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Circa 1920s?
Daily Express Article: Village of Broad Smiles – Newbold Verdon the happiest village in England

VILLAGE OF BROAD SMILES.

WHY THERE IS MIRTH IN LEICESTERSHIRE.

"Daily Express" Special Correspondent.

NEWBOLD VERDUN
(Leicestershire), Friday.

This village is certainly the happiest in all England. Led by the robust Rev. Hugh Legge, Newbold Verdun laughs through life like a man who is assured of Paradise—and the Reverend Hugh, who, as I related yesterday, has advertised for a cook with a sense of humour, is, perhaps, the happiest of them all.

After last night's chat with him on his nice taste in domestics, I visited the village to see for myself if it was as wonderful as the vicar had painted it, and if the villagers cracked jokes as often as a monkey cracks nuts.

"They say life's a gamble," said the thatcher, "But's better'n 'orse racin', bah goom, 'tis, for you never lose nothin' by backing a living, do you, Mr. Legge?"

The congenial spirit of the thatcher is common throughout the village. There is a coal mine close by, and Mr. Robert Smillie would have rejoiced to see how happy a miner can be on the minimum wage and a cultivated sense of humour. These miners laughed and lingered as they walked to work as if coal-mining was as easy as a job in Whitehall.

The farm hands, too, were as bright as buttons. They told me that the English climate is the finest in the world; that Leicestershire was the finest county in England, and that Newbold Verdun was the finest village in Leicestershire.

All the same, I have a suspicion in my mind that this unwonted cheerfulness is not entirely due to the influence of the genial rector. Mrs. Legge told me that there is not a telephone in the village. Surely this is enough to make the heaviest heart glad?