

BELLEVILLE, PA.

Nov. 28—Weather is dark and cloudy, cold wave reported on its way. Temperature supposed to drop 35 degrees. First day of hunting season for deer. Mountains are being combed from foot to summit for meat that perisheth. No doubt many times more hunters than legal game.

The Belleville Mennonite Men's Chorus, of which I have the pleasure of being a member, rendered a program at the Huntington reform school chapel. This was a very unusual experience for me.

We went in through high iron gates with a guard holding the gate. As we went, many guards were standing watching. It made a person feel insignificant, walking past all those men with their high crowned caps, and uniforms, and brass buttons. We went up three flights of iron stairs, 45 steps on each floor. There were long rows of doors, rooms for inmates. We came into the top of a large building where was the Protestant chapel auditorium. Catholics have a chapel too.

This auditorium was approximately 50 feet high in the center, seating capacity around 450.

We sat up on the platform, elevated three feet above the main floor. Then they came, scores and scores of men, average age 23, all dressed in white shirts and slightly faded blue denim pants, mostly with neckties. Some fine looking young men, about 300 altogether. Attendance was not compulsory.

There were around 800 inmates, one-third Negroes. This is a place for men with low intelligence quotient. The average I.Q. was 65. All were there for criminal offenses. It reminded me of the great white throne judgment. All were convicts and were at that place because they had to be, except the guards. Their singing was good.

It was the first time I was ever in church with all men save one. She was probably the wife of a guard. My heart was touched. Many faces, sad, happy, ignorant, despairing, hopeful, and uncertain.

Probably none had ever intended to end up in that place when they started out. All were at one time sweet little innocent babies. Even so, very few people intend to spend eternity in hell, but put off the day of salvation until they drop into the pit, banished from God and all that's good throughout the ceaseless ages of eternity. John R. Renno

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Three Funerals

Dec. 4—Statistics reveal that more than sixty persons die every minute. This makes many funerals, but many more are born than die in a day. It was my experience to be at three funerals in six days' time. One died a natural death and two were killed accidentally.

First on Tuesday, Nov. 29th, Menno K. Yoder's funeral was held at his home. A very cold day. Sam D. Kanagy had devotions. He spoke of many things concerning the life that now is and that which is to come. How we need to live carefully. Crist B. Peachey preached the funeral sermon.

Second, on Saturday, Dec. 3rd, the funeral of Paul Edwin, 3 yr. old son of Ambrose Yoders, was held at the Locust Grove church.

He was killed instantly when the wheel of a truck loaded with feed passed over his head. The children were playing when the driver was unloading. Then he told them to get away, and pulled forward, and stopped to close the end gate. He was proceeding to leave when the little girl saw what was happening and screamed, but too late. Somehow, unnoticed by the driver, the little fellow was under the truck, and the wheel passed over his head, crushing it. Louis Peachey had charge of devotions. He read Psalms 90, the prayer of Moses.

Erie Renno preached the funeral sermon. His text was Psalms 23, The Lord is my Shepherd. This was a sad funeral. Many tears were shed. A few adults

wept, some were stirred. When his little sister stood beside the coffin weeping aloud, it moved everyone that heard. My mind was drawn to a scripture, "A little child shall lead them."

Third, the funeral of Jeff Peachey was held on Dec. 4th at the Belleville Mennonite church. He was hunting and evidently sat down when the shot gun, with a rifled slug, slipped and the firing pin was jolted. The slug went into his abdomen, evidently killing him instantly. About six hundred and fifty attended this funeral.

Jacob Weirich had charge of devotions, reading and talking from Psalms 90.

Aaron Mast preached the funeral sermon with the text Job 14:14, "If a man die, shall he live again?" The answer, "Whosoever liveth and believeth shall never die." John R. Renno