

FROM WHERE WE STAND

Serendipity -- What Can It Do For You?

Some people get more done by accident than others do on-purpose.

It's true that some people just seem to get things accomplished. Sometimes it seems that even their mistakes turn out for the best.

One day in 1923, USDA scientists at Beltsville, Maryland tested a culture of *Brucella Abortus* taken from the milk of a cow infected with Brucellosis. The strain proved virulent. The story might have ended here had not the test tube been laid aside on the desk of research veterinarian J. M. Buck and remained there for over a year at room temperature.

Instead of throwing away this old culture, Buck tested it again and made an astonishing discovery; the bacteria had weakened, then stabilized at this low virulence.

The possibilities were evident. This strain could be inoculated into calves to organize their body defenses against more virulent strains. Research eventually gave us Strain 19 vaccine, one of our most effective weapons against Brucellosis.

Such happy accidents have played an important part in all fields of research.

A young Scottish chemist failed in his attempt to synthesize quinine — and recognized in his test tube our first coal tar or aniline dye.

A few decades back a French physician noted a drop in the level of blood sugar of typhoid patients treated with sulfonamide and pointed the way to a diabetes treatment.

Tragic accidents have produced many noteworthy achievements.

A young French chemist was unnerved by an automobile accident in which his pretty young wife had been badly cut by flying glass. In his laboratory he dropped a bottle of collodion, a sticky substance which dries quickly

in air. To his surprise the bottle did not shatter, but the pieces stuck to the collodion and shatter-proof car windows were born.

What about this ability to find good things we don't set out to look for—this serendipity, as it is called? Is it luck? Is it accident? Is it coincidence?

Yes, but it is more than that — a great deal more than that.

In looking at each of these incidents we see a scientist in the tradition of scientists asking, "What happened?" and "Why?" His mind was not confined to the thing he expected to happen. He did not accept failure and forgot the entire incident. He used the unexpected result to broaden his knowledge and lead to other discoveries.

Farmers can make use of serendipity. All too often we miss a good lesson when we make an error in fertilization or cultural practices with a crop. All too often we are prone to say, "Well, that was the wrong thing to do. I won't do that again." without really learning anything from the mistake.

There is reason to believe that serendipity can be encouraged. By exposing farm boys to as many experiences in the field of agriculture as possible, we can create a favorable atmosphere for these so-called accidents, by giving the farm boy the best possible basis for recognition of new uses of old practices and products.

Serendipity, of course, is no substitute for a well planned and controlled experiment. It is not an excuse for making mistakes or using practices that are known to be unsound, but it demands attention when we see farmers miss an answer which might come easy to one who recognizes it.

At least that's how it looks from where we stand.

accomplished through loans and purchases, marketing quotas, land retirement, and diversion of surpluses thru an expanded Food for Peace program and establishment of an "emergency reserve" of foods and fibers.

Mr. Kennedy said production and marketing control would be put into effect "only when at least two-thirds of the producers vote their approval in a referendum."

He warned, however that in order to attain full parity income farmers must be prepared to accept "sacrifice and discipline." He added he believed farmers will be willing to accept whatever controls that are necessary to reverse the long decline in farm income.

The issue of controls vs. free markets sharply divides the farm organizations in Washington. It is the issue, too, which we expect to be most hotly debated by Congress in 1961.

The word "agindustry" has coined by Dr. Lyman E. Jackson, Dean of the College of Agriculture at the Pennsylvania State University. Dr. Jackson believes the term "agindustry" defines more fully the whole industry of agriculture. The Penn State dean introduced the term in a paper he wrote for the U. S. Office of Education.

Rural Rhythms

WORK WELL DONE
By Carol Dean Haber

The corn is gathered in the crib;
Tobacco's hung to dry;
The winter wheat has all been drilled,
The hay and straw stacked high.

I look around my little farm
At shed and barn and field,
And satisfied, see the results
Of summer's heavy yield.

the Secretary can make without additional legislation. Discretionary authority granted him under present laws will permit him to raise most price supports and to impose stronger production controls.

Parity of Income Promised

Mr. Kennedy has told farm leaders here his recommendations will be "substantially those I proposed during the campaign." They will be aimed, he said, at (1) raising farm income, (2) reducing surpluses, and (3) adjusting production to demand at reasonable prices.

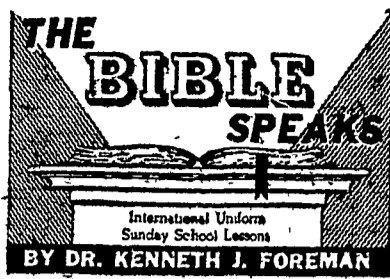
The key farm promise was to "secure full parity of income for the American farmer." He defined parity income as one "which gives average producers a return on their invested capital, labor and management equal to that which similar, or comparable, resources earn for non-farm employment.

That promise became a hot campaign issue when the Department of Agriculture estimated it would require a 50% increase in prices received by farmers and result in a 25% increase in food costs. Mr. Kennedy said both figures were too high.

Supply Management

"We intend," Mr. Kennedy said, "to assure this parity of income primarily through supply management—the adjustment of supply to demand at parity income prices."

This, he said, would be ac-



Bible Material: Jeremiah 31, Luke 1:67-68, 76-78, Romans 8.
Devotional Reading: Hebrews 9:11-15.

New Covenant

Lesson for December 4, 1960

ALL OF US live under laws, we have never read. But there is one law in the United States which is at the base of all others. Laws which conflict with this one are declared to be "null and void" (empty and nothing, to you), unconstitutional. For the Constitution of the U.S.A. is the basic law of the land. It is not long, it can be read by any one with a high school education. If every community had a public ceremony once a year at which this Constitution would be read, preferably by every one there in unison, it might be a very good thing.



Dr. Foreman

Is there—it is a bold question—anything corresponding to the Constitution, having to do with the relations not among men, but between men and God? Is there any Agreement or Plan in line with which God and men can have dealings with each other?

Can God Be Depended On?
One answer to that question is NO. It is not the Christian answer, it is not the Bible answer, but you may hear it from many people. Such people believe that God is more like lightning, or the wind, than he is like a person. The expression "Act of God" often refers to something not only unpredictable, like a tornado or an earthquake, but something horrible and devastating, wiping out the works and the welfare of man. Granted, God is not all "sweetness and light." He is not a Grandmother-in-the-sky. Nevertheless, the Bible never speaks of God's wrath, without a good reason for it. God is not a capricious prima donna with an un-governable temper. God's wrath is anything but a tantrum. His goodness is not dependent on how he feels—as ours is. God does not have

"moods," he does not do what he does "just because..."

The Old Covenant

On the contrary, God's dealings with his people, the ancient of Israel, followed a pattern that God is not free to act will; free to choose any pattern free to act on any line. By having chosen the pattern, the way of dealing with men does not give that up (as we say) without notice.

The characteristic pattern of God's dealings with Israel was a Covenant. Another word that is Agreement. It means a sided arrangement. "Bargain" is not a good word for it, because the word "bargain" suggests each side trying to get as much as possible. Covenant is a good word, if we remember that no agreement between man and man can be dictated by God, not man, sets the terms.

Many times in the Old Testament there is a story of the making of the Covenant. (Exodus 24 and Joshua 24 describe two occasions.) The people choose God, God chooses the people. The people choose God and promise to obey him not in order to bribe him, but because he has chosen them.

The New Covenant

Jeremiah makes two things about this "Old Covenant." The first is that the people invariably break it. The other is that God will make a new one, and this will be on men's hearts, not on tablets or in some document outside. If we give a name to the Old Covenant it would be Law; if we give a name to the New, it must be Jesus called the Communion. "The new Covenant in my blood because his blood would be a 'pure sacrifice of love'"

To put this in another way, God's dealings with men, with those who knew him best, once upon a time was in the pattern of Law. God acts in the pattern of Love. Love does not mean that God never comes out of a motive of divine before Christ came. We may fancy that Christ somehow aged to induce God to love the world of men. We cannot (and the Bible does not say) that God began to love just recently. Some of the saints and seers in Old Testament times saw that the law itself was an expression of God's love.

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Now Is The Time . . .

BY MAX SMITH



TO SPRAY FOR CHICKWEED THIS FALL—Many alfalfa producers discover chickweed damage next spring when it is too late; we'd suggest that the field be sprayed during November or December when the young plants are easy to kill. The DiNitros for warm weather and grass mixtures and the Chloro IPC for straight alfalfa stands in colder weather are recommended. The important thing is to spray this fall and not next spring.

TO WATER TREES AND SHRUBS—During the winter trees and shrubs need moisture to keep from winter-killing. The ground at the present time isn't as wet as we might think. Therefore, we'd recommend that home-owners soak the ground around trees and shrubs before the ground freezes for the winter. Water slowly so that the moisture will go down to the roots. This is especially important in the case of plantings that have been made during the past year.

TO PROTECT WATER PIPES—A zero morning is a poor time to thaw out or repair water pipes. Some advanced attention in this respect will eliminate the problem of frozen water lines and save valuable time. Pipes may be buried, wrapped with insulation, or protected by electric heating cable; however in the case of the cables your electrician or power company representative should be consulted before installation; improper connections and methods may be a fire hazard.



THIS WEEK

—In Washington
With Clinton Davidson
New Farm Program

Democrats in charge of both Congress and the White House for the first time in eight years will make new farm legislation one of their first 1961 objectives.

President-elect John F. Kennedy has named special committees of non-government experts to work with the next Secretary of Agriculture in developing recommendations he plans to send Congress in late January or early February.

Most observers here think that a tough Congress probably will make changes in farm legislation, these are likely to be delayed by extended debate until too late to be made effective for 1961 crops.

There are many changes in present farm programs which

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