

Lancaster Farming

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The Farm Income Situation

There is considerable optimism in Washington on the farm income situation. Figures show that in 1956 farmers enjoyed a four per cent rise in net farm income over the preceding year.

Economists in the Department of Agriculture predict that 1957 should show a like gain.

Prices being received by farmers are averaging about three per cent higher than a year ago and the general price picture appears steady for the foreseeable future.

Crop prices probably will be lower this year, according to Nathan M. Koffsky, chief, Farm Income Branch, Agricultural Marketing Service, but this probably will be offset by higher prices paid for cattle and hogs.

In general, he expects the volume of marketings of all farm commodities to be smaller this year.

Also coming into the farm income picture strongly this year for the first time is the Soil Bank. Although several million acres were in the acreage reserve last season, the act was approved and put into effect well after the planting season in many areas of the United States.

This year, the full potential of the act will be felt.

In the long range picture, a constant rise in production is to be expected. American farmers have shown that despite reduced acreages, they can still keep boosting production each year.

But offsetting this is the fact that stocks of agricultural commodities are being reduced through domestic consumption and through sales abroad. When the excess stocks are moved out, the price should rise appreciably.

It is this last item, the huge stocks of farm surplus food, that has the economists and the Secretary of Agriculture worried.

The economists say that gains in farm income gained can be maintained, but no real change can come until the stock level is down and not depressing the market.

At his news conference Monday, Sec. Benson said that the rigid formula of price supports will have to be removed before the excess stocks can be reduced.

Under the present laws, according to the Secretary, as stocks are reduced, the price supports must go up, thus tending to increase production into storage, thus again depressing the market.

But one item that no one seems to be able to control, support or parity, is the constantly rising cost of farm production. In 1939 the total farm production expense in the nation was \$4,394 million.

The costs hit a peak in 1952 when total costs amounted to \$22,476 million. In 1953 the figure dropped to \$21,246 million.

However, since that time, costs have risen steadily until last years total costs amounted to \$22,143 million, or about \$300 million under the all time high.

Where does all this leave the farmer? It leaves him trying every way to cut the costs of production. Fertilizer sales figures show that farmers have been buying plant food at a decreasing rate the last few years. Some observers believe that this year fertilizer sales may take a setback for the first time.

Farm machinery and feed dealers have felt the pinch of farm belt tightening for quite a while. This year, the farm machinery manufacturers expect a sizeable sales rise for the first time in several years. Rains in the growth areas, however, are responsible for most of this optimism.

Looking at the farm income picture as a whole indicates more clearly that while money can be made farming, efficient low cost production will be the key.



BY JACK REICHARD

50 YEARS AGO (1907)

A sudden and violent hail storm caused great damage across the countryside lying north of Oxford, Pa., May 19, 1907. The communities of Russellville and Faggs Manor were the worst sufferers. Hailstones the size of walnuts fell so thick and fast that they could be shoveled up the following morning. Nearly every window in Russellville was broken. Over 100 glass panes were broken from windows in the town hall and several dwellings had over 80 panes smashed.

The Faggs Manor Church did not escape; its windows were literally riddled with hailstones. The storm was the most severe in the memory of oldest living residents in the area.

On the farm of Edward Broomell a turkey was killed instantly when struck by a hailstone.

Shad Makes News In York County

Lovers of Susquehanna River shad were interested in the report that over 100 of the species were taken from the waters of York County's Conowago dam, 50 years ago this week. Thirty-five were caught in a single haul. The point where the shad were taken was between four and five miles from the Susquehanna, considered a rare occurrence by experienced shad fishermen. The only reason given for the migration so far inland from the river was thought due to an unusual large run of shad in 1907.

Town Fathers Erect Monument To Thief

The town trustees of Sheldon, Vt., has solved the problem of legally disposing of \$120 found on the body of a burglar who was shot dead by erecting a monument in their village with the following in scripture "To the unknown man who was shot in Messrs. Gennison & Gallop's Store while attempting to burgle the safe on the night of October 13, 1906

Rats Devour Pigs

Rats in Paris and Bourbon counties, Kentucky, were causing farmers great concern. William Layson had two litters of nine pigs each devoured by rats in an old straw rick. Edward Conway, a neighbor, killed 97 rats while cleaning a stable. James Humphrey reported killing 85 on his farm.

On a Pennsylvania farm, near Cochranville, Mrs. Thomas Neal lost a cow in a very unusual manner. The animal was pushed into a large watering trough by the other cows, with its feet straight up in air. The cow's body so completely filled the trough that she was unable to turn and drowned in less than 10 inches of water.

Charles Brady, a Lancaster farmer residing in Conestoga Township suffered painful injury when caught under the rear wheel of a four-horse team wagon. Brady was hauling sand from his farm that day, and while descending a hill the brake unlocked. He managed to stop the team, but came out of the mishap with a crushed ankle.

A Popular Teenagers' Game

Have you ever played lame fox and chickens? Well, it was a very popular game among teenagers in yesteryears. One of the players has to be the lame fox, and all the others are chickens. The fox has his "den" in the center of the ground or room in which the game is played, and the four corners are the chickens' "pens". The chickens keep running from corner to corner, and the fox, hopping on one leg, has to catch them. If he puts his foot down when a player is caught the catch doesn't count.

His foot can only be put down while standing in his den.

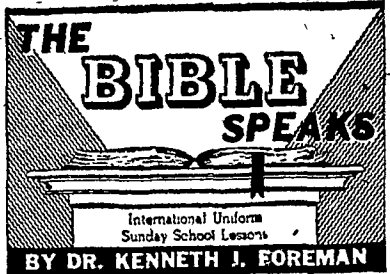
The chickens who remain uncaught longest wins the game. As long as the chickens are in any corner pens the fox must not touch them.

25 Years Ago

Dr. A. Caswell Ellis of Western Reserve University told delegates to the American Association of Adult Education in Buffalo, N. Y., that "events in recent years have proved that the leaders of education and schools that developed them have failed utterly" to train students for the responsibilities of citizenship.

He stated it was the general understanding that the primary justification of our expensive public school system, and to a great extent for the numerous kinds of schools and colleges, has been that they educated our citizens for the responsibilities of citizenship.

"It is well recalled that in the older days faculty members were not only specialists in their own subject but also dedicated to the vital mission of developing character in their students. Has the essential mission been entrusted to others or has it been lost in the shuffle of developing brilliant minds at the expense of human hearts?" Dr. Ellis challenged, 25 years ago.



BY DR. KENNETH J. FOREMAN
Background Scripture: Genesis 13: 18:1-19:29
Devotional Reading: Luke 11:1-13.

In a Bad World

Lesson for May 19, 1957

THIS world we're in may be a bad one, but it never gets so bad we can't pray. The worse it is, the more reason to pray. There is a story in the Bible which shows a good man at prayer in an evil world. There are many such stories in the Bible, to be sure. The one which has been selected for our study is that of Abraham pleading for the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah.



Dr. Foreman

Yet this good man prayed for those wicked cities. There have always been puzzlers in this story, but they are not the main point. That point has nothing to do with such questions as "How can God eat hot bread and veal roast?" or "How could Abraham see God if it is true (see John 1:18) that no man has seen God at any time? The point of the story, for us, is the kind of prayer a good man can offer, in and for an evil world.

Realistic

First of all, Abraham's prayer shows that he had no illusions about Sodom and Gomorrah. They were cities which he preferred to stay away from, cities notorious for wickedness unashamed. We do not know how many thousand persons there may have been in Sodom, but Abraham ventures to think that in the whole city there may perhaps be 50 righteous persons. Abraham's series of prayers in which he begs the Lord to spare the city for the sake of fifty—then 45—40—30—20—10 good people, is often taken as a sign of Abraham's growing faith in God. But it can just as well stand for Abraham's decreasing faith in Sodom. At the end, he would not dare ask God to spare the city for "twenty's sake,"—it is plain that he was very doubtful that there might be even that of good-

Pickpockets At Teachers' College

While attending the baccalaureate services of the Millersville State Teachers' College held in the campus chapel Sunday morning, May 22, 1932, Chester Monteith, Lancaster, was robbed of a wallet containing \$25 in cash; Norman Christ, borough assessor of Millersville, lost his wallet and \$13 in cash; S. R. Killian, of Rohrertown, had his purse and \$75 taken, and John W. Harra, ice manufacturer, of Engleside, was robbed of \$30 in cash.

Lancaster State Police were notified and investigated, but the only conclusion they had reached was that the robberies were executed by professional pickpockets, to which the victims agreed.

Elsewhere police and detectives of three states were trying to trap four gunmen who had killed a State Highway Patrolman and robbed a bank messenger of \$23,000 at New Castle, Pa.

After scattering roofing nails over eighteen miles of highway, the robbers fled toward the mountains in West Virginia.

Clarence Campbell, the patrolman, was killed with a sawed-off shotgun.

Twenty-five years ago this week, a large gathering of Lancaster countians took place in the Ephrata area on the High School campus to witness the annual May Day pageant under the direction of Miss Lois Hauck, in which the student body participated. Miss Mildred Cressman, supervisor of music for the borough schools, was in charge of the musical arrangements.

citizens. Children may play as if there were no evil in the world, but grown men even in their prayers must realize what kind of world they live in. Our Lord's Prayer mentions temptation and evil as real and dangerous, even for good men.

Generous

Abraham's prayer is not only realistic, it is generous. Readers of the Bible will remember Jesus' story of the Pharisee who in his prayer recalled the publican—a model citizen. But to the Pharisee the publican was not a man to be prayed for, only a man to be despised. Now Abraham was far better than the citizens of Sodom, if they were good at all, which seems doubtful; and he was better too than his relative, Lot, for whose sake he was chiefly praying. But he prays for them all the same. His prayer is of the highest sort—not for himself at all, but for others. The reader can test his religion by the kind of prayer he offers. One can ask oneself: How often do I pray for myself and how often for others? When I do pray for others, is it for good people only? Are my prayers an expression of selfishness, or can I offer generous prayers? How long has it been since I prayed for any one I didn't really like?

Daring

Abraham's prayer is humble; but it is also daring. Most of our prayers are safe; Abraham realizes that his is risky. It almost involves throwing a challenge to God: Shall not the judge of all the earth do right? This man realizes that he may actually be praying against God's will. He may be praying for the wrong thing entirely. But that does not stop him. He dares to believe that God was interested in a very small minority of good people. He dares to pray beyond his hopes, beyond his knowledge... but not beyond God. The God in whom Abraham believed, the God Abraham knew, was not like men. He did not—and he does not—share man's prejudices, man's pride. A man, even a good man, prides himself on not helping the unworthy; but God's mercy is untainted by conceit. Do we dare believe that God is just? Do we dare believe he will do the fair thing, or do we try to argue him into doing what we want even if it is not quite fair? Do we dare believe that God is merciful? or to pray for those who will not pray for themselves? Do we pray only for sure things, or do we dare go so far as to pray even when we fear that we may be asking too much? Can we stand and take God's No (as Abraham had to) and still hold our faith in Him?

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