

# Things Said Never Bad As They Seem

By JAMIE BUCKINGHAM

To keep from being totally overwhelmed by the present, we need to take a long look at the past. Seeing things in their true perspective often makes mountains dwindle into molehills.

Excavators dug up a clay tablet from the ruins of old Babylon. Historians now rank it as one of the earliest pieces of recorded writing in existence.

**AFTER YEARS** it was finally translated. It read: "Alas! Alas! Things are not what they used to be. Children no longer obey their parents. Everybody wants to write a book. And the signs are multiplying that the world is coming to an end."

Only a fool would say that things are getting better and better every day in every way. But on the other hand, only a fossil would feel that there is no hope for the future — or the future generation.

The following editorial appeared in Harper's Magazine:

"It is a gloomy moment in history. Not for many

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## PERSPECTIVE

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years has there been so much grave and deep apprehension, and never has the future seemed so incalculable as at this time. In France, the political cauldron seethes and bubbles with uncertainty; Russia hangs, as usual, like a cloud dark and silent upon the horizon; while all the energies and influences of the British Empire are sorely tried . . ."

**THE DATE OF** the editorial: October 10, 1857. More than 100 years ago.

Maybe the poet was right when he said with tongue in cheek:

My granddad, viewing earth's worn cogs  
Said things were going to the dogs;  
His granddad in his house of logs  
Swore things were going to the dogs;  
His granddad in the Flemish bogs  
Vowed things were going to the dogs;  
His granddad in his old skin togs  
Said things were going to the dogs.

Well, there's one thing I have to state:  
Those dogs have had a good, long wait.

If we are disheartened by what we see around us, it's because we're nearsighted. This is the most fantastic and challenging age in history to live. I'm excited about it. If you aren't, then what you need is "distance glasses."

It was Emerson who said, "The years teach much which the days never know."

So take the long look at life. Take a look at the Author and Creator of life. Look at life like God looks at it.

Maybe then things won't seem quite as bad as they seem.