

"Mr. Dooley" on Uplifting the Farmers

By F. P. DUNNE

"Well, sir," said Mr. Dooley, "I see that me fri'nd Tiddy Rosenfelt has app'nted a commission to make th' wives iv th' farmers happy though marri'd."

"What are they onhappy about?" asked Mr. Hennessy.

"Faith, I don't know," said Mr. Dooley. "But Tiddy Rosenfelt has a fri'nd that says they're wretched. 'Tis conthry to me own idee iv what Hogan calls the boocolick life. I've often thought that if Jawn D. Rockefeller iver wint crazy fr'm th' dhrink an' left me a fortune iv two or three hundherd dollars I'd l'ave th' sinseless luxury iv th' rollin'-mill distriect an' buy an' estate out among th' lillboards an' settle down with th' hardy agaricoolchists an' mangle th' stubborn glebe, as Shakespear says. 'Twas me hope so to end me days. I niver see many farmers. They don't get out this way often. But me idee iv a farmer was a care-free fellow that arose fr'm his bed in time to wake th' lark, shampooed th' horses, milked th' cows, satisfied th' cravings iv th' inner hog, honed th' scythe, ground th' sickle, and returned to th' house with a wholesome appytite fr' breakfast fr'm siven to siven-three; after that he whiled away th' mornin' hours ploughin' ontill dinner-time, when he discussed a hearty repast between twelve an' twelve-three; thence he dawdled through th' afternoon ploughin' ontill th' welcome sound iv th' supper-horn rang in his ears, when he ran home an' ate supper with th' family fr'm six to six-three. Th' avenin' hours were devoted to ploughin', after which, havin' seen that th' horses an' cows had nawthin' to complain iv fr' th' night, he dashed to his bedroom, took a half-hour's useful exercise fr' th' muscles iv th' leg with a bootjack, an' thin fell asleep upon a bed that had been intinded fr' a rail fence but was disqualified fr' irregularity.

"A wholesome life. As fr' th' farmer's wife, if she wasn't happy who shud be? All she had to attend to was th' care iv th' house, th' cookin', th' chickens, th' childer an' th' churn. Surrounded be th' beauties iv nature, why shud she complain? Ivry rusle iv th' breeze in th' orchard promised her presarves to be put up in th' fall. Th' chickens strutting an' cackling in th' farmyard spoke iv eggs to be fried. Th' lowing kine brought thoughts to her mind iv th' churn. Fr'm her parlor window she cud see the golden buckwheat gleamin' in th' sun, remindin' her that th' autumn was approachin' with its stimulat' combats between her griddle an' th' hired man's appetite.

"But it seems that with all these here advantages th' farmers' wives are not happy, an' Tiddy Rosenfelt proposes to see about it. Th' idee iv annybody bein' onhappy makes him feel bad. He wud like to see th' whole wurruld inj'yin' itself. Ti-ra-li is his motto. So he's app'nted a commission to venture far, far beyond th' last livated railroad station an' ask th' farmers' wives why they are onhappy.

"'Tis a pearious job these here gentlemen have undertaken. Wan iv thim has been lacerated be dog bites, a sicond is suferin' fr'm a contusion under th' left eye caused be a copy iv a 'Garland iv Verse' flung at him be an anguished lady, while a third is a defindant in a breach iv promise suit. But, nawthin' daunted, they go on with their labors.

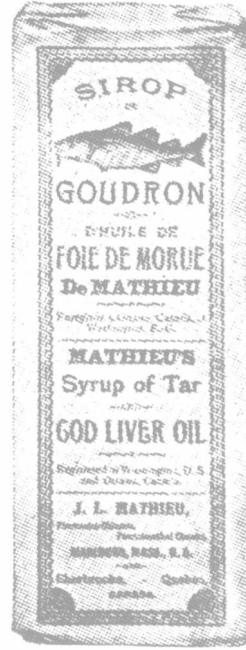
"Th' preeliminary report is nearly ready; Th' commission met at wanst an' repaired post haste on a throlley-car to th' rural distriects. We were surprised to find that th' throlley line did not stop at th' city limits, but wint on out into th' country. This suggested wan reason fr' th' onhappiness iv th' farmers' wives. In th' city th' clangin' iv th' throlley-car gong is softened be a multichood iv other intolerable noises; but in th' country it has no competition but th' crickets, th' cows, th' dogs, Lucille Ann playin' th' gramophone, an' father sleepin' like a child on th' lounge. We left th' throlley-car at what appeared to be a farm an' winted our way to'rds a comfortable-lookin' abode sit-

uated as near to th' highway as it cud be without bein' run over be auty-mobills. Entherin', we found a lady who was readin' a book, weepin', an' atin' a chocolate aclare at wan an' th' same time. "Madame," says I, "why do ye weep?" "I weep," says she, "fr' th' sorrows iv Bertha, th' poor sewin'-machine girl." We made a note at wanst fr' th' Prisdint that a gr-reat sthride to'rds th' happiness iv th' farmers' wives could be gained be securin' th' happiness iv Bertha, th' poor sewin'-machine girl. "But," says I, "what else have ye to disthress ye? Surely this is not all. Bertha cannot last fr'iver. Soon she will marry th' rich mill-owner's son, an' thin what will ye have to fall back on fr' a sob? Is not ye'er home life mis'rable? Don't ye have rows with th' old man? Explain why ye are an object iv commiseration to th' wurruld, so much so that ivry time th' Prisdint thinks iv ye'er abject condition he burts into tears iv pity," says I.

"At this th' lady rose an' demanded to know what we meant be intrudin' on th' privacy iv her home an' insultin' a lone woman. She stated that she wud have us to know that she was no more onhappy thin anny other lady, an' that th' commission wud be much better employed if they wint home an' inquired into th' causes iv th' onhappiness iv their (th' commission's) own wives, although th' same wud not be hard fr' anny wan to determine who wanst got a good look at us (th' commission). Th' onhappy woman further alleged that it was a good thing fr' th' commission that her husband had not come home fr'm th' meetin' iv th' directors iv th' bank, but she wud show th' commission that an American lady cud protiect herself. As we did not wish further to disturb her, an' as she was edgin' over toward an onyx clock on th' mantelpiece th' commission thought it best to retire, which it did. I regret to have to report that Profissor Higgins, th' indefatygable scretary iv th' commission, severely injured his kneepan gettin' over th' fence."

"Well, sir, I expiect great things fr'm th' commission, Hinnessy. I'm sure Tiddy Rosenfelt is not goin' to stop when he has discovered th' causes iv onhappiness on th' farm an' removed thim be an act iv Congress. Onhappiness is a very gin'ral complaint. It is wan iv th' gr-reatest curses iv th' human race. It attacks us before our first tooth comes, an' stays with us afther our last has gone. It is sthrange that iv all th' men who have governed counthries, fr'm Solomon down, Tiddy Rosenfelt is th' first to undhertake a scientific investigation iv th' subject. Afther he has got th' farmers' wives to singin' sure he will app'nt other commissions. Th' commission on onhappiness among infants will advocate th' abolition iv pins, parents an' prickly heat, an' th' substitution iv false teeth fr' th' nachral article. It will be found that little boys can be made happy be burnin' th' school-houses an' supplyin' each little boy with a set iv tin entrails. Much can be accomplished fr' th' happiness iv little girls be th' abolition iv bashfulness an' an onlimited supply iv pickled limes. Onmarried people shud be marri'd an' marri'd people shud be onmarri'd. Th' onhappiness iv th' poor can be relieved with more money an' so can th' onhappiness iv th' rich!

"Well, sir, 'tis a tur-rible problem this here wan iv human onhappiness. If Tiddy Rosenfelt finds out th' causes iv it he'll be th' gr-reatest man since Moses. Some folks say th' on'y way to be happy is to wurruk. Maybe that accounts fr' th' onhappiness among th' farmers. Perhaps they wud be merryer if some employment cud be found fr' thim, preferably in th' open air. Some say 'tis money; they're poor. Some say



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