

From Where We Stand . . .

Whatever Happened To May Day?

Whatever happened to May Day?

Our memories of those gay occasions is a bit dim, but we do recall frolicking about a Maypole and crowning a Queen of the May. There were flowers and sunshine and pretty girls in bright yellow dresses. Spring had come and everyone was happy.

Young people in certain parts of the country still celebrate May Day in one fashion or another. Maypoles with colorful streamers may be seen on a school playground here and there. Flower-trimmed baskets filled with candy are left, secretly, on doorsteps for special boys and girls. Sunday school children bring cheerful news of spring to hospital patients.

But by and large May Day customs have fallen from favor in our times. From a historical point of view, the lapse may be only temporary, for May Day is a very old tradition. A remnant of ancient agricultural and fertility rituals, May Day has been celebrated through the ages as the arrival of the season of new vegetation. Elaborate festivities once included omens and taboos to insure good crops and happiness, and homage rendered to leaf-covered branches and the spirit of spring.

The ancient author, Chaucer, tells us it was the custom in his England of the Middle Ages for all people "to fetch the flowers fresh" on the first May morning. Every town and village erected a Maypole as high as the mast of a 100-ton ship. People danced in rings around the flower-wreathed Maypole nearly the whole day.

The merry festivities were dealt a severe blow by the Puritans who, in their campaign to take the joy out of life, uprooted Maypoles and put a stop to the reveling.

Festivities revived, however, in the 17th century after the Restoration. In the 1890's many countries adopted May Day as the international labor day.

Regardless of the current status of May Day customs, it does seem an appropriate time to observe with awe the plant world around us, a world of life and beauty and fragrance that renews itself every spring and supplies us with an unexhaustible supply of food, clothing and shelter.

For anyone who depends upon the products of agriculture, and that appears to include everyone, an occasion like May Day should indeed be a time for celebration.

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

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Wheat Farmers Decision

Wheat farmers have another opportunity to express their feelings on government programs.

The May 1 to 15 sign-up period nationally should reveal clearly just how the farmer stands. The 1964 wheat program is entirely voluntary; the only pressures for signing up are financial.

Growers who have been clamoring for less government in agriculture have an opportunity to stand up and be counted. It may cost several dollars, but the farmer must decide if the net result

would be satisfaction enough to make up the difference.

Basically the wheat grower has two choices. He can stay out of the program, produce all the wheat he wants to produce and sell it wherever he can at whatever price he can get. Or he can sign up for the program, grow within his allotment and take advantage of diversion payments, price support loans, and marketing certificates.

A recent change in the bill allows a grower to collect the price support if he is within his allotment whether he signs up in the program or not. However, he is not eligible for the diversion payments or the certificates.

Just how much, financially, would a farmer stand to gain by participation? He would be eligible to collect diversion payments of 20 per cent of the county support price of \$1.50 per bushel on the normal yield for his farm. This would amount to about \$8.00 to \$12.00 per acre in Lancaster County. Of course diverted acres must be put to soil conserving uses only.

On wheat grown within the allotment, the farmer will be issued certificates worth 70 cents a bushel on 45 per cent of the normal yield and certificates worth 25 cents on another 45 per cent.

Compliance with the program may mean destroying wheat planted last fall when there was no wheat program. Many farmers, however, planted within their previous allotments thinking that a new program would be passed before harvest time. For them compliance poses no great problem.

Those who planted beyond acreage allotments will have to decide if it is worth it to destroy wheat already planted and qualify for the guaranteed prices or take their chances of lower prices on more acres.

It should be interesting to see how many farmers really meant what they said last May.

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

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Who Am I?

I am more powerful than combined armies of the world.

I am more deadly than bullets, and I have wrecked more homes than the mightiest of siege guns.

I steal in the United States alone over \$300,000,000 each year.

I spare no one, and find my victims among the rich and poor alike, the young and old, the strong and the weak; widows and orphans know me.

I massacre thousands upon thousands of wage-earners in a year.

I lurk in unseen places and do most of my work silently. You are warned against me, but heed me not.

I am restless. I am everywhere; in the home, on the street, in the factory, at railroad crossings, and on the sea.

I bring sickness, degradation and death and yet few seek to avoid me.

I destroy, crush and maim; I give nothing but take all.

I am your worst enemy.

I am CARELESSNESS.

BUY BEST SEEDS

Farmers are often tempted to try to save a few dollars by buying "bargain" seed at a cheaper price, says George Berggren, extension agronomist, at The Pennsylvania State University. But, he adds, there is no better investment in any farming program than quality seed, and the use of the information on the seed tag is a good place to begin.

Grasslands occupy about three times as much land in the United States as all cultivated crops combined.

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THE BIBLE SPEAKS
 International Union of Sundry School Lessons
 BY DR. KENNETH J. FOREMAN

The Right To Work

Lesson for May 3, 1964

Background Scripture: Luke 12:13-34, 16:1-13; 1 Thessalonians 4:9-12.
 Devotional Reading: Psalms 127:1-2, 128:1-4.

EVERY WRITER knows that what he writes may never be read. Between the time these lines are being written, and are printed in May, it is quite possible that nuclear war lasting an hour or so only, will have wiped most of the people off this earth. To prevent such a war is of course mankind's present major problem. But even supposing—as we must, otherwise all writing would come to a stop—that



Dr. Foreman May will come as usual, and even supposing that no war of any kind comes any more, will that be the end of our problems? Of course not. Overshadowed by the terror of the Bomb, older than that peril and no less real for not being played up by the newspapers, are many other problems calling urgently for attention. One of these is the problem of work.

"Work with your hands"

In the waters along the reefs and in the open sea around a small island there were lobsters and many kinds of fish. Every man on that island was a fisherman, and all of them prospered. Commercial fishing is hard work, but these men were not afraid of it. So winter and summer they were out there, never more than an inch or so from death, but earning cheerfully a good living for their families. Now there was one exception, a man who did not go out fishing unless the weather was just right to suit him, a poor fisherman who made his situation worse by spending much of the little income he had on drink. His neighbors did not sympathize

with him. They saw it every day: hard work is rewarded, laziness brings poverty. This was in the depression, and the men of that island could not see any point in the then new schemes for helping the unemployed. They figured that being unemployed was a man's own fault and helping him would just encourage him to be lazier still.

A new problem

The world has changed. We face a different problem today. It used to be the question: How do you get a lazy man to do his share of the community's work? Now the question often is: How can you provide jobs enough so that every man will have the chance to work? A wealthy man was telling with some pride about two wonderful machines which his coal-mining company had recently put into operation. Standing in a quiet air-conditioned room, two highly trained radar men could guide machines, deep in the earth, in digging out the coal. Those two men with their electronically operated machines could turn out more coal than 28 men could before those machines were installed. Four men out of the 28 miners were kept on the payroll; twenty-four were fired.

What can we do?

There is no serious problem of unemployment in a fisherman's island. There is a serious problem of unemployment in America with its machine civilization. The Bible teachings about work can be obeyed in one situation, they cannot in the other. This is a problem to which the churches have paid very little attention, partly because they don't know what to say about it, partly because many churches are made up largely from management circles rather than of working men. (How many unemployed persons are in your congregation?) This writer does not know the answer. But at least it is time to suggest that from a Christian standpoint, there is something radically wrong with a state of things such that able and willing workers are denied the right to work, many of them for the rest of their lives. The next time you eat a meal, give a thought to those who can never earn a meal of their own.

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Now Is The Time . . .

BY MAX SMITH

To Spray New Alfalfa Seedings

Growers who were able to get their new seeding of alfalfa sowed during the past month without any nurse crop, should spray for weed control. Without the nurse crop the weeds will be more severe and may take over. We suggest that the field be sprayed with one quart of 2,4-DB when the weeds are two inches high; do not make the mistake of waiting until the weeds are 4 to 6 inches high — it will be too late for good control.

To Prevent Tobacco Seedbed Diseases

A regular spray schedule to prevent wild fire and blue mold in the seedbed is better than to try and stop the disease after it is present. The combination spray using Streptomycin and Fernalin every week to 10 days after the plants are the size of a dime is recommended. A mimeograph sheet on tobacco bed spraying is available from our Extension Office.

To Aim for Quality Forage

Livestock producers should make every effort to harvest a maximum amount of quality hay and silage this year. There is no greater asset to both dairymen and beef cattle producers than a barn and silos full of top quality hay and silage when winter comes. This takes planning and good management. Be sure that the forage is cut at the proper stage of maturity, this would be at heading time for the grasses and from bud to early bloom stage for the legumes. Don't let your forage ripen in the field.

To Control Rose Diseases

Hybrid Tea Roses are very popular around most homes, a regular spray schedule is needed to prevent such leaf diseases as black spot. As soon as the new leaves are 1/2-inch long, we suggest that the plants be sprayed weekly with either Maneb 80% wettable powder (1 1/2 tablespoons per gallon) or Foli-Protect 75% wettable powder. Spray both top and bottom leaf surfaces as well as the stems.

Reform only yourself, for doing that you do ever thing—Michel de Montaigne