

**STILLWATER, PA.**

Jan. 3—One man with whom I have much to do, and he plays a large part in my spiritual welfare, is our preacher, Ben Lapp. His address is Watsontown, Pa., and he has written an article concerning the church and her ministry which I would like to share with you this week. He writes . . . Many who are on the outside of the church of Jesus Christ today, are looking at her with a critical eye; she has failed in her mission of evangelism and making the world a better place to live in. Their appraisal of the church's era, such as racial discrimination, war, etc., has often been silent, yea even lending a helping hand toward, instead of against these evils. At least the nominal church is guilty of these things, and we must stand with bowed head under the accusation of the world.

We can well expect the world and the non-christian to stand in judgement of these things, and because of it many are turning away from Jesus Christ and turning to Communism and other ism's, as well. Yet even within the church we find much criticism, but little being done to improve matters; it is indeed easier to use a wrecking bar, than to use a hammer and saw in constructive ways. The burden of my heart is that as Christians we do more to help build the church and less to tear down and destroy. I will admit it is difficult to build a new building on an old foundation, but in this respect the church is different than another building for the foundation has already been laid, which is Jesus Christ, which no man can destroy. 1 Cor. 3:11.

One wonders sometimes how far we have come from the original pattern and design which Jesus Christ laid down for his church, with our costly cathedrals, professional workers, etc., to an extent where

many Christians are mere spectators at a weekly (Sunday morning) performance, and this is the extent of our christianity. Not so however with the early church in the book of Acts, where it seems each person who named the name of Christ not only departed from iniquity, but became involved in the cause of Christ, and he went everywhere preaching the gospel.

Perhaps the commitment we should make in our day is to burn our bridges behind us when we commit our lives to Jesus Christ, and become involved in a cause wherein our leader gives a personal "follow thou me" charge to each of us.

The Bible makes becoming a Christian an enlistment into the army of Christ. It speaks of Christian warfare, not in the terms of flesh and blood, but in a spiritual battle in which we are engaged; see 2 Cor. 10:4-5 and Eph. 6:10-18. Jesus, our captain, says IF any man WILL come after me (implying that this enlistment is voluntary) then take up the cross and follow me. Elton Trueblood in his book "The Company of the Committed" has one chapter entitled "Strategy of Penetration" showing how the Sunday morning service ought to be a drill hall where the soldiers of Christ are refreshed and given new courage for the task before them through the next week.

The church then becomes a penetrating force as it leaves its effect, not so much on a Sunday morning, but in the shop, in the feed mill, the factory, the store, the home, etc.; this is the church at work in society, fulfilling the words of Christ; ye are the salt of the earth, preserving, healing, being a conscience to the world in general. The very life of every Christian is being the light of the world, pointing souls to Jesus Christ.

In closing let me quote the words of Lenard Ravenhill, "If the church today had as many agonizers as she has advisors, we would have revival in a year."

John R. Renno

**STILLWATER, PA.**

Jan. 10—Mild winter weather, and a good rain too, which in a small way should replenish our depleted water supply. I don't know of anything that is quite as disheartening as when you turn on the spigot and water does not come.

When we lived back in Big Valley our water came for two miles by gravity and we had about as much pressure as we now have at 40 lbs. When it failed there it usually was not without warning, and we knew that we had a leak in the pipe, and usually knew where to look.

But now things are different. We may have water one time and in a half hour it may stop without warning. If the pump has stopped, you know it is electrical failure, etc. But when the pump keeps on running but no water comes you begin to think the source of water is failing. Such was our lot on Christmas eve, and it seems every time something goes wrong it is in the evening before a holiday or on Saturday evening, when you cannot get anyone to fix it immediately. Not only do we depend on it, but the cows, chickens and everything is out of water, if we are. Christmas eve, when the water failed to come, I just shut off the pump, and hoped it was the pump that was failing, and not the source of water. The next morning the boy turned on the water, and it came again, thus giving ground to our fears that the well was going dry, so we went on a rationing schedule, etc. We had water for about 2 weeks, when it again stopped and did not come the next morning.

We read about the Israelites who complained, and accused Moses directly and God indirectly, when their water supply failed. I am not trying to justify their accusations, but I know by experience that it is very hard to refrain from worrying, and becoming frustrated, when you go for a drink, and there is none. The children want water, and you can't give them any. You can't use the modern toilet facilities, for they depend on water. The cattle bawl for they are thirsty. Yes, I know there are always substitutes, such as hauling water, etc. but all this takes time, and the Israelites were in the desert where there was not even the remotest sign of water, and they could not go get it any place. There was none anywhere. We find it very hard to stay at peace, even with all the spiritual privileges we have in our day, when the main source of mundane life fails.

Recently I was to Virginia to Joe Overholt with a load of hay, and he preached a sermon to me about this. Now he did not know what he was doing to me and I didn't tell him either; but he was explaining to me of the severe drought conditions last summer, and how that things just burned up, and now they are really going in a hole financially because of it, but with a big smile he said, "This is the Lord's doings, and it is marvelous in our eyes." He reminded me of the prophet Amos who said even when the food supply for the cattle fails and everything goes wrong, so to speak, he will still praise the Lord.

But I do know that the way one was reared has very much to do with ones temperament, and at-

titudes. The people in the south, and the big west are very much different than we are in the east and north. There it takes little to satisfy them, and they are prone to be content with such things as they have, and to praise God for His goodness, and His wonderful works to the children of men. We in the east were raised in the atmosphere of the very latest in comforts. This atmosphere of having everything come our way, and the water to come when we turn on the spigot has become a part of life, and we are much used to having rain when we need it too. All this put together, has taught us to fret when things go wrong and upset our schedule. We know this is wrong but it seems it takes more grace to keep us sweet than it does for one reared with a minimum of comforts.

Oh! and lest I forget to tell you, our fears were groundless, or at the most useless, for upon checking we had forty feet of water in our well.

Now concerning my ad in the Budget, the phone number there quoted was inadequate, for there are ten digits. The correct number is 717-864-7072. There is not much profit in hauling hay for a long distance, as it's too light, but I would much rather sell to some saint for less than for one otherwise who does not know our Saviour.

John Renno

## STILLWATER, PA.

Jan. 25—The article this week is one of which I am loath to write, for it concerns one of my personal misfortunes, as well as those in my sphere. It may seem as a misfortune on the surface but underneath there is a purpose and an education involved, so that all is by far not lost. It was January 2, 1964, just 23 days ago, a day which I shall never forget.

The day before this it snowed and drizzled all day, and it was hardly fit to be out in, but I had planned to take a load of hay to Orange, Va. to Joe Overholt the next day, and I wanted the hay on, else I could not go that week, for I did not want to start for that long a trip on a Friday, but that is what I should have done. It's the same old story, too late smart. This day would have been alright but the day before it snowed and the roads were slippery, and not fit to be out on, but many were out in spite of the conditions, and I ventured out too. At three-thirty in the morning I got up and went out.

This could very well have been my last day on the earth, but God did not plan it thus, and I was delivered from personal injury. The truck in which I was riding was just at the right angle on the point of impact that when the fifth wheel tore loose and the trailer came forth the little wheel which is used to park the trailer when off the tractor, called the dolly wheel, came forward and hit the rear drive wheel, and I was spared from being crushed. Every day many people die on the highways and we read of the reports and statistics, and we think it just awful. Why aren't they more careful. Then we go on about our business giving it no serious consideration, except when it comes to us and we, or one of our own, are one of the statistics.

Accidents are caused, they do not happen, for if I had been more alert and ready for any emergency, it could have been avoided, but I had been going since early morning and just a little dull, and near Marysville, just across the river from Harrisburg, going downgrade on a glare of ice, and no cinders, two cars and a pick-up truck stopped, and I saw it too late. All I could

do was stop the wheels. The vehicle kept right on going, for the load was pushing me. I had to do something and with two seconds to decide! I tried to pass by them and keep the middle of the road, and give the truck room (which was coming towards me) to also slip through, but when I turned, the thing started to jackknife, and I went right over in the path of the oncoming truck, and there was a terrifying crash, and jolt, then all was silent . . . Now what . . . I was somewhat in a daze, I got out and looked the thing over—setting there cross-wise on the road with the traffic blocked both ways. The other truck belonged to my mother's cousin, S. I. Yoder, and had a load of high test gas on it, which could have sprung a leak, and burned everything and everyone but it did not happen. If it had to happen I am so glad it was not some other big firm's vehicle who cared not for me or anything else, just for the money they could get out of the damage. But everyone was kind and good, so that I was amazed. Thousands of dollars were lost, by many because of lost time, in getting to work late, and the fire trucks came, and the firemen stood by, just in case, and the police officers, and others directing traffic etc. And all this trouble and difficulty was caused just by me, and who am I?

But I was vividly reminded by what Sam H. Peachey once said when he first started driving motor vehicles. He claimed you really learn what is involved in driving after you have several wrecks. And I believe this one will help me to be more careful, and also teach me that I am not invulnerable, and that it doesn't always happen to others, never to me. For it has.

The man in the other truck was injured somewhat, but not serious. He was John A. Kauffman, son of Freddie Kauffman. He was hospitalized for some time with sore muscles and joints, after going home.

Yes, I know many will now say, had you stayed with horse and buggy it would not have happened; and this is probably true, but wherever we are, we are never safe from bodily harm; the all-important thing is to be safe from spiritual harm.

John Renno

**STILLWATER, PA.**

Jan. 31—We are indeed grateful that our winter weather was not more severe and we are also glad for the abundant supply of rain during the month of January.

We had unexpected visitors this past week, and because they were completely unexpected I was not at home, which I regret very much. They were both here on the same day, but not at the same time. The one party was from the Souderton area, Budget readers, and they wanted to see the Stillwater scribe, but he was not around and neither did my good wife know where they might see me, although I was not far off. She does not remember the name of the man, but claims he, along with a real estate agent, were touring the area. The agent asked a lot of questions but she supposed the land did not appeal to them, and we have no idea what they were after, nor who they were, except that the one was a Budget reader.

The next party was also composed of two men, and she did not tell me who they were but started describing them, and I identified Reuben Harvey from somewhere in Ohio. No, I have never met the man, but would certainly like to. And I do, so wish they would have let me know they were coming, and I certainly would have made arrangements to be here. He was traveling with his driver, as he does not drive a car himself. My wife described him as a man with a black beard, and long hair down to his shoulders. The man who was transporting him was an ex-Amishman and a half-brother to Nick Stoltzfuses wife. Mr. Harvey has high ideals, and wants to be used as a missionary among the plain people.

Now I have done some traveling too this week, and made an exceedingly interesting visit with some friends who I have never met, except by correspondence. They live on 945 East King St. in Lancaster. I took a load of hay to the stockyards to sell, and arrived there in the evening about nine o'clock with the intention of staying at their house, and I looked up the name in the phone book, but was rather dubious as to whether they would have a phone, knowing they were plain people; but yes, there it was, Brechbill, L. T. I put a dime in the slot

and dialed the number, and a woman answered, and yes, they were home. There was no bus going out King street that time any more, and I was not about to pay a taxi, so I went "shoe leather express". I suppose it's about a mile out there. But it was well worth the effort for they entertained me as a king, and lodged me and gave me more than I could eat.

But what is much more, they are travelling on the same road that I am and we had a very pleasant discourse. He is very hard of hearing, and has a very powerful hearing aid, without which he says he is stone deaf. I had to speak loud and clear, and then he did not always perceive, so he just turned to his wife and she acted as interpreter. It seemed he could understand her quiet tones better than all my efforts.

They are very plain people, belonging to the Old Order River Brethren, and he thinks all christian men ought to wear a full beard, and not trim it at all—just let it the way the Lord made it, and they should also have their hair covering the ears, but should not wear a mustache, for this, according to his findings with Jewish authorities, is not included with the injunctions concerning the beard.

I can appreciate his principles, and the steadfastness of his faith in Christ for he is a very strong advocate of having the Spirit of God within, and letting him live the life in your mortal body. He does not go for these high sounding testimonies of salvation, when the giver thereof does not prove it with a life according to the doctrine of Godliness.

I was also glad to meet Mrs. Brechbill's mother who is 90 years old, and lives with them, but she does not look much older than many do at 70.

Hay is coming down in price but I don't suppose it will get much lower, and there are many in this area that are still holding it for more money, it being a major source of income for them. I feel sorry for them too, as costs are high in making it, but when there is no market the price must come down. And there is so much hay in the area that one could almost build a mountain with it. I believe at present I could easily locate 400 tons, ranging in price from \$20 to \$40. Also much straw which is selling as good as hay. See ad. John Renno

**STILLWATER, PA.**

Feb. 8 — The official groundhog watchers say they saw one coming out and taking a view around, then turning tail and going down into the hole again. They claim by this that we still will have six more weeks of winter; but I doubt the authenticity of this theory, and I would rather believe in the sign of the migration of the birds, for one said he saw several large flocks flying north.

My nearest neighbor sold all his cows last Saturday. He had around 50 head of cattle and he expected \$15,000 for all of them, but his guess was too high by one-third. He hired the Sands Auctioneering firm to have the sale and they charge 8 percent of the gross. This is another farmer that has found it too difficult to go on. He is now looking for a job, and doubtless can find one, for many firms would rather hire an ex-farmer that is used to working than some young sprint just out of college that thinks he knows it all, and yet is interested in nothing but the pay check.

The rest of the full time farmers are just hanging on by a thin thread, and moaning and complaining that all they are doing is working for the feed companies. I personally believe the poultrymen are a little better off than the dairymen.

I was talking to several large feed men the other day in other areas, and they were both quite alarmed by the financial stress the farmers are in, especially in those areas where it was so dry last summer. They have to buy feed, for almost all winter, and are already out of funds, and cannot borrow more to tide them over, for they already have all they can get from the finance companies.

Reports are that steers are so low priced, that one man told me he lost \$5,000 on one bunch, but I suppose he was a man that could afford it, for he is a businessman. The same man also told me that farmers are such queer individuals—when the price of steers is fairly good and they think it might get better yet they just hold off in hopes of the high-dollar, but then when their predictions fail, and the price drops, they get all excited and all want to sell at once, and thus flood

the market still more. This man is in a position to know for he has cattle at the stockyards in Lancaster, or rather he buys and sells there. Says he know my brother, Dave, and wonders why he hasn't been around to buy for so long. The name is Lorrah or something like that.

I have traveled hundreds of miles this winter and spoken to many individuals, and I find that there is a great spiritual darkness hanging over the land. I am reminded of the prophecy in Amos where God says he will send a famine in the land, a spiritual famine, and they shall wander from sea to sea, and from the north even to the east, they shall run to and fro to seek the word of the Lord, and shall not find it. I am not at all sure that this refers to this time but it makes an application, and this is the way it is. The great mass of organized churchianity is going on at a great pace, and preaching as never before, with some kind of meeting going on all the time, and making our spiritual leaders so busy that they have no time for worship.

But in spite of all the glory there are many individuals who are caught along with it that are not happy about the whole thing, and they fear lest many are like Mary and Joseph were when they left the temple. They just supposed that Jesus was in their midst, when he really wasn't there at all, but back there where they had left him.

We were discussing this situation the other night, and trying to find a solution, as far as we ourselves are concerned. We can see that there are quite a number that have left the organized machinery, and started another group all their own, but that does not seem to work either, for then they get just a little proud of their humility, and the vanity shows itself.

We did not arrive at any conclusion and we don't know better than to just go along with the crowd outwardly, but inwardly protesting and trusting the Lord to show us the way, and show what step to take next, being thankful that we need only take one step at a time.

I also spoke to Bill Robbins' wife. He is the preacher that was in this area for several years, but is now near Williamsport, and she wondered how it was going with us denominationally; then added that she also was hurt when at the farm show she saw those there who wore those "little white hats" but the clothes they wore did not reveal that they loved modesty and simplicity.

John Renno

## STILLWATER, PA.

Feb. 15—The days get longer, and even though it does get cold and snowy, it can't last too long. But in spite of the beauty of nature, and the delights of springtime, this whole world is in serious trouble, and the trouble we know about best is our own country's difficulties.

Johnson's 3-month honeymoon is now over. He has domestic problems plenty, as any president will have, and besides all this there is trouble elsewhere. There has long been war in Vietnam, mostly guerrilla war, but many Americans have lost lives, and the war is not getting anything accomplished either. The communists seem to be gaining victory over the free world all the time.

Then there is trouble in the Panama Canal zone. The Panamanians decided they are growing up and the canal is their own, although it is a former treaty that assures this country the use of it, and is also a major source of income for them. But it did not work out for them the way they had planned, for our officials told them if they want to keep the canal for their own use we will make another one, and do it quick with nuclear power.

And at the same time this was going on, Castro sent some fishermen up into the Florida waters to fish with the plan that they should be arrested by American officials, then if they were, he would retaliate by turning off the water at the Guantanamo Naval Base where America has a large base and they consume 2 million gallons of water every day. This water now has to be shipped in, or by the use of machinery they can make sea water into good water.

Castro is seeming to be a big man and strong, and cannot be overthrown, lest the Russians make more trouble for us. We, a big and powerful nation, are getting weaker all the time. We are decaying from the inside, and that's why small and insignificant nations can slap us in the face. At the U.N. those small nations have just as much power as we do in voting, yet they pay no expenses, for they are too poor, so the U.S. has to pay so they can blackmail us. And the foreign aid we have been pouring our billions into is not bringing any beneficial results —rather it's making enemies.

And above all this, and probably the cause of most of it is that the nominal church of America and even the denomination of which I am a member, generally speaking, is being sucked down into the whirlpool of worldliness, and as a witness to this just see one of the recent issues of the youth paper that is published at Scottdale. It has the story of the crucifixion of Christ there in poetry in beat-nik language, with no explanation whatsoever, so that one is to assume that they agree.

I quite frequently go past Pottsville and a little beyond that I see a sign "Summit Mennonite church,  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile." I've seen this sign for more than a year, and decided I'd like to drop in on them some Sunday morning and pay them a visit. We tried it last Sunday but all we found was an empty building, with a padlock on the door. A sign beside it confirmed that this was the Summit Mennonite church, and that

we should observe reverence. But we were not interested in the building, we wanted to see and have fellowship with the people. There was not a soul around, and upon asking the neighbors they said there's a Zimmerman who lives nearby that goes there, and showed us to his place, only to find that he had moved a year ago. Another lady said she used to see them there every Sunday morning during the winter making a fire, but she does not see it any more. It would seem to me to be a great benefit to society if they would take their sign down, or at least hang a black crepe over it.

But our efforts were by far not in vain, for it was not too far from Hamburg, and near where John E. Yoders live, so we motored over to their place, and had dinner, and spent the afternoon in fellowship, and the discussion of problems of mutual concern.

The price of straw is now \$30 and not \$35 as advertised.

John Renno

**STILLWATER, PA.**

Feb. 22—Winter again! It snowed 17 inches in one night, and after that turned cold. It's an ill wind that does not blow somebody good, and all this water will benefit all of us.

I did not have any graves to dig all winter, and now one last week and one this week, and according to traditions will have one next week, for "vas sich tsvet, das drit sich."

There was a clear sky Friday, the day of the funeral, but a very cold wind, and the vault men came and erected the tent, and put that nice green stuff around the grave so as to kind of hide the fact that we're going to put her in the ground, and when the funeral arrived there was only one car beside the hearse. You see Edith Kile was never married, and had only three living relatives, and so there were only four came along to the grave for the services. This was the smallest funeral I've ever witnessed, and the preacher was just as cold and mechanical as the weather. They erected a tent large enough to hold about 30 people, and only four there besides the preacher, and the undertaker. The undertaker let on he was sympathetic, but when they asked him to bring the flowers along back, he swore when they didn't hear it. So I guess he was cold and mechanical too.

Our preacher, Ben Lapp, is scheduled to speak at the Stumptown Mennonite church near Bird-in-Hand, Pa. on Saturday evening, and all day Sunday, on March 7 and 8, so if any of the readers of these items would like to hear the man I listen to most, you would probably be welcome there.

We have received some very nice letters from several readers recently, and we rejoice that they took the time and opportunity to write. It is very encouraging. Some seeing the advertisement concerning hay have written and have included items of mutual interest. The weather makes it difficult to make and meet schedules. If it didn't I would be in Virginia now instead of writing this, but the big snow came, and that changed everything. I cannot tell just what hay prices will do. It would seem that as spring gets closer and the need becomes greater the price would rise, but so far it has not had much effect on it;

but then the supply is so super-abundant right here in the community that it's greater than the demand.

Last year this time hay was selling here for fifty dollars a ton at the barn, so many decided they would again this year cash in on the good hay price, but now the price is down to where many are crying the blues. I feel sorry for those down south where the drought hit so hard and I do not feel it proper nor right to capitalize on their misfortune. But when I have no hay to sell, except that which I buy from others, so I really am not in a position to criticize.

John Renno

**STILLWATER, PA.**

Feb. 29—We were graciously reprimanded, and pleasantly surprised by the statement made by Ezra Kanagy concerning the young man who paid off \$3,000 of his debt in one year, and indeed perhaps things aren't as bad as we had thought, at least not as far as that young man is concerned. But then he also said that the providing of finances was not the sole purpose of our existence, with which I heartily agree. But I am caused to wonder how a young man could find time for fellowship with his Creator, and his family, if, as Ezra said, costs have doubled and prices have dropped. And still makes that much net profit, for I know that anyone who makes that much, does not allow any grass to grow under his feet. Especially one who farms with horses, for he cannot produce volume as well as one who is more mechanized in his methods.

I also think that farming the old way is still the best if you want to do it that way, but then I am made to wonder how many would still be farming with horses by next year this time if their religious leaders would grant them leave to farm the modern way. No doubt the horse population would take a nose dive, and why, if it is still the best way? I do not farm with horses any more even though I do admit it may be the most efficient way financially, because I think it's harder work, and it seems everyone has it in him to get the most done with the least amount of effort. But then on the other hand, it's just a vicious cycle, for to do it the modern way costs more, so you increase the volume, and then work just as hard or harder than you would if you were satisfied with less.

I made two trips to Stuarts Draft, Va. this week. Took hay down from here, and I mixed the social part in with business, and did some visiting with friends that I hadn't seen for a long time. The first load was for Adam Miller, the deacon. I stayed there for the night, and got up the next morning and to Ben Swarys for breakfast. It's been about 12 years since I saw them. Benny is

not as plump as he used to be, but he still sounds like the same fellow, and Mary has changed the most in facial features, and I know she won't like me to tell you this, so let me whisper it, (she looks a bit older, than she did 12 years ago) but she still maintains that sweet winsome way.

When I got back from my visit to them, Adam and his sons had all the hay unloaded so that I didn't even lift a bale. Now wasn't that nice?

I came home by the way of 522 through Big Valley. It made it a little farther, but it has been so long a time since I travelled that road that I was quite anxious to see it once more, and then Emma King was down there to visit with her relatives, and wanted a way home. She claimed she could get off at Selinsgrove and call a taxi, but I figured I might as well be the taxi too, and I enjoyed it too. Now I am not sure that Mrs. King would like to have another ride like it on a truck for that distance, but she claimed she was surprised that it was not more rough, and she seemed to stand the trip quite well. I dropped her off right at her door, along with her luggage, and that's the only place I stopped in the Valley for I wanted to get home. I saw some that I recognized on the road but I don't suppose they knew who it was and probably didn't care—D. M. Swarey's twin girls, and on farther down below Belleville Steve Kanagy was coming up the road.

I am always impressed with the simplicity of life of those people in Stuarts Draft, especially those who did not come from the Valley. It seems to take little in the way of comforts and conveniences to satisfy them. Their houses are simple and plain, even though their farming methods are modern, yet their living standards are below those in Lancaster and Mifflin Counties, who are supposed to be much plainer than they. It seems when the living standards go up, the pride of life goes right up with them.

The second load I took down I stayed at Adam Bylers for the night, and I did not get very much sleep, for talking seemed to be more important than sleeping, and even at that we did not get near finished. I went to Sam Yoders for breakfast. They are from the Valley—both of them, but they seem to be so Godly that you can't find any pride there whatsoever.

John Renno

## STILLWATER, PA.

March 9—We went to church and the church was open this time. I'm referring to a former experience we had of visiting a church and it was padlocked. The incident reported in the Budget brought some response, and those concerned did not like what I had to say, so they invited us to fellowship with them at the building which is a successor to the one that was closed.

This one is near Richland, in Lebanon Co., about 20 miles from Pottsville. It is only a small congregation, but their kind is nationwide. The man who negotiated that we attend this service was Myron King, of RD, Bethel, and he also preached the sermon. Afterwards we went to his house for the noon meal, and tried to explain the situation. He says the Lord always has a people that are true to him and if a conference gets large, and goes its own way, there is always a remnant that secedes, and breaks away, and stays true to the old Book.

As you who read these articles have probably noticed, I believe the Mennonite denomination of which I am a member, is being sucked down into a whirlpool of worldliness, and there seems to be a general forsaking of the doctrine of Godliness, and replacing that with a man-made doctrine that suits our 20th century philosophy better. And all thinking men, who know anything about the situation that I have spoken to agree with me that it is only a matter of say 25 years at the most when we will be quite like what we now call the world.

The denomination we visited is newly-started and small yet. They call themselves the Mennonite Christian Brotherhood, and they seceded from the main trunk of the old established Mennonites because they feel they are fast sinking down into worldliness and they thought it best and safest to get off a sinking ship while there is yet opportunity. As I have reported earlier, I feel this is not the answer, because those people are generally proud of their humility. Probably some are, but not all. I have only investigated one

man as yet, and am therefore not qualified, for lack of testimony to pass judgement. We have spoken to Myron and his family for several hours only, but what we have found we were pleased with; and although his theology is much stricter than mine, and I think he makes the Way more narrow than the Word does, yet his opinion does demand attention for further study, for his character has many features that are to be desired, and on these I will not elaborate except to say that I believe he is a child of God, and a true disciple of Jesus Christ; need I say more?

While we were in Lebanon Co. and so near to old acquaintances, we took advantage of this and visited with Menno Swareys. He is only a year younger than my father, and seems to be well and content, a priceless possession. His wife is about blind but does not complain. They seem to be growing old gracefully. We then asked him as to the whereabouts of Tommy Peachey. We followed directions and drove in to a place which we thought probably belonged to some rich rancher, but sure enough the mail box said Thomas Peachey. We were amazed at his prosperity. They entertained us as though we were kings, but time was fleeting and we had to make it short, for we also wished to see their daughter Elizabeth, who is married to Eli Stoltzfus. They have a son who was run over by an auto last January while sliding, breaking both his legs and is yet bedfast, having a cast about his legs and lumbar region, so that he cannot as much as sit up. He is 13 years old. When we drove in Eli was just finishing the milking. He has a fine herd of Holsteins, and he was wearing a straw hat which he says he wears all the time, even in zero weather. He claims it helps to keep his head cool so he can mind his own business, but we doubt that it works all the time.

The hay market seems to be tightening up just a bit, and moving slightly better. At Ephrata last Friday, there were 90 loads, and I was surprised at the prices it brought.

John Renno

**STILLWATER, PA.**

March 15—It is always interesting to me to stop by at my old home town at the weekly auction. Recently I was rewarded when the occasion presented itself. I took a load of hay to Meyersdale, and on my way home passed through Belleville on a Wednesday afternoon. One of the first men I saw was Abe Grassmeyer from Spring Mills. He was glad to see me and said he wanted to write but thought I was too busy to answer anyways. It is true I am very busy, and do not write near as much as I used to, but hope people can read these articles, and derive some satisfaction from those, if a personal letter does not come.

I also saw my father, and he was talking with Joe Sharp over in the west corner of the auction arena. This seems to be a favorite spot for the elderly to discuss problems of mutual concern. It kind of replaces the country store with the old pot-bellied stove. Sammy K. was also there, and I always liked to hear a few words of wisdom from this man. He claims to have had heart trouble and can't do much any more, and has discontinued driving his dump truck, but I believe as the outward man is perishing the inward man is renewed. He told me when he was a child he accepted that, and when he became a youth he could accept that,

and also adulthood, along with its complexities, and now he's ready to accept old age. He did not feel it a disgrace nor humbling to get old and infirm. He is a man who faces life realistically, and that tells me he has remembered his creator in the days of his youth, for what is known as the evil days are now upon him and he can face them with pleasure.

And this leads to the subject that we discussed with Adam Byler and his wife when we spent the night with them when we were in Stuarts Draft, Va. several weeks ago. It is that of raising children, and that when they go astray the blame lies solely on the parents. We both agreed heartily that the Bible means just what it says, "Train up a child in the way he should go and when he is old he will not depart from it." This is a command, with a pro-

mise attached to it, and if we do not receive the promised blessing of obedient children, we may safely conclude that we have not met the conditions of training them in the way they should go.

It has been argued up and down that this does not mean what it says for there are too many instances where children seem to have had godly parents that trained them properly and yet they went astray. Or when there are several children in a family and all do well except one, and have yet all received the same training. But the arguments of reality can never change the scripture, for if only one child went astray, then that child was not trained right.

The Bible does not say that if a child is trained wrong he will always do wrong, but if he is trained right he will not change from that. And there is a vast difference in training, and teaching. A train runs on a track, and it will invariably go just where the track goes, and no other place. And so for the young child you lay the track for him before you can teach him. And if you missed laying the track in that young age, then you've missed it. All you can do now is teach. And proper teaching has no such promise as proper training. The first thing you train him at is obedience. He will soon learn whether you mean what you say.

Children who talk back to their parents were so trained, by the negligence of their parents. They thought they were too cute to punish, and soon the cute child becomes an evil, rebellious one, and he knows that if he wants his own way all he needs to do is to kick and holler, and scream. His parents taught him that. They fail to practice what the Bible commands that thou shalt beat him and save his soul from hell. They seldom beat unless they are angry, and then is the wrong time for the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God.

I personally know a man who wants to be nice to his offspring, so he does not make them work on his farm. He hires men to work for him while his grown boys go groundhog hunting after school, and he expects to pay their way through college too, so he talks of selling his farm and get a high-paying job so he can earn more to do this. This is not the way my Dad gave me an education, and I feel what I've received from him is worth more than a carload of college diplomas.

John Renno

**STILLWATER, PA.**

March 28—That article concerning the training of children has raised a question, in the minds of some, with the result that they wrote, and probably many more have wondered, but decided against writing, thinking within themselves that it's of no use.

I wrote the article because it has been requested, and not to raise any misunderstandings. Nor because I know so much about it.

One letter says, quote . . . "Your letter then would apply to your parents that they didn't train you the right way. I know your father and knew your mother; I cannot prove the kind of training you had but I do believe they tried to teach you to live in the same faith as they live and have lived," end of quote.

I do not recommend that one be a church tramp, and go from one to the other. It is true that one who changes denominations continually is not a stable person. And any person who finds himself in the Amish denomination I would not recommend that he leave it thinking

that he can find more peace and joy elsewhere. This is a fallacy, for peace and joy can not be found in any church. It is not a product of the church. It can come only from the source and author of peace. It comes from fellowship with Jesus Christ, and outyard circumstances do not have control of that.

It is true I am not now in the church which I was brought up in. The reason for that I will not discuss publicly here, but this should not cast a reflection on the way I was raised, nor is it a disgrace to my parents, although some view it as such, but by such attitudes they do little more than expose their ignorance.

I think I have been trained from a child to honor those to whom honor is due, and the first thing I knew for sure was that what my father said he meant and that I would receive my just dues for disobedience. This is the most important lesson for any child to receive. If this is thoroughly ingrained all the rest will fall into place.

But after one grows up he is an adult and no more a child, and as Adam said a man shall leave his father and mother and cleave to his wife, and any wise parent will refrain from meddling with his married son's affairs, unless called on. This son is still under obligation to honor and respect his parents, but this by no means demands that he must comply with all their wishes, although he should if it is at all possible. But it is far better to have peace with your wife, with whom you must live always, than to have peace with one whom you wish to honor, at the expense of turmoil at home. This is the reason for the Biblical injunction.

And Mr. Hertzler from Canada thinks it strange indeed that I state my honest opinion about farming with horses, even though it seems to contradict my actions. But why should it be thought a strange thing for a man to be honest? Have we come so far from virtue, and honesty, and integrity, that it is thought strange for one to possess these qualities? It is to God before whom we all shall stand, and before him all our thoughts and motives are manifest, should we not be open before men as well? John Renno

### STILLWATER, PA.

April 4—We had an abundance of water so far this year. If any are in doubt of this I don't think Mast Stoltzfus is, for he lives along the west branch of the Susquehanna River, and the water came up and they had to leave home for a few days, along with all their cattle. And not only him, but as we came along route 15 we saw many houses standing in three or four feet of water. And the water mark along route 11 near Northumberland is about five feet higher than the road.

When I do any digging I can see that the earth is wet like normal down underneath, which it was not last summer. It's time to dig again, but I'm not quite ready for I don't have all the hay customers satisfied yet. There is still much hay here and the price is down where it belongs, and there is yet much hauling to do.

Recently I was to Dayton, Va., near Harrisonburg with a load for W. J. Beery, a Budget reader who has bought much hay, and decided he'd give me a try. They have 12 children, and he's in his early 70's, and still farming. They have a beautiful place; white buildings, and all fixed up, and no trash laying around anywhere. It seems like everything is in its place. I think he is a little on the order of my uncle Rufus, who was also called "particular" Rufus. He even had his pigs trained not to squeal and push when he was feeding them, for they all had to stand back until he had everything in the trough, and at his signal they would come and eat.

This man Beery must have his cows trained over and above the average, for they are loose in the barnyard during the day, but the milking barn is over beside the milk house about 75 feet away from the barn. They live right along the road and with no gates or anything to prevent the cows from going where they ought not. I think if our cows had the privilege and we'd let them out to try to get them over to another building, without any fence on either side, they would high-tail it all over the place. I know they are used to it but how they get young heifers trained, or strange cows, I

still don't understand. He tried to explain that they want that good grain he feeds over there, and they go right over, but what makes them want to go back without getting nasty notions? I suppose if pigs can be trained to be decent, cows can too.

He still has four horses, and uses them somewhat, with a tractor to do the heavy work. They belong to the Old Order Mennonites; and are people that make you feel right at home with them. Just common and ordinary, and it seems like I've known them for a long time, and yet it seems the common folks are the extraordinary, for many put on a show and try to be extra nice when strangers are around, and so they try to be nice and thus are not ordinary.

I've traveled thousands of miles this winter and have done business with many people, and most of these are Christian people. When one is in business you can soon tell whether one upholds Christian principles or not. It's so much more pleasant to deal with those who know the Lord Jesus. You need not fear that they will not keep their word, or that their checks are no good, etc. You can depend on what they tell you. Their word is their bond. Small wonder Jesus said we need not swear with an oath to confirm our sayings.

And with all the pleasant things that can take place here on this earth because of Christian people, what will heaven be like where no one will be there who does not know the Lord, where all liars and deceivers will be absent. And when I think back of all that I have known that have gone there and all that will go there, it makes life beyond the grave a joyous anticipation. The Christian life is the very best anyone can have. You have so many good and true friends, not only for time but for eternity.

John Renno

## Job STILLWATER, PA.

April 11—Tragedy struck a family in the community. The children were sick with childhood diseases, and the mother was overworked, and her mother decided she needed a break so decided to take her out for an evening of entertainment, and they went to the movies for the evening. The father stayed at home with their five small children, the oldest one being nine years. He was watching T.V. but apparently fell asleep, after the children were all in bed upstairs. He woke up and the room was filled up with smoke. He ran upstairs to get the children, but evidently there is where the fire was, and he could not get up. He ran to a near neighbor to phone for the fire truck but they were not at home, so he drove about a mile before he found someone at home. By the time they got back the house was all in flames. The five children were all burned to death. I spoke to those who helped at the fire, and saw the bodies afterwards and they said they could not be recognized as human bodies, but were only about as big as a two-quart jar with the arms and legs all consumed by the fire. Just a black piece of charcoal.

Fifteen minutes after the call went in, the Huntingdon Mills fire truck was at the scene. It was five miles from the place, and the firemen were probably in bed, for it was about midnight when it happened. I do not know how they can be so fast, and it is a remarkable record. The Benton Fire Co. was also called, but it took them 20 minutes just to get the fire truck out of the garage. We live about 3 miles from where the fire was but we were in bed and did not even know there was

a fire until the next morning.

One thing that we at our house look forward to every year has again taken place this past weekend. We look forward to it with joy and anticipation. For it is a visitor from the Big Valley, and he likes to set us straight, and criticize our shortcomings. And why do we like to be criticized? Because he does it in love, and with a helpful attitude. But this is only a minor part of the blessings his visit brings. He brings us the very latest news from the Valley, and reports the changes that take place, etc. And what is much more, he brings the blessings of God, whom he loves and serves. One thing he told us was that one family does not come to visit us any more, for it seems I have a way of getting people to tell me things that they should not, and then I have a habit of putting it in the Budget, and it may put someone on the spot. But then on the other hand should not our talk be so above reproach that we need not fear to see it in print? The man that comes every year is Nelson Glick.

I delivered another load of hay to some of those plain people, the like of which I wish we could all be more. Down near Mechanicsville, Maryland. Now I don't know all of their problems and disappointments. To me, it looks like they don't have any, but I know they do for that is the lot of the human race, just as the sparks fly upward, so says Job. The name is Paul Zimmerman, and they also have a large family. I saw some of their sons as they helped to unload, and the youngest one was only 13 but he was a very good worker, so much so that he needs to be commended. His name is Elam.

If anyone is in need of hay yet, I can deliver good timothy 250 miles for \$40. Good cow hay \$50, and straw \$35. (Adv.)

John Renno

## STILLWATER, PA.

April 18—We seem to have an abundance of rain, even though it did not rain on Whit Sunday; just may be that this saying does not work.

I had a load of hay at the Green Dragon auction at Ephrata, again this week. I like to keep abreast of the market, and I think this is one place where it brings about what it's worth. Levi Byler from Union County has been there with a load for many weeks, of his own hay. He has only a small three-ton truck, yet he claims it pays just as good to take small loads, for they bring more. It does not take as much money to pay for a small load as a big one, so people are willing to pay more per ton. He said last week he got \$51.50 per ton for what he had. It was nice green second-cutting alfalfa. The price ranges from \$30 to \$50 there each week, depending on the quality. It has been predicted that it will take a sudden drop when the cows go to pasture, but it is very hard to tell. Last fall it was predicted hay would be very high this spring, and many held onto their hay, only to be disappointed. Instead of going up, it dropped.

I did not let my load go through the auction, for Mr. Rieff of RD, Leola, asked me what I wanted for

it and I told him. He talked with his son-in-law, and they decided to take it. Thus doing it quicker than waiting until it was sold by auction. I still had to pay the commission of \$1.25 per ton. The son-in-law that got it was Aaron Zeiset, and he comes from a large family of 21 children. Don't think I've ever heard of such a number. And they all live yet except one, and the parents are living too.

It's a very rich country down there by the looks of things; hardly any dirt roads and few lanes are gravel, and if you don't watch when driving on back roads you will wind up in someone's barnyard, for many of the lanes look just like the township roads. You want to be sure the road you turn on has an outlet.

Dr. Frank Laubach is a world famous missionary, and he hails from Benton, Pa. The local men's clubs are proud of him, and have erected a sign, saying this is Benton, home of the world-famous missionary. He recently spoke at a meeting here, and after the meeting the privilege was given to ask questions. One question asked was whether the heathen are really lost, and (where ignorance is bliss 'tis folly to be wise) whether we had not better just let them go in their ignorance. He hemmed and hawed for a little, and then said some overzealous and uninformed missionaries seem to think that the only people who are going to heaven are the Christians, but he does not think so at all, for if a man is a good man he will get there too. Said he personally knew Mahatma Ghandi, who was a great philanthropist, or social worker, or one who loved people, and was good to them, and he did much good in his lifetime, propagating the way of non-violence, as the way of settling disputes. He read the New Testament, along with three other books, and although he did not believe in Jesus as his personal Saviour, Mr. Laubach said he expects to meet him in heaven, just the same.

John Renno

## STILLWATER, PA.

April 25—For the last three Mondays it rained, and didn't clear off until Wednesday. We think we have far too much rain now. Last year this time, we had less than an inch during the whole month of April. It's time to have the oats sowed but it's too wet.

We are scheduled to have a wedding ceremony at our church, and this is the first one we have ever had that I know of. Now weddings are nothing new, in fact they are almost as old as the human race. But for the young couples who are experiencing it, it is often a once in a lifetime experience, or we hope it will be. And it takes weddings to keep the church in a healthy and growing condition. This wedding is for Carl Sarvis and Sue Ann Groff. Carl came to this area several years ago, taking his I-W in lieu of military service, and worked at the hospital at Williamsport. He was a total stranger when he first came to church; and he is of the quiet disposition, but he soon had friends, and before his two years were up he had a girl friend. She is the daughter of Hershey Groff's. His father is not living any more, and his mother and brother and sisters are with us sometimes. They are from the Chambersburg, Pa. area.

I had a visitor today, and since he is a preacher, we discussed preaching methods. When I was still in the Amish church we used to hear a long sermon twice a year, concerning the Patriarchs and the history of the children of Israel. Yes, more than twice a year, did we hear it, but it was especially stressed in the spring and fall at Communion time. I used to question the wisdom of such procedures, and the repetition, but now I know it was very valuable for me personally. When Paul advised Timothy to preach the word, he of course referred to the Old Testament, for then there was no New Testament. All they had to preach was from the law and the prophets, plus personal experience.

I have a class of boys to teach every Sunday morning, age 12 to 14.

At first I was amazed at their ignorance concerning the Old Testament characters. They knew faintly of Moses, but concerning Abraham, and his colleagues they were totally ignorant. They didn't know where the Jews came from, or who their father was, and many such important things found in the Old Testament they knew nothing of. Now 12-year-old boys do not of themselves have a habit of delving into Bible history, but ask them about some present-day baseball stars, and Hollywood characters, and they know about them. It must be because they hear more about these than they do about Bible history.

These boys have a far greater privilege of hearing the word of God than I did when I was their age, because they go every Sunday, and the Sunday School is supposed to be far superior to the old type of church, where you sit for hours and try to hold still, and then only attend church twice a month. Much more than this, we have Sunday evening meetings, and Young People's Bible meetings, and youth fellowship, and all these, but in spite of all the teaching we try to give them they know less about Bible history, than the boys used to.

My friend and I were discussing these maladys, and we came to the conclusion that today's preaching and teaching does not meet the needs for which it is intended. In Hebrews chapter six it mentions repentance, faith baptism, the resurrection, and eternal judgement, as the principles of the doctrine of Christ, and we are admonished to leave these principles and go on to perfection. But it is to be feared that in today's preaching and teaching we never leave these principles. We never get above these rudiments, so that our youth are ignorant and unprepared for the perilous days in which we find ourselves. Thus we have many tumbleweed types of Christians, who when the winds of adversity blow, are carried away with it. They are not established in the faith for they have no foundation which Old Testament teaching provides. No, this friend who came was not a stranger to me. I knew him before he knew himself, for he is my youngest brother, Eli, from McVeytown, Pa.

John Renno

**STILLWATER, PA.**

May 2—Which is the most convenient, too wet or too dry? When it does not rain at all for a month or more you get used to doing things when you want to and can plan out ahead, and fulfill your plans unhindered weatherwise. But this month of April was exceedingly wet so that you cannot do that. The water just stands where it cannot run off, and the small streams become raging torrents, and I even heard of one man who is building an ark.

This Sunday there is scheduled to start some kind of gospel meetings in the local fire hall, and it's raising quite an excitement among church leaders. They are trying to prevent it, and because of all the opposition I'm getting interested myself, and think I'll go just to see what it's all about.

I know very little about it except that the man who comes is reported to be of one of the groups that was started by Alexander Campbell, long ago, during the days just before the civil war. I read about it in the book entitled "The Fool of God." This man Campbell saw that the churches that were in existence then were too formal, so that one could not worship God as an individual, but all worship must conform to the ecclesia. He resented being told how he must worship, and started preaching to people that they are free and can worship God, and fellowship with Him any time, and anywhere, and just be a group of Christians, without any particular denomination.

The Reformed church is the one he rebelled against, and what he tried to avoid is what he did, for he started another denomination, called The Christian Church, of which there are quite a few in the area. And then they divided among themselves during the years, and now there are many of them, called the Disciples of Christ, and the Churches of Christ, etc. This particular man that is coming I understand is of the group that does not believe in music instruments in their worship service.

The amusing thing about it is that the president of the fire company gave permission to use the fire hall for the meetings, and now the opposition party is down on him for allowing them in there. The fire chief is angry about all the opposition, and the blame he is receiving, and says that if this religious group is to be barred from holding meetings in the fire hall, then from here on all religious groups will be bar-

red. No more wedding receptions or any such thing that is usually practiced by the opposition party.

Isn't it strange that those who opposed these meetings are the religious people, and those who make loud their boasts of piety, and goodness. Those who do not attend church or make no profession of faith, just sit back and watch; they don't care whether gospel meetings are held or not.

Now, I am well satisfied with the denomination I belong to and have no intention of looking for a better one. Nevertheless they have caused enough interest in me by all the opposition that I plan to attend some. I'm hoping they will really preach the truth. It is usually true that the false cults do not receive much opposition, it is those who are true that usually raise a revival or a revolution.

I again took a load of hay to Ephrata, and figure I lost about 50 dollars on it because I was not minding my business. You see my old buddy from Belleville was there, Kore Peachey, along with my wife's brother Dan and wife, so I talked with them too long. They started selling the hay and had mine sold before I got there, and for about five dollars a ton less than I had wanted. No, I did not actually lose anything. I just took less than I could have gotten had I used better vigilance. Perhaps I can just send Kore a bill for fifty dollars.

I then went to visit Crist Stoltzfus who suffered a heart attack last winter, and is not supposed to work for about a year. He seems to be enjoying himself, and says he had visitors nearly every day since. He also does a lot of reading, and studying, which is good for the soul. Perhaps while he suffered bodily affliction he is enjoying spiritual vitality.

John Renno

**STILLWATER, PA.**

May 9—One of the things taught me by my father that stands out in my memory above many other things is that I shall meet with troubles, trials, and tribulations, as I go through life. I am beginning to realize more and more the wisdom of his counsel. I don't suppose that I could be classified as a young man any more for I am now half way to eighty, but it seems the older I get the more I lean on the traditions and counsels. I've received from my superiors; and can see the folly of rejecting such counsel as worthless.

We must learn to take everything that comes in our life as a lesson, and those experiences that cause us the most afflictions are often times the most valuable. We must learn to expect troubles, and sudden changes in our plans, then when they do come we are not so apt to lose control of our emotions, and if they do not come we are none the worse.

The more things you have in life the more there is to go wrong, and when things go wrong, that's what we call trouble. I sometimes look at people who are on relief, and just live off the

pay check comes in regularly, they have no need to fear a change of finances. They are fixed. They have nothing to do all day, they have nothing to go wrong, for they have nothing. But I would not like that kind of a life at all, even if I would think it right to live thus. Such a life would be drab indeed.

If we are true children of God as He wants us to be, then we should prepare to live with Him, for in my finite mind I think the next life will be busy. I do not at all know what there will be to do, but I expect much activity. Jesus said my father worketh hitherto, and I work. Thus it is God's nature to be busy, and man is the happiest and most contented when he is gainfully employed. He was created that way, and I do not believe the next life will be very much different in that respect. The Bible does not specifically say what we will do, it

only mentions that we will be like Him and live and reign with Him. And I believe that word reign means just what it says, and one who reigns is a very busy person. If anyone wishes to contradict, he is welcome; he has as much right to his opinion as I have to mine.

It seems some days that everything you undertake goes wrong, and you say you may just as well have stayed in bed that day, for nothing of profit has developed; but I don't think this is true, for we are much more apt to learn when things go hard than when they run smoothly.

One day I started out with a load of hay, and expected to be back by the next morning, for I had someone along to help drive, and it was a 300-mile trip, one way. I had gone one-third of the way when the two-speed shift stopped working, and I was unwilling to go so far in low range. I finally found someone who said they would fix it, and they did so when they were ready, and seemed to take their time. I got underway again in about 3 hours, and went another hundred miles when a rear tire blew out. By then it was evening, and shops were closed, and I had no spare. After getting a new tire, we finally got underway again, and went too far and had to turn around. When we did, the motor stalled and refused to start, with the truck crosswise in the road. A policeman watched traffic, and another man got us started by jumper cables.

We finally got to our destination, slept in the barn until morning; unloaded the hay and started for home. The other man was driving, and I slept, and when I woke up I asked where we were, for we sure didn't come that way. We were in a city. I then asked a mail man and he said we are in Washington D. C., and gave us directions to get out. We had only gone about 1,000 feet when the universal joint on the main driveshaft came apart. This should not have happened either. It was

negligence on my part for I had known those bolts to work loose; but you know how it is! The universal joint was broken, and we had to let it set right on the street until a repairman came to our aid.

Well, we got home the evening after the morning we had intended to arrive. But it was a very valuable trip, in which I learned lessons that I could not have learned any other way. And I expect I will need the information I derived for the future here, and the one to come. For God knows just what we need and he is working out things for us after the counsel of His own will. So glad my life is in His hands.

John Renno

## STILLWATER, PA.

May 16—The third Sunday in May is always a high day for us at the Beaver Run Church, for then we get good speakers for all-day meetings. We decide early in the year who we will have and what we want them to talk about. And this year was no exception except that we had them the second Sunday because our one speaker is such a busy man that it was the only time he had open. This was Charles Hostetter from Harrisonburg, Va., the originator and speaker on the weekly radio broadcast, the Mennonite Hour. He did not however say anything about his broadcast, for he was called to preach the gospel to us and he did.

The last sermon on Sunday evening that we asked him to speak on was "The Conflict of the Ages, Between God and Satan." And this was the best, in my mind. He made it very practical, and declared how that Satan approached Eve, and suggested to her that God was somewhat selfish in forbidding them to eat of the tree in the midst of the garden, for he knew that if they did, they would become like him and know what good and evil was, and he did not want any competitors. He just wanted to be God all alone. This all sounded so logical to her, and she reasoned things out for herself, instead of just believing God, and she decided that Satan was right and God was wrong, so she took and ate.

He claimed that this same reasoning is still going on today in the hearts of men, and is and ever was the great conflict, fought in the human heart. God is on the one and the right side and telling us what is just and right, and that in keeping and doing his will, it will be well for us; but Satan is on the other side suggesting to us that God does not quite mean what he says, and that we must reason these things out for themselves. On Sunday afternoon he also spoke to us on Witnessing, saying we are responsible for telling others, about the great plan of salvation, and the reason so many of us do not fill our responsibility is also because we do not actually believe what God tells us concerning the doom of the unbeliever.

The other speaker was from Belleville. He is not a college boy but just a common farmer, who by diligent study and research has ac-

quired for himself the ability to expound the word of God. He is the old fashioned type of preacher. He gets excited about what he is saying, he flails his arms and shouts, and you have much difficulty in falling asleep when he has the platform. He preaches with his whole body and not just with his voice. He spoke to us from the book of James. Making it very practical to us, and giving us the principles so that we can test our lives according to this section of the Word. I was hardly aware that there was so much in this little book, until he told us.

This man stayed at our house on Saturday night, and needless to say we had a very interesting time together, for we have known each other for a long time. He is much older than I am, and he was about ready to quit farming when I started, but in due process of time we both sang in the Big Valley Mennonite Men's Chorus. We have much in common, although we have many differences.

Now the latter man of which I spoke is Sam Glick who was ordained not too long ago, and lives in Belleville, and goes with Clayton Hartzler in the painting trade. He preaches at Rockton, about 60 miles from home. This was an old Mennonite church that had fallen into decay so far that the mission board closed it down as unworthy of support, but by the persistant pleading of some from there, Sam yielded to their call and went up, and now it seems to be a flourishing congregation. Anyone who can work so effectively as to resurrect a dead congregation is worthy of attention. Because it is the Lord that works through such a one.

John Renno

### STILLWATER, PA.

It has not rained to amount to anything, about all during the month of May. It is not so long ago that I had been declaring how wet and unhandy it is to have rain every day, but that has all changed now. Many are making hay, but it is too early in my estimation. Ten years ago it was hardly heard of to make hay in May. But they say the quality is so much better. They used to say alfalfa should be made when it is two-thirds in bloom, but now they say it should not bloom at all, and the timothy is just about half-grown, and the amount of hay per acre is very low. No, I'm not farming anymore. I just live on a farm, and the boys do the work, and they want to follow the modern trend, but I won't let them. Guess I'm just a bit old fashioned.

The oats is just up 'nice,' and the corn is about three inches.

There is a big school nearby which was built about eight years ago, and since much of my work has to do with sewage and its disposal, I find out many of the woes when it does not go away. And it didn't go away any more at the school. The disposal system has fourteen 1,000-gallon septic tanks, that are round like a silo, but it does not need more than one, for sewage does not co-operate with man's ideas. All the solids were in the first tank and the rest had only water in them. Now the tanks are connected together in the bottom, instead of the top like they are supposed to be, so that you cannot clean one at a time, so we had to clean them all to get the one, which meant we had to haul 14,000 gallons of water.

They also closed the school on a Friday because the waste water would not go down. The next Monday it opened again but the pipe was not opened yet, since it is far underground. So it was announced over the public address system to the students that they should not flush the toilets at all. One of the janitors was underneath the girls' toilet when one girl flushed the toilet about five times, and her companion reprimanded her, saying that they were warned against that, but her reply was "don't you want to go home?"

After they got the pipes open, by Monday evening the tanks were half full again, thus indicating they use about 7,000 gallons of water a day. They have a cafeteria there and it takes a lot of meals to feed them all, and much water to wash up thereafter.

John Renno

### STILLWATER, PA.

June 6—It is still dry, and getting dryer. Were it not for the very wet April we would have a severe water shortage. Strawberries are just starting to ripen. The wheat is rather short where there is any, but many do not raise any wheat any more. Oats and corn is small, but growing and not affected by the drought as yet because they are small, and the soil holds moisture very well. About two feet deep is hard-pan. It just looks like it was boiled at one time, and very hard, with many stones mixed in so that digging is very difficult, but it can be done if you scratch long and hard enough. Under the top soil is clay, and from there on down to rock is hard-pan.

A man at Orangeville just bought a big truck, and did not have a license for it yet, but was trying to get it started and it refused to go. So he got it out on the road and started it down the hill, but it was going too fast for him to get it into gear, and he had no brakes for it was equipped with air brakes, and

these do not work if there is no air pressure. There is no air when the motor isn't running to turn the air pump. All he could do was to keep it on the road.

The hill gets steeper the farther you go and is about a mile long; and this would not have been too bad, but at the foot of the hill was a stop sign and you had to turn either right or left. There was no road straight ahead, and to make matters worse there was not even an open field, but a house. I don't know how fast the truck was moving by the time it got down there but it was supposed around eighty miles an hour. He did not hit the house head-on. He tried to turn and side-swipe a concrete wall, knocking it down and the truck went sideways, but the great speed swept it on and it hit the curb beside the house, then it upset and went in against the house, hitting it with the top of the truck.

I don't think the man was injured much, but the truck certainly was beaten up. There was hardly a straight piece on it any more. The house was badly damaged and was hit many times before by motorists that couldn't stop. There are also steel guard posts in front of the house imbedded in heavy concrete, and they were knocked over.

I saw the truck next day on my way to jail services at the Bloomsburg prison. We hear that our penal institutions are crowded, but this one certainly is not one for there were only three inmates there, and there is a lot of room for more; but we can be glad there are no more. One man there is a chronic prisoner, for he is no more out until he is again caught at some illegal act and put in again. It is said he spent about 40 years of his life in prison, in different parts of the country. Another one was there for stealing a car, and another one for forgery, etc. They heard the gospel that day, but it is up to them to reject it or to obey it.

John Renno

## STILLWATER, PA.

June 13—Warm weather, and sufficient moisture. But the hay crop is poor due to a dry May, and now that it rains, much of what little we did have is damaged.

I had a letter from Ephrata saying that hay at that auction was selling for only \$20 a ton, and new alfalfa about \$25. He said this price was in line with feeding steers, for there is no profit in this business as of now.

I was at the Dewart auction and no wonder, for small feeder steers weighing around 500 lbs. sold for 20 to 22c, while fat steers were full two cents lower. I couldn't understand why people will bid these up so high when they know that you cannot profit with a two-cent drop, but I suppose many of these small ones went for slaughter.

While beef is very abundant in this country it is very scarce in Europe. But they are shipping beef over here anyway. It costs \$1.73 per cwt. to ship beef from Ireland to N. Y., but to ship beef the other way it costs \$3.33 per cwt. And Europeans want small beef that isn't fat while Americans want it real fat and grain fed. They are trying very hard to make things so that we can ship beef over to where they want it, and thus reduce our over supply.

In London steak costs the housewife \$1.75 per pound, and in Switzerland even more. In Paris a first quality hind quarter sells for \$74 per cwt., while the same thing sells in Chicago for \$36. And buyers are heading for Chicago from Italy, Germany, France, and London, for someone ought to be able to profit with that much of a price raise. And just maybe the meat market will be a little better if we wait a while.

I was a little ashamed last night. I was working away from home as usual and was hungry, so I went to a store and bought four slices of baked ham and a small pie. Now this ham weighed about one-third pound, and it was soon all gone, and while I was eating I thought of the people in Cuba where a family of nine is allowed only one pound of meat a week—that is if you can get it. For there you cannot go into any store and buy what you want like we do. They have their names recorded in a certain store, and there is the only place they can buy, and then only

if the supply lasts. And to be there early enough to be sure and get something they start for the store as early as 2 o'clock in the morning and stand in line, waiting to get in for hours, and sometimes then the things you want are all sold out, and you get nothing. And to think that Cuba was once a land of plenty just like we are, and people were living in luxury the same as we are; and in a few short years they are reduced to extreme poverty. This could happen here. And the Christians there are asking us to pray for them that the Lord would remember them and deliver them through this present distress, for many churches have been closed, and the godly taken to prison or killed for preaching the word, and the churches that do yet exist are watched by the ever-present spies.

I don't know what it will take to bring people back to their senses, for it seems right here they have lost all sense of direction, and are bordering on what would have been called insanity several decades ago. A man whom I well know told me his wife left for the dentist at noon one day and didn't come back until 2 o'clock the next morning, and then refused to say where she was. She claimed she has just as much right to have a "good time" as he does, for she is always blaming him for infidelity to her, but has no definite proof. And these are church people and of those who believe in partaking of the Lord's Supper every time they meet to worship.

Another one I know is holding down a good government job and makes around \$600 a month, but this is not enough—he goes and works at another place, and holds down two jobs, to get enough to live on. His first wife did not want him and left, so now he has his second, and they are just merely living, without love, and she spends so much on clothes. It was said she has so many different dresses that she couldn't wear them all if she tried and shoes in superabundance.

These are just two cases and they could be multiplied a hundred times over, and it's what we know as "the world" and the bible says the world passess away with its lust but only he that doeth the will of God abideth forever.

These things could all change overnight and if this nation ever gets back to God it must change. And not only is it what we know as the world, but as the home goes, so goes the church and then the nation follows. For the nation is made up of homes and churches, so it must really be the church that is at the fault of all this, but before this it's the homes. And homes are made up of individuals just like you and me.

John R. Renno

### STILLWATER, PA.

June 20—There was a train wreck between Mocanaqua and Wapwall-open. A freight train derailed for some reason, and scattered cars all over the place. The big heavy steel rails were twisted and bent like match sticks. Some of the cars were completely demolished; all smashed and bent. Others were on their sides, while yet others were upright, and wheels were to be seen everywhere. The river is on one side of the track, and Route 29 on the other side, and along the road is a solid wall of rocks. It is fortunate that nobody was going along the road when the train wrecked for there would have been little chance to escape, for there would have been no place to go. The trains travel fast on this route, and when something happens there is a tremendous weight pushing it on, and when it cannot go forward it will have to go sideways. They don't know yet what caused the wreck, but there are different things that can happen. If the track spreads a little and one set of wheels go down it will cause it, or when a bearing heats up and gets tight it will skid the wheels until the flange is all worn off thus allowing it to leave the rails. These things are checked before the trains start out, but even with all the checking, something can be overlooked. I wouldn't doubt someone will get his walking papers. The railroads can haul so much more than any other land vehicle, for several engines can pull thousands of tons, and one box car hauls as much as two tractor trailer trucks, and yet the freight is just about as high by rail as by truck, but when they start to pile up it is very expensive.

There are many people discouraged these days, waiting for the things that shall come to pass, and the wickedness of man is increasing by great strides.

One young man thought he was just at the end of the rope, and had no purpose in life anymore, and had but a dollar and two cents in his pocket. So down at Miami Beach he takes off his clothes and folds them neatly together, and lays them beside the retaining wall and wades out into the ocean until it got too deep, then he started swimming. He had decided to swim and float until he expired. So he would swim until he tired, then floated, and all night long he did this. The next morning he was still alive, and he was getting tired, but he got a new outlook on life. He decided he did not want to die after all. So he planned to swim for shore, but he didn't know which way to swim, for he could see nothing but sky and water, and he was also getting thirsty, but did not dare drink salt water—so he began to swim in the direction he thought was north.

He swam and floated all that day, but still no land in sight. That night he could see lights against the sky, so he swam for them until the next morning. He thought he could go no farther, but then he saw some fishing boats coming out and he hailed them and they picked him up and took him ashore, some 60 miles farther north than where he started out. The police then took him down to where he had left his clothes, and through cracked and swollen lips he smiled and said perhaps things will go better now. His clothes were still neatly folded where he had left them, and he looked in his pocket, but the dollar and two cents were gone. This is a story that Paul Harvey told and I thought you might want to know about it too.

Who can find a virtuous woman, for her price is far above rubies? And a beautiful woman without virtue is like a pig with a golden hair band. And there are many such today, and their number is increasing rapidly. A good wife who stands by you, and cares, and shares your sorrows and joys, and tolerates your mistakes and failures, although maybe not without grudging at times, but she stands by your side ready to defend and strengthen you, is certainly a gift from God. And usually you don't appreciate the good things you have until they are gone.

John Renno

### STILLWATER, PA.

June 27—The weather is beautiful now for many days. Those who wait to make hay until it is the right time, according to nature, are really having a hay day, with no rain and few clouds in sight. But this is not so good for growing crops, although they are not suffering too much yet. It was wet for a week or so, but a few days after the rain it was dry again. The longest day of the year is now just past, and soon the days will get shorter, and the harvest will be past. We had a light frost in June—you could see it on some corn leaves, the tops had that grey frozen color, but it did not hurt anything.

I am still hauling some hay from here to the Coningham Valley to a seeding company—they use it for mulch along the newly built highways, where new seedlings of grass are started. It seems kind of bad to take such nice hay and chop it all up and spread it along the roads, but they are about the only people who will buy hay now, and it seems I have to get rid of it. The seeding company pays just about as good as farmers do, for they have to have it and dare not be caught short. They must fulfill their contracts, so they buy it up when they can get it and store it. They have hundreds of tons in storage now.

Several weeks ago we were blessed with a short visit from Sim Stoltzfus. His son Chester lives in the Turbotville area and comes to our church, and Sim comes and preaches to us occasionally, and we always like to hear what he has to say. But he came and visited in our home and encouraged our hearts. He is a man of sagacity, too, and knows the Amish in Lancaster very well for he used to sell diesel engines to them, but of late he only has a small machine shop where he works when and if he wants to. Says he would like to have a Christian machinist to work for him occasionally, but such a one is hard to find.

Sim is a very strong pre-millennialist in doctrine, and talks prophecy wherever he goes. Says the early church fathers held the pre-millennial view too if you go back far enough. It was during the time when Chris-

tians were severely tried when a man rose up and declared that scripture cannot be taken literally, and especially those things which are so difficult to understand, and that speak concerning the future — they must be rationalized and made to fit our understanding. Now again things are different and things that were once thought incomprehensible are now in plain sight, like the nation of Israel.

This nation was not in existance

until 1948, so people could not believe that the things in scripture relating to Israel could come to pass literally, so they spiritualized them and applied them to the church. This lead to confusion and unbelief concerning prophecy. Sim thinks because of this many are being worldly in their minds, and are not really looking for the sure word of prophecy, which shines in a dark place. He thinks it's a very serious sin if you do not take the pre-millenial view of prophecy, because it's hard to read the Bible without coming upon something relating to it, and to disbelieve of what God has so clearly spoken.

Now, when I say pre-millenial, I mean to believe that Jesus will come back to this world and bring in an era of perfect peace, when nation will not lift up sword against nation, neither will they learn war anymore, and when every man will dwell beneath his own fig tree and vineyard in peace and harmony, without fear. When Christ will again raise up the throne of David, and the word of the Lord will go forth from Jerusalem, and man will not say to his brother, know the Lord, for they shall all know him from the least to the greatest. When Christ will bring about the restitution of all things spoken of by the prophets, when the wolf will dwell with the lamb, and the cow and bear will lie down together, beasts will not have a carnivorous nature, to destroy each other, which came as a result of the fall (sin) of man. And the earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord, just as the waters now cover the sea. And Sim says "to deny this is a grave sin." John Renno