

# RURAL MORALS ARE BETTER THAN CITY--RUBERT HUGHES

It has always puzzled me to understand why people assume that God made the country and men made the towns; for if God made the country He also made the men who make the towns, and he put into men's breasts the love of gathering together for mutual help, comfort and improvement.

Furthermore, the towns are mostly filled with people who were born in the country or who actually live in the country.

The number of rich people in New York or any other city who go out to a farm every evening is enormous.

Damning the Arts. The wickedness of the arts is sufficient to make the city less wicked than the town. Just because they have at hand so many amusements and diversions, of course many moralists find these amusements wicked in themselves. If we listened to all the sects there would be no theaters, art galleries, dance halls, or moving picture emporiums, and libraries would be cut down to theological debates.

The cities are indeed vicious if all who either patronize or make possible the dramatic and fictional arts are damned to begin with. But the world without the actor, playwright and theatrical manager known as Shakespeare would be much improved.

If it came to a question of doing without Shakespeare, Dr. John Roach Straton, I'm afraid I do not hesitate long.

The records of crimes committed in the rural regions include the most appalling known to mankind. Violations of women flourish to an extent undreamed of except by the sheriffs and constables who pursue in vain. Burn-burning has been a favorite out-

door sport. Theft and murder are as frequent as convictions are rare. The town finds its breeding-ground in rural sections, and many lonely communities are simply festering with abominations.

Some Sobering Facts. I was foreman of a county grand jury once for six weeks, and I don't want anybody to talk to me about rural innocence or noble purity. Even if my oath did not forbid my telling what I heard, my discretion would, for nobody would print it.

My father's first client was a big brute who was accused of burning numerous barns for the sheer pleasure of the fire-works.

When I was about a year old my father failed to prosecute a Missouri farmer charged with killing a neighbor's horse and chopping off the heads of a man, his wife and their six children. The jury acquitted him, but the neighbors promptly lynched him.

In a small city where I lived for a time a young 16-year-old girl took part in a wild all-night carousal with five young men, and the next day she was dead.

A distinguished lecturer told me recently that the principal of the high school in a certain city of moderate population told him that during the last year 24 of his girl pupils had had illegitimate children.

Some Horrifics. About a year ago the whole country was torn up by the trial of a small town university brought suit against a local clothing merchant to force him to support a child of which the professor's wife had confessed his paternity.

More recently a small city in the northern part of the south made some

excitement over the fact that six men and women had been shot to death in a Lovell Lane just outside of Omaha.

A letter recently received from a woman in a small New England town told me that three young couples had ridden over to a neighboring village for a brisk evening, from the effects of which four of them had died. Not a word appeared in the newspapers.

We should not let ourselves be deceived by publicity. The tragedies of humble people in small communities do not make headlines.

Publicity and Sin. A divorce suit by a woman or a man of national prominence for some professional, social or financial reason will fill columns in every newspaper of the land. A hundred divorces by obscure people will not even be listed.

A Texas judge recently granted 213 divorces in 230 minutes. Nobody probably even read the names of any of the 213. Yet you can hardly pick up a paper in which you do not find a daily reference to the unpleasant domestic squabble of a certain New Yorker who has the unfortunate combination of big money and a bad temper.

It is a ridiculous, a wicked habit of thought to deduce general opinions from headlines. Because rich and famous people get large space when their affairs go wrong, nearly everybody assumes that rich and famous people are more reckless and wicked than poor and humble folk.

A clubman in New York was found dead in his pajamas with a handful of letters in his hand and a bullet in his heart. The newspapers made him famous, and called him richer than

he was. The whole nation puzzled its head for months over the still unsolved mystery of his death, and a number of women who had the bad luck to know him had the same fame thrust upon them. Yet hundreds, thousands of unknown poor men and women are found dead, exhibited in morgues and stuffed into Pottery's fields without comment.

A famous case that filled the front pages for years concerned a bank president who accused his wife of an illicit affair with an Indian guide. Where the guilt—if any—lay, who shall know? But it was credited to the corruptions of city life though the sin, if sin there was, was committed in the most beautiful rural regions, close to nature's heart, in the very core of the country little troubled by mankind.

Before me lies a paper describing the finding of the body of a young girl who was an organist in a village church. Her father refused to go to her funeral, saying, "She was always gallivanting around with the boys. She never stayed at home much." The day before she disappeared she mailed postcards to six of her attendants, three of them married men.

Before me lies an account of an orgy in a small southern town with a drunken riot in the village square.

Comparative Wickedness. In the same region a farmer was so disgusted because crowds of young people used to visit a pond on his farm at night and bathe there, that one night he stole all their clothes. A wild farce ensued in the effort to get everybody home without discovery.

One could go on forever quoting instances of depravity in country-side and village peace. But the very

mention of them would be charged against me as an unpardonable offense.

Yet things go on and are well known to everybody who lives in such regions. And still the cry goes up that the cities are more wicked than the small communities.

Wickedness is not a matter, however, of populations. It is a matter of the coincidence of temperaments in a common mood with the favorable opportunity.

Temptation and Opportunity. I assail the small community and the rural reputation, not because I consider them worse than the city evils, but because they are universal, proclaimed as better.

There is safety in numbers. There is solitude in crowds, there is also protection in crowds. Crowds make an excellent chaperon.

On the other hand opportunity is in itself rather a hindrance to temptation than a help to it. The greatest temptations are due to unexpected encounters, to peculiar and unusual moods. They are not sins of intention or of character; they are accidental mistakes. They may happen in a city or in the most bucolic scenes.

In the great cities there are millions of people who live modestly, virtuously, modestly. The country regions have their swagging brutes and their untamed rakes. In both realms all sorts of people dwell.

Americans in Paris. No sharp line can be drawn between the two. There is much ado over the vices that cities purvey to visitors from out of town, to the buyers and small merchants and country-folk out for a look. But surely if people come in from the country

to hunt wickedness, they bring with them as much as they find.

Paris has long had a bad name because of the misbehavior of Americans and other tourists there. But the Americans must share the blame. In the great cities one finds many virtues as well as many vices that the country and the small town cannot provide.

The great movements for the prevention of disease, of cruelty to children and to animals; all the great endeavors of charity find their highest expression there. And I consider the love and the culture of beauty in all its forms a virtuous act.

I consider a great work of architecture, a noble deed whether it be a cathedral, an art gallery, a custom house, a theater, a movie palace or a residence.

I consider a great play a virtuous achievement, and grand opera a high attainment of human merit striving to be divine. I consider a symphonic concert or a gorgeous ballet or a superb moving picture among the most worthy achievements of the human soul at its best. I consider a great fresco, a great sculpture or painting, a magnificent badge, a subway system, a railroad, a steamship, an airplane—all of these and many more, to be downright acts of virtue.

For virtue is not to be a matter of avoiding the doing of a great number of things. It is not "I don't," "I didn't," that does a soul worth while, but "I do," "I did."

The man who, in his passionate eagerness to beautify and cheer his fellow men and women and to adorn the scene of the drapery of his life, is now and then swept beyond the bounds of discretion or propriety, is not to me one-half the sinner that

he or she is who abstains from everything civilized and glorious for fear of a misstep.

The great goodnees of the city to me is that in it men and women band together and co-operate for beauty and joy, for health and comfort. Vast municipal enterprises are to me helpisms of the loftiest kind.

I thrill as fiercely as anybody to a sunrise or sunset, to a mountain or a violet, a sea in storm or a sky full of pink clouds. But why should I rave over these as the wonderful and perfect works of a benevolent Creator who made them all for me with His own incomprehensible hand, and then turn and curse some city where a million or more human beings have combined to build homes and offices and factories, and to provide hospitals, orphan asylums, theaters, opera houses, athletic clubs and what not for the welfare of one another?

How can a man gaze upon the vast terraces of the skyscrapers of New York, Chicago, Philadelphia, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Kansas City and other cities and call them the evil works of Babylon?

Is the dirty tramp who slinks down the lane and cooks his stolen chicken in a thicket with his booby companions nearer God than the engineer who drives his crowded train along the paths of the elevated, carrying thousands to their toll and home again to their families?

I have seen as wonderful sunsets and moon skies down the canyons of city streets as I ever saw in the deserts or the mountains. I have seen as much brotherly love and gentleness among city policemen as I have seen among the dear old village folk or the God-fearing farmers.

So have you. So has everybody. I love the country and I own a farm where I spend many happy days and nights among the most pleasant people. But I love also the vast throngs of the football games, or the gleaming horsehoe of the Metropolitan opera house.

Not Place, But People. The shop girl or the stenographer at her task, or hurrying home or sauntering to a movie with her steady eye, is no neither less nor more poetical than a sweet country lass lugging her smoking milkpail or scattering her painful of corn among the chickens, or drifting down the twilight lane with the hired man "to see the view."

Crimes are committed in all places—all sorts of crimes. And they look ugly and hateful in the result; but they are the gestures of people in torment and they are pitiful in their origins.

There are rich people who have gentle, simple hearts, and there are poor people who are cruel and contented. There are palaces where there is contentment and cottages where there is horror. The reverse is true. And the man who has self-respect enough to wish to hold and to voice only such opinions as are based on truth and on mercy will be ashamed of silly impulses to denounce one class of society in general or to praise another unduly. He will avoid the ancient and dishonorable folly of repeating the mossy-green lie that cities are bad and villages good.

It is not the cities or the villages that are either good or bad, but the people in them. And people are only people all the world over, world without end, Amen.

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# DOHENEY'S INNER LIFE PRESENTS PATHETIC PICTURE

By MARK SULLIVAN. Washington, Feb. 16.—Here in Washington we haven't yet got used to the picture Mr. Doheny gave us of himself. Most of us whose work takes us among public characters had run across him from time to time.

Doheny didn't even seem to make any effort to put his case in a light favorable to himself.

When he was on the stand the first time, and told frankly of his own initiative, the story of the \$100,000 loan—if it was a loan—to Fall, nearly everybody who knew the background felt rather kindly toward Doheny. At that time the tendency of most observers was to put most of the odium on Doheny's parity, at least, to exculpate Fall.

As to Fall, the condemnation was severe. Fall was an experienced public man who knew the law and the properties. Also, Fall had already lied about the money; had made it get from one man and later admitted he did not get it from that man.

Fall Asked for Loan. And so, when Doheny came forward and said he was the man who gave the \$100,000 to Fall, the result

was increased condemnation of Fall, coupled with a disposition to try to find some amelioration for Doheny. Doheny said Fall had initiated the transaction, had asked for the loan. That caused everybody in Washington to turn thumbs down on Fall.

As to Doheny, one could see how he might have made the loan on the basis of the fact that he had a second appearance of Doheny's was the one in which he recited the list of public men he had fired. He had the air of calling the roll of them like an ostentatious king giving an inventory of his possessions.

"Paid for Influence." He used such bald phrases as "I paid them for their influence." If some hostile lawyer had set out to put the worst possible words into

Doheny's mouth he couldn't have done worse.

When he described himself in the case of several Democrats he employed, as a rich man doing business with the government who wants influence and buys it, he could not thereafter go back to the claim that he was not a case of buying influence, but merely a case of doing a favor for "quid pro quo."

He seemed to exult in making the case seem as bad as possible for McAdoo and the others—and therefore for himself as well.

There were a good many surmises as to Doheny's motive. There was talk of his being "put up to it" by republican lawyers, or by Jim Reed, in order to discredit McAdoo and the others. Probably a more complete explanation is that Doheny was angry. It is said that Doheny on occasion can get very angry indeed, and that when he gets angry there's no stopping him. The story is that after his first testimony he read the speeches made for him and Fall by Senator Heflin and some other Democrats and thereupon made up his mind to go on the stand again, and tell what he could tell about

Democrats he had employed; and tell in a way to put it in the worst possible light.

No "Cool Oil Johnnie." Doheny was no "cool oil Johnnie." He gives the impression of a modest man of stable character and dependable substance. He is quite a different type from Sinclair.

If you should meet Doheny and talk with him and did not know his background you might say that he was the professor of philosophy in some backwater college. He is distinctly a man of thought and enthusiasm for ideas, although Doheny himself had comparatively little formal education.

Doheny, in dinner table conversation with friends, used to recount his own experiences in Mexico and from them draw generalizations about the philosophy of social organization and the individual conduct of life. Before he set up his great refineries in Mexico he said the native used to get up in the morning, put on an antique hat by his grandfather had woven 75 years before, go out and sit on whatever side of the adobe hut was sunny, and as the sun moved on, keep chang-

ing to the sunny side. This was the Indian philosophy of life.

Made Mexicans Work. Doheny needed labor. He wanted those Mexicans to work for him. And they, by all their ideas of the conduct of individual existence and by all their traditions, set no value on continuous daily toil or on the fruits thereof. Doheny put his mind on the problem of giving these Indians an incentive to work. He did it by setting up stores in which he sold straw hats with bright colored bands from the United States; phonographs and other things tempting to a simple people. Then he offered them \$3 a day to work for him. The wish to get American hats and other things novel to them tempted them to work for the money they had to have in order to buy.

Doheny thought, with all the earnestness of his soul, that he had done a fine thing for these Indians and for the world.

It was difficult to realize that Doheny was not a professor of philosophy and economics, but an old prospector for oil who had finally struck it and grown greatly rich, one who had spent most of his youth and much

of his mature life as a grub-staked wanderer.

That was the sort of conversation that casual acquaintances had with Doheny, and the kind of man he revealed himself to be when one had the opportunity of leisurely luncheon with him.

Doheny spent most of his formative years not in schools, but as a lonely, grubstaked, poverty-stricken wanderer on the desert. Doubtless it was the quiet of these lonely days and nights that he became a man of reflection.

For 20 years he prospected for gold and silver. Then he turned to oil, and found it in several places in our own southwest and in Mexico. He found one spot where a well poured forth upward of 2,000 barrels of oil every hour for years. After he found his oil he organized his companies with business skill. He cast away none of his vitality in dissipation and very little of it in any form of recreation. He built a fine home in California, but aside from that he lived simply. He seemed neither to care for money for the sake of keeping it nor for the sake of ostentatious display. When, in testifying in the

Fall case, he said it was his custom to give money to any old acquaintance who asked for it, he told the truth. He gave much money to technical engineering schools and that sort of thing.

Loyal to Associates. An acquaintance asked Doheny when he was telling his difficulties with the then government of Mexico, why he kept it up—why should he, then 63, stick to the harassments of hustling back and forth from Mexico to Washington, to Los Angeles, to New York, fretting his spirit and wearing himself out to safeguard his corporations.

He merely smiled and said some thing about obligations of loyalty to associates whose "prosperity was bound up with his."

One wonders if he wishes now that he had retired. There is something almost pitiful about this old man of 68 rushing up and down the country. One thinks of him not as owning his possessions, but as being owned by them, driven and harassed by them.

Doheny thought passionately that he had a correct philosophy of the world, but one wonders if he really had a correct one for himself. When

you saw him going in and out of the committee room you wondered if he were really as happy as one of the elderly watchmen who read the newspaper at their ease and doze the afternoon away in freedom from care.

Irony of His Work. A good deal of Doheny's thought ran in the direction of maintaining democracy and the whole present system of organized society. He dreaded the thing that was attempted in Russia—dreaded it not so much for the sake of his own possessions, but dreaded it rather as fatal to all that he regarded as being for human good.

When Mexico tried an experiment looking in the direction of communism Doheny felt it was another menace to civilization.

And now the ironic fact is that this unostentatious man, who seemed less concerned about money for his personal sake than about individual ownership as a theory of organized society—this man is one of the central figures in a scandal about which it has been said that no propaganda coming out of Russia has done as much to undermine public confidence in government and big business as has the oil scandal.

Can they control the wilder elements as well as their own party? Will they remain united, or will personal rivalries lead to further distraction, bloodshed and anarchy?

Although there are many capable men at the head of affairs in Russia today, there is no one who possesses the gifts and influence of Lenin. The world is apt to write him down as a monster. He is too early yet to estimate fairly his real qualities. In the past, monsters have been makers of Russia.

The history of revolution, after the fall of the central figure, is ominous of troubles. There is no parliament or democracy in Russia in which the ultimate authority is vested. There is, therefore, no arbiter of disputes except force. Unless and until events demonstrate that the Russian government is stable and can be depended upon, I cannot see investors forming queues when the next Russian loan is being floated.

It is, therefore, no matter of dispute that they should win the confidence of

# RUSSIA'S FUTURE HANGS ON FAITH OF FINANCIERS

By DAVID LLOYD GEORGE. Special Cable to The Omaha Bee. London, Feb. 16.—Great Britain is according a quasi de jure recognition to Russia. I say "quasi" because questions arising out of the recognition are still to be settled. There are two important facts in the international relations of Europe which will have a bearing of unknown significance upon its future.

For the moment there will be no Russian ambassador at the court of St. James, but the bolshevik charge d'affaires will appear there and a British charge d'affaires will be received in Moscow. There may be a change in the Russian representative in London, but his status will be exalted. Rakovsky is in London today as the official representative of the soviet republic, but he is merely a trade representative. He was relegated to the plebeian corridors of the board of trade, and even there rarely, if ever, was he allowed to enter the sanctum of the president.

In the days of the coalition the Russian emissary was received at Downing street, and there discussed with the prime minister matters of common interest to both countries. But the coalition drove the bolshevik lepers outside the gates, and Lord Curzon flung stones at them with his rhetorical catapult. His intention, no doubt, was to scare them away altogether. His effort entirely failed, but still there was on real intercourse between the governments.

Now that Rakovsky and O'Grady are arrayed in the panoply of diplomacy, will it make any difference? A great deal. Not because of the change of status, but more because of the improvement in the atmosphere. The frost-bitten diplomacy of 1923 has disappeared and a real thaw has set in.

Mr. Acknowledge Debts. The proposals of the Genoa conference stipulated that, as a condition of de jure recognition, the Russian government should acknowledge the debts incurred by its predecessors to foreign lenders and should restore the confiscated property of foreigners inside Russia or compensate them for the loss. And, moreover, the soviet government should undertake not to organize, assist or countenance any hostile propaganda against the laws and institutions of another country.

On the main condition there was, at that date, complete accord between the powers negotiating with Russia.

When the Russian delegates put in a plea of poverty for their country and pointed to the desolating ruin of war and civil dissension and to the ravages of pestilence and famine the French delegates were scornful. It was our barbarians or hordes that repudiated honest debts for honest money advanced by neighbors. The argument had its entertaining side for the delegates of Great Britain. They, however, refrained from pressing home the moral of the French contention.

But agreement was found to be impossible.

Payment Not Made. The net result has been that the Belgian investors have not had their property restored or received compensation in respect of it, that each year that property is deteriorating and chances of compensation are becoming more remote, and that the French investor has received nothing in respect of his Russian bonds and is now less likely than ever to do so.

But agreement was found to be impossible.

The British worker and the capitalist both need trade with Russia. The soviet government, having secured recognition from Britain, Italy, Germany and possibly Czechoslovakia will not, in my opinion, think it worth their while burdening Russia with the full Genoa terms in order to purchase recognition from France and Belgium.

The United States of America will come in on its own terms and only in its own good time. The American government is hardly likely to take upon itself the worries of French and Belgian diplomacy so that, in the end, French and Belgian investors will suffer for the working of the policy played by the Poincare government during the efforts made at Genoa to restore peace in Europe.

The labor government is quite justified in entering into separate negotiations with Russia by worrying the soviets about claims of French and Belgian investors.

How will it work out? That will depend on what happens in Russia. I have no doubt that the present Russian government is sincerely desirous of establishing good relations with Britain. Russia needs credit on a large scale. No country in the world has suffered so much from the war and the unknown as the Russian people. The little peddling arrangements by which they have been able to carry through from time to time are ridiculously inadequate to Russia's real needs.

Estimated Need Modest. Russian delegates at Genoa placed their immediate requirements in the way of foreign credits at 400,000,000 pounds. That figure is modest when one thinks of Russia's deficiencies in

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