

SECRETARY MEREDITH TELLS SOME MIRACLE STORIES

Uncle Sam's Agricultural Experts Have Found Out How to Turn Corncocks Into \$17-a-Pound Product--Marvels in Cotton and Fig Growing and Other Surprises



The Secretary of Agriculture Discusses One of His Favorite Themes.

BY WILLIAM ATHERTON DU PUY.

"SAVE your corncocks," the secretary of agriculture said to me, just as though the roasting-car was not over. "They contain furfural. You may feel that you can worry along without furfural but when I tell you that it is selling today for \$17 a pound you begin to see the light. And furfural is but one of the three important commodities of commerce wrapped up in corncocks. The department has learned to get them out and the method of it reveals another of those romances of science."

Edwin Thomas Meredith was on the second of his favorite themes. His first is that of "selling" the department to the people, causing them to appreciate the benefits that lie back of properly supporting it. Possibly he regarded these stories of the marvels it had performed as part of the selling. To me they were at least an hour's entertainment.

Agricultural papers in Iowa and a bank in Chicago. You would have guessed him to be an important executive in some large enterprise. He is a big, dominant man, forceful and good to look at. You find none of the earmarks of the farmer or the scientist about him. He works an army of experts. He is the executive.

"Corncocks," he is saying, "have long been a problem. You will remember that not many years ago cottonseed were used as fertilizer or at least as cowfeed. Now we eat their oils as olive oil and butter and never know it. The utilization of cottonseed has added much to the value of the crop. We have been trying to do the same with corncocks and now we believe we have accomplished that end."

"Down in Owensburg, Ky., there is a corncock utilization plant. It consumes 100 tons a day of them. That is not as much when you realize that 200,000,000 tons are produced every year. But it is a start and soon there will be such plants all over the country."

"From these coaks is extracted glue to the extent of 45 per cent of their weight. It is used in making pasteboard buckets, wallboard and such products. The furfural is an important chemical in the dye industry and is used in making pineoleums and other celluloid-like products. Acetate of lime, from which acetic acid, important in the industries, is made, is another by-product. The combined value of these is such that all corncocks promise to come to be treated."

"In the end it was discovered that the figs fell off because they were not fertilized. By that I mean that it is necessary for the pollen from one fig to be carried into another to make the life cycle complete. If bees did not carry pollen from flower to flower, the seeds of many plants would not mature."

"These Smyrna figs required the services of a particular sort of wasp which crawled into fig after fig, carrying pollen. This wasp existed on the shores of the Mediterranean but not in California. It was necessary to send an expedition to the Mediterranean to capture these wasps, to bring them back and to propagate them, before this fig industry could be established. Eventually this was accomplished and now our choice figs are home grown."

"How about gas from straw?" I inquired. "We have a plant working on that problem. From 20 pounds of straw we can make enough gas to drive a car 20 miles. This fact would be economically important if it were not for that other fact that we have not yet found out how to reduce the gas to liquid form like gasoline. An automobile could burn this gas today, but it would have to carry a gas bag as big as an observation balloon to maintain its supply. The farmer may now set himself up a gas tank and generate from straw fuel for his home plant, but for automobile use we have not yet solved this riddle."

"Out in California the department is selling fruit and cull lemons for five dollars a ton. It established a citrus fruit laboratory to discover uses for the culls. As a result the by-products of lemons last year were 1,500,000 pounds of citric acid, 500,000 pounds of citrate of lime

and 50,000 pounds of lemon oil. Twenty concerns are now engaged in the manufacture of products from culls of oranges. The total products last year were 4,000,000 pounds of marmalades, jellies and such."

"In Northern California there were thousands of acres of land growing nothing. It was worth from \$5 to \$10 per acre. At an expenditure of less than \$200,000 the department found a suitable rice for that section, introduced and established it. Today it is yielding \$20,000,000 a year to the community."

"The romances of science are applied in a thousand ways in agriculture. Take the battle with the boll weevil, for instance, which has been a battle to make possible that we should continue to grow this great crop in which we dominate the markets of the world. We are slowly winning that battle. We are winning by methods condemned in warfare between civilized nations. We are poisoning the drinking water of the boll weevil. It is interesting to know that the dew of the morning is that drinking water. We poison the dew, the weevil drinks it and dies. The farmer makes a crop."

"Last year this method was tested on an abandoned farm where the planter had given up his crop and moved out. The department divided the field into three strips. On the strip down the middle of the field it administered the poison. One of the unpollinated strips produced 45 pounds of cotton to the acre and the other produced 80 pounds. The poisoned strip produced 450 pounds to the acre, which is a good crop."

MARY IS HERE By Fannie Heaslip Lea

(Continued From Page 6.)
The window. You didn't see me. The tears came and I couldn't see any more. I had to catch a car and go back to the theater. I ran. That night I forgot my lines and they took the part away from me."
"I hate this!" said Vivien suddenly, and put down the pencil. She thrust the paper away from her. Wallace had been reading over her shoulder as she wrote. He gathered up the sheets and stacked them in orderly fashion.
She protested with a suggestion of unsteadiness.
"If it's real—if it's true—its something in your life I've got no right to know about—nobody has . . . and if it isn't true—what's the use?" She lifted her small, pale face, tense with a defiant questioning.
"Does it make you unhappy to do it?" he asked curiously.
"Yes," said Vivien, "it does. Just as unhappy as if Mary were me." She remembered her dream unwillingly and her heart quickened a beat.
Wallace said slowly:
"Ask her if I ever did her any wrong—see what she says."
Vivien took the pencil he held out to her . . . she held her breath, teeth upon her lower lip, while the pencil covered a fresh page. . . .
"I could have forgiven a wrong. You forgot me."
"That's all," said Vivien, looking off across the quiet room. "It doesn't write any more."
"Will you try just once again—if I ask it of you?" said the man beside her in a strangely gentle voice. "Who is Mary?"
Vivien would have walked through fire if he had asked it, but she did not say so. She drew the paper toward her and waited. He took her left hand again. The fire on the hearth chuckled out of an eerie silence. . . . and the pencil, wearing dull, began to write. It moved so swiftly the words ran together in long, waverling lines, yet it was clear.
"It's verse," gasped Vivien.
"Don't stop!" he begged her.
When the pencil had done and lay inertly in Vivien's fingers he took the paper from her and read it slowly:
O, there are eyes that he can see,
And lips that never his lips can see,
But to my lover I must be
Only a voice.
O, there are breasts to hear his head,
And lips that never his lips can see,
But I must be, for I am dead,
Only a cry.
They looked at each other across the filmy white paper.
It was in that moment that Wallace first learned the color of Vivien's eyes. He filed a mental note—"Blue—astoundingly—but not china—between blue and violet. . . . Some-how he lost himself a moment in that subtle and intriguing distinction. After that moment he said:
"It's not bad verse—do you know it? Did you ever see it before?"
"I think it's lovely—but if I've seen it before I can't remember it," said Vivien. She knit her delicate

eyebrows. There was something impudently sweet in her look.
He agreed at once:
"Neither can I."
"But you don't think I wrote it myself?"
"You mean Mary wrote it?"
"Is Mary something outside of me?"
"You don't believe in ghosts, do you?"
"I thought I didn't—but Mary seems terribly real."
"I have an explanation—that is, I have been working toward an explanation—if you will let me give it to you . . ."
"Why should I not?" asked Vivien swiftly.
"You may not care for it—women are so locked away behind a hundred reserves."
"I am not!" she began, and stopped short.
"You are not like other women," he finished without a trace of mockery. "I know that. I can see it in the little I know of you. I have never known another human being with your—your crystalline honesty."
"It is amazing—and very beautiful—that is why I feel that I can tell you . . ."
"Go on," said Vivien briefly. Thoughts whirled in her mind like leaves, scarlet and golden on the wind of October. She felt a flush rising in her cheeks. Her eyelids burned.
"You have heard of the subconscious mind," said Wallace presently. "He was drawing little squares on a stray sheet of paper, as he spoke. He did not look at her.
"It's the way you explain anything you don't understand, nowadays, isn't it?" asked Vivien quaintly.
Wallace looked at her, smiling. The thought crossed his own mind that her hair was uncommonly lovely in the lamplight, silvery blonde, with a wayward wave to it . . . he came back with a jerk to what he was saying:
"Your subconscious mind is the part of your mind that lies outside your conscious control . . . it remembers and holds and uses what sometimes you had rather forget . . . what sometimes you think you've forgotten . . . what, sometimes, you don't know that you know. Tell me—did you ever see a house like the one Mary described just now?"
Vivien leaned her elbows on the table and rested her chin in her small cupped hands. It made her almost breathlessly happy just to be sitting there listening to Wallace's cool, deliberate voice, to meet the straight, keen question of his eyes. . . . She felt as if out of all the world she had come suddenly upon the one human being who completed her life . . . as if now, for the first time, she knew what it was to have a friend. . . . She wished passionately that he would ask some favor of her . . . that he might need her, somehow . . . since all he asked was information, she gave it freely.
"I've never seen just that house," she told him, big eyes fixed gravely. "But houses something like it—dozens of them. I adore houses. I always have. Ever since I was a

little girl. I have a trunk full of them upstairs in the attic." She told him about the little old cowhide trunk—about the pictures clipped from books. He listened with an extraordinary softness in his gray eyes, but the look of the explorer was still there.
"You're not given to easy emotions. You're strong. I mean, you keep a firm hold on yourself, don't you?" he said unaccountably, when she had done.
"I try not to slop over," said Vivien briefly.
"Ah—that's the key to the whole thing!" he exclaimed, almost eagerly. "You smother your impulses; you repress yourself . . . you don't let yourself go . . . that's—that's the reason of Mary!"
"I don't in the least know what you mean," said Vivien.
They looked at each other a moment in silence. The room was full of a mysterious uneasiness.
"What I mean is this," said Wallace. He seemed almost to force himself on.
He spoke a trifle hurriedly, without choosing between words, as if he would have drawn back from what he was about to say, but had already gone too far to make withdrawal possible.
"Mary is, in my opinion, the unconscious expression of an emotion which you are feeling for some one—and which you have repressed until the thing has unconsciously gotten away from you."
He came to a dogged stop, drew further little squares upon a bit of paper, forbore to look at the victim of his diagnosis. "That is as it looks to me," he finished abruptly. "Perhaps I shouldn't have put it into words."
"You haven't put it into very clear words," said Vivien, proudly. She kept her head high, but the color left her face slowly. "Is this what you mean: that I am in love with—and that because I cannot tell him so—and that because I have not been able to tell him so I have faked this writing thing—and Mary . . ."
"Faked! Good Lord—I don't believe you'd fake anything to save your soul alive!" he interrupted, violently. "Haven't I told you once already tonight that you seem to me the honestest woman I have ever met? Mary isn't anything you deliberately made up. She's an outlet, made by your subconscious mind, for a secret and a hurt so big that you can't go on living with it any longer. You've got to ease the pressure somehow. Mary eases it for you. You said it hurt—to write, just now—as if Mary had been you."
"Mary is you!" She's the you, the sleeping in the very innermost place in your being . . . the details of her-story are nothing . . . she is the expression of a desire."
"You mean," said Vivien, subornly—"don't talk psychology to me—say it in plain English—you mean that I love somebody who doesn't love me and that you can tell it?"
"Who doesn't even know, perhaps, that you love him!" insisted Wallace

with equal stubbornness. "A hundred things might stand between you. I mean that there is some obstacle, yes—and that you are suffering, yes—if I know anything about psycho-analysis."
Vivien sat without a word. A horrible sense of shame was licking at about her, like flames about a little green tree. She felt naked. She felt as if her very heart had been uncovered to the world. She wanted to get away somewhere and hide her face and cry the night through. She had always been afraid of love, but now she felt that she would never be able to be proud again. This thing that was happening to her now. Love had betrayed her into humiliation of the blackest and most unbearable kind. She had been proud and she had been reticent. Now her reticence was taken away from her, and in all her life she felt that she would never be able to be proud again.
"An ache came into her throat . . . her breath caught painfully . . . she struggled with a sob . . . sat with her hands linked tight on the table before her . . . her eyes lowered."
"Don't say I've offended you!" begged Wallace, his deep voice unexpectedly husky. "He's a lucky man, whoever he is."
At which Vivien came quite suddenly to the end of her endurance. She made a little, stifled sound, between laughing and crying—a rather bitter sort of laughing—pushed back her chair, and ran out of the room.
Wallace jumped to his feet to follow her, but she was up the stairs by the time he got to the doorway. So he went back and sat down to wait for her. He thought of course she would come back. But she didn't. He sat there doggedly cursing himself for a clumsy brute, and the snap and chuckle of the flames on the hearth was the only sound in the suddenly desolate room. It was 11 o'clock when Vivien left him. The half-hour went by, and the hour, and the half-hour again. The fire died out and the room grew unpleasantly chill. The lamplight a sardonic mockery of warmth. Still Wallace sat there. He turned the scattered sheets of Mary's pathetic confession over and over, read them again and again. He would have given his right hand to be able to take back the explanation which had shattered Vivien's delicate calm before his eyes—but his scientific conscience would not allow him to retract the truth of it.
After a long time he said to himself with a groan, which came from the bottom of his heart: "Why couldn't I have been the man!"
And that was the first moment in which he knew what had happened to him.
At 12:30 Dulcibella came home. She said good-by to young Blake in the hallway because she saw the light still burning in the living room, and good-by, to Dulcibella, were things to be more artistically achieved without an audience. Young Blake, moreover, was looking up. He did not require any particular mental exertion on the part of the girl, and she danced divinely. Also, he justified his red head, emotion-ally speaking. Dulcibella foresaw a thoroughly pleasant six weeks; which was the average length of time re-

quired in her case for the rise and fall of a snifter.
She wandered into the living room filled with an indulgent annoyance that Vivien should have left her to put out the lights and lock up the house, and came so upon Wallace, sitting beside the table, his hand across his eyes, his big shoulders slouching a little tiredly.
"Well—for pity's sake!" cried Dulcibella, "where's Vivien?"
She came and stood beside him, at which he stood up at once, and started down at the table littered with loose sheets of paper and yellow pencils.
"Where's Vivien?" she asked again, curiously. "Have you been working at that stuff all this time? Let's see! Did Mary perform? What did she say tonight? How perfectly absurd!"
She caught up two fluttering sheets and read aloud, without waiting for an answer. She was in high spirits. Young Blake's last ardent whisper still lingered in her ears. . . .
"I could have forgiven a wrong—you forgot me." Dear me!" cried Dulcibella, "what sort of stuff has Vivien been reading?"
She skimmed another page, and another; gurgled with laughter; cried out in pretended horror: "Poetry—my word."
Wallace put out his hand quickly and let it fall again. He had not spoken. Dulcibella read the two little verses through.
"H'mph!" she observed a trifle scornfully. "I hope Vivien didn't try to pretend she'd written that herself—that's Sara Teasdale. Vivien's caught one word of it—that's all. I've got it in a book of love songs upstairs."
Wallace flushed suddenly and darkly.
"Don't you know your sister better," he said abruptly, "than to suppose she would stoop to any sort of deception? She's the soul of honor—I've never seen anyone like her. She's wonderful. She's like a white flame—she's—"
He came to a halt, very nearly violent in its suddenness. Dulcibella was standing with her hands linked before her, regarding him interestedly.
She said with lovely sadness, shaking her perfect forefinger at him:
"Take care! You mustn't talk that way. It's not fair to Vivien. The child is absolutely unspoiled—and you've turned her head badly already."
"I've what?"
"I said you've turned her head. It's true. I can see it. And it worries me. I know you wouldn't do it for the world—but you are, you know—you really are, Dr. Wallace, rather a dangerous person . . . even I . . ."
"You mean that?" Wallace stopped her, desperately quiet.
"That I—" murmured Dulcibella.
"No," he corrected bluntly, "that Vivien—what you just said—"
"You think it's horrid of me to tell," said Dulcibella, gasping a little, but running gallantly true to type.
"No; I think it's wonderful of you—I think it's beautiful of you—"
He dropped down in the chair he had quitted, covered a scrap of paper with rapid, nervous words, folded it, wrote

Vivien across it, crushed it into Dulcibella's reluctant hand.
"I'll be grateful to you till the day of my death," he said unsteadily, "for what you've done for me tonight. I've been a blind fool—thank God, I see a light! You've got to make her listen to me now, Dulcibella! Give her this—don't leave her till she's read it; I depend on you!"
Dulcibella stood there, lost between annoyance and amusement. Out of a flushed resentment she began deliberately to laugh, royally playing go-between!
She thought of young Blake and abdicated any other claims for the moment.
Wallace caught her hand and crushed it. "Promise to do this for me," he insisted breathlessly. "Promise, Dulcibella—you've got to give it to her—now!"
"Go home at once," said Dulcibella. "I think you've gone mad!"
But she started up the stairs with his message. So much Wallace made sure of before going. And her smile was delightfully astyler—a quick-change artist, Dulcibella!
Across a little white bed in a shadowy little room upstairs Vivien lay, with her arm flung up across her eyes, and drew long quivering breaths. She had stopped crying, but there were still tears in her heart.
"Vivien!" said a contralto whisper outside the locked white door. "Vivien, let me in!"
"Not tonight," said Vivien in a hoarse little voice.
"Vivien, I've got a message for you."
"I don't want it."
"You will when you get it. It's a letter."
"I won't read it."
"I'm slipping it under the door," said Dulcibella. "Good night, Yen!"
It was the old soft name of their baby days as good as a caress. Vivien sat up on the side of the bed. She watched a little oblong of white emerge from under the door and lie like a patch of moonlight on the polished floor.
After a little while she went over and picked it up. She had never seen Wallace's writing before, but she knew at once whose it was.
When she had read it three times she kissed it with soft, trembling lips. She kissed it more than once. Eventually she went back to bed, but not to sleep. She didn't want to sleep. No woman does who has just been passionately proposed to—even in pencil!
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Good Insurance.
Mr. Casey had recently obtained employment by a subway construction company; and, one day, as he was leaving home, Mrs. Casey admonished him thus:
"Do you mind now, Malachi, you don't get hurt. This mighty dangerous work in that subway."
"Never ye fear, darlin', Mr. Casey reassured his wife. "I've just borrowed ten dollars from the foreman, and he don't let me do any dangerous work at all, at all."

Many Diseases Prove to Be Blessings in Disguise.
Immunity to Other Troubles Often Comes From Sickness.
MEDICAL science has shown that many diseases prove boons and blessings once we have got rid of them. Even those maladies which remain often guard us from ailments far more deadly, as a physician points out.
Rheumatism is most unpleasant. Nevertheless, sufferers from rheumatism are as a rule otherwise perfectly healthy persons. They are little liable to other troubles.
Bronchitis effects elderly people so that every time they cough there is a slight strain on the heart and the blood is kept in circulation. Moreover, as the victim has to take precautions against cold, he renders himself comparatively immune from other diseases.
Typhoid fever cures indigestion. On recovery from typhoid the patient frequently finds himself with a new stomach which will "take nails and bolts."
One who recovers from smallpox enters upon a new lease of life. He is rarely ill afterward and usually lives to a ripe old age.
Gouty persons invariably pass the allotted span of years. Gout tends to promote longevity in that the germs in the blood keep other hostile germs from entering the system. Further, gouty persons take great care of themselves.
Many of us are very careful of our health; once nature has given us a sharp warning and so we prolong our lives by many years. Thus if a man has a pain in the region of the heart he "gets the wind up" at once. Heart disease, of course. Better go slow.
As a fact, however, a pain about the heart or irregular beats are not commonly complained of by persons with heart disease. Among men and women troubled with heart disease, for everyone who dies young there are many hundreds who, by living carefully and naturally, attain a life longer than the average person who has never been troubled this way.
In a Class by Himself.
An Irish drill sergeant was instructing some recruits in the mysteries of marching movements, and found great difficulty in getting a countryman of his to halt when the command was given.
After explaining and illustrating several times he approached the recruit, stood him up silently for a couple of minutes and then demanded his name.
"Casey, sir," was the reply.
"Well, Casey, did ye ever drive a mule?"
"Yis, sor."
"What did ye say when you wanted him to stop?"
"Whoa."
The sergeant turned away and immediately put his squad in motion. After they had advanced a dozen yards or so he bawled out at the top of his lungs: "Squad, halt! Whoa, Casey!"