

### STILLWATER, PA.

July 5—The weather . . . It's beautiful, except sometimes when it's so hot at night you can't sleep.

The local banker at Orangeville is quite concerned about the financial state of farmers, and the milk business is shaky that one never quite knows whether he has a milk market, because many were shut off, simply because the company had too much of it. And the taxes are going higher all the time. It is just a matter of time until no one will be able to make ends meet. It's the price we must pay for our national sins; but come what may, those who are anchored in Christ, have the true riches, which moth and rust will not corrupt.

Ben Lapp, our preacher was at Chambersburg, Pa., having weekend meetings last Sunday, and Lloyd Eby, the man from Stumptown church, preached for us. He is the one preacher who played quite a large part in the starting of Beaver Run, and I suppose he feels we are his children. He gave us some good advice anyway, on the keeping of the Lord's day. He said chopping green feed, and spreading a load of cow manure on Sunday mornings may not be so wrong in themselves, something that we think must be done every day, and Sunday is no exception, because cattle need attention seven days a week but if we do these things which do not absolutely have to be done on Sunday it weakens the community conscience, and they feel just a little more comfortable in their sins. We need to be salt that preserves.

And something else that Lloyd thought should be reported was that we forgot our one and only

daughter, when we came home from church. You see we have 30 miles one way, and we were over half-way home, when one of the boys said, "Where is Irene?" And we looked quickly all around and lo and behold she was not with us. Now we have four boys and one girl, and when all seven of us get into the car it is kind of full, and when only one is missing we fail to notice it unless we look carefully. So we just came on home, and called Clarence Zeagers, who live near the church. Yes, they had her there. We went up in the evening and got her, and then spent the rest of the time with Albert Hebners. I suppose Lloyd will rub this one in.

And this is what I wanted to write 2 weeks ago . . . There seems to be that in man which likes to get away from it all; away from home, away from responsibilities, and the usual routine of life, and go someplace where he can enjoy life a little more where things are different. And people are willing to spend large sums of money for this convenience, people who cannot really afford it, too. Our older forefathers knew this was in man so they took advantage of it, and tried to preach the gospel to those on vacation. The result is that at Patterson Grove, which is no real place, no post office, or anything, yet it is a temporary town during the summer months. It has quite a large auditorium, and little cottages built all around it (there must be nearly a hundred of them) in the woods, and along the creek. They have a public swimming pool there too.

I believe this at one time was a good place where the gospel was proclaimed, but now there are very many there who even hardly claim to know Christ at all. And their lives and attitudes certainly deny it too. It's sad to behold the spiritual ruins of by-gone days. We worked there several days installing septic tanks and know whereof we speak. They have public toilet facilities but many now want modern conveniences, which is the very reason why they leave home, to get away from it all and live old fashioned. It's just a vicious cycle.

The children of Israel liked to do this too. They would go out under the green trees, and have a good time; and of course a good time also included worship, so they erected gods of their own imagination and set them up in the groves, and worshipped them there. It seemed they got tired of worshipping the true God, and wanted a change in routine too, with the result that much immorality, and idolatry was committed. The Lord patiently warned them by His prophets to stay away from these vacation spots, but they would not listen.

Now: is it wrong today to go on a vacation? Is it wrong to go out in the woods for a picnic? Is it wrong for a band of men to have a hunting cabin up in the mountain? And go there away from the restraints of home, and have a fling? Is it wrong to have a change of routine, and get away from it all, if the all includes Christianity?

John Renno

## STILLWATER, PA.

July 13—We could use a lot more rain than we have, but we can also do with what we do have. The earth is very dry down underneath, from an insufficient supply of rain ever since last year. It has been said that man destroys nature's water supply by building so many big roads, which do not take any water in but it all runs off down the river. Also so many buildings which shed the water. And the trees and underbrush are cleared away which usually held much moisture in reserve, but now the reserve goes down the stream and into the ocean from whence it came, without first giving man the benefit of itself. It is claimed and even feared that by the year 2000 the world will be so heavily populated that there will be standing room only, if the present population increase will continue, and there will be a great shortage of food and even water. They now have the equipment to convert sea water into drinking water by taking the salt out, but as of yet, that is too expensive to be practical.

Amos Jutzi and family are former residents of Canada, but have lived in Montour Co. for several years, in the Beaver Run area. Amos has had rheumatic fever when he was a child, and had a recurrence of it seven yrs. ago, and now just recently has had another attack, spending time in the hospital, taking forty pills a day, plus numerous shots, etc. He is home now but not too well, and he cannot do his work although he is just a young man. We are hoping for his complete recovery, but in the meantime the work on his farm must go on. He has a good wife, and a small son that do the chores, and things that needs must be done, but there are still many things

that remain undone, and also be hard on a man to have to sit in the house while others go about their duties, unmindful of the blessings of health.

The church members got together and cultivated the corn recently, and yesterday they had another rally to clean out the barnyard, and hauled a lot of ground in to fill it up where it was hollowed out from previous manure loading with tractors.

We tried to correct all this, and we did a pretty good job with about 150 ton of dirt. Amos exclaimed it is much better than he expected it to be, and better than it would be had he been out. The barn wall was also pushed out at one place, because there was no foundation under it, and we corrected that by pushing it back in and piling dirt against the outside.

Recently I spoke to a Chiropractor about rheumatic fever. He says it is something that is developed in small children because of a lack of appetite. They do not eat properly, and are ill fed, and undernourished, so that the nerves, which release energy to the various parts of the body are too starved to function properly, and the patient has what we call rheumatic fever.

The chiropractor also discouraged taking polio shots, etc., saying that all the high potency drugs which individuals are called upon to take by the medical profession, can often be harmful to the blood stream claiming that is why so many people who are in the flower of their age just fall over with a heart attack. All this drug must be carried off by the blood stream, and worked off, and puts undue strain on the liver and kidneys, and that which is supposed to be for our benefit can be to our death.

John Renno

## STILLWATER, PA.

July 20 — Regarding vacationing; we received two nice letters by two men who still occupy an art which is far too little practiced . . . thinking. And to receive the full impact of these letters they should be read more than once. The first comes from a pilgrim at King Street, Lancaster. He writes, "We believe it is sin that will keep the soul from entering the celestial city. Good is good, and wrong is sin, as used in this subject. There is a dividing line between the two, and who can find it? There is a universal line with God, but not with man; each individual believer draws the line where he thinks it fits him best. Each believer that undertakes anything must draw the line somewhere, and he will. There are many who profess to know Jesus and still draw the line agreeable to their own inclination. An example is divorce and remarriage . . . by their fruit ye shall know them.

"To look at it in church form; one believer is drawing his line away from the human prescribed church line, other believers try to correct him, and most of the time the accused will make some kind of confession that will appease his accusers. How many times will he in his heart draw that line to please his God? And if God is not satisfied, what thought all humanity were satisfied, or vice-versa, it is God that sanctifies.

"Friend John! this is written not to embarrass you but as a friendly chat, and to encourage you to continue your column in the Budget, I look forward to it weekly. May the Lord bless you and your house real well."

The next letter comes from a concerned Bishop, as follows . . . "I read with interest your recent letter in the Budget regarding outings, picnics, etc., which Christians have adopted now from the world, and I'm glad that there are others that share the same view with me. Not that we can depend on our own views, but the Bible does speak out the mind of God, and for the ardent Bible student, seeking to live the Christ-life, with the right of the Holy Ghost to address God, Abba, Father, will find the Word a treasure, that leads to a holier life.

"Perhaps we do not share the same views in all your Budget letters, yet I do appreciate them, and feel if one has talent and time to do it, there is opportunity to cause people to search the scriptures and build convictions among his fellow men. It's also the duty of the church, but in our time it's too often convictions lost, doctrines weakened and pleasures creep in to satisfy the longing that only the peace of God can satisfy.

"Your thoughts about the groves wherein the Israelites worshipped and did the things they liked to do, were clear. They were a displeasure to God and he commanded them to cut down their (parks) groves. It led to idol worshipping. They mingled worship with pleasure and where there is sin, the approaches to it are also sin. The roads that lead to sin are displeasing to God. And Jesus warned that our hearts be not over charged with Sauffen und Fresen, Surfeiting, unnecessary eat-

ing and drinking just for pleasure. The commandment says, be filled with the Spirit of God and not with excesses. Now-a-days it seems the world cannot do anything without eating and drinking, fulfilling Christ's prophecy of the last days; church suppers, banquets, lawn parties, Association meetings, etc., all are not complete unless there are refreshments, as though the word of God had lost its refreshing power. Christians here follow close to the world's ways too, and I'm sorry it is so. It hurts to see the blindness of our own. I am an Amish Bishop but we do not make commandments concerning picnics. I believe in building individual convictions rather than "don'ts". We read in Isaiah 58 of the type of worship which is pleasing to the Lord, and suggests not to do thy pleasure, etc. Our Christianity is sick, many have come away from immorality, drink, and tobacco, for which we praise God, but far too many are still doing their pleasures! Restless Christians, how we need missionaries among us!"

Now in the above letters I feel two men of sagacity have answered, and we would do well to consider, and give heed to their admonitions, and I also believe far too many of us would almost fall into the category of being lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God, for when there is a ball game it's no trouble to get people to come, but if it's a prayer meetin, then we must do our own things that cannot wait, like they can on a ball game.

And Lloyd Eby wishes me to tell my readers that not only does chopping green feed on Sundays break down community conscience, but is also disrespecting the Lord's day, and is not keeping it holy. It seems to him there ought to be other ways to take care of these chores, and a number of brethren have found it so. Thanks Lloyd for setting me straight. John Renno

### STILLWATER, PA.

July 27—We have good growing weather, and driving east of Harrisburg and seeing the corn all rolled up early in the morning, before it was even very hot, made us glad for our weather back home.

I want to tell you about a service at Beaver Run church. For me, it was the most beneficial, spiritually uplifting, and illuminating service that I've ever witnessed there, and I know that takes in a lot of territory, for I've heard many speakers there, but this one was different. It just seemed the Holy Spirit took over the service, for the speaker did not abide by his text, nor by points one, two, and three, etc. as is customary. The speaker was 80 years old, and preached as though this was his last sermon. Well, no, he didn't exactly preach, he just talked from his heart to ours. He was Martin Miller of Elizabethtown, Pa., a Jewish evangelist. He was so taken up and enthused by the salvation that is coming to a few Jews here and there, and he thought it was so wonderful, and we did too.

Yes, he is looking for the great day when they shall look upon him whom they have pierced, and shall mourn for him as one mourneth for his only son, and for the time when a nation shall be born in a day; but he spends far more effort and enthusiasm to witness to individual Jews, for he knows that unbelievers shall alike be damned whether they be Jew or Gentile.

The service was also different because there were few dry eyes, and yet he was not an emotional man, as such. His speech made you want to serve the Lord better, and made you bewail your unworthiness, and feel how really small you were, and made you appreciate God's great salvation which is come even unto you. If we had more men like this in our pulpits, worldliness would vanish like ice melts on a hot day. Our people would serve God willingly, our bible would come back into the public schools, and our nation would be so strong that no other would dare challenge her.

And when the man led us in prayer, he just talked to God as you talk to a very close personal friend. No thee's and thou's, no great influential speech to some great dignitary, no beseeching to someone who was indifferent to our needs, and must be talked to with endearing terms and flattery, to get him to yield. The prayer had only few words, but great power. John Renno

### STILLWATER, PA.

Aug. 3—There has been sufficient moisture for crops in this locality. We had 16 inches of rain so far this year and normally we have 22 inches. No prolonged periods without rain, but water level is lower than usual.

Another big farmer is going out of business here. Alvin Sutliff and his brother and some of the Sutliff sons are all going out of the business. One of the largest all-day sales ever held in this area will take place Aug. 19. Three farms and all the machinery, and 130 head of purebred Guernsey cattle will be sold. I wonder why they try to do so much in one day, and I also wonder who will buy all the things. The Merryman Co. of Sparks, Md. will have the sale and undoubtedly many strangers will be at the sale.

The high prices that usually are demanded by purebred cattle are paid by those who have the money to operate on a big scale.

Mr. Moon and his son were at our church last Sunday. He lives at Watsontown and is a Methodist, but his son lives at Scottdale and is a Mennonite. It was during the last war that he felt he could not conscientiously participate in carnal warfare, so he went to the C. P. S. camp and thus became acquainted with the Mennonites and found a wife among them. He now works at the publishing house as an artist. Ivan and his wife are different from the common run of Mennonites at Scottdale, even though they spend all their time there. His wife had the plainest covering on of anybody in our church and when I heard they were from Scottdale I was astounded for I had believed everyone there was going the other way, judging by the type of literature that comes from there. They said there are four Mennonite churches near Scottdale, and three of them belong to the local council of churches, but the one they belong to does not as yet. Their pastor would like to, but so far they did not have enough favorable votes. Mrs. Moon told me that many of the women at her church have their hair cut right in fashion and I asked her why she did not. She simply told me that the Lord does not want her to have it thus.

I have protested to the publishing house that some of their literature do not meet the required

standards of our church. Our congregation had sent their youth paper to the youth in our area but it was unanimously decided by our council that it was no longer suitable because of the type of literature found therein and the subscription was cancelled. The Lancaster Conference sent them an official protest concerning the worldliness that is evident, but they just said they are sorry some feel that way and went right on. The Lancaster Conference is presently planning a youth publication of their own.

I am sorry that the editors at the publishing house appear to be leaning toward the liberal or modernistic view but I am at a loss to know what to do about it. Is it just another sign of the times in which we are living? Must we submit to the spirit of modernism? John Renno

### STILLWATER, PA.

Aug. 17—August is supposed to be a hot month, but not this year. It seems like late in Sept.

Sometimes writing to the Budget can be tiresome and unrewarding, and you feel like quitting, or at least skipping it for a week, but then when some of your readers come from over 100 miles just to see your face, because they desire to see what you look like, it's more encouraging. Clarence Wile and his wife did just that. They are members of the Church of God, and live near Columbia, Pa. They set out to locate this scribe, on their way to Elmira, N. Y. It was not easy, since I am seemingly so hidden behind sticks and rocks, but they did it anyway. They are elderly people, and drive a 1941 model car, and so cater to the antiquated. They also seem to love the Lord, and speak freely of him to all who wait salvation, and possibly to some who do not. And their manner and attitude seem to verify their testimony.

They came to where I was working, removing a stone fence row, and in the same field a man was trying to bale straw, but his baler did not co-operate. He was very upset and cursed so loud you could hear him quite plainly even at a distance. This was something new to them, for they said where he works, on a dairy farm (the Turkey Hill Dairy), no one is allowed to use profanity, for it is managed by a man of God, and he will not keep anyone who does not respect his God enough to refrain from cursing.

There are many disturbing things taking place concerning which I have been silent recently. The one of which is the attitude our officials take towards God. In New York State it is supposed to be illegal to read the

bible and pray the Lord's prayer in public schools, and also when saluting the flag they do not like the phrase, "one nation under God", and are trying to eradicate that from the flag salute. A verse in the Psalms seems to be very fitting, "Why do the heathen rage and the people imagine a vain thing, the kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the Lord, and against His Anointed, saying let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us. He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: the Lord shall have them in derision. Then shall he speak to them in his wrath, and vex them in His sore displeasure."

There was once an attorney whose client was tried for murder, and confessed his guilt, to which the lawyer said, "Gentlemen of the jury, my task is easy, the accused has confessed, a defense is impossible, and yet may I add a few words; there on the wall I see the picture of the crucified Christ. There hangs the picture in this hall of justice, where you condemn the guilty. But why do we not hear anything of Him in our public schools? Why does the murderer for the first time see the Crucified one here in this hall? If the attention of this, my client, had been directed to the Crucified one when he sat on the benches at school he would not now sit here facing disgrace and infamy. Yes, it is you gentlemen whom I accuse. You that brag with your education and your culture, and yet are barbarous; who spread atheism and lust among the people, and then are astounded at the results such as this one who you have condemned."

John Renno

## STILLWATER, PA.

Aug. 23 — There are some things in this life that you never can find out the reason. And some you find out if you wait long enough; but recently Harry Wenger, that renowned apostle of the Holdeman denomination, sent word by a letter to the little congregation near Belleville that he intends to be there on a given date to relate his experiences he encountered while on his recent missionary trip to Nigeria, Africa. In that letter he made special note that they should tell me. Why he should care one whit whether I knew about his trip I am not certain. He may have had a reason, but did not reveal it. I do not belong to that denomination nor do I ever expect to, nor do I sanction all their doctrine as biblical, but they have certain points that are noteworthy, and these we wish to discuss.

Ten years ago, a christian native of Nigeria found a tract printed by the above mentioned denomination, in which was stated the doctrines of that church. This doctrine appealed to this individual as biblical, and above anything he had ever heard before. He sent for more. This publishing house had in one day 250 letter of requests from this section of Africa for literature. This was the highest for one day. Every day calls came in upwards to a hundred.

Finally these people in Nigeria were not satisfied with literature, they wanted personnel. The church sent two men over two years ago. They were told by the mission board there it would be impossible for them to get into the country in the name of their own board. The state religion is Buddha, and they represent Christianity. They were told if they did get in at all it would only be by the direct intervention of God. They tried, and succeeded. In two years time they were in. And recently, Harry Wenger from Kansas, and others went over and established their head quarters at Ife, Nigeria. They went against seemingly impossible odds, but when they got to all the impossible places they were met with open doors, and entered with ease with

the sanction of the government of Nigeria. They entered the front door to that country amid much acclaim, so much that they were amazed beyond words, and could only weep at what God had done. According to Wenger's report, there are thousands of believers in Nigeria that were won to the faith by other evangelical misisons, established churches, etc. But they were dissatisfied with the teaching they had. It did not correspond with the way they read their bibles themselves; they found Holdeman literature, which seemed to satisfy them completely, and they prayed for ten years for personnel, which prayer was just recently answered.

Why were these people not satisfied with the way they were taught? If they were saved and knew it, and many were, why were they not content? What more can a man ask for in this life than peace from God through Jesus Christ? If they had this, why did they ask and pray for more teachings? You may draw your own conclusions to these questions, and they may differ with mine.

These Holdemans are just one step behind other Mennonites in trying to leave the simplicity of the gospel, and be like everybody else. In many cases Mennonites are plain in name only, they have succeeded in casting aside the simplicity of the gospel, and become confused with the jumble of society. The Amish have more of it but in far too many cases it's outward only.

I noted at the recent Mennonite Youth Convention at Belleville, when speakers were listed, it very carefully mentioned where they had received their education, and what degrees they held. It made no mention whatsoever whether they were men of God filled with the Holy Ghost.

I know all this is to be taken for granted, and to question it you are classed as fanatical, but is this the way the Book of Acts reads when it mentions the speakers at various occasions? Have we really departed so far from the faith of the gospel that what the bible gives as examples has no influence over us?

John Renno

## STILLWATER, PA.

Aug. 30—Sixteen years ago this day at four in the morning our oldest living child was born — a son.

Near Hazelton, just 35 miles from here a mine caved in on some miners, and three men were trapped. They tried to get them out for awhile, but were about ready to give it up as hopeless, even asking advice from the Federal government as to whether it would be legal to let the men remain buried under 300 feet of earth and rock. But they kept on for a little while longer and behold they received signals from beneath that the men were still alive, which renewed their effort. They got a big drill in from Texas with a 26-inch bit and drilled a hole down and got two of them out after being in the earth for about two weeks. They drilled small holes first and started communications with the men, and dropped food and bedding down for them, and had to start drilling at different places when they were afraid the drilling might cause a cave-in where the men were. The one man they haven't heard from for ten days, and he is assumed dead, for he had signaled to the others that he was injured. The two were together in one place and the injured man was alone — separated from them with rock.

There are many things that I wonder about, and one of them was why it is that in so many cases the women are the religious leaders. This is true in churches which some would call the "English" people, and others call them the "gay" folks. Among the so-called "plain" folks it is not true. The men attend worship service as well as women. In conversing with a Methodist preacher recently I've found the answer. He said in their Bible study and prayer service which are held during the week, is attended by the women of the church—the men have things to do which they consider more important than meeting for prayer and fellowship. This he claimed was because women are more childlike than men. Jesus said, "except ye become converted and become as little children you will not inherit the Kingdom of Heaven". Children will place utmost trust and confidence in their parents. They believe everything they tell them, and accept their verdicts as final without question whatsoever.

This preacher claimed men now find the outside world cold and harsh, and in order to succeed in business you must be the same way and not trust anybody, or he'll get the best of you. He said business men all say that they could tell him of many who he thinks to be honest and upright, but know they are different by hard experience.

This is the result of a man-made society, and is the cause of many being on the way to eternal ruin; too busy, too self-reliant, not trusting and loving. He said men on the farm do not get this way so easy, because they work with nature, and have to depend on God for their sustenance.

We had "parents day" at our church last Sunday. All our parents were supposed to be invited to attend the service with us, and many did. We are mostly young people and many of us have both parents living. Sim Stoltzfus, the father of Chester, preached the morning sermon, "What We Owe Our Children." He seems to think that if young children do not listen to orders from their parents, it's because they know they can get away with it without punishment. Or many times the mother says when Daddy is away, "now you must behave or I'll tell Daddy when he comes home", thus signifying that as long as Dad is away you can do as you please. I have no control over you, the mother implies. He reprimanded that kind of mother. And he also said mothers should not work away from home, and leave their children to baby-sitters.

After church we all went over to our Preacher Ben's place for dinner. We each brought something along to eat, and had a good time of fellowship. Then to finish it we had service there on the lawn, where all the parents took part. John Renno

## STILLWATER, PA.

Sept. 7 — Weather is mostly cool, with prospects for an early frost, but things are not ready to die yet, for the tomatoes are not all picked, and the corn is far from ready. Rainfall is scant but sufficient. Some have already filled their silo but for me it's far too early to make good feed. The corn should be about denting and the fodder starting to die at the bottom before it will make a good substantial feed. If it's put up too soon the moisture is so high that much vitality is lost by the juice running away. And furthermore if it's water you want for feed, a person can get that much cheaper at the source of water supply than in the silo. It costs money to make silage, so why put up water?

Another farmer has decided to quit and sell out. He lives about a mile and a half from here. It is reported that his things went very cheap, an almost new baler for less than \$400, and other machinery for only a fraction of its original cost. The cows were nearly all below \$200. But he did very little advertising, and word did not get around. He tried to sell his farm for some time already but so far has not found a buyer.

Eighteen years ago one dollar was worth 100 pennies, but today it is worth only 45c, and of all the income we have we must pay 35 cents of every dollar for taxes. And about one-third of this money we pay in taxes goes to prepare men and machines to kill people. At the same time we put forth large efforts to save lives, sending billions abroad in foreign aid to help gain hungry politicians, and buy their friendship; and at home we try to stop the terrific highway death toll, and are told to install seat belts in the autos to save lives, while we sit fastened in our seat belts smoking cigarettes which we know without a doubt will kill us in due time.

We are told to drink this or that kind of alcoholic beverage, when it is proven that a major proportion of highway deaths are due directly to such actions, and not only this but it makes beasts out of men who were supposed to subdue the earth and all that is in it. These are sins of the world and should not be found among people professing godliness.

Last Sunday our preacher spoke on a subject about which he never spoke before in all the six years he was ordained. But it is not a popular subject. It is found in 1 Cor. 11 concerning the devotional covering. He claimed he is doing it for two reasons, namely because there are nearly always those in church from other denominations or with no church affiliations and he thought they might wonder why our women wear it, seeing it is not the prescribed order from our fashion centers.

Secondly, he said he wants to strengthen that which remaineth. He refuted the argument that many use that this was just for a special condition that needed correction in Corinth in the days of the early church. For he claimed that if this were true then how can we tell whether other things were not written and recorded only for that day and have no bearing on us today. He said it was given for all the sanctified and faithful in Christ Jesus, just as it says in the beginning of the epistle. He said the hair is given for her natural covering, but she is supposed to also in addition to this wear a veiling to show that she is in subjection to the prescribed order given in scripture for mankind.

He recognized that society has taken away the scriptural method and replaced it with something more suitable, namely the wedding ring, but he claimed the wedding ring has no power for it is but a man-made order. In contrast, the devotional covering has power from heaven, and evil men will not dare to attack any woman who wears this consistently, realizing that women in immodest clothing are not being consistent even if they do wear a veiling.

He also recognized that the modern hairdos are not consistent with the veiling and I suppose he meant that if some insist on having modern hairdos they might about as well lay aside the veiling too. John Renno

## STILLWATER, PA.

Sept. 14—We were very pleasantly surprised this week one evening when Ben Yoder and his wife drove in from their place in Virginia. They are both working at an Old People's Home, he as janitor and she as night watchman. He writes in the Budget too. They originate from Kansas. That is where they were raised but decided it was a poor place to bring up their children, so they moved to Stuarts Draft, Va. This is where I met them for the first time, several years ago. Also saw them in Big Valley just before moving here, 6 years ago. They are the kind of folks that can grow old gracefully.

Ben's are not really old yet, but they are not young, and as far as physical labor is concerned they cannot take too much of that anymore. But they have raised a family of children, and as far as I am aware, they are all children that any parent could be proud of. Children that fear the Lord and keep his commandments. And these do not just happen, for all children are naturally inclined to do evil, but the good must be taught, with discipline, and when they come to fuller years they must decide for themselves to obey Jesus. Besides raising their own family, Ben's have also raised other orphan children partially. This has been a blessing even in Old Testament times when one was merciful to the fatherless and widows, and this is just another of the things one who wants to grow old gracefully will observe.

They stayed overnight and the next morning they left for Selinsgrove and vicinity. They had a week's vacation at the home where they work and this is the way they decided to spend their vacation, in visiting relatives and friends. They said they had some trouble to find our place, and since some more have been here who said the same thing I will give directions for anyone who desires to visit us in the future.

Now everyone can obtain a road map, but even these can be confusing, for they say one thing and it means another. On the road map you will see a road

that is numbered 122, but try as you will you cannot find it, for the number has just been changed to 61. Route 14 has been changed to 143, and 83, which comes from Bethel to Pottsville is now 183. And the new short way which is going through nearby will be route 80. Also route 115 has changed to 118. To come to our place from Lancaster the best route is to go through Reading, Hazleton, and Berwick, and we live only 14 miles from there, but you must cross a mountain. Cross route 11 at Berwick and keep going straight up the boulevard. It will take you across the mountain, through Jonestown, and Bendertown, and the first stop sign past Bendertown turn right and you are two miles from New Columbus where we live, but you must turn left there. If coming in from the west you get to Bloomsburg on route 11. Where this makes a turn right you make a turn left on Rt. 339, and stay on this for 12 miles until you come to a gospel sign on the right, then turn left and stay on this road for five miles and you will be at New Columbus where you must turn left. Our house is .2 of a mile from there, on top of a little hill. A white house with big maple trees in the front yard.

Today for the first time in my life I was up in the air, without support from the ground up. I hauled some dirt for a young man who has a big yellow flying machine, and he offered to take me up, and of course I wanted to go. No, it's not a big machine, it looks big but it weighs only 700 pounds, and has room for only two people. But is a strange sensation, when you speed over the ground faster and faster, and finally the ride becomes very smooth like sleigh riding, and the earth falls away from beneath you, and in just a short time as you rise higher you seem to stop for you see nothing going by, you can only see things down and that is far away so that you hardly seem to move at all, even if you are going 80 miles per hour. The earth looks so beautiful from above, the roads look nice and smooth, and hardly any hills, and the fields below look like a great quilt. The higher up the nicer it looks.

John Renno

## STILLWATER, PA.

Sept. 20—Heavy frosts in spots wiped out the prospects for a good corn crop, and it so happened that our fields were spots that were hard hit. It seems inevitable that we are having shorter growing seasons, because of the jet streams which have changed, and it makes the winters cold like they used to be when Dad was a boy, and it makes short summers and long winters. It will probably be this way for the next 50 years.

We had very interesting visitors at our house last Sunday. They came to our church services then came along home for dinner. They live in Union County, and are members of the Holde-man church at Belleville. Now these of that sect claim that there is a visible church on this earth, where all the members thereof are truly born again, and they claim to have no members any length of time that are not on the way to heaven. If they are discovered to be on the broad way they are put away, or ex-communicated. And this makes interesting visitors, because I cannot see this doctrine as scriptural. And to make matters more interesting, our preacher of all the 52 Sundays in the year chose this particular Sunday to preach on the church. Of course these people did not agree with the preacher's viewpoint. And there was one person among these visitors who was quite dominating in the viewpoints it held. In fact, was just like I am. We both were sure we are right, and the debate became very interesting. They claim that Christ has a visible body on this earth, and only one body, and they are it. Now they do not claim that everybody else is lost, but that they do not belong to the body of Christ—they are mere friends of the bridegroom.

My view is that the body of Christ is invisible, only profes-sed Christendom is visible, and man cannot tell for sure who does or who does not belong to the true body. The scripture tells us that which can be seen is temporal, and that which cannot be seen is eternal, and if we can see the spiritual body of Christ with physical eyes, then such a body is only for time and not for eternity.

These interesting visitors were Jonas Benders and Daniel Martins. The Martins moved in from Ohio recently, and they are of the pioneering type, and would

like to see a growing Holdeman church get started in the Buffalo Valley too, and more power to them if what they claim is true. We doubt that it is, but we appreciate their zeal.

We were at a wedding recently, in the Methodist church only  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile from here. The man who got married we know well, because he is the local cattle dealer. In fact he deals in anything he thinks he can make a dollar on. And we also used to go to the church where his fiance went, so we felt obligated to go as it was a community affair, and everyone who felt inclined to go was welcome. Now, I personally never catered much to weddings as they always seemed so fliprant, and this one was no exception. In fact it was the first

one I ever attended that no sermon was preached whatsoever. The Amish weddings start out with a three-hour church service, and are usually inspirational, and then when we became Mennonites we attended those weddings, and they had a much shorter religious service, in fact so short that there's hardly any use in going at all, but this one had all religion taken out. Well, no it had religion, but that was all. I couldn't call it godliness.

The first thing wrong was that I was busy but laid my work aside and went, and had to just sit there and listen to someone play the piano, and I didn't even care for the music. Finally, a man came in leading the parents, then the bride came in amid much picture taking. The preacher stood up front with a big grin, and when he was ready to start he asked that all cameras be stopped for the duration. He had quite a lengthy rigamarole of a ceremony, and he said three prayers; but the thing that bothered me the most was that he used the name of the trinity for the marriage ceremony several times and requested that God bless these people. This would also have been proper had they been professed children of God but to take someone that does not even profess to be a Christian, and ask God's blessing upon him in the three High names of God, seems to me to be nothing short of taking the name of the Lord in vain, and John tells us not to bless anyone in the name of the Lord who is not worthy of it. After the ceremony it was more picture taking and rice throwing and everybody seemed to be happy, but joy seemed to be missing; for that comes only from within.

John Renno

## STILLWATER, PA.

Sept. 28—B. Charles Hostetter from Harrisonburg, Va. was at our church last Wednesday night, and spoke concerning the work of the Mennonite Broadcasts, Inc. of which he is the principal speaker. They have a half-hour program every Sunday on many stations in this country, and also in foreign countries if they can buy the time. He said it is easy to buy time in America, but not so in other countries, for most of them are government operated and will not sell time for religious broadcasts, except their own brand. The four churches here in the northern part of the state pay for the weekly broadcast on the Williamsport station which costs \$22.50 per week. Radio is now 43 years old, and is everywhere all the time, even though you don't hear it without a special instrument made to catch the beam, yet it is there. Back in 1920 the first station ever to go on the air was KDKA in Pittsburgh, Pa. Then you had to listen with special earphones like we now listen to telephone.

Charlie said when he was younger you could get people to come to church and hear the gospel, but not anymore. Now when there are special meetings the major part of those present, or often times all those present are the church people; the unchurched will not come, so if you would tell them that God loves them you must go where they are.

Radio is one method that can be used to a good advantage, for there are millions of radio sets in use, and nearly every car has one. But he claims the message must be geared to fit the listening schedule of those to whom you wish to speak. It is not like it used to be years ago. People used to sit in their living room and just listen to the radio, but now they listen only as they are doing something else, like washing dishes or driving the car, etc. He said he used to preach 15 minutes on the half-hour program, and then 13 then 10, and now it's down to eight, and I think his sermons are so short it's hardly worth listening to. It's mostly just songs, and I'm not so very much of a song fan. Especially do I think his quartet is rivaled by many, in voice blend, and even choice of music.

Charlie claims people will not listen to a longer sermon, and if they don't hear the whole sermon they miss much of the meaning so you have to talk while they are willing to listen. It's not like in church where people usually will sit and listen out of respect, but the radio they can turn the dial and listen to something else.

They are also experimenting another method to catch men.

## STILLWATER, PA.

Oct. 4—Silo filling isn't what it used to be. We used to cut the corn by hand and throw it on the ground then go along with horses and wagons and several men and pick it up. It was hard work. Then the hardest job was pulling it off the wagons in at the cutter; but now man has designed an ensilage cutter with a corn binder attachment on the front, and it goes along and cuts it and blows it on wagons, and these are self-unloading, so very little hand work is done anymore.

We didn't fill our silo this year. It's getting pretty old. We just used two dump trucks and dumped it in a trench. It took five men 13 hours to do it. I don't know how much we put up but I suppose it would be as much as five 10x30 silos could hold. The work is very easy, and we can do things quickly, but in spite of it all we seem to be busier than ever. We used to have time to cut corn on the shock, but now we just wouldn't have time to do all that any more. We don't even need to husk it anymore, machines do it all—that is, if we can keep the bills paid.

When I was young yet my Dad pointed out to me how fortunate I was to be able to heap hay, saying now-a-days many boys grow up and don't know how to heap hay for pitching it. Well at the time I didn't consider myself so fortunate. In fact I wished my Dad and uncle Ez weren't so old fashioned and would get a hayloader like everyone else had. We used to spend long hours in the hot summer sun with a fork, rolling the hay together, and pitching it on the wagons, and one man had to build the load, and tell where he wants it put, and the familiar words were echa-hinna, eckka fonna, binders, laagk, and hinna in de mit. But now I do consider myself very fortunate that I was privileged to go through these experiences, for they were a part of the making of me. The lines have fallen to me in pleasant places, yea I have a goodly heritage.

I believe the most valuable lesson for any young boy to learn is to work; just plain old-fashioned hard work. And I suppose it has always been and always will be the tendency of the same boys to try to avoid as much work as possible. If they despise to work more persuasion must be used. I mean the old fashioned persuasion too. We used to call it (hussa fodder) Pant fodder.

It makes me so unhappy when I see young boys in their prime of life being idle, refusing to work, and their Dad wants to be good to them and let them have

life easier than he had it. What that Dad really is doing is robbing that son of many blessings in the future. Work is a blessing and an honor, and let no man despise it. It is not a result of the curse of the first man when he fell into sin, for before he fell he was told to work, to dress the garden and keep it. I don't know just what he had to do but I believe it was constructive work. Jesus said, "My Father worketh hithereto, and I work." Now when we think of work we immediately think of it in physical terms, but this need not be so, for a spiritual being would not do physical work, as we know it.

Even though man has devised ways and means to do things quicker and easier, as in the case of silo filling and hay making, there is still just as much work to do as ever, for the man who wants to work. I don't really believe unemployment is necessary, of which we hear so much today. It's because people have not been taught the blessing of honest labor, and have not been made to work against their will when they were young, that they now just want to be idle, and the government to feed them.

Another farmer is giving up; my nearest neighbor says he is going to sell out completely, and go look for another job. He is just a little older than I am, but thinks farming is such a poor financial supporter, that he is going to quit trying any longer, and do something more profitable. Just recently he remodeled his cow stable, and milk house, putting in a bulk tank and barn cleaner, and spending much money on it, but now has decided to abandon it, and do something more easy and profitable.

John Renno

That is by minute messages, put on like advertisements are. There is an interesting every-day story told to catch attention and then before the listener is aware of it he is hearing about what Christ can do for him in just a few words before those opposed have the time to turn it off. By the time they gather their sense together the message is gone, and they have then heard. They also have half-minute programs, but these are the same every time.

Personally I think a little chorus would do wonders to make people gospel conscious too, for the cigarette ads and many others employ this method with apparent success. And this reminds me of the story I heard of the cigarette company who found an old man, 102, in Florida, who smoked for years and is still well. They asked him if he wanted a free plane ride to New York to appear on a T.V. show as an advertisement in the morning. But he refused, saying he couldn't appear in the morning, for he doesn't stop coughing until noon.

And back to radio—they are also reaching people this way that cannot be reached any other way. One third of the people in this world are behind the curtain of Communism and atheism, and are forbidden to listen to the gospel truth, and foreign preachers cannot enter very easily, but there is no curtain that can keep out radio waves, and people have small transistor sets and will listen very willingly, so they are reaching many of the people thus. ELWA is a station sponsored by Christians and so is the short wave station in Quito, Ecuador. Also a station in Monte Carlo will sell time to them and in this way they can reach Spain, which is predominately Catholic. Germany which will not sell time, and Russia in the Russian language, which is preached to them by a Russian that escaped with his life. This man recently went back to some of the Communist satellites and found that many are listening and enjoying it but they dare not write for it would not pass the postal inspection and would reveal that they are listening to things they are forbidden by law to hear. So the gospel is preached around the world, thus making many more without excuse. John Renno

## STILLWATER, PA.

Oct. 12—Less than 500 years ago Christopher Columbus proved that the world was round, and that you will not fall off the edge if you travel into the unknown and unproven. And since he discovered America, in what seems just a short time America flourished beyond anything ever heard of before.

The people went through dire trials, and it was a survival of the fittest. They had a heart within, and God o'er head, they had a purpose, and a goal to strive for; but anymore people are shiftless, and aimless. Many a country that had reached the stage of wickedness and lawlessness that we in America have reached, has been punished with the seed of their own destruction but we so far have been spared from national disaster. It must be that there are still enough people in it that live according to the doctrine of Godliness that God has spared us.

We do not have church at our place of worship as often as many others do. Only once a month do we have evening services, unless there is something or somebody special around that we feel would be beneficial to hear.

But last Saturday evening was an exception. Kenneth Sites, and his wife and two daughters and a son, were at our church. Now Kenneth is married to a sister of Albert Heebner, and thus has relatives in the area. And what's much more, just five years ago he started down Route 11 for Mexico, and spent the next five years there as a missionary.

He told us that going away to another land does not change very much. He thought that people have the mistaken idea that people who go away to tell others the story of God's love are different than the common run of humanity, because they are missionaries. But he denied that this was true. He claims that you are still your same self, and have the same temptations, the same weaknesses, the same triumphs, the same Jesus, and the same commission as every one else.

He said that Old Mexico, and that part which is now Mexico City, where he is stationed, was inhabited by Indians about 400 years, ago, and these people were very far advanced in science and knowledge, comparable to that of the early Egyptians. But the Spaniards came over to Mexico

and wanted to convert these heathen. They held up a crucifix, and told them to bow down, and pray to Mary the mother of God. But this was strange to them. They were worshipping the sun, and were satisfied with their religion, but these missionaries were not. They forced them at sword's point to pray to Mary, and of course, rather than die, these Indians did as they were forced to do, and thousands were baptized, and this religion now has a firm root in Mexico. They are taught to avoid these evangelicals at all cost, because they are teaching a strange doctrine. There are some who respond, and it does cost something to be a Christian there; and I suppose it's with this as with mundane things, you get what you pay for. Here it's almost the respectable thing to be a Christian, and the lines of demarcation are so hard to determine that it is to be feared that many who comfort themselves in Christendom have only a show.

I also learned something noteworthy from Kenneth; he stressed the fact that the law of Moses seems to us to have been very strict, so that we are glad that we are under Grace. But he warned us that under Grace we have much less lenience than they did under the law. He emphatically stated that the Grace of God TEACHES us, and because we are taught we know far more than they did under law, and because we know we are going to be responsible for much more. Grace teaches us to deny ungodliness, to deny worldly lusts, and it teaches us to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this time, and to look for that blessed hope, and for the glorious appearing of the Lord. If we do not practice these it is because we do not have the Spirit within, or are disobedient, and as such are subject to severe punishment, far above and beyond those who were disobedient to the law of Moses. And to be ignorant of the demands of Grace is no excuse.

John Renno

## STILLWATER, PA.

Fall is here, and the trees are about bare, but it's warm and mild weather, every day alike, warm and very dry. Much of the corn was hurt by the early frost, and is not ready for husking. Probably some will be picked next spring. We haven't had any rain for weeks and not much since May. The streams and rivers are lower than they ever were before. In some it's hard to see any water, just a bed of rocks where the water used to be.

There is much ado about the deal the U. S. is negotiating with Russia. It seems Russia has had dry weather for three consecutive years, and their farming methods are far behind ours here in America. In fact, about 50 years behind, and above all that, there is no free enterprise. Everyone is supposed to be a tool of the state, and work for what we call the federal government, so they are inefficient, and don't care much if they do not produce, for it is of no interest to them personally. So it's easier to do little, and be inefficient; and this results in poor crops.

Many are alarmed about the wheat deal with Russia, saying we are only feeding our enemies, and filling their stomachs, to make them stronger so they can bury us the sooner. While others say, and especially the western wheat farmers, that we should sell them the wheat which will give them something we have too much of and will supply us with that which we have too little of—the gold supply, is dangerously low.

Personally I cannot say which is best, although I am inclined to believe it would be to our national interest if we would place a ban on all Communist countries and have nothing to do with them in any way. But we are not doing that, and are trading with them far more strategic things than wheat, not directly, but indirectly. Also it does not make too much difference whether one is practically an atheist, and acts like one, or one who says he believes in God, and still goes right on and lives according to his own lusts as though there were none; except that the atheist might be better off in the judgement, for he was no hypocrite. Again men who are lost, and estranged from God are all alike basically, in that they are at enmity with God, regardless whether they are Communists or Democrats or Republicans, they

all go to one place for eternity.

And speaking of things eternal—I was to a meeting recently—a missionary conference to be exact, and the preacher said that I was a very important person in the eyes of God. In fact he said that I was one of the most important people in the world—if I am living in the will of God. He claims that many have the mistaken idea that God has special people to do his work such as preachers, and evangelists and missionaries, and the rest of the people are just common and ordinary, and of not very much account in the sight of God, for he has no special place for them. He called this an erroneous thought, and said the so-called small man who never makes headlines is just as important as the globe trotter who wins hundreds of souls.

He claimed that there is not a person born, but that he was

planned by God himself. We are not just biological accidents. We are chosen and planned by God. And then he also said there is no such thing as getting to heaven after this life on your own terms, for after all, he said heaven belongs to God and he has the right to say who is going to live there. But it is a place that is free for all who meet the conditions, seeing that God has no favorites.

He also said that all those who think they are good enough because they have never done anything bad, are only deceiving themselves, for unless one sees himself as a lost sinner, and estranged from God, he will never ask to be saved, for he sees no need for that; and unless and until he does that he will never see God's place of abode.

The one who has a call to stay at home and work so that he has to give to him that needs, and the one who prays for the one who is out on the front lines is every bit as important as the one who goes and forsakes all literally for the cause of Christ. And the church member who is in the will of God is every bit as important as the preacher.

John Renno

## STILLWATER, PA.

Oct. 26—Just a year ago this day the weather was quite different than what we have now. It was cold and snowy all day. But this year it is warmer than it was since 1931. This is also the twenty-third day that we have had no rain, and the 12th month that we have had below-normal rainfall. The Susquehanna River at Wilkes-Barre is now so low that you can walk across it without getting wet feet. It is lower than it was ever known to be before. It was also told us that what we lack in moisture now will be made up in snow this winter, according to the almanac. I haven't lived very long yet, and I have only been in the earth moving business for a little over a year, but I have never seen it so dry; much of the ground is just dry powdery dust.

Hunting has also been called off, and in spite of the carefulness much timber has burned and will yet burn unless we get rain. But season or no season, the sight of a ringneck rooster walking about the open field was too great a temptation to pass up for a man near Catawissa. He was driving along in his car and saw this bird, and stopped, and shot; and just behind him came two game wardens, they also stopped and wondered what he was shooting at; he told them it was the crows, but a walk through the field found a dead ringneck. He was faced with four charges, shooting from the car, hunting without a license, shooting out of season, and violating the new law our Governor had just made that no hunting shall be done of any kind until it rains. He was fined \$110 and lost his hunting privileges for several years, and he didn't even get the ringneck!

Hurricane Flora just stayed over Cuba for five days and pounded there without mercy, and the damage it has done is enormous. The papers say they lost a million tons of sugar, and half the sugar mills, and the whole Chaco crop is gone, and bananas, beans and rice, have been all but wiped out. Power lines, and bridges and roadways were also washed away. And also it is believed 2,000 people have died because of it and 300,000 left homeless. The Naval Base at Guantanamo in Cuba, owned by the U.S., warned the Cuban radio, but they denounced it as meddling with communications. But it's hard to know just how much is true that the papers say.

John Renno

## STILLWATER, PA.

Nov. 2—On Sunday, Oct. 27, we had an anniversary service. Beaver Run church is now ten years old. The first service was held on October 25, 1953. The idea of it started back in 1950 or possibly earlier, when some of the Stumptown congregation felt that they ought to be more diligent in carrying out the Lord's commission, and these convictions were nurtured by prayer and the seeking of the Lord's will.

They then had summer bible schools up in the southern part of Tioga Co. but this area showed little prospect of bearing fruit. So on December 23 and 24, Paul N. Kraybill and Lloyd Eby made a tour through Montour, Northumberland, and Columbia Counties and they found in the area around what is called Beaver

Run there was no bible school, so they got permission to hold it in a school house, and there were several requests that church be started, or Sunday school.

The bible school closed in Aug. and the first service was then held in October. They announced in the community that the service would be held and came up from Lancaster Co., on Sunday morning not knowing what they would see, but the result was beyond their expectation for there were sixty some people there at the first Sunday School, with an attendance of forty to fifty every Sunday thereafter.

Now, when we celebrated the tenth anniversary, the building which was erected in 1956 was just about filled to capacity, for there were many there that had helped to start the congregation and after it got going they stayed at home. The building is not large and 15 people will fill all the seats.

The first service was held in an old school house that was no longer used for school, and that building still stands but looks abandoned and forsaken. The new building is really a country church for it is not along the main road as most church buildings are. It's not even along a hard-surfaced road, but simply a little dirt road, and is hard to find by anyone who isn't ac-

quainted with the community. The reason for building there was that they could get the land there for nothing from Clarence Zeager, for it is near his home, and he is a leading lay member of the congregation, and has been since June 13, 1954 when he was taken in by church letter, and nine others were received by baptism that same Sunday.

It has been said that if all the people that were ever received into church membership there still maintained that membership the building we now have would be too small. So many, especially young people, come to Sunday School, and they enjoy it, and they seem to make a decision for the Lord, and are taken into church fellowship, but when persecution and difficult home life bears them down, then they begin to reconsider. Many of their companions do not belong to any church, then they also wish they were not tied down with church membership, and they get an eye on the old life and decide that this perhaps was better after all, so they go back to where they were and are harder to reach than ever.

In this community there are so many who never go to church anywhere, young people grow up into adulthood without hearing much about the Lord except in profanity. One has just cause to wonder just what it will be like in the next 20 years. The future for this nation, yea even for this present earth does not look promising.

Bible scholars tell us that when these things begin to come to pass, the generation that sees its beginning will also live to see its end. I don't know just how long one generation is. There is no definite set number of years, because one is interwoven into the other. One generation is passing off the scene, and one is at the helm of things, and the third one is coming on. So we do not know when the end of this age will be, and knowing the time is not important either. The all-important thing is to know Him who holds the future in His hand.

John Renno

## STILLWATER, PA.

Tuesday the rains came. It was thoroughly enjoyed, for it was something that we had not seen for about a month. It netted us about two inches here, but just the top layer of ground is wet, for I was digging ditch today, and below the top soil it's just as dry as before.

I was digging a water supply which is the third one for this year. I like to do this kind of digging; it fascinates me. This man thought he had a spring of water about 500 ft. away from the house coming out under a big pine tree. I dug a hole there but there was no water there. I moved over about 12 ft. where I thought it looked as though there might be water, and there was a good stream. I dug out a hole which he laid up with stones, and then dug a ditch down to his house where he will lay the pipe. This was the best supply of water that I ever dug.

Water is very precious, and we fail to appreciate it until it does not come any more. When the rains fail to come in due season, we have no water for the crops, and there's nothing we can do about it, but when our drinking water supply ceases from lack of rain then we move. It's interesting and fascinating work to dig around and find a water supply, to dig down and see it bubbling up from the ground, and when it does this in this dry weather it should be a good source. I suppose it is the same as digging a well, except in doing that you cannot see what you are doing and cannot see the water coming through.

I enjoy working for the public. You are at their mercy, you must please everyone. There are some laws that are in force for everyone who works for the public as I do, and unless you obey and

mind' these laws you may not have a successful enterprise.

First of all when you work for someone else you should do it as unto the Lord, and work for His Glory. The second step, is you should work with the man's interest at heart, and do the work as good or better than you'd do it for yourself. If you work for the public you must consider yourself a servant, and a servant does not work to please himself necessarily, but only when his master is pleased should the servant be pleased. You must be unselfish.

The third step or reason for working is to support yourself financially. Without this you cannot continue long. You must not work cheaper than anyone else, and anyone who underbids you should know what he is worth. You do not have to work cheap. People are willing to pay well for something they want, and must have. These three things must come in their proper order if you want to be successful; God, others, and yourself last. And under these conditions I do not believe anyone needs to be unemployed, for the demand far exceeds the supply of dependable employees.

I was warned when I started this work that I may have to work for nothing for people are poor and cannot pay. And especially by one who had been in it before me, and had to quit for he said people just did not pay him what they owed, and he still has much money out. But, so far, I've had no trouble whatsoever, and even though some do not have it readily, if you wait patiently, they will pay for they feel obligated to you.

Perhaps one example would be in order; an elderly couple had trouble with their sewage and we put in a new system. I was warned by their neighbors that this man is very poor pay. But he is unable to work and they have a daughter to keep that is mentally incapacitated, and their income is meager. They paid half of it right away, and the rest in small amounts, until they had it all paid but \$30 then quit, and I heard nothing from them. I could not go and ask them for it because I knew I was better off than they were. But a year later he came around and

paid it all, and it almost hurt me worse to take it than to let it go, but to refuse to take it might hurt his feelings, and when you work for the public you must please everybody for they have friends that may want work done too.

You cannot afford one single unsatisfied customer. Far better would it be if he cannot be satisfied to make no charge for your work than to take money that he gives for something that he feels is ill spent. You not only lose him as a customer, but his friends too, and what's more is you lose your Christian testimony.

John Renno

## STILLWATER, PA.

Nov. 15—Seems there's just no use worrying any more. When we had unusually early frost we thought "there goes our corn crop"—but it didn't. We had only about a thousand bushels less than normal, which is far above expectations.

Something unusual is taking place in our church. We are having revival meetings! They are not just called that for a convenient description—we are actually being revived. No, there are not great demonstrations with people going forward and making a public demonstration of their doings, but the Spirit is at work in His quiet, peaceful way.

The usual things, when having meetings, is to go to church for a week or ten days, every night or so, and then it takes some persuasion to get people to come, and some come just because they feel sorry for the pastor if they don't stand by him with their presence.

The usual thing is to preach and tell people in simple language how to be saved and so on. Then at the close of the meeting quite a lengthy season is spent in begging people to come forward and openly demonstrate their decision to follow Christ. The usual thing also is to make the Christian life just as pleasing as possible so as not to offend anyone, and drive them further away.

The organization in our meetings is about the same as always but there it stops being the same. The attendance is different—even on a Monday night the building was about full. And the reason people come is also different—they come because it is harder to stay away than it is to go. You are afraid you will miss something very important by not being there, just as Thomas did when he was not with the rest at the time the risen Lord appeared. And the type of preaching is unusual. The Christian life is not pictured as an easy road filled with success and happiness, and at the end you will go to Heaven as an easy way to escape eternal torment.

The preacher comes right out and tells us that being a Christian is not the popular thing to do. It is not an easy life to live—it's hard, it's rugged, and it takes people with backbone to meet God's standards of righteousness.

This preacher does not beg and plead for people to come forward. He says this does no good, for if one wants to come and hates his sin enough he will come

readily, without human efforts, and it seems to work in his home church too, for they have been at Gaithersburg, Md. for 10 years now in mission work, and they have ten converts, and never have they had one to go back into sin again. It is far better to have a few that stay than to have many and then lose most of them. Peter says that it were better not to have known the truth than to know it and depart from it afterward.

The preacher's name is Glen Sell, but what is more important, he preaches with power and authority.

John B. Renno

### STILLWATER, PA.

Nov. 22—I fell like a prisoner, for the bounds of my habitation are within the Bloomsburg Hospital. I got my finger where it did not belong—in a revolving V-belt. It gave a quick jerk and bent it backwards, breaking it off so that it hung down, the joint sticking out. It's the first time I saw one of my bones. The wheel was very dirty, thus complicating matters and infecting my body. Today the doctor looked at it and he seemed to marvel that the finger is going to live. It was ripped and much more difficult to repair than a cut. It happened on Monday noon and I expect to go home tomorrow, Saturday.

I like to be with old men, and this week is never to be forgotten for two 83 yr. olds are in my room. The one has been a butcher all his life and has had trouble of the colon, so they made a hole in his side. He does not talk very much, but did say he is ready to leave the world and no time is too soon, but he and the other old man confirmed the truth of the statement made by Solomon of old—Remember NOW thy creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not and thou shalt say I have no pleasure in them. These men both expressed their displeasure that they are still alive. The evil days are here for them and they have no pleasure in them, thus indicating they have forgotten their creator in their youth, and now they are still too troubled with infirmities to remember Him. Old age need not be pathetic and should not be—let all youth take warning. Mostly the young are too irresponsible, the middle aged too busy, the old too infirm.

The other old man lives five

miles from me and is very interesting, secularly speaking. At 16 he told his dad he does not like farming, and his dad made no demands against his leaving, so he got a job at a sawmill. In nine months he was sawyer, and sawed for 42 years (but never sawed his finger). He also farmed later and became a great threshing rig operator. He was very active, and it's very hard for him to lay still. He fell and hurt his hip. The first evening he was very amusing. He wanted to go to the toilet, but they said he was to stay in bed. He was used to giving orders, not receiving them. He asked "Who pays for this?" "My daughter works here", and "Who ever heard of having a bowel movement in bed?". He was scarcely restrained, and last night they put the sides up on his bed but he got up and crawled out over the foot end where his table was setting. His thumping to the floor brought the nurses running. He exclaimed that he didn't realize that step was so high. It was about four feet.

This is the first time in my life that I was ever a hospital patient. The care one gets is excellent and the expense of being here is not as bad as I used to think, considering that many need to be on duty 24 hours a day, seven days a week. You get three good meals a day and a bed, plus care. The cost here is \$16 a day in a ward.

It also reminds me of something more dreadful. When one lies awake at night hearing the wails and groans of pain coming down through the corridors, you have a lot of time to think of how had you taken precautions, you would not be here. It reminded me of the eternal home of the damned! Only there, there will be no care, no aspirins, no sleeping pills, even no water!

It seems the less you know the better you can sleep here. If you spend the day reading, studying, and meditating, then go to bed you have trouble getting the mind stopped so sleep can come. Evening visitors also tend to keep sleep away. Solomon says much studying is a weariness to the flesh.

The news of the ruthless shooting of the President came as a great shock to everyone here, and also to the nation and the world. I know that God permitted it, and don't know why, but it did something to the nation, and I hope it was for the good.

John R. Renno

### STILLWATER, PA.

Nov. 30 — The past day has brought us some much needed rain. This morning the ground is white with snow, the first of the season.

We had welcome visitors on Thanksgiving day, people whom we have known since childhood. John O. Peachey, Dan Swarey, and Simon Benders. They all hail from the Big Valley, the same as we do, but have all moved out except Dan's. We also used to belong to the same denomination, but that is all changed now, too.

We are members of the Mennonite church, and Simon's having moved to Buffalo Valley, have joined themselves with the Beachey Amish at that place, and John O.'s are members of the newly-established Holdeman congregation at Belleville, although they lived the other side of the mountain from it. Dan Swarey's live near Reedsville and away from the heart and pulse of Big Valley. They can only say they live in it, and almost out. They also tentatively are members of the same Holdeman church, of which my brother Eli, is the pastor. We all have stemmed from the same root and trunk but time and circumstances have brought diverse changes.

There is a Brethren in Christ mission about twenty miles north of us, and has been for years, but it has never resulted in very many changed lives, nor increased membership. The facilities there are nil; no toilets, no anterooms, no basement, and hardly any place to park. The building was erected about 1897 by the community, and was supposed to be a union church. But it did not last too long that way and was finally purchased and taken over by the E.U.B. and was deeded over to them. They supplied it with the necessary personnel for a while, but that finally died out too, and the church was closed for a while. At the request of some in the community, Ross Morningstar held evangelistic meetings there, and from then on they started Sunday School again, but it never amounted to very much.

There were many hindrances, due to the fact that the Brethren in Christ had no deed for it, and it was very difficult to get one because in the beginning it belonged to heirs, many of which are now dead.

Then to top it all off the church burned, so now it looked as though that about consummated the effort there. But when a church gets on fire is when people get concerned. So now there is renewed interest, and last night they had a meeting. Henry Ginder and Isaac Knoode, the Bishop of the district, and the members of the mission board were there, to discuss the possibility of either remodeling the old building, which is practically worthless, or build a new one with half-decent facilities.

Many people of the community want nothing else but the old one fixed up, for to them it is an old landmark, and they evidently feel not that it is needed for the welfare of the soul, but for sentimental reasons. People whom I have never seen at church there, were nevertheless at the business meeting and voiced their opinions. They then took a vote as to whether it should be a community project, and the mission board should pull out completely, or whether they should take over full responsibility. There were 31 votes cast and 30 were in favor of having the denomination take over. They then appointed a committee of 5 who are to decide what to do about it, and they are to make recommendations.

On Dec. 20 there will be another meeting with the community people and then, according to the findings and recommendations of the appointed committee, steps will be taken that will be deemed proper. It was interesting to note that the people who had the least interest in the spiritual aspect of the church were the loudest in their demands, some even getting hot under the collar. They want a church building in the community even though they never attend. It seems to them to be kind of a good luck charm if nothing more.

We were invited to attend this meeting. That's why we were there, and we are sympathetic and much in favor of anything taking place that will cause men to turn from darkness unto light, but it takes much more than a building to do this, although we would hasten to add that good facilities can be instrumental in getting men to hear the truth, and there is a great spiritual dearth in the community.

John Renno

## STILLWATER, PA.

Dec. 7—The death of President Kennedy, and the way he died has done more to bring this nation back to sharp reality than anything that I've ever heard of before. Immediately after it was reported that he was shot at, even before he had died, news reporters were right on the scene, and the whole nation and most of the world knew it. And all foolishness stopped on radio. All the music that was played was hymns or gospel songs.

The editor of our local weekly newspaper, called The Argus, had the most fitting remarks: he writes — "The ways of Divine Providence are mysterious. It is beyond the infinite mind to understand, so we accept them implicitly, even though our selfish and confused natures rebel at the thought of what has happened. That it is the will of God should be enough. Beyond that we need not go for an explanation, for if we truly believe we must be reconciled to our President's death, as to the loss of a husband, father, son, brother or friend. The nation's prayers and sympathy go to his widow, to his parents, to his brothers and sisters, his daughter Caroline, and his son John Jr. For while the United States can replace a President, there is no substitute for a loving father."

Personally I have never favored hunting stories, they don't thrill me as they seem to do others. Even when I still went to school I was glad when hunting season was over with for then one could engage in sensible conversation. And even now most all social gatherings have hunting stories. Even after church they invade the atmosphere. There seems to be little else that will take so much attention. Even the salvation of a soul from hell will not create as much interest and enthusiasm as how a deer was shot. And after having said all that, let me give you about the best hunting story I've ever heard.

Locally a man shot a deer and put it in the trunk of his car and on his way home he stopped at a garage where some of his friends were and told them of how he got a deer. After talking a while he took them with him

to the car to show them his game. Upon opening the trunk there was no deer there, nothing but a few blood marks. While he was inside bragging several fellows slipped out and hid the deer behind some buildings so he could hunt it again. I can imagine he wasn't quite as enthused about telling of how he hunted the same deer twice.

In North America there are 15,000 villages without a pastor or church. Nearly 700,000 Americans are without the church or the gospel.

It will take 100,000 new churches in the next 20 years to keep abreast of the population increase. There are also twelve million Jews in the world, and five and one-half million live in the United States. Every third person in New York City is a Jew.

There are over three thousand languages in the world, and at least two thousand tribes with 150 million people in them for whom there is no scripture. We just haven't gotten around to translating it yet. And it is very hard to translate scripture into a language which is not written down. You first have to make an alphabet, and teach people to read their own language. Christianity has through the years first taught people to read, then because of the lack of funds and literature, has left false isms and communism provide the reading material.

The Eastern Mennonite Board of Missions and Charities has now 164 missionaries in 7 different countries. In Ethiopia we have 42 people, 7 churches, and no members yet. In Tanganyika there are 50 of our missionaries, 114 churches and over three thousand members. In Somalia, 26 missionaries, 8 worship centers, and 25 members. And so on down the line. But there are usually many more people at church than there are members. For instance, in our own church we have about 40 members but more than twice that in church attendance.

In 1954 the mission budget of the Eastern Board, or the amount they planned to spend for mission purposes was \$232,425, and now this year of 1963 the amount they plan to spend is \$479,000, a little over twice the amount of nine years ago. It takes much money to put people out on the mission field and support them there, and statistics say there is no other mission board that equals ours in thrift, and that Mennonites are much cheaper to keep on the field than some others are. But let's not be proud, for it still takes 94 Mennonites one whole year to win one soul to Christ.

By our attitude we are saying that our own Christian experience is so meaningless to us that we can see no point in sharing it with others. And even if four hundred thousand dollars is a lot of money, we still average only one dollar and seven cents per church member. John Renno

### STILLWATER, PA.

Dec. 14 — According to one weather watcher that goes by signs, we are to have forty snows this winter in which you can track a cat. We have had several of them already, and this last one was more than just a "cat-tracker" too, and winter hasn't even begun yet. According to the calendar it doesn't begin for another week.

There was a young man at church last Sunday, and I don't remember his first name but he was a Slabauch. He was a friend of Earl Martin because they had been in I-W service together. He hails from Ohio, but presently lives in Norfolk, Va. He verified what J. J. H. has been saying—that the city conditions are getting so that they are crowding the farmers out. Buying land for more than two thousand dollars an acre. And the financial state of farmers there ought to be better than most places, for they have their own milk handling plant, and is exclusively for Mennonites. Is a non-profit organization, and they get around seven dollars a hundred for their milk. But his view of it was that they will probably have to leave that part of the country, and settle some place else. He seemed like a good man too. He was asked to give a few thoughts after Sunday School, which he did, and it was interesting. We appreciate visitors of his calibre. Those who seem to take their orders from above, and not according to the fashion of this present world.

Our preacher is presently holding evening meetings at the Hershey congregation, in Lancaster Co., near his parental home. Recent reports were that his audience is mostly church-going people, and inferring that these type of people need to be revived too. That's what the meetings are supposed to be—revival meetings. Personally I am skeptical of those kind of meetings. I am not at all sure that I should be thus, and I'm all for it if people are revived, but just so much form and nothing more, is taboo.

Ben's father, Henry Lapp, just got out of the hospital. He went there to get his thumb fixed up, which he cut while carrying a glass jar; the jar broke and cut deep and severed a tendon. He was hospitalized and told he could not work for a few weeks, and he decided that while he is recuperating from this he might as well make it worth while, so he underwent another operation that was pending, but had been put off until some more convenient day.

I stopped at D. B. Stauffer's place recently. I wanted to see what he looked like, and to see the type of person he was, and his disposition. He has a large machine shop, and claims he puts in ten hours a day, plus five hours on Saturday. This being Saturday afternoon, he was down at his brother's place helping to build a garage. His relationship is large, for he went on to explain who this and that person was and how they were related, for they were having an afternoon frolic, I suppose.

Dan is a man who thinks for himself, and is not ruled by popular opinion or community pressure. He lives his life as if he alone were responsible to God and as though he must give an account of himself, and not another. He and I have differences of opinion, and our variances are interesting to discuss. He thinks children ought to decide for themselves whether they will put away worldly things and join his church. He himself does not have an automobile, although he does not necessarily think it evil; but the group he belongs to have decided for themselves that they do not want them, and he is with them. But his boys have them, and he sees no point in restraining them from it. He thinks they must decide for themselves, if they refrain from something because they must, it is not willingly, therefore not beneficial to them.

John Renno

**STILLWATER, PA.**

Dec. 21—Bitter cold weather and winter has just begun. I find more all the time that people do not like it at all, and speak of going to Florida. But I suppose a mass migration to the southland would be impractical, and neither could the south contain us all; and I suppose most of us will just stay and complain.

The weather reporters are constantly affirming that we are having 9 or 10 degrees below normal for the season, and this lends to our discouragement. I wonder if the normal pattern is not to be changed. We had a long, warm fall and plenty of time to get ready for winter, but we are still not ready. The water level is far below normal, too. Wells are failing that never failed before, and streams are drying up that never did before. The people who are in the well drilling business are flourishing, and are far behind in their commitments.

As we are in the excavating business during the warmer months, and are busy every day that it is fit to work, there are about five months out of the year we cannot do this because of weather conditions, and if we would just be resigned to this condition we would now be unemployed. But I detest idleness, so I purchased a tractor-trailer outfit, and take to the roads during these months. But just to run on the roads is not profitable—you must have someone to pay your way; you have to have hauling to do. But this is not easy, for the Public Utility Commission has issued rights to haul certain things in certain areas, and no one else dare do it without permission. And if you want to haul out-of-state then the Interstate Commerce Commission will get you. So if you want to do much hauling for the public you must lease to someone who has these rights, and to get these is not cheap. But there are always loop holes in every law, for these laws just cover certain commodities. Foodstuff is not covered by this law—that is raw food—but once it's canned or processed then it is. And anyone can haul anything anywhere if he owns the product he is hauling.

There is much hay in this area, for there are so many who have gone out of the dairying business and have sought other means of employment. This land is still not idle, for people make hay and still grow grain to sell. And we have heard that east of here the hay is not so plentiful, and lately have taken a load of hay to the Green Dragon auction to see what would happen.

Now, I had never been to the Green Dragon before, and it was a new experience for me. Incidentally, Green Dragon is the name of a great auction and produce sales at Ephrata, Pa. They sell dairy cows, dogs and cats and just about anything. And there was much hay there, too. But now I was there on business and someone paid my way. For I bought the hay and sold it there for more than I paid for it here.

But not much more, and hardly enough to make it profitable, for people around here are hearing reports that hay is selling for fabulous prices of sixty and seventy dollars a ton, and they think they ought to have that much here at the barn. Many are holding it for higher prices, and I'm afraid they will still be having hay next spring when no one wants it anymore.

At this auction the price was about the same. There were about 20 or more loads there, and it brought from 40 to 50 dollars a ton. When the quality was low the price was lower. But the highest quality hay did not bring more accordingly. There was some very nice green alfalfa and was bid to the low fifties, but was not let go because of low price. It seems the buyers are not willing to pay those high prices for quality. They would sooner just pay ordinary prices for ordinary hay. And if I were buying hay I would do the same. Furthermore, good timothy hay is worth just as much as alfalfa (if it was made right) and does not cost as much. Therefore if anyone reads this who is in need of hay you can let me know and I will see that you get some if I can get it here cheap enough. One thing that impressed me at the auction was that each load was marked how much weight it had on. I weighed mine and put on what it was, but could have just as easily have marked it up a ton or so and no one would have known the difference . . . except me and God. I saw some trucks there that were not nearly as long as mine but the weight was very high according to the slips, and I wondered that people would believe it. If I were buying hay there, I would demand that it be weighed again where I could see it.

John Renno

## STILLWATER, PA.

Dec. 28—There is much difference in the weather, when we compare this year with last. Then it was very cold, sub-zero with high winds, and snow blocking all the roads that were exposed to winds. Now it's balmy and nice, we had a snow storm that yielded six inches, and after that a little wind, but not much.

Our preacher didn't like what I had in the Budget several weeks ago concerning revival meetings. He says instead of criticizing and saying what's wrong with things I should write constructively, and tell how they can be improved. I offered him the opportunity to take my place and openly challenge the article, and my attitude, and rectify things himself, but he declined, saying he doesn't know the answer either.

This is the situation as I can see it. We in this day are constantly being reminded in the papers and in announcements, concerning meetings and a hearty invitation is extended to the public. It seems every church has to have their annual meetings, and they want people to come. And for any church not to have yearly revival meetings is looked upon as getting cold and losing out spiritually. And so we just go on holding our meetings, regardless of whether they meet the needs of the people, and the community or not, for we just do not know what else to do. We feel surely it cannot be wrong to preach the gospel, and if we hold meetings and preach the situation ought to be improved. But it is not getting better.

The other Sunday, Harold Book preached at our church, and he related an incident about

when he went to school. There was a man going fishing and, walking by the school yard, he asked the boys where there is a good place to catch fish. One out of the group replied that if you want to catch fish you must go where the fish are. And I believe this is what's wrong with our present day endeavors. We do not go where the fish are, and so we don't catch any, and wonder what's wrong.

The bible says; except the Lord build the house, the workman worketh but in vain, and except the Lord keep the city, the watchman watcheth but in vain. And to look at our doings it does not look as though the Lord was doing very much of it. We are working by ourselves. I can well remember the late Dr. Barnhouse giving the illustration of a committee meeting where plans are made and discussed, and the prayer is made with this idea; "Lord we ask you to bless our work, and if you don't, we plan to push it through anyways."

I honestly believe the reason we are not experiencing God's blessing as we should is because we spend too much time on ourselves. Selfish people are not beneficial to a community, to their own family, nor anyone else; and neither are selfish churches. When there are yet 7,000 communities in North America that have no gospel witness, no church to go to, no one to tell them the true gospel story, while we are over indulging ourselves with preaching and gospel meetings, etc., that affect hardly anyone but just us. Is this fair? Is this the great commission? To sit in a small huddle & keep so isolated and sophisticated that others do not feel welcome, or wanted, or needed, or at home in our assemblies. Now, I do not at all advocate that we be good mixers and just like the society around us, to make them feel welcome; indeed that is where too much of the difficulty lies. We are too worldly already, in our attitudes and actions. It is only when they see Jesus Christ walking with human form, separate, and yet not separated from society, that people will come to the realization of their own needs.

Furthermore, many gasp at the idea of going twenty or thirty miles to church as being unrealistic, and unpractical, but never bat an eye when someone travels 30 miles to work every day. They think work is very important, and our life depends on it. Personally, I feel if more would live farther away from their worship centers, and rub shoulders with more of the untouched and unreachables, be with them but not of them, that the gospel would make more of an impact on the unregenerated than all the gospel meetings will.

And if we do have meetings, we should go where the fish are. Have them in some place where the community is not so well churched. And what is also very important, when our church building gets too full, instead of building it larger, take a lesson from the bees. They don't build a larger hive, they swarm, and live someplace else. Why not go and live in one of these 7,000 unchurched communities. Or do our pleasant homes, our family ties, or farms handed down from generation to generation, and our businesses, mean so much more to us than do the souls of men, that we had rather just lay on our ivory couches, and give money that we don't miss anyways to the mission board, so they can send out those who will go. Why not be a self-supported missionary in your community?

John Renno