitiously; when men wore boots and women fainted.

With the passing years we have grown sophisticated in our pleasures at the price of spontaneity. Enthusiasm now borders upon impropriety, while genuine fun is passé. Would that some of the youthful ardor of former times could be revived and mirth be unrestrained again.

J. E. B.