

Chapter – 1

God Made the Country

About the Poet

William Cowper's (1731-1800) poems show deep respect for the rural life, the common people and the lovely, quiet landscape.

Main idea(s) of the poem

The poem is about

- the creation of countryside by God
- the evolution of towns by men
- rural life is natural, quiet, simple and tension-free
- urban life is artificial, noisy and luxurious

Presentation/ style

- The poem uses the scale of contrast.
- He compares the rural life and the urban life.

Features of Rural (Village) life in the poem

- Life close to nature:
 - Open fields and Trees
 - Birds are found chirping
 - Moonlight at night
 - Thrush and nightingale sing sweetly
 - Trees give shade and coolness
- The life is calm and quiet
- People live natural life
- People feel peace and comfort
- People are hard-working
- People are healthy.

Features of Urban (Town) life in the poem

- People are not close to nature
 - Thrush and nightingale become silent
 - Lamps do not allow people to enjoy moonlight
- Atmosphere is very noisy
- They live artificial and luxurious life:
 - They see only artificial paintings

- They depend on vehicles and artificial light (lamp/ electricity)
- People are not laborious
- They lack good mind and good heart
- Worry and anxiety (harmful thoughts) fill in their mind.

Conclusion

- The creation of God (countryside) is better than that of man (town)
- Village life is full of peace and comfort whereas town life is very noisy.
- The closeness of village life to nature suggests that God created the countryside.
- The distance of the town life from Nature suggests that man (and not God) made the town
- The poet lives in a village so he likes village life.

Questions

Now, on the basis of your understanding of this poem, try to answer the following questions:

1. Why does the poet believe that God made the country?
2. Why does the poet believe that man made the town?
3. Where does the narrator of the poem live?
4. Which two types of life have been compared in the poem?