

## STILLWATER, PA.

Jan. 5—This article was written by Walter Clemmens, at my request. He gave it as a talk at a Sunday evening meeting and I thought it interesting.

"The God of the Alpha; in the beginning God created the heavens and the earth, the beginning of nature. He created light, water, land, sun, moon, stars, plant life, animal life, and last, but not least, man. Air, which none of us can live without, is necessary for animal and plant life. There is a small amount of air at 100 miles above the earth, but most of it is below 15 miles, and one-half of it below  $3\frac{1}{2}$  miles. God has put it where it is necessary for life. Air in itself is pure, but man defiles it. Rain as we know it is drawn from the ocean which is salt water, but falls to the earth pure. This should remind us, when we lived a life of sin we were impure, but through obeying the truth of God we become pure by the blood of Jesus. It is a beautiful sight to see the earth pure and white with a cover of snow. Snowflakes have six sides and are star shaped with beautiful flower designs,

but no two crystals have even been found exactly alike. Snow should remind us of Isa. 1:18, Come now let us reason together saith the Lord, though your sins be as scarlet they shall be as white as snow . . .

"God has made everything beautiful. I'm happy to live in Northern Pa., among the mountains, hills, valleys, and some of the most beautiful scenes the eye can see are within short driving distance. There is a farm in Montgomery Co. near Franconia that shall always be a landmark in my mind; it portrays the beauty of God, where a man of God, my grandfather spent many hours planting shrubs, trees and flowers on his farm. As a boy I spent my summer vacations with my grandparents. During those vacations I spent many hours walking with my grandfather among the trees. As we walked together he told me about the different trees, shrubs and flowers, always reminding me that God made them beautiful, then he would remind me of the dogwood trees of which

he had planted the entire length of his farm, on both sides of the highway, white and pink dogwoods, saying our Lord was crucified on a dogwood tree, the blood stains remain on the edge of the petals to this day. This is probably just a legend. Nevertheless it draws one closer to the Lord. Then he would remind me that he was looking for a heavenly home where he was sure the flowers and trees would be more beautiful than he could imagine. Since that he has gone to his heavenly home.

"The God of wonders . . . First we would like to think of the sea. The rivers carry salt minerals into the sea, but when the water is drawn from the sea by evaporation it leaves the salt behind. If all the salt were taken from the ocean it would cover the entire earth 150 ft. deep. The average depth of the ocean is 2 miles, but the deepest spot is over six miles, 35,410 ft. near the Philippine Islands, 1 mile deeper than the highest mountain is high. In Alaska, the land of ice and snow, there are 1500 varieties of wild flowers. It is said there are over 400,000 different kinds of trees, plants and flowers and herbs now growing on the earth. There are 522,400 kinds of birds, animals and fishes. It is said that God made a humming bird, and he liked it so much that he made over 500 different kinds of humming birds. There are also 1800 different kinds of lizards. As a boy I went fishing on my father's farm, and there were only two kind of fish that I knew about, the sunfish and catfish; but there are 13,000 different kinds of fish, 20,000 different kinds of birds. And over a million bugs and insects have been identified, and until they are done identifying there will be 12 million kinds, and 3,000 different kinds of ants. It is said that the brain of an ant is much larger in proportion than a man, and the ant is ten times stronger than a man proportionately; no wonder God says, consider the ant. There are 8,000 different kinds of butterflies, 10,000 bees, 200,000 beetles equipped with pliers and pincers, and 40,000 kinds of moths. Truly God is a God of wonders and marvels!

"He is also God of the Omega. The Colorado river at present has banks a mile high, and the canyon 10 to 12 miles across, and 300 miles long. The Snake river

has cut the deepest canyon in the U. S. where it flows between the boundaries of Idaho and Oregon. This gorge averages in depth 5,500 ft. for a distance of 40 mi. It is as a small water stream that these rivers began, but the process of time and rain and snow mixed with sand and gravel wore into the earth through the years. They will probably flow till the end of time. Let this remind us of the one who made the rivers; God himself, whose love and grace will continue for us.

"In closing I would like to meditate on Psa. 95:3-8. For the Lord is a great God and a great King above all Gods, in his hands are all the deep places of the earth, the strength of the hills is his also, the seas is his, he made it and with his hands formed the dry land. O come let us worship and bow down, let us kneel before the Lord our maker. Today if we hear his voice, harden not your hearts."

Walter Clemmens,  
Per John Renno

## STILLWATER, PA.

Jan. 12—Snow is all gone in these parts. Very cold weather at present, the coldest national weather on record. The whole nation has felt the effects of it. Everywhere was below freezing except the Florida peninsula, and the west coast. In some forty states it was below zero.

The country of Peru in South America has declared a state of emergency. A large landslide consisting of ice, snow, mud, and stone slid down a mountain and in eight minutes time covered several villages killing around 4,000 people. Planes flew around trying to help those left over but there were very few survivors, and big cliffs remain yet and threaten another landslide.

A strong windstorm along with much rain did quite a lot of damage in nearby Nescopeck in our own area. A building of a lumber company only built 3 years ago was blown down, and completely demolished. The roof was lifted up and carried over across the street into a new Laundromat and smashed that in, demolishing that also.

The milk situation is worsening. There is a great supply—far greater than the demand. The company to whom we sell, Foremost Dairies of Philadelphia, are getting quite particular with the farmers. Last June the Ardmore inspector was around and too many farms did not pass the inspection so that our milk was all barred from the Ardmore plant. At this plant they bottle all the milk, and of course bottled milk is class one, and sells for a better price. So now they are coming around again soon, and our local inspectors are trying to get ahead of them this time and going around to each farm and getting it in order so as to get back into the Ardmore market.

They also have a new system of grading the farm sanitation. It goes by points. Each item they

consider vital has five points, such as clean cows, and keeping all the bantams and guineas out of the stable (ours are losing their heads over this) and having the stable clean and well-lighted, etc. And if you don't dance to their music you will be out of a market. We have our cows loose in the loafing pen and some of them were not too clean, but they had to be perfectly clean and quick, too. Most farmers know how cows get around the hind legs, especially those that insist on getting dirty. The manure sticks and dries on so that it almost seems like a part of the hide. I had several like this but how to get it off immediately I didn't know, so I experimented. I took a butcher knife and shaved down along the leg and got it off. It is hard and tedious work but it works. Several of them have nicks in their skin but at least they are clean and they are not very sensitive there so it didn't hurt. They rather liked it.

I again attended the farm show at Harrisburg this year, and only two things that I noticed are new in the sense that they have just come out. The one is a new kind of motor for the International tractor. It's a turbine, and weighs only 90 pounds but runs at the terrific speed of 56,000 rpm. I suppose there will be many years until I have one of those kind, and probably never.

The other new thing was a manure spreader—a side spreader. It consists of a barrel-like thing on tandem wheels, the barrel laying on the side and the part that's turned up cut out, only it's much bigger than a barrel. One shaft goes from front to back, and on this there are chains hanging. To spread, the shaft just goes around and the chains are supposed to sling it off. They say it works well with any kind of manure. They had pictures to substantiate their claims.

And speaking of manure spreaders, I of course met Norman Kanagy there, as I do about every year, and he said his brother Ezra, Budget scribe, inquired about the price of a new horse-drawn spreader, and the same spreader that cost \$300 a

few years ago now costs double that, and yet you get no more than you did. Besides farm prices of produce have declined rather than increased. I reminded Norman of what old Bishop Crist Byler said of the farm show. "It's just a place where people go and are tempted to buy things they don't need. But Norman thinks that is remedied now. We still may be tempted to buy but we do not have the where-with-all to pay anymore.

I suppose we are all going broke together. Our national debt is greater than we ever expect to pay, and we are increasing it. A local Ag. teacher told me he doesn't think the Communists will ever shoot at us. It won't be necessary to go to that bother. We are spending ourselves into bankruptcy by preparing for war at such a rate that we will be weapons poor. There will be all guns and no more money to buy bullets. I do not know just what will happen, but something has to happen soon. No nation has yet escaped the judgements of God who were worthy of them, and Billy Graham says we have already fallen lower than Sodom and Gomorrah. If we love life, let's pray!

John Renno

## STILLWATER, PA.

Jan. 19 — Again it was my privilege to witness a scene that only seldom happens in anyone's life; the ordination of a bishop. Elmer Martin is the present bishop, but his health is failing, and he shifted responsibility to a younger man, Paul Landis of Salunga, Pa. Paul is around 28 years old, and has been ordained rather young, and was engaged in working with the Voluntary Service units, across the nation, and even in other countries. He can speak Spanish and was used quite extensively as a witness to the Spanish speaking people.

A Bishop was sought for what is known as the Mellingers district, which covers the area around Lancaster, and also Beaver Run, which was an outpost of the Stumptown church, but is

now self-supporting, and more. Four men were in the lot. They were voted in by members of the said districts over which Elmer Martin presides, from the ministry, which includes about 17 men. Of these, four had the required five votes, and the lot was cast and fell on Paul Landis.

The ordination was held at the Mellingers church, which seats about a thousand people, and it was presumed that about half of the men there were ordained. The church was filled. The service began at 9:30 in the morning and was over by noon, after which lunch was served for those who came from a distance.

The sermon was preached by Richard Danner from the Hanover district, a bishop for 27 years. He received that office at the age of 27. He answered the question raised by the Lynnhaven scribe; why a bishop. Danner claimed that the bishoprick is a continuation of the Apostles in a sense, since their office was also called a bishoprick, and he claimed they were the only ones ordained by Christ to baptize. He further stated that where the office of bishop is ruled out as unnecessary, and all the work done by the local pastor, it results in confusion and lack of spiritual development. For, says he, the people want a democratic church government, and do away with a central head, so they can boss the pastor around and do as they please. They want license for liberty, to live as they please and take the local pastor right with them, which is not possible when the pastor is under a central bishop, and he alone has the authority to baptize, marry church members, and discipline the unruly. His text was 1 Cor. 4:15 which reads, "For though ye have ten thousand instructors, yet have ye not many fathers." He claimed the husbands are the fathers in the home, the pastors are the fathers in the church for the small problems, and the bishop is supposed to be a father to all under his jurisdiction that have bigger problems. He says it easy to stand and give instructions to people but a different thing to be a father to them.

John Renno

## STILLWATER, PA.

Jan. 26 — We had beautiful weather in this section of the country, as compared with conditions described elsewhere; take for instance Tulsa, Okla. had ordered a new snow fighting machine, but it could not be delivered because it was snowbound. Here at present we have no snow, and many nice sunshiny days. Perhaps the lack of nuts and feed for wildlife can be taken literally to foretell the kind of winter. Indeed more and more of the sayings of our forefathers which were held up for ridicule, are now being considered. Like the saying, an apple a day keeps the doctor away. This has been tried on certain young people and it was discovered they were much healthier, and had better control over themselves than those who did not eat raw apples.

Bible schools are the order of the day this winter. Ours is too far away this year. We usually hold ours together with the Buffalo church, and this is the year to have it there. I was there as a visitor and found it very well attended. One hundred eleven all told, but quite a few children. It is good to get together to study the word, but this should not substitute for home bible training. Recently I spoke to a lady who told me they never had family devotions at her parental home. Occasionally when they were at home on Sunday evenings they would read together, and she thought this was always so wonderful. Only once did she hear her father pray aloud, and that was at the breakfast table when her brother was to leave for the army the same day. They were Mennonites, and I wonder if the father had prayed earlier, this occasion would not have occurred.

To far too many people their religion is just a spare tire, instead of a steering wheel. The spare tire need not be in good condition for you seldom use it, and you gripe about every time you must, because you are in trouble, you don't use it unless you are in trouble, and cannot go without it. The steering wheel is a must and nobody would think of going any place without a means of steering, and this is what the bible must be to us if we would have obedient children.

In my home when I was young and playing it sometimes irked me when I had to stop playing, and father announced it was time for bible reading. Then I questioned the benefits of bothering with it but not any more, for the memories of my childhood religious instruction linger with me continually.

Peace and prosperity are two things everyone is looking for; men have searched and talked, and planned for it but since the year 3000 B. C. there have been only 292 years of peace on earth. 14,531 wars have been fought in which approximately three billion, six hundred and forty million people have died. The valuation of the property which was destroyed, the prosperity which

men have sought for by these wars, is valued at the price of a belt around the world, a wall of solid gold, 100 miles wide and 30 feet high.

Men have sought for prosperity and had it within sight but destroyed it, because they lacked peace of heart. If the bible were used more in homes and the children, as soon as they show resistance, were disciplined, and taught to obey orders without question more peace would be in the hearts of men. For children grow into men, and if their own will is not broken the first few years of life they grow up to demand what they want, and plunder to get it. The thoughts and intents of the human heart are only evil continually.

One of the world's bad men died today, in Italy. He was in his 60's. They called him Lucky Luciano. He was sentenced to 40 years in prison for being a leader in a narcotics ring and white slavery. Soon after his sentence he was released from prison but deported to his native country, Italy. He died at an airport of a heart attack while waiting the arrival of some friends. Even in his own country he was always in trouble with the police.

John Renno



**STILLWATER, PA.**

Feb. 2—Groundhog day. The Punxsutawney Ground Hog club says he saw his shadow today, and went back for another six weeks of sleep while we have more hard winter weather. Locally, he would have had to look quick to see it, because it was cloudy all day, with slight sunshine in the morning.

Several Luzerne County bankers were arrested for getting away with thousands of dollars. One was arrested in Washington, D. C. while attending an executive meeting. The F.B.I. got on the track of missing money, and it caught up with them.

All of India is in an uproar this past week. The astrologers say the end of the world is coming on Monday, Feb. 5 (if it does you probably won't read this anyway). They have as their gauge the fact that five of the planets are within 13 degrees of the sun, which happens every century or so, but they say this is different because there will also be a total eclipse of the sun at the same time. This eclipse can, however, be seen only in the Pacific ocean so it will probably pass unnoticed by many. These Indians say if the end of the world does not come there will be such a terrible catastrophe that life will not be very pleasant any more. But then the end of the world has been predicted to come so many times already that this is nothing new. And in spite of all the predictions it still is going on just the same. Although this present world system will be brought to end, the bible says in different

places that the earth will abide forever.

I was down at the woods along the creek cutting wood this afternoon. This is something that I've done very little of in recent years, but quite a bit formerly. It was so pleasant to be all alone with your thoughts, and birds fluttering through the brush, and the water rippling over the stones. It was very quiet. About the only sounds to disturb were man-made motors and jet planes, and trains chugging along and whistling. I've had such a pleasant lot in life in the past, that it can be a source of real pleasure to sit on the wood pile and do some reminiscing. I also like to hear the axe ring through the woods and see the chips fly (and as always, I let them fall where they will).

I've attended two meetings this past week that were also pleasant if they weren't so fraught with evil possibilities. I take great pleasure in meeting different people, and these two meetings brought different farmers together, since one was dairy and the other poultry.

The men at the meetings, I assume, were for the most part men of this world and interested in things of this life only, and have no plans made for when this life is past and gone; but the things that impressed me was the seemingly gloomy outlook for farmers financially. The county agent said we are hard put, and he doesn't know what to do. It's very hard to do anything, for the interest of one man conflicts with the interest of the group.

We were told how to be more efficient and make our stock produce more, and how we could get more and better production with less efforts. But if each one will take the advice given it will hurry the coming catastrophe for farmers so much the more. Not only is the outlook bad for the farmer but also for those who are connected with it, like the hardware stores and machinery dealers. One of them told me it's not a matter of making a profit anymore. That's completely out of the picture. It's just a constant struggle to keep your head above water, and keep all your bills paid. They have no income tax to pay for they didn't make anything, and they keep going just because it's something to do, and they have too much self respect to give up and go on relief as so many do. But he claimed this area is harder pressed than many others.

Marketing orders will probably be here soon, when you will be told just how much milk and eggs you dare produce without being penalized. They are fast planning a program like that. Many farmers are quitting, but we still have over production because those who stay in business produce so much more than they used to. Truly, those who have hope in this life only are of all men most miserable.

It's so good to sit on the wood pile and meditate, and let the world roar by in the distance, for in quietness and confidence shall be your strength. I was so wondering about the coming Sunday School lesson which is the Christian's Use of the Lord's Day, and about John the Apostle who was in the Spirit on the Lord's day. Why do we worship on the first day of the week instead of the last, and what is it to be in the Spirit of the Lord's Day?

John Renno

**STILLWATER, PA.**

Feb. 9—We read so often these days of weddings that causes us to wonder just what it's all coming to. For instance. . . "The . . . Mennonite church was the scene of a lovely wedding where the Rev. . . performed the ceremony and the bride was gowned in a floor-length gown of embroidered tulle over taffeta. She carried a white Bible topped with white roses. The bridesmaids wore orchid dresses covered with net. They carried colonial bouquets of white and yellow pom poms."

It doesn't say whether it was a religious service or not, and the Bible isn't mentioned at all except that the bride carried one, but it was probably not opened at all, and probably won't be for a long time to come. We wonder, for it does not say who had the pre-eminence, the bride or the Lord.

Near Montrose, Pa. a man was taking his wife to the hospital. She was expecting her 3rd child. They called the neighbors and asked them to come over and take their two young children, one and two years old, over to their home for the rest of the night, for it was now a little past mid-night. As the parents drove out the neighbors drove in, and the woman went upstairs to get the little children, but when she entered their room it was filled with smoke. The husband also tried, but was forced to retreat because of flames & smoke. The whole house was soon engulfed in flames, before anything could be done, and the house was burned to the ground. The two charred bodies were found later amid the ashes. The parents were both treated at the hospital when they heard the news. It is hard to imagine what an experience like this would be.

A significant baptismal service was held in an Ecuadorean jungle stream on November 22, 1961, where nine Auca Indians were baptized. Five of these were those who killed the five missionaries who tried to reach them with the gospel back in 1956, on January 8. The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church, and missionary work is going on there by the wives and sisters of those who were killed.

Communist Russia, which openly boasts of its Atheism, has had for years one of its leading church men as its strongest sup-



porters. In 1927 when the Russian leaders confronted priests for support, this one, Nicolai, signed a declaration of unconditional loyalty, while at the same time 100,000 other priests of the Russian Orthodox church were put to death or sent to Siberia as slave laborers. What some consider to be this priest's greatest contribution to Communism was when he entered into the World Council of Churches three weeks before he died. He now has a successor and the evil still goes on. Why American church men should welcome such evil in their council is not readily understood. And they are leading figures too.

John Renno

### STILLWATER, PA.

Feb. 23—Tuesday, Feb. 20th, 1962, will go down in history as the day the American people put the first man in orbit around the earth 3 times and brought him back safely and alive. That it was a great feat cannot be denied, but the exact value derived from it I cannot determine at this time.

By 1967 we expect to send manned vehicles to the moon and bring them back. The machine is already underway. First there will be moon probes. In 60 days another man is supposed to go around the earth three times, and soon one is supposed to go around 18 times. John Glenn started off and in 5 minutes time he was already 100 miles high, and traveling at the terrific speed of 17,000 miles per hour.

I myself would not mind seeing how the earth looks from 150 miles up, but to get up and get down is quite a ticklish task. Coming back down is harder than getting up. For entering the earth's dense atmosphere going that fast creates a heat up to 3,000 degrees fahrenheit. It takes a great deal of insulation to protect the man from roasting. Also he must slow down from 17,000 miles per hour to 200 in five minutes time, and that's applying the brakes pretty hard.

So far the space probe has cost every man, woman and child \$2.40, and seeing there are 185 million people would make it around 44 billion, 420 thousand dollars, just to investigate the unknown. Surely curiosity pertains to the human race. It took

five thousand men to be out on the high seas to catch one man as he came down, and then they weren't there right away. He had to wait about 20 minutes before he was picked up. If his capsule would have blown apart like Virgil Grissom's did, he would doubtless be in the bottom of the sea by now, instead of enjoying the plaudits of mankind. I believe men will eventually get to the moon, but even if they do who will be the beneficiaries?

Now speaking about another kind of capsule; if you get into your chicken house and find that production of eggs has dropped about 25%, and the next day more yet, and a lot of eggs laid on the roost and on the floor, you may as well mark it down as New Castle disease, and in a few days you will not get any eggs at all. Such has been our experience. Some died, and some sat around and looked as if they'd like to, but the poultryman says they will be over it in 3 weeks and then lay fast enough to make up for the loss. I had some of them to the laboratory at Tunkhannock to make sure what it was. He said it's a virus and nothing can be done about it. It must take its course.

It has also been our privilege to get a free ride to Belleville last Sunday afternoon. Our preacher, Ben Lapp, was asked to come and preach a sermon there on that Sunday evening. The theme he was to preach on was "Recognizing Propaganda In World Affairs". I don't know of

a better qualified man to preach on this, because he gets the U.S. News and World Report which has much news in it, and he reads it quite extensively, for he seems to know what's going on in the world. But personally I'm not sure of how much benefit it will be to speak of this in church, since there are so many positive things to talk about. He did not want to speak on propagating the truth but time seemed to get away from him so rapidly that he got very little said about that. One thing that I thought was noteworthy, was that we should pray for the rulers of our land, and not only pray, but earnestly beg God to give to them what is best, for that's what the word supplication means.

I also saw some of my old-time acquaintances at church. I think they are aging awfully fast, even mentioning to Sammy K. that he's getting so wrinkled but he insisted he was approaching 70 years of age. Nelson Glick said he may be in our church on March 4th to teach the class for me if the roads are bare; I'm looking forward to this event. Not that he's such a great orator and expounder, but he's very conservative. In politics he would be called a rightist. We need more of this in our church today, because many are going to the left, even questioning the value of some of the biblical principles we hold to. We ought to have at least two or three Nelson Glicks in every church. They are an asset, for I know he has helped me much in this line of thought.

John Renno

**STILLWATER, PA.**

March 2—The weather has not been pleasant to my way of thinking. So much ice which melts so slowly, and raises the ground level that when it rains the water runs into my barn.

Two young girls were killed near here, the one 9, and the other 7. The school bus on which they were riding stopped to leave them off right at an intersection. The girls waited for the car coming in one direction, then without looking dashed out on the road directly in the path of a car coming in the opposite direction. They were thrown 50 ft. and both instantly killed. The one was the daughter of the school bus driver.

Another airliner crashed with 95 people aboard, with no survivors. The New York area is so congested with air travel that there is hardly enough room for the three airports there so close together, and the planes leaving the one are required to turn sharply when ascending to avoid getting into the others territory. This one was one of those big jets and the turn was too sharp, or so they suppose, that the engines stalled, and it went down in Jamaica Bay and exploded, just three miles from the airport. We think it's terrible when a plane goes down, but according to miles traveled, air is still the safest way to go. Far less people get killed by air than any other way. In Pennsylvania for every hundred million miles traveled by auto, there were almost five people killed in auto accidents, and this is the safest state in the nation, so they say, for in other states the death toll is higher.

John Glenn is having a time of it. He is receiving what I suppose Peter would call an abun-

dant entrance. In Washington an estimated 250 thousand stood out in the rain along Pennsylvania Ave. to watch his motorcade pass. And in New York there were several million spectators to cheer. These cheers were somewhat dampened by the airliner crash, for it happened the same day. John was asked what he was thinking about when he was going around the world, whether he was afraid of death, and was praying, etc. But he claimed he was too busy controlling his space ship to spend time in meditation and prayer. He said he made peace with his maker several years ago, and so has no fear of death. It has been suggested to us that he is not a Christian or he wouldn't be flying around the world at such a pace. But personally I am not sure whether it's worse to fly around the world at 17,000 miles per hour at 150 miles high, or fly from one place to another 3 or 4 miles high, at 400 miles per hour. There are now many Christians that employ airplanes to take them places. Will they employ spaceships in the future?

Last Sunday was rather unusual for me as I did something that it has been almost nine years since I did it last. I went to church . . . I mean to church at the place where we used to live, the same place where I was born and raised. My oldest brother lives there now, and incidentally he has been ordained last fall. The order of the service was exactly the same as it used to be, and the same message was preached, but what a great change has taken place in the people who attended. There was my brother, Jonas, who is younger than I, sitting on the back bench with the old men. And David C. Swarey, and Isaac P. Yoder, and Joe I. Peachey. Men who were on the second bench then are now with the elders, and those who were young boys then are now sitting with children on each side of them, and the young boys now I do not know any more. Many of them weren't even born 9 years ago, or were mere babies. Some have aged very fast, then there are others who look just the same, such as Enos, Lizzie, and Noah Davie. Lydia doesn't look a bit older. There were no rocking chair occupants there among the men folks, such as old Mose Zook and Menno Yoder. They are "nicht mere forhanden."

John Renno

**STILLWATER, PA.**

March 9—Spring is only a few days away but winter still seems to have a firm grip. Two big snow storms in one week. The east coast had the worst storms in 25 years, doing extensive damage, with high winds and high tides. The storm did very little to us except strong winds.

The visit of Nelson Glick came to pass as planned. He taught my class and did excellently, but told me he was disappointed that they did not know more. For instance, when he asked where five of the ten commandments are found in the new testament, someone suggested the sermon on the mount. And when he asked who committed the first crime of stealing before the law was given someone suggested it was Achan. And when he asked for someone who would quote the ten commandments, no one did. I must do better.

He came here early Saturday evening, and stayed till Sunday afternoon. We had a wonderful time of fellowship together. He

told us many things that are taking place in the Big Valley and even told me a few things that I dare not put in the Budget. Besides having fellowship, and Bible discussions he also told us how we could be better stewards of our possessions. An old broom on the back porch, was worn off on one side and bent from setting; and he reprimanded me for not having drilled a hole in the handle long ago and hung it up, to make it last longer. He also told me to stop calling people that are now 80 years or more "old people". He said Sammy K. and Tom Byler are not old men. I am sorry if anyone was offended by being called old. I did it as an honor and not a reproach, for I am very fond of the elderly.

Nelson has taught the bible for years, and is well versed in the Old Testament, and this makes him so interesting to talk to; for one who knows the old very well can make the new so much more interesting. The church in general is drifting, and unstable for want of men of his calibre. He is conservative, and yet not dogmatic, he can disagree and still be agreeable, he can reprove and still love, he can excel and not be proud.

It has been said at the news conference at the local feed mill that two Dairies in Williamsport, Pa. were getting too much milk, so they stopped the big shippers, and refused to take their milk

any more, and kept the smaller ones. As a result there are big dairy herds going over the auction block. Now, I don't know who will buy these cows. If the small herds only get bigger very little has been gained, but it is hoped that some cows will go out of state. One sale has already been completed and the highest cow was said to have brought less than \$300 dollars.

Next week another foreign minister's meeting will start in Geneva, with some eighteen nations participating. But France is wise—they are not going, for the result of the meeting can easily be guessed; a lot of talk and dollars, and time consumed, with no results of any benefit. The nations are getting together trying to plan how not to cut one another's throat, and as proof they want to stop making neu-

clear weapons, and if a foolproof agreement could be reached they would even destroy what they already have. It is quite evident in anybody's mind that they do not want peace. The cold war keeps the price of things higher, while we spend our billions preparing for war that we hope will never come, but most certainly will, eventually.

As for conferences talking of peace in the last 16 years, there were 863 meetings held, with 1700 hours of talk, and 18 million words, but no agreement is in sight. This ought to be sufficient proof that they do not really want a settlement, and furthermore, peace has been taken from the earth and there will be none until the Prince of Peace comes, and puts down all rule and all authority.

John Renno

## STILLWATER, PA.

March 16—We had ordnungs gma on Sunday, and expect to observe communion on March 25. Now our ordnungs gma is different than what it is some places, although the same end is in view; to examine ourselves to see if we still are in the faith, and have peace with God and our fellow man. We still have an ordnung though but it isn't related much in public and not too much attention is given it. Maybe there's no use in having any. Indeed, if everyone has peace with God he must have peace with his fellow man, because one without the other is impossible. They only come in pairs.

Our preacher had a good message for the occasion. He spoke on the Devil's most effective tool; that of causing misunderstanding between Christians. Saying that at times we differ in opinion, but instead of sitting down with each other and examining our differences closely we are harsh and critical. We judge and condemn before we know all the facts, and we're not too interested in finding out the facts, which, if we know, we would react quite differently. He gave some historical facts where Satan used misunderstanding among God's people to work havoc. He claimed Satan is after us, not because he loves us nor wants anything to do with us, but because of the conflict that exists between him and God. We are God's workmanship, and he's out to destroy God's work, which in this case happens to be us Christians.

I was astounded recently by the primitive conditions that still exist in this what we call modern America. It is modern in a sense, in that many have television, and electric, and radio, and autos, but that's about the extent of their modern way of life. A livestock dealer asked me to go with him to gather up some stock, and we came to a place where lived an old lady who had three cows in an old shack a little ways off from the house, which you could get to only by wading mud. Well, two of these were cows in that they gave milk, but the one she wanted to sell was said to be seven

years old, but she had never freshened. She was sterile. Why would anyone feed an animal for all those years without realizing profit in return?

Another place where we got a heifer was a large herd of about 50 head altogether, all Guernseys. This herd was taken care of also by a lady about 60 years old. The way she watered them was to carry water in a 5-gallon bucket. I suppose she spent most of her time in the barn with her cattle, with whom she fell in love, and that's why she had so many—not that they brought her much income for she wasn't selling milk since the plant went bulk. Many of these were but skin and bones, and very hungry. The reason that she sold a heifer was she gave it in return for hay which she bought from this cattle dealer and not because she wanted to get rid of it. Yes, she had a husband but he worked in his shop, as a mechanic, and he couldn't help her much because he has a very bad heart, and is living on borrowed time. It does one much good to get out and see how the other half lives. One place I asked the man if he attends the church nearby, but he said he doesn't go anywhere. He used to go there but they started quarreling, and everyone wanted to be boss, so he just quit and doesn't go any place ever since.

At the auction I had a very interesting visit with Crist Sharp, deacon at the Buffalo Mennonite Church. Some strange things are happening these days, things stranger than fiction. He related how his brother left his wife and family and is living with another woman.

This week's mail brought a letter which I will quote in full: "First a friendly greeting in Jesus' name who died for our sins. I read your letters in the Budget, but a lot of times I don't think much of them because there is not much news in them, mostly welt und gelt. But when I read last week's letter I just had to wonder, and wonder, and wonder." An unworthy Friend.

Now I am not sure what this man wondered about my last letter, but am glad that he was honest enough to give me his opinion. He also sent me a copy of the poem that I had known something of for a long time, which I was glad to receive, and sometime perhaps I'll have it in the Budget. It's in Pennsylvania Dutch, entitled, "Ich ves net vas die ursach iss." Renno



**STILLWATER, PA.**

March 21—Spring is here according to the calendar, some robins were also seen, and the days and nights are now of equal length.

The Geneva disarmament talks are in a complete deadlock. And Krushchev would like a free ride to the moon with us. Talks of working together in the space probes, for in this way he can learn a lot of our secrets without telling us any of his, or perhaps he doesn't have any. Mrs. Kennedy is on a semi-state visit to India and Pakistan, along with many news reporters. The filming of her trip will cost the taxpayers around \$70,000. Our government is fast going in the red, with no relief in sight. We spend more for taxes now than we spend for food. The interest alone on the national debt is almost ten billion dollars, or \$50.80 for every man, woman and child. It appears to be only a matter of time until we will be sunk as a nation.

Now some people say they have no interest in world news. They just don't bother themselves what goes on in the world. They know we're headed for trouble but they aren't going to concern themselves about it. Now the ostrich also has a method something similar to this. When he sees danger coming he just sticks his head in the sand so that he can't see the enemy, and assumes if he can't see the foe, the foe also cannot see him. The ostrich is concerned but does the wrong thing. We also ought to be concerned enough to talk to the One who sees all nations as a drop in a bucket, and who maketh war to cease, and cutteth the bow, and breaketh the spear in sunder.

Others don't want religious articles in this paper, saying they can read all the religion they want in the Bible. Still others don't want to read about farming trends, etc. And I do wonder what is left to write about.

There is yet one thing or so that needs mentioning. We are told the pious people of India put spikes through boards then turn the board around and walk on these spikes with the bare feet, thinking they can by thus crucifying the flesh atone for a guilty conscience, or find a more

ready acceptance with their gods. Well, the people who walk on spikes still exist, only they are now more educated. They have the spikes in their shoes and use them for heels, and have the head turned up, walking on the head of the spike. They also do it to please their god, which is called Dame Fashion.

These people wearing spikes are now in our so-called plain churches. I would have no objection to these if they would serve some purpose other than drawing attention to the flesh.

But it certainly must be tiring to wear them, for the leg must be held rigid all the time else it will go sideways, and care must be used not to tramp on the register where the cold air goes down to the furnace, or they will be caught and be difficult to free. Personally, I believe anyone wearing these heels is sinning against God and their own body. Now if the church would make a regulation requiring these it would be terrible how strict they are but just let old Dame Fashion recommend them, and all kinds of sacrifice is made at her altar.

The Sunday School lessons for this past quarter were named Jesus and the Ten Commandments, and were quite interesting, especially the 10th one on being covetous. I never gave this so much thought until I made a more intensive study of it, and it's amazing how easy it is to be covetous and not be aware of it. And the above mentioned sin of walking on spikes is one phase of covetousness. It's done for the desire to be fashionable, and noticed, desirous of vain glory. And as the pastor was preaching on the Prophet Micah he spoke on the covetousness of the preachers of those days who cried peace to the people as long as they gave them plenty to eat, but if they didn't they even prepared war against them.

I am beginning to wonder if our standard of living isn't too high, and like the man who didn't know what to do with all his goods we say to our souls eat, drink and be merry, and are

quite unaware that our souls cannot enjoy food, or clothes. Then why do we covet them so earnestly? Wouldn't our standard of loving be higher, if our standard of living were lower? I am beginning to wonder if we really aren't too nice and fancy to be the kind of Christians we ought to be. I wonder if we haven't turned Matthew 6:33 around to say, "But seek first after all these things, then the kingdom of God shall be added unto you." John Renno

**STILLWATER, PA.**

March 30—It seems but a few days ago that the command was issued to take off the screen doors, and today it was again time to put them on. Housecleaning is also on the agenda, and I'm always glad when that's over; not that I have to help, but I don't like my normal living routine disrupted. Plowing is also going, but there still was some frost down deep where a heavy application of manure was applied.

We had our communion service last Sunday, and it was unusual; in fact one participant confided that it was the first communion that he enjoyed, at Beaver Run, but then hastened to add that it was because of his own prejudiced attitude that the

other ones weren't enjoyed better. Our new bishop, Paul Landis, had charge of it. The messages were the best I can ever recall of having heard any place, or anytime. They were not emotional, not exciting, and not even given as a great oration, but like Paul said, "when I came unto you I came not with excellency of speech, or enticing words of man's wisdom, but I knew nothing save Jesus Christ and him crucified." It was also not like too many like to do to save face, just speak of great doctrinal facts, and sins in general, aiming at everybody and hitting nobody. He did not even speak much of great big sins, but concentrated on those little foxes that spoil the vine; such sins as envy, pride, and false pretense. Saying when we pray to be kept from pride, we are already proud of our humility, or we wouldn't think of praying like that. Or the sin of trying to impress the Lord

by our good works, and wondering why he doesn't sit up and take notice. Or the sin of worshipping man, and methods, instead of God in the Spirit and truth. He further related how that Jesus could have had some great shrine, or memorial erected to help people remember his death, but he just used the simple basic things of life that is familiar to everyone, as bread, and the fruit of the vine. He said he hopes that the Mennonite church will never lose the practice of feet washing, as has been done by many denominations; but said we will lose it if we just do it as a cold mechanical routine, and not because we love each other. He said some men would wash their neighbor's feet at communion, but wouldn't go to help him plow his field if he needed help. He also told how that when Jesus and the disciples went into the upper room for the last supper, it was usually the servant's job to wash everyone's feet as they entered. But there were no servants here, and Jesus may have wished one of the disciples would take that task, but they were arguing who would be the greatest, and were certainly in no mood to stoop to wash feet, so Jesus just took this servant's task himself, at seeing this they may have been ashamed of themselves, and Peter probably showed how most of them felt but didn't say so, because they were more timid than Peter.

When the emblems were passed out he asked us all to stand up front in a semi-circle, then after we prayed we all ate the bread at the same time, after meditating upon it in silence for a moment. This was impressive too, but probably would not be so much in a large congregation. When it would hardly be possible for them all to stand up front at the same time, but this is just one more instance where it's much more practical and efficient to have a smaller congregation, where everybody knows everyone else just a little more intimately. Why then do we spend the millions every year to build bigger churches, when we all agree that smaller ones are more enjoyable? Would not it be cheaper to build more smaller ones? It would also be much better for the mission of

the church to make disciples of all men, for very few disciples are made in big churches, they are too busy in committee work to be winning souls.

Now I wish to ask a question of every reader, and wish you would send me the answer if you know it. Our love as a church in general is waxing colder all the time, we are more self sufficient, and care less and less for our neighbor, seldom going to visit as we used to do, we are failing to love them as ourselves. The question is, would our love be more pure, and of a more compassionate nature if we were not living on such a high plane? The standard of living we have adopted seems to be robbing us of our love, while we so rush after the almighty dollar. If our living standard is causing us to lose our love, which is the life line of the Christian faith, how can we reduce it? Where do we begin? Would this solve the problem? I have stated the above statements in my Sunday School class, and was asked how to lower it and didn't know; could any of you help me on this?

John Renno

## STILLWATER, PA.

April 7—Perhaps a postal card received by us would explain this season of the year which is so delightful to almost everyone. Quote: "Beautiful, beautiful weather—snow gone—birds singing—daughter ironing—girlies fighting—finger itching to work in the ground—lambs having a hoe down in the orchard when turned loose, what a wonder . . ."

On a sadder note, one young man has just been sentenced to die in the electric chair. The trial which lasted for 11 days was held here in Bloomsburg. He is a man not quite as old as I am, a magazine salesman by trade. He has been tried before on charges of assaulting women, and has served prison sentences. Last summer, on July 11, he was seeking an address in nearby Centralia, and as he was wont to do he asked a young girl for the address. If they tried to tell him he asked them to go with him in his car. Many of them refused, but this one, Mary Jane Benefield, went with him and showed him where the certain address was he was seeking; after having secured the information he asked her what the young people do for recreation around there, she told him swimming, and showed him where the place was. When he took hold of her she screamed and evidently would have made her escape but he hit her on the head with a stone, and left her dead, and went on his way. A great search began for the young girl, and she was found the next day lying in her blood. She was 13 years old, a Catholic. They didn't find the murderer for quite some time, but he could not be hidden for long, and was taken into custody several months later.

There are a few things that should be commented on, and one is the immodest dress of the American woman. As John R. Rice once said, "Any woman that is bold enough to walk down the street with shorts on, and gets assaulted, gets just what she has been fishing for—the lustful eye of men." Paul Harvey said, "Any woman going into a supermarket with shorts on has too much flesh exposed without a price tag on it." Now the above mentioned girl was wearing shorts, and being no older than she was, probably didn't know any better, but as so often is the case, the tempted hangs while the temptress goes scott free. In this case the temptress was slain, but often they are free to go about tempting others; it just isn't right.

John Renno

**STILLWATER, PA.**

April 14 — Cool, wet, soggy, damp, rainy, snow flurries, windy, farm work halted. It's about time to sow oats, but as long as water stands in the fields, that cannot be.

Some people seem to care whether we live or not. At least they do not want us to perish if our house should catch fire. A man called up and said we have been recommended as prospects, and asked if he might show us a film on fire hazards. We gave permission and he proceeded to show us pictures showing how fires are caused, and how that if a fire starts in the basement, the deadly gases rise up to the upper floors, and the occupants are killed by carbon monoxide gas before fire ever reaches them. They said that normal living is the greatest cause of fire—such normal living as smoking cigarettes on the couch. A few embers fall down in and lay

there. A long time after you have gone to bed they burst into flame, and burn you up. Or the T-V set is one of the major causes of fires. It carries around 50 thousand volts of electric current, and sometimes long after it is shut off and you have gone to bed it will burn, and consume you.

These men had a fire alarm system, and they would put a fire detector in every room that would ring the fire alarm when its temperature reached 145 degrees. All this they would install for the sum of \$589, or a small down payment and so much a month. He asked me then, whether I don't think such an instrument was a necessity for every home. I told him I lived for 37 years and never burned up, and my dad lived for 72 years and he never burned up. He insisted I didn't understand what a hazard fire is. I furthermore told him that I don't think a few more years on this earth are of vital importance. We will die anyway, sooner or later, and if people were half as concerned about keeping out of eternal fire it would be worth their while. We told him we didn't live nor-

mal lives, and we had no T-V and never smoked cigarettes. The pictures were designed to scare people so that they would buy their wares, but it didn't work on us. I told him I have a God in heaven who watches over me and I cannot die until he permits. He thought I was queer.

Paul Harvey said in California people are so set on getting something for nothing that on most any pretext they sue for damages. A woman stepped on a grape in a store, and sued them for 23 thousand dollars. She got three.

A man borrowed money at the bank to buy an automobile. He had every payment paid up but the last one and just couldn't seem to get the money, so the bank sent a man over to take the car from him. Well, the next day he quickly got enough money together to make that one last payment, and after having secured the car he pulled a banana cream pie out of the box he was carrying and threw it right in the face of the banker.

John Renno

**STILLWATER, PA.**

Apr. 21—Weather is somewhat more like spring than it has been for several weeks. It's almost May and no oats sowed, and not much plowed for it. It seems the seasons are shorter than they used to be. Spring is always late.

Yesterday we took the day off and went to visit some sick folks, and those who are somewhat halt, or maimed. Also spoke with some of our former colleagues. The place was Belleville. We stopped at S. W. Zooks, who is an uncle to us. He had a stroke some while ago, and is bedfast. His speech is hindered, and he is but a shadow of his former self. Says the time seems so long, especially from midnight till morning. He is always glad for visitors. It seems when we are hale and hearty we put far off the evil day, and we forget that death is ready to take possession of our body the moment our natural resistance declines from its activity. Each of us has in our bodies the seed of death, potential worms ready to eat us.

We also saw in the Budget that our aunt Katie Renno was bedfast and stopped to pay her a visit, but she came to the door her usual friendly self to greet us. She was sick but is now better. We also visited with others who were not sick. The day goes around so quickly that you just have to be on the run continually. We left home at seven in the morning and arrived home 12 hours later, with five of those spent on the road, and the rest visiting about seven places. People think it strange we cannot stay longer, failing to realize we have so many places to see, while when they come here they only have one.

JRR



**STILLWATER, PA.**

April 26—Summer has once again arrived, and I hope it will stay longer than the other warm spell did.

We have once again started nuclear testing; today was the first, and many more will follow. While at the same time the disarmament conference at Geneva is still going on. We are trying to reach an agreement with Russia to ban all nuclear testing, and have a fool proof policing action so that no one can cheat, like they did when we had the voluntary moratoriums on such tests. They are violently criticizing the U.S. for going ahead with the tests, calling them warmongers. The Soviet diplomat at the conference had quite a statement to read, and was more excited than he had ever been seen before. But it seemed no one else was very much impressed. In London a great crowd marched around the U.S. Embassy, violently protesting the tests. I heard them shouting clear over here.

Another something new; we can also now boast of having hit the moon on the back side, which we never see, we've tried seven times before but always failed. The rocket hit at the speed of six thousand miles per hour, and I don't suppose there were too many big pieces left. But it supposedly didn't make any sound when it hit, because there is no air there, hence no waves to carry sound. The Russians have hit it long before this and on the side which we see. Now, I still don't know what advantage it is to be able to hit the moon nor to send man up there as they plan to do by 1968. Yes, I know they say he who rules the moon also rules the earth, and they try to be first, but how foolish can they get. The one who created the moon was first and he already rules it, plus the earth.

I had a very interesting visit the other day with a man who is 84 years old. Seems to be quite spry for his age, and talks just in one streak, like a radio. While he talks he demonstrates what he is trying to say, with gestures, and motions of the body. He has lived for a long time now and has had many experiences. He also is a taxidermist, and his living room looks somewhat like a museum, with mounted squirrel, and owls, and deer heads,

etc. He said one night he came home and thought someone had been intruding, for he saw one of the birds on the floor. But when he went to pick it up it flew away; it was a live grouse. He showed me the place where it came in through the window pane, the pane wasn't broken or cracked except just a hole in it about the size of the bird, and of course he won't fix that pane either. He just has a cardboard over it, so he can show it. He also has many petrified objects. He showed me a potato turned into hard rock. You could easily see it was a potato at one time for it had eyes and the color and everything. He also had fish and other objects that were turned into rock. It takes a long time for something like that to turn to stone, but it evidently will if it is someplace where it cannot decay, and enough pressure is applied.

The old man lives by himself in one little back room of a house which at one time housed two families. He is quite wealthy, but lives as though he wasn't. And his room looks just like rooms do where bachelors live.

John Renno

**STILLWATER, PA.**

May 4—It is quite evident that the questions that were raised several weeks ago concerning our living standards affecting our love for one another, and how to lower the standards if that were the cause, has caused some to do some serious thinking, and a number even have gone to the bother to write me.

The best answer, in my judgement, was given in the Budget by Jerome Raber, who said he saw it along the road "Christ is the answer". Now I knew that this was true all along, but it just never dawned on me before as it did when I saw it in the Budget. I have also erected signs like this, with the same words on, but never realized just what it means, and am confident that I still do not comprehend all that is involved in this so great a statement.

The next best answer also was in this paper just last week, by John W. Martin; his answer was

very logical, and he reasoned that it is almost impossible to lower the standard of living when we live here in America, because the American standard is so high. This also raises the cost of living, and we must have more income, to keep up with the expenses.

Some of the answers received in the mail went like this . . .

"Yes, I think if things go well with us, we get self-satisfied, forget the other person and the Lord; think too much of what we will do tomorrow, and speak of material things more than spiritual. When our ancestors came together, did they talk of how to make money, or did they just praise the Lord for the little they had." Another one thinks the high standard of living is the main cause of the falling away from the faith, and thinks it is the power of the beast prophesied to come in Revelation. And he thinks to lower the standard of living, we must come back to the biblical standard of having food and raiment. Let us therefore be content, and thinks anything more than this is a transgression. He also points out that we say we must have all these things to help us to prosper more so we have more to give for missions, etc. But he thinks it isn't right to do wrong so that good may be done by it.

Still another one thinks that it is the great Babylon mentioned in the bible, the great harlot. And says he thinks to go along with this practice of materialism is being disobedient to God since he tells his people to come out of her, and not be partakers of her sins. Says he has come out and does with much less than is customary, and has been richly blessed.

Some of these are noteworthy opinions, and give just cause for consideration, but let us not forget that God is dealing with the whole world, and not just with America, in which only eight per cent of the world's population lives. Because God has chosen for

us to be born where we were, we seem to think we see the whole world when we see America. Now to average the income of every family in the world, would come to around six hundred dollars a year. And this is very low. I would assume the majority of us have this much income in a month. This is not net profit, but gross income. They tell us that Red China raises no more grain than she did 10 years ago, but has millions more mouths to feed, and Russia is fifty years behind America in agriculture. Now if we would not farm different than we did fifty years ago, we would also have a food shortage. And in India, where people worship the cow, and refuse to eat beef, people die every day of starvation, and they think nothing of it. And in many countries hundreds are dying for their faith in Christ. Now to sum up the world as a whole and think what others think about the situation, they probably wouldn't agree that Revelation is being fulfilled in the same way we do.

I also received other letters that were interesting but time and space are limited, and I just quoted some at random, not because they were better than others. Those who wrote were sincere, and honorable, which is to their credit, except one. No doubt the author was sincere, but sincerely wrong; for if we let ourselves be led by visions and revelations which are contrary to the written word we are not building on the solid Rock.

I know that we are living in serious times, and in times in which love is waxing cold, and evil men are getting worse instead of better, and this is not only in the world as such, but also in the religious world. But this is no time to give up, for we have the promise that the gates of hell shall not have the victory over the church, the Body of Christ, and we must first of all be sure we belong to the body, and then as Peter says abstain from fleshy lusts which war against the soul, and lay aside every weight, and the sin which does so easily beset us, and run with patience. John Renno

## STILLWATER, PA.

May 12—May 10th is time to plant corn in this part of the state and we went out early to pick a few stones off and the ground was slightly frozen. The stones underneath were white with frost, and the ground was froze fast. The pullets' water fountains were frozen so that they could not be opened, out on range. The clover looked just like it does in the fall after a hard frost. Even the "brenneasele" along the lane hung its leaves as though in disappointment.

I noticed by the paper that the Belleville scribe has ordered 300 leghorn chicks. And what is so significant about that? We often receive about that size orders, and haven't even thought it worthy to mention. But I read between the lines in this, and supposed he was abandoning the hatching egg business and going to producing eggs to eat. Now Walter Clemmens has just this year started in the hatching egg business, and I suggested that it might be a mistake, but he

said he has made so many mistakes in the past that he supposes one more wouldn't make much difference. And by the way, market eggs have just hit a new low in the New York Urner Barry market. They haven't been this low for a few years now. Perhaps this will give the in-and-outers the blues again, so that they will quit, and this will alleviate the price-cost squeeze.

There are quite a few farms for sale in this immediate vicinity, but they seem to be hard to get rid of, unless the right person happens to be around. One that I am acquainted with is a couple that have no children, and their health is not so good. They have worked very hard all their life, and have accumulated some wealth, and have two very productive farms, and want to sell them both for \$35,000. There is only some over 100 acres of land in the two, but two sets of buildings, and a full line of machinery, potato machinery, and a lot of poultry houses.

We had a panel discussion at church recently about teaching the under-developed countries how to farm more efficiently, so that they would have more to eat, and also that they would be more ready to listen to the gospel message, having the hunger pains alleviated. But it's very hard to do, since they are so set in their ways of doing just the same their forefathers did; such as drying the manure, and using it for fuel, instead of for fertilizer. And when they sit down to milk the goat they sit at the back, and let the manure fall into the bucket if it so happens. They then reach in with the hand to pick it out. They can see no harm in that for it all comes from the same animal.

About 80 percent of the people are engaged in agriculture, and yet there is a great scarcity of food, while in America with our modern technology, only nine percent are on the farms and we have a tremendous surplus. Now we could (and there has been talk about it) of sending food to Red China to those who are starving, but that is not as simple as it may seem, for we have no way of seeing that those who really need it will get it; to just send it over and let the Red leaders do the distributing would probably not be good, for we may just be strengthening those who are the cause of the famine.

A man who lived in London wanted to visit the U.S. and the state of Texas. They boarded a plane and flew to New York's Idlewild Airport. When there he asked the stewardess which plane he now must take for Texas. She asked to see his ticket, and told him to get on that first plane. When they were flying for a while the man spoke to a man in the other seat, and suggested that there must be a lot of water between here and Texas; but the man said they were not bound for Texas, but for London. He had showed the wrong ticket, she went by it and not by what he said. They got a free ride back. John Renno

## STILLWATER, PA.

It's getting very dry and dusty around this vicinity. Has been a long time since we had rain of any substantial amount. Every day is about alike now—clear, windy, and warm, and if there are sure signs of rain they all fail.

One would have a very good reason to have a pessimistic outlook in life if that life consists mostly of things on earth. Our egg man doesn't want all our eggs, says he's going out of business if it doesn't improve soon. We take our surplus to a big huckster in Bloomsburg, and there they say everybody is bringing too many eggs in they just don't know what to do with them. Even people who never sell there bring theirs, saying their egg man doesn't come around any more.

From there I went to the milk plant and they were under the weather, saying by the first of June the Benton plant will close, and all must be bulk, or ship it to Dushore in cans, and pay shipping costs which are high, and since that is a New York market the price will be lower to start with. The government is after the Foremost company, saying they are too big. They are forced to sell much of their interest, and become as small as they were in 1951, to keep from becoming a monopoly.

Also there is far too much milk produced, and there are continually write-ups in papers saying how milk is too fattening, and will cause early death if too much is consumed, thus curbing the public consumption of milk. And isn't that strange? For it is a proven fact that cigarettes cause cancer, and hundreds die every year, and liquor is the nation's number one killer, and people are certain of this but still keep on drinking and smoking more than ever. But just let food have a vague possibility of undesirable effects and people shun it, if it is successfully played up in the newspapers.

Billy Sol Estes was a man from Texas, a rich farmer, or they thought he had millions, but discovered he was operating on borrowed money, and is practically penniless. He borrowed from big finance companies, and used huge ammonia fertilizer tanks as collateral, and they assumed since he was rich that he actually possessed them but many never existed. The Government fined him \$500,000 for raising too much cotton, and he refused to pay, then they discovered it was a big hoax. Even several congressmen are in the scandal. It's a big thing going on now in Washington.

On the international scene the U.S. has sent troops into Thailand, and its Allies are asked

to do likewise, to protect that country from being taken over by Communism. The Communists are furious about it, and it seems Laos is about ready to be washed down the Communist drain.

On the church scene, we were at the last service at the Buffalo Mennonite, of their revival meetings that had been going on for a week. Amos Swigert from Pottsville, Pa. was one of the speakers, and he spoke about the attitudes we should have as Christians; about those who leave our fellowship, saying it is too worldly, and that nothing is being done about it, and the Bishops don't care, etc. And what our attitude should be towards those who don't obey the church and are put out of the fellowship, and our attitude towards the Word, and those who say the rules are too strict.

Lastly he asked what our attitude should be towards our publishing house in Scottdale. He said it is not a servant of the church any more, but a servant of materialism. The pictures they show in their publications, and the kind of teaching that is put out is geared not to build the Mennonite church but to be pleasing to the masses so they will buy. Especially did he mention the Sunday School literature, saying they avoid printing doctrine that we hold precious, and

biblical, because it will not please everybody, and the truth might hurt, so they just don't print it, so they can sell their literature. This he said is being a servant of materialism. And I could agree with him on this a hundred per cent. I was sensing that the Publishing House was off the beam, but didn't know what was wrong, but believe this is it.

I believe the time has come when if you want to be a true Christian you must earnestly contend for the faith that was once delivered to the saints. Stand firm on the word of God and know why you stand there. You must of course be friendly, and courteous, but never yielding an inch to something that is not according to the doctrine of Godliness. The lines of demarcation are showing stronger between a true Christian and those who are "saved with the Saviour". The test is about to be applied and those who have no oil will be manifested much to their regret.

John Renno



**STILLWATER, PA.**

May 25—It was dry and the moisture below normal, but now with a few good thunder showers, making millions of tons of nitrogen available to plant life, things look very good. But I would suppose the total rainfall is still below normal for this time of year.

Letters still came in concerning our living, and one that was quite interesting came from the other side of the world, from Japan; yes, from Lee. I would assume he, having somewhat more knowledge of life outside of these United States, would be well qualified to speak on the subject, so let's look at what he says. Quote . . . In your letter of April 5 of the Budget you stated a good observation of the church growing cold because of our high standard of living, and would our love be more pure and of a compassionate nature if we were not living on such a high plane.

I do not feel it is our standard of living that is robbing us of our love for one's neighbor, but it is as you stated in your next sentence: the standard of living we have adopted seems to be robbing us of our love, while we rush after the "almighty" dollar. It is this mad rush after the dollar that hurts our love for God and one another . . . Neither we nor any Amish group would want to go back to Bible lands of living, with oil wicks, plowing with oxen and a stick, and sowing and reaping by hand.

There are many standards of living around the world, some are called "high" and others "low", based on the concept of ease and enjoyment of the flesh. But God made a beautiful world, and great and magnificent, eternal laws. These are to be enjoyed in thankfulness to God for his provision for man. And above all redemption from sin. The world and the things which God made is good and balanced: it is man's depravity that corrupts this planet, and he cuts deep injuries, and covers fields with his neighbor's blood in war.

I would say that it is covetousness that causes our love to wax cold, stiff, and hard. One sure cure, and I can guarantee it, is found in the book of Daniel, as in other books of the Bible. It is faith in the living Christ—God—Redeemer, and reading, and believing the Bible, and praying 3 times a day. If this is sincerely exercised, covetousness will be repented of, and the standard of living in any country, or part of the world will be used for the glory of God. And neighbors and countries will love each other as they love the same Christ. End of quotation.

This week a young Baptist preacher called at our place on business, but that was a minor part of the visit, for we were soon discussing the state of Christendom, in this vicinity in particular, and the country in general. He was disappointed, and partly frustrated because of so many professing Christians who just do not measure up to the Bible standard of godliness. He says there seems to be a spirit of dumbness in the people, when you speak to them of Spiritual things they do not conceive, nor comprehend, but when you talk about hunting or fishing, something that interests them, they are very alert and intelligent.

He said he spoke to an important man in town who poses as a very good Christian man, and has a son who is a minister. This man told him how he has had much experience in his life time, and he is very mellow in his attitude, insinuating that this Baptist preacher was not so because he had no time for this easy-going, watered-down Christianity—homogenized, and pastuerized if you please, to make it acceptable to society.

There is so much of this easy-going type Christianity, enduring all kinds of sins and attitudes, that we came to the conclusion that all those who adhere to this type are not saved at all—they just think so, and will be greatly disappointed when that day comes.

J.R.R.

**STILLWATER, PA.**

June 2—Very dry. Weather recorders say the driest May on record. Only a little less than three-fourths of an inch during the entire month. Our normal is about four inches. Many areas had quite a bit of rain last night. It goes above, and below us but not here. The showers seem to follow the mountains where there is more foliage, and we live about seven miles from the mountain on either side so get only what is scattered this far.

Another thing that scientists say and seems to be true is that when you pull the plug out of the bath tub, or anywhere, where water runs down the drain the swirl always goes around clockwise here in the northern hemisphere, and in the southern hemisphere it swirls around counter clockwise.

Did you notice that birds sing more in the springtime than any time of the year? They have also decided the reason for that. Birds sing not because they are happy, but for other reasons. In the spring when they arrive, the males usually arrive first, then when the females come they sing to attract their mate, and the one who makes the most noise gets the mate first. Also when looking for a location for a nest they search around for a suitable place, then sit and sing and whistle to notify all others that this belongs to them. When the young ones arrive during the summer months they get busy providing food for their offspring and do not sing so much anymore. They sometimes raise a second brood, and sing some, but their voices have died down considerably, and are not as noticeable. The time of the day also seems to influence birdsong. Some sing at daybreak, as robins do and others sing more at dusk, while the whippoorwill sings only at night.

Scientists have also learned much from nature, in creating mechanisms to serve man better, or to destroy his enemies. From the frog's eye they are learning to make missile detectors. The frog sees only that which is needful for him to see for food. If he is surrounded with dead, therefore motionless flies, he does not seem them. The eye

does not tell the brain what it sees unless it is for his benefit. Likewise it sees only the movements characteristic of its enemies, screening out that which is non-threatening.

I spoke to a man who was in the navy for years, and he said during the war they sometimes shelled and sank their own ships thinking they were firing at the enemy, because all was completely blacked out at night when a lot of the fighting was done. If they would have had the ability of a common frog this would not have happened. They are now trying to learn from the frog how to detect enemy missiles, and also aid them at the overcrowded airports, to avoid collision.

The bat also has a radar system that is far superior to man's device. He can be blindfolded and let fly through a room strung with fine wires and yet never hit a single one. He lets out supersonic squeaks, and flies with his ears and not by sight.

The rattlesnake in seeking warm-blooded prey relies on an infra-red organ in its head that can detect temperature changes of one thousandth of a degree. And if scientists knew how to obtain this they could detect rocket launching anywhere in the world, but the devices they now have are very crude compared to what the Lord has provided his creation with.

Man also has radio systems and can with the aid of electricity harness the ether waves and send his voice for thousands of miles, and they are using radio to tell the truth behind the iron curtain, called Radio Free Europe. But when those behind the iron curtain don't want their people to hear they can harness the same waves and make other noise so that what is said cannot be understood. This is called "jamming". But the little mosquito which we swat so freely can, by simply vibrating its wings, send messages to other mosquitoes 150 feet away that no other noise can jam, be it thunder or any other noise.

J. R. R.

## STILLWATER, PA.

June 8 — Beautiful weather during the summer months cause many to get in their cars and go. This is one reason we get many visitors at church at Beaver Run.

This past Sunday, Kindig Miller from the Stumptown congregation was present to tell us of the mission board's program of "fresh-air" children. This is a little different from what is done by the Herald Tribune of New York. These children that they want to put in homes for two weeks are from different cities, but only where our missions are located. The children are from six to nine years old only, and are from homes that come to the local mission churches to worship. Those over nine years are sent to Camp Hebron near Harrisburg for their vacations and again only from those who attend the mission services. This camp is free to those children.

Another remarkable feature at this church service was the preacher that was there. He was an elderly man, excellently versed in the scripture. In time past, he was a colleague of my father. His name was Sim Stoltzfus. He preached from the book of Revelations, with a message for this day, saying we are in the age of the Laodiceans. He drew three circles on a board, one inside of the other, and the text he used was, "I have brought thee out from thence that I may bring thee in." This, of course, is referring to the Israelites, but he applied it to the people of today. The first circle he said signifies the world, and the Lord wants to bring people out of the world into the church of the first-born. He claimed he was in Lancaster County the night before, and it was not possible to enter into Montour County without leaving Lancaster County first. And so it's not possible to enter the church unless you leave the world first.

The second circle referred to the nominal church—people who have their name on church rolls, and may be regular attenders, and church workers, and they have left the so-called evil world, but the world has not left them. They are christian in name only, and like Lots wife look back to the world for their instructions, and information. And whenever there's a new fad in the world, you find it in this church.

He said these people are too religious to be worldly, and too worldly to be religious, and like the Laodiceans they are miserable poor, blind, and naked. It makes a person very unhappy with just enough religion for misery.

He claimed God was well able to bring all the children of Israel out of Egypt and into Canaan. He had all the power necessary, but many died in the wilderness because of unbelief. And God is well able to bring anyone out of the world into the true church, but those who are called will not all get all the way because of unbelief. Many are called but few are chosen. He also said those in the church of the first born are set out of the world and the world is out of them. Those in the world are under restrictions, because the world has laws,

and they must be obeyed. And likewise those in the true church are under restrictions. They are subject one to another, they do not follow the whims of the flesh.

In the evening service, the Boyertown church had the program. This is where Amos Jutzi's attended for eight years, after moving there from Canada and before moving to Montour County. Most of the Boyertown group was at Amoses for supper. I suppose there were about 50 altogether, but they brought their supper along. They didn't all take part in the service in the evening, only a few, and the preacher then brought a message. He spoke about Christian assurance. There were two old ladies among them, who when I shook hands with them they told me their name was Bechtal, and I told them mine was Renno. "Oh," they gasped, "Not John Renno?" "Yes," I said, "that's it." They were introduced to the Budget when they were in Florida, and have been getting it ever since, and they so wondered how John Renno looked, and wondered if he'd be there at church.

John Renno

**STILLWATER, PA.**

June 16—Now there was about a week of rainy weather, damp, humid and cloudy, but not much rain although it was a great aid in helping crops.

If you ever went fishing as a youngster and got the line all tangled up so that about the only thing to do was to cut off the tangle and cast it aside as good for nothing and get another line, it may about describe our national situation. They seem to be hopelessly entangled in disputes.

Three major airlines are threatening to go out on strike because the flight engineers want more and more. The President says it dare not be, it would cripple our nation too badly if they quit flying. Also West Germany depends on them for their supplies, and this would stop that too. The Stock Market dropped as low as it was back in 1929 and during the depression, and the stock market does not consist of money alone but on faith. When people lose faith in their nation or its economy they want to sell, and do it fast. This creates more supply than demand, thus the price drops.

Steel prices were kept at the same level by order of the President, and steel consists of a 14 million dollar business, but construction is a 57 million dollar business and they are constantly raising their pay yet the government does nothing about that. They want shorter work weeks

and the same amount of pay. For instance they want to work only 35 hours in a week and get paid for 40 hours. Personally I get 35 hours of work in a little over two days, and my pay is about as much as they get in several hours.

Billie Sol Estes, that great swindler from Texas, is still on trial. He is in debt for over 30 million dollars, but he claims he can get out of debt if they will give him time and loan him some more money to make more.

Recently over Iowa, an airplane blew up and fell to earth and nobody was supposed to know why, but the federal investigators got on the trail, and the evidence now seems to point to one man. Two days before this flight he bought a new car and wanted a high life insurance policy included in the financing of it, so that altogether his life was insured for over three hundred thousand. He had told his wife he will commit suicide rather than face the theft charges that were filed against him.

It was thought at first this was just one of those things that sometimes happens with man-made machinery when that plane blew up, but they pieced some of it together and found out that it was blown apart with dynamite in the wash room. And having sought the identity of each passenger they came upon the deeds of this man, and found out what he had said, and that he studied explosives a short while before. So they are about to conclude he wanted to get away from it all and die in a plane crash, and his relatives would receive the benefits of his life insurance.

So men are getting more wicked all the time, like in Noah's day the wickedness of man was exceedingly great. This man had no care for all the 44 other people in the plane whose lives he took along with his own — he was selfish to the nth degree. Although very few go to these extremes, nevertheless selfishness controls them, and because happiness cannot be found in gratifying the desires of self, but only in making someone else happy they go in search of happiness and peace which is very distant from them for they are going in the opposite direction from where it is.

Men strike for more pay and less work because they are selfishly looking for happiness, and peace and security, with which they are only interested in gratifying the desires of their animal nature, and never look to the needs of their fellow men. Just like pigs—whoever eats the fastest gets the mostest.

World conditions are far worse than at any time in secular history. And they are never going to get better in this age, but only worse.

It looks to me like it will get so bad in national and international affairs that all men will look for some great world leader, who can settle all these disputes, and quiet all fears, and bring peace and safety on earth once more, and will find such a one in the Anti-Christ.

Then when they shall say peace and safety, there is no more danger, then sudden destruction comes upon them, as upon a woman in travail, and they shall not escape! The only escape route for anyone out of these conditions is up. And to those that look for Him (Jesus Christ) will He appear the second time without sin unto salvation.

John R. Renno

**STILLWATER, PA.**

June 22 — Very dry. Much cloudiness but no rain. If the weather was wet it would probably rain every day, but when it is very dry all the rain signs fail, and even when it does shed a few drops the amount is very meager. Hay is very short. Hay-making season lasts only a few days, with only about one-fourth the usual amount, and some not even that.

I wanted to make hay for my neighbor this year, but he told me it would hardly be worth my while, so we did nothing with it at all. He says we will have some corn because he asked for corn, but having no use for hay, since he's a poultryman, he didn't ask for hay. He claims the wheat will only make about 10 bushels per acre.

Now what to do about feed for this winter may be a problem, for if this keeps up, the little hay we did have will be all



fed before fall, and there will be no winter feed, unless it rains some to give us a little corn stover.

It has been predicted that hay will cost \$100 per ton, but I doubt if it can be bought at any price, at least not around here for there is none to buy. I suppose there will be much stock sold which will help some.

The Kennedy - Freeman farm bill has been defeated in Congress for which I am thankful, but not too optimistic, for they are very determined and do a lot of arm twisting, and threatening, if their plans are not approved by their colleagues. The bill would put the control of farm commodities pretty much under the control of one man, the Secy. of Agriculture. It is just as it always has been since the government took control of agriculture, the big rich people prosper by it and those who honestly work for a living find it harder and harder to make ends meet.

The Billy Sol Estes case is just one link in a long chain, of discrepancies in the grain storage program, those who can afford it build enormous storage bins and get paid millions, for storage. In Mr. Estes' case he didn't have the money himself, so he schemed and his deception was discovered, and along with that, much other dishonesty, and beside all this he is a lay preacher!

We buy our chicks from a small hatchery that produce all the eggs they hatch, and we get the same kind that other hatcheries sell for twice as much, but because of efficiency of operation they far under sell everyone else. They have very little overhead, very little advertising, no salesman on the road, and only 2,400 hens, and when they don't lay enough they can't sell more chicks, and they don't hatch any during the summer months. We get the chicks ourselves.

John Renno

gen out of the water that the fish didn't have enough to survive.

And, as mentioned, people are willing to pay huge prices for nothing but pleasure and recreation. Nearly all the lots are sold out around this lake, and they cost around two thousand dollars each. And no fish, nor good boating, etc. So the lake commission decided to do something about it. First they hired my backhoe to dig a ditch across the breast, and they herein placed two 8-inch water pipes. These they didn't put down to the water level so it wouldn't run out when it wasn't supposed to.

The pipes were placed about 3 feet underground, and with an elbow down to the water, these they then filled with water and siphoned it out of the lake; and when they wanted to stop the flow of water they just let air in at the top and water will stop, without a shut-off.

The water level now being down about ten feet or more, much of the brush and fallen over trees appear on top of the ice which is about 8 inches thick, and I, along with some others, am being hired to get the excess wood out of this lake, and burn it. To look at the awful mess almost makes you say it's an impossibility, but the work is underway.

The first day I was out on the ice with a small bulldozer, and it just snapped the brush off, and worked well. As far as brush was concerned, it didn't seem to present any problem. But the water was frozen during the last cold spell, and then the ice covered with snow, so that it didn't freeze any more, and they decided to drain some more water out, for it is always running in. This left the ice suspended above the water, and after running over it with the dozer for a while the ice seemed to weaken from the constant jar of the steel tracks. All at once, with a great plunge, the ice broke, and down went the dozer. No it wasn't completely submerged, for the water is

only four feet deep there and the blade didn't go down either, it being lighter than the rear end. So we stood around and looked at it for a while, and finally decided to go for steel cable, and hitch a big dozer to it from the shore. This being done, it walked right up out of the water, and on top again. How thankful we were that the blade didn't go down in. This would have made it extremely difficult to get out, and also would have drowned out the ignition.

Today, the second of many days it will take to complete the job, we played it a little more safe, and pulled in the fallen trees with a cable, and burned them. But it's messy, because the snow prevented the ground from freezing at all, and it's just mud to work on. After the water level rises to where it will again support the ice we will probably again try pushing off the brush. You will possibly hear more about this, for it will take about all winter to complete the job.

John Renno