

STILLWATER, PA.

July 5 — Our oldest son is now almost 17, and he, like all boys, wanted a vehicle of his own. I thought it would be handy if we had two cars that are roadworthy for longer distances, so my brother-in-law, Eli, who fixes cars as a career, got one for a little something and made it almost like new again, and

our son had it for his own. But it ended in near catastrophe. Eli, somehow, forgot to fix the gas gauge, and you never knew how much gas you had, so Danny took it to a local garage to get it fixed.

The garage mechanic and Danny were under the car in the pit inside of the garage, and had drained the gas tank, so they could get at the float inside, that tells you how much gas you have. It was dark under the car and they had a light bulb with them, and they happened to break it. There was a great boom and the car was afire, and Danny, too. It knocked him down in a daze, so that he didn't know quite enough to strike at the fire to put it out. The other man got out with minor burns, but Danny had second and third degree burns on his arms, face, and one on his chest, and on his knee. That means he's in the hospital, and probably will be there for a long time yet. The car also is a total loss. They managed to quickly push it out of the building but the tires soon caught afire, and it burned up, all except the front tires and the motor.

Danny is in the Bloomsburg hospital, in a private room, and he's much discouraged, for it's quite a change for him, from a life of activity to one of complete inertia. His arms and hands are bandaged up so that he cannot even feed himself. He was well liked in this community for he did quite a bit of work for different people, and many think it just can't be that he has to lie there unable to help himself. One even said there are so many boys around who aren't much good and hardly know how to work, why does this have to happen to one who is not afraid to work?

I suppose everything is being done that can be done, but nature has to take its course, and it takes a long time for skin to heal alright. The doctor said he does not know for two weeks whether a skin graft is necessary or not, until he can see what or how much healing power is left. They are constantly injecting fluids into his veins to keep the skin from drying up. The Lord has permitted this for some purpose, and we wait on Him.

John Renno

STILLWATER, PA.

July 11—It's still dry. The first cutting hay was short and the way it looks now there will be very little second cutting. The corn will soon be starting ears, and then if it still does not rain, it will be another failure. They are having rain about 16 miles from here. Every once in a while a thunder shower develops and goes over the same area. It seems in dry weather once the showers have a streak started they about all follow that pattern. The moisture attracts the showers and they go that way, and where it's dry, the heat tends to push them out around.

I had a real jolt last week when reading the literature that I was supposed to teach to my Sunday School class, when the lesson title was, "Does it matter what I believe". It said there that some Christians see no evil in helping to engage in carnal warfare, and some Christians see no harm in going to the movies in a commercial theater, and seemed to suggest that we can decide for ourselves just what is right for us and that makes it right. We are in about the same position now that Israel was during the time of the Judges, when it says

there was no King in Israel and every man did that which was right in his own eyes. I do wish somebody would do something about it, besides shaking their head and say "it's too bad". For I have the position of telling my class of boys what our official church organ teaches, and what the bible teaches, and the two often do not correspond.

I know a good place to go and get away from it all, I mean all the work and cares that home life offers. At World's End State Park they have old-fashioned log cabins, or stone cabins, and they are not just small things — they are quite commodious. They are back away from the highway, back along the stream, and even away from radio and T.V. for it's deep down in a canyon and the radio waves just go over the top of it. Of course there is no electric there, either. Just a roof over your head and the four walls around you. No bathrooms, but outside toilets are there, one for each cottage.

There is a big fireplace in each cottage, and plenty of wood in the wood house so you can keep warm. It soon gets cold in there too, for the sun does not shine very long in between those mountains.

They do not charge much rent there because it is state property, and state and federal governments are used to operating things at a loss. But if you have a week that you would like to take off, and ignore your troubles (perhaps they will go away till you get back) this would be a good place to go. It's a wonderful place to meditate, and that is one of the major maladies in our churches today—lack of meditation, and concentration.

As a man thinks in his heart so is he, and you can pretty well determine, the kind of person you want to be by taking time and thinking constructively. Great buildings are never built without construction work, and great people are not made without constructive thinking.

Don't spend so much time on thinking of your mistakes and failures in the past. Worrying about them is negative and destructive thinking. The mistakes must now be thought of as stepping stones to victory.

This earth is not our final home, and we are not really prepared to live until we know we are prepared to die.

John Renno

STILLWATER, PA.

July 18—Barry Goldwater won the Republican nomination for president, and by a large margin, but the hardest struggle is still ahead. In my opinion only an act of God can get him enough votes to win the election. Many that I hear talking are opposed to his conservative views, and hardly anyone believes he will win. One man's opinion was that if he should get in it will take the Republican party 20 years to recover from the blunders and failures of his conservative deeds.

Our son who was burned just over two weeks ago by a gasoline fire is still in the hospital. His face that was just burned by the one hot blast has recovered well, but his arms and one hand had gasoline on it, and they are much worse. The top skin came loose and looked like he had a plastic glove on. And for want of something to do he picked at it until he had it all peeled off, for which deed he received a sound remonstrance from the doctor. His one hand is fairly well, but the left one is still useless and weak. He is in an isolation room by himself, and

they will not even permit any visitors, for they say he has no resistance to disease since the top skin is gone. Only those of the immediate family are allowed to see him. This caused some disappointment, as he seems to have many friends that wanted to see him, and even some of his cousins from Belleville traveled all that distance and were turned away.

They put him in a room with T-V so that he has something to do to pass the time more quickly, since he can neither read nor write for the lack of the use of his hands. I don't like T-V, for it has many programs on that are neither good nor evil in themselves, but the main harm is being done by keeping people from thinking. It's not that what they see is so evil, although that is shown, but just watching plays being performed, and acrobatic deeds done for the sole purpose of entertainment.

Entertainment is not wrong either, but when used to excess it makes weak minds, and robs man of the determination to stand for

that which he knows is right. I believe that is one reason why so few people are getting right with God, they do not think nor reason that they must reckon with the just and righteous Creator, and there is no fear of God before their eye.

I was to Virginia again with another load of hay this week, for Alvin Schrock of Stuarts Draft. It was so dry down there again that the hay is very scarce. Alvin had some alfalfa of his own but did not dare feed it to his cows for they had used heptachlor to spray for spittle bugs several years ago, and they are afraid it will show up in the milk. There is no tolerance to that in milk. If the tests reveal it you have no milk market. It is declared unfit for human consumption. And yet several years ago the "educated farmers" that would starve to death if they had to make their living on a farm, told us we should use it. It's much better just to use good common sense when farming and let those brilliant men go their way, for their methods change too rapidly.

If only the farmers down in Virginia would sow more timothy they would have hay, but it seems they are bent on having alfalfa, and think there's nothing like it, then when it's dry they have hardly any hay, and end up buying timothy anyway. But then that makes business for me. I thoroughly enjoy going down there, and doing business with those people. It seems they live lives charged with Divine presence. They do not claim holiness, they live it. A man can argue with words, but not with deeds.

One thing that I don't like is to take their money. I don't suppose they have an abundance of this, for they have suffered drought conditions for too long but they seem to be content and thankful, and gladly pay you. Even though I don't like to take their money, I have hardly any choice, for I have to pay for the hay that I buy here, and I have the expenses to pay on the truck, and you'd better believe to keep a big truck on the road and keep it safe, is very expensive. It seems to me if I would need hay at any time this next winter I'd buy it now, if I could, but it's already getting a little late, and the price is moving upward. It is not near as plentiful here as it was last year.

John Renno

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July 25—Recently I had a visitor in the Sunday School class, a young boy about 14, who contended that it is right to do wrong, when one's living depends on it. He claimed it was no sin to misrepresent something you have to sell, and that salesmen could not make an honest living if they told all the truth about their product—If you want to sell an automobile and you know that it has defects, but the prospective buyer does not, it is not wrong to let him find those defects after he has paid for it. And not only was this just. He was intelligent, and earnestly contended, that it is right to do what we once thought was wrong, and that dishonesty is no sin if your living depends on it, for you just can't be honest in some kinds of business—you have to live. We tried to point out the old paths of truth to him, but it was just convincing him against his will.

We were sorry to hear of the death of my nephew, the son of Jonas D. Yoder of Belleville, who evidently tried to swim across the pond but didn't make it. He was the son of my sister, Nancy. I did not know him very well, because I've been away from that vicinity since he was small. I was also sorry that we could not go to the funeral, but word just didn't get around to us in time.

We get mail from those who sympathize with us in that our son was burned, and we appreciate every one of them. One that impressed me was from Cora Miller, from Hartville, Ohio. She says she will soon

be 86 years old, and her right arm is lame, and she has used crutches for 16 years, but gets up every morning, and dresses herself and gets her own meals, and does her own sewing, for her eyes are good. She seemed to be thankful for the many blessings she yet has, and also sent us literature about a certain salve that is supposed to be good for burns. Others have also written, and sent words of condolences, and some have told of experiences far worse than we've had. Our son is getting along well, and we expect him home soon, for he is up and around now and can take care of himself. When he does come home, he will have to go back for several skin graftings. They will not do it right away, until the rest of the body has recovered from the shock. They tell us that skin grating takes much time and they can only do a little at a time.

They had him in isolation, and he couldn't read or anything else, so they thought they would do him a favor and put him in a room with T-V. I didn't like this very well, but they do as they please. Some of the neighbors around here think he ought to have TV when he gets home too, for it will be a long time till he can get to work. You see, everyone else around here has it and they can see nothing wrong in watching it to while away the time. What I saw on TV there was not especially wrong, but neither was there much that was right. It is something to keep your mind occupied so that you cannot think constructively, and this creates a vacuum in your soul. This is dangerous, for a vacuum is an empty space, which draws anything to it. As of now, I've decided that I will not live in a house where there is a TV set in use. I consider it a dangerous enemy to my soul, and this is the worst kind.

John Renno

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Aug. 1—Still very dry, and I suppose many of you know what that means, although some do not, for yesterday I was to Lancaster, and it looks like a different world down there. Everything is nice and green, the lawns look so beautiful, the corn is standing straight, and with ears hanging on it thick and good, it almost makes one dread to come back home, for here it is quite different. Lawns are brown, corn is rolled up because of the heat and drought, trying to conserve what little moisture there is yet to be found.

But this is not the worst place of drought, as I was also to Virginia this week, and down in the Stuarts Draft area, it's just a little worse. Over in the Dayton area, near Harrisonburg, it was also this way until about a week ago they had a heavy shower, and things look green again.

They sure have some beautiful country down through the dry river valley, nice white buildings, large farms and beautiful country, inhabited mostly by Old Order Mennonites. They have no cars or rubber-tired tractors as yet, but they don't wear Amish clothing, nor look like Amish, and yet they are kind of like them. Nice people and very hospitable, for I walked into Marion Good's place just about noon, and they invited me in for dinner, with some old Virginia ham and sweet corn on the cob.

I took a load of hay down to Adam Miller. It was old hay from last year, and not quite so expensive as new hay, but just as good. And Adam still has faith that it will rain again for he is making more room for his cows, building new buildings, etc.

People here are aware that there is a hay shortage, and are reluctant to sell now, being afraid it will go up even more once they have theirs sold, and they also want to cash in on the big prices. But then I was told that they truck it down from Michigan for less than I can haul it. Don't know how they can do it unless they have a load both ways.

I stopped in to see an old-time friend near Newville, Pa. Allen Brubaker who used to be a preacher over at Mattawana, but moved down there years ago. He is a lot older now but he sure don't look it. Just seems like the same fellow.

We were at a Brethren in Christ tent meeting, about 20 miles from here, where Ross Morningstar is pastor, and they had another Brubaker from near Elizabethtown. He preached an old-fashioned sermon the like of which I haven't heard for a long time. He spoke about Hell, the place of torment—a prepared place for an unprepared peo-

ple. And he spoke as though he really believed there actually was such a place, and he believed that people will go there, and stay there, and he tried to describe the agony they will have to endure. He spoke about the rich man and Lazarus, saying when they both lived on earth, the rich man wouldn't give anything to Lazarus, but when he was in Hell and in need then he had the audacity to ask of Lazarus a favor.

The thing which impressed me the most was the way he preached, with earnestness and conviction, just as though he believed it. And as afore stated I haven't heard a sermon like it for a long time. When I was a little boy, old Levi Kanagy, who was then an old man, and long since gone on to his reward, would most solemnly affirm that there was a place prepared for people, that would burn with fire and brimstone forever and ever. But now we are educated, and we know so much more then we used to. We don't hear such preaching anymore. That was alright back there, when people were old fashioned, and believed every word of the Bible, but it seems we think we know better. We are too nice now. Why to declare that God is a God of wrath and justice, and that every sin and disobedience will receive a just recompense, would jar some of us loose from our lethargy. We might start thinking. Or we might also actually believe in Hell, if it were preached like it was on Sunday night too often.

He said we all know that murderers and drunkards and robbers will go to hell—we don't doubt that—but he claimed everyone that does not through faith in Jesus Christ live a Righteous and Holy Life will also go there, even though he is a Good Man. He claimed that Jesus will come and take vengeance on those who do not know God, but also on those who do not obey the gospel, and that comes just pretty close home. But, of course, we know he was just an old fashioned country preacher, and he wasn't too well educated like our modern preachers are. So perhaps he just didn't know better. But I was disturbed all week about what he said, and the way he said it.

John Renno

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I attended the auction at Green Dragon, at Ephrata, to keep abreast of the hay and straw prices, and discovered that hay sold for less there than I can buy it here. Second cutting alfalfa very nice, and green as grass, sold for less than 25 dollars per ton. But then, who knows, next week there might not be any there. The reason it was so cheap, according to a hay "jockey" is that it's too cheap—the people will not buy. If the price would go up, then they would be afraid of a scarcity and buying would resume and the price would rise. He claimed this is the way people are; just funny; when the things they need are down they will not buy because they are afraid the price will go still lower, but when the price goes up then everyone wants some before it gets all.

Straw is so low that many who usually have it to sell will not even bother to gather it up. They say it's better to leave it lay on the field for mulch than to sell it for less than \$20. And I suppose that is correct, so there just might be a scarcity of straw by next spring; we'll see.

Lancaster is known as the Dutch country, and many (English) try to cash in on the Dutch and use many Dutch things to advertise. Zinn's Diner, east of Ephrata, has a huge Amish man standing in the front of their establishment about ten times larger than a normal man, and they call him Amos, and even away from there, over on the Turnpike, you can see a sign with Amos inviting the public to eat at Zinn's. Many others are taking advantage of the plain people. But then the Mennonites there do not let others tell about themselves. They put up a building, and call it the Mennonite Information Center, and they have an Archives and a library there that's open to the public, where they can come in and find out first hand what they want to know, and perhaps I'll play ignorant and stop in to see how much they know.

I've been near there several times recently, for the Host Motel bought four farms just East of Lancaster, and they hired a man from Benton to put in a large golf course, and swimming pools, etc. and he has asked me to deliver him 40 tons of straw to use as mulch in seeding of the golf course. It seems kind of wasteful to see these four nice farms empty and deserted, like ghost towns, and the fields all torn up with big bull-dozers, but that is the way of modern man. He wants pleasure, and lots of it, and is willing to pay a large price for it.

Aug. 15—Barry Goldwater, a native of Arizona, has certainly risen to a place of prominence. There are few people in America who have never heard of him, I would suppose; and yet if they haven't it's because they have not availed themselves of the news media. A few years ago he was occasionally heard from, giving a dissenting voice to some of the measures that were taken by the present and former administration, and it was even voiced that he might run for president, but hardly anyone thought he would be considered seriously as a candidate.

But ever since I remember, the American people have not had a choice between choosing a liberal and a conservative for president. It was a choice between a Republican and a Democrat, but they were both of a liberal mind, more or less, and mostly more. Now to be a liberal politician means to be a spendthrift, and ever sinking the country deeper into debt, not even considering nor caring if it ever comes out or not. And also to have a massive foreign aid program, which is mostly geared, not as they claim to help poor and underdeveloped peoples, but to buy friends, and to give money promiscuously to politicians in other countries, to spend on themselves, for their own personal pleasure, and sinful riots.

And furthermore liberals also want bigger and bigger government, big spending programs, where the federal government collects taxes from the people and uses it to spend on urban renewal, which people could easily do for themselves if they had some incentive to work. But this big federal handout looks so easy it gets people to feel that they are getting something for nothing, in spite of the fact that they have often been told that there never is such a thing. It makes big government and little people, where the individual matters less and less, and the big government matters more and more, and this is but another step towards socialism, which is a sister to Communism.

Now Barry Goldwater has risen to

prominence, and he claims he is against all this. He claims to stand for small government, and big individuals. He is against this massive foreign aid program, to buy friends and throw money away. He does not like the idea of tax money being used to put people on relief, as it is being done, and encourage idleness, for many get more doing nothing than they could earn if they worked, and it is breeding laziness and idleness, which is the prime thing that brought about the downfall of Sodom and Gomorrah, and it will also bring about the downfall of America. Goldwater is also against making a man pay social security tax against his will.

Now the American people again have a choice this fall. Yes, I know many good christian people say they are against voting for any man. They say we should pray for the Lord to put the right man in the right place, and have many arguments as to how it's wrong and anti-God to vote. They say we should just pray. And I have no way of knowing how much they pray but I would assume that those who make the most noise against voting are of the ones who also do the least praying.

I personally wish Goldwater would get into office, but I also know that unless God will move the hearts of the people to vote for him he will not make it. And neither do I trust Goldwater to bring about a great change in our national affairs. As far as godliness is concerned, I do not know that he has it. Neither is it in his power to bring about a revival in America. But I hope that God will use one way or another to bring many people unto Himself in this country and in others. I know that God is interested in our national life as well as our spiritual and personal life, and from Him all goodness, truth and righteousness has its source.

John Renno

STILLWATER, PA.

Aug. 22—Many of you know, and probably many have forgotten that we had submitted an article about a sermon we heard on hell and eternal punishment. We are still getting mail from people who did not understand that article. One was a nice letter from a man 74 years old in Ohio. I am sure it was written with an honest and sincere heart and in such a way that it demands immediate attention.

In a sweet and simple way this man just told us that he did not understand why we did not believe in hell, nor why we thought one who preaches on it with conviction was old-fashioned; so we will have to explain to him and to all others who have written concerning this that the article was written in irony. I did not mean what they thought, but exactly the opposite. This is not lying or falsehood—it is a figure of speech that is often used in scripture. Elijah told the prophets of Baal to cry louder that their god was asleep or away on a journey and he did not mean what he said. It was spoken in irony, to show them the foolishness of their deeds and belief. And Job told his three friends, "no doubt you are the men and wisdom shall die with you", but he did not mean that. He was showing them the folly of their arguments by speaking ironically.

The article I wrote was written to challenge the preachers who are at ease in Zion, who lie on the ivory couches and ceiled houses and say that all is well with us, while they and their parishoners are drifting ever faster into ungodliness. Also to make everyone think and consider his ways. For I know Jesus will come, and deeds will receive a just recompense of reward. Faith will be rewarded and unbelief spurned.

Another misconception that has come to the surface is that some say I left the Amish church to please and pacify my wife. Nothing could be further from the truth.

We were in Virginia twice this week, in the Stuarts Draft area with hay, and to compete we must deliver it there for \$45 per ton. They tell me they can get hay shipped in from the west for \$44 on the railroad, but then they must go and get it at the railroad, while I will deliver it right to their barn and unload it.

They were having Orientation meetings while I was there and I attended one of them. They are intended to prepare their young people to face the world into which they have entered, and to face it with a Godly attitude and behavior.

John Renno

STILLWATER, PA.

Aug. 29—We had a Jew in our services last Sunday, and he spoke to us about as long as the preacher did. He is a junk dealer at Milton, and Clarence Zeager, who is one of the pillars at Beaver Run, knows him real well. He kept inviting him to church until he finally came; and then he wanted him to talk to us and give his views concerning things. I was glad to hear just how the Jews feel about conditions, nevertheless I do not approve of having one speak who is an avowed unbeliever, but it was something over which I had no control, so I listened.

He started speaking to us from Abraham's time on. He said in Abraham's day it was practical to offer up the first-born son for a burnt offering, and because Abraham was from the heathen he also wanted to do this, but God showed him a Ram and told him to offer this instead, and thus giving him the lesson "Thou shalt not Kill". And he said that God gave the Jews their laws on Siani concerning the meats they were supposed to eat and those which were unclean they were to abstain from eating, and after they were a nation in the land of Canaan for some time, the Lord wanted them to go and teach all nations the good and moral laws, and the laws of hygiene, etc. But because they were reluctant to go, he sent other nations in to overpower them and they were thus scattered into all the world to teach men cleanliness, and uprightness.

Now, he said, there is not a country where there is not a Jew, and it is because of them that nations became better civilized. He recognized the work of God in all of their doings, and said it was against all odds that they became a nation of their own in 1948, but now they have their own army, their own laws, their own orthodox religion, and are quite indigenious.

He said they have often been told that Jesus was their Messiah, and they believe that Jesus was here, and that he was a very good man, and devout, and that he died a martyr's death for what he stood for, but they could not see how he could have been their Messiah, because when Messiah comes, men will beat

their swords into plowshares, nations will not learn war anymore, and there will be great peace upon the whole earth, and even the beasts will lose their carnivorous nature and stop preying upon one another. He claimed such a time had not come upon the earth when Jesus was here, so they cannot accept him as Messiah.

He said there are three major religions on the earth, the Christians, the Catholics, and the Jews, and that he hopes, and it is the hope of the Jews, that they will all unite into one religion in the future. He thinks we all have to learn one of another, and neither of us should be too sure we are right, for no one knows just what is right. He claimed it was the hope of the Jewish people to all unite into one world church, and be one religion throughout the whole world. He claimed we could all give in a little in our views, and strike a medium in the which we all could be satisfied. He said they do not reject Jesus as their Messiah but because he did not fulfill all their expectations and promises concerning him they are not sure. They believe God will make it plain to them in his own good time.

The Budget sure seems to get around the country. As I write this article to be sent in on Saturday's mail, and it is in print the next Saturday, it gets a little late to attend the auction at Ephrata and expect the prices to remain the same for three weeks. Yesterday, Aug. 28, I was there and saw two people who came there from afar to buy hay if it goes so cheap. The first was Ervin Byler from Delaware, and I had a good talk with him and was glad to see him. And also Elmer Yoder from above Allensville, in the Big Valley. Elmer bid on hay and would have bought

but it went most too high, for good second cutting alfalfa sold for 35 to 39 dollars per ton, and good clean timothy is in great demand too, and brings about the same. One never knows just how it will sell from one week to the next, but it is interesting to watch. There were only about eight loads there, in comparison to over a hundred last spring, so there was not too much pick and choice. It was just that one week it went so cheap, and one could have bought it and stacked it there until this week and made some good wages, but those are things you never know.

Jonas Kanagy of Stuarts Draft is in the hospital. His heart was out of time so the doctor put him to bed, but when the nurses proceeded to give him a bath, he said his heart started to work alright again, and was good ever since. Sometimes his heart would run fast, then slow and miss a beat, etc., but he seems to be on the way to recovery. We were down to that area with hay four times in the last two weeks, and expect to be going some more, as it's very dry. John Renno

STILLWATER, PA.

Sept. 11—Some time ago I commented on the Sunday School literature that we had with a modernistic slant, and wondered why someone did not do something about it more than just saying "it's too bad." Well, we still have the same literature and we probably will have, but it's not because there is no other. The non-conference Mennonites have started a publishing house in Crockett, Ky. and are also now publishing Sunday School literature, but it's not the International lessons prepared by the National Council of Churches. Personally, I do not know why adults have to have literature anyway, because I would judge 90% of the people receiving it don't use it except when they go to church, and they had much better just use the bible. If we have extra money to spend we could better give it to the poor.

But what I am more enthused about is the school literature they are printing down in Crockett. It's something entirely new, and for grades 1 to 5. It's reading, phonics language, writing, and spelling all combined in one. Instead of having Dick and Jane stories, or Mother Goose rhymes, or Tom Sawyer and Huck Finn, they have all Bible stories about Joseph, and Daniel, and Moses, and many other patriarchs, and the Bible is what the Jews used to teach their children in school, before the day of modern printing presses. So why can't we take advantage of the presses, and teach them lessons in faith and practice that are true, and at the same time will also teach them spelling, and writing, etc.

Quoting from the literature used to advertise this new kind of school material, "This is a new series. We know of nothing like it on the market. We often heard parents, teachers and school board members, lament the light, meaningless subject matter contained in reading textbooks and workbooks currently available. The textbooks our forefathers used taught good morals and built men of character. Do not our children deserve the same advantages? The series is designed to

train the child from the beginning of the course to be an independent reader. Detailed instructions are provided in the teachers' manual, so that even the untrained and inexperienced teacher can have the satisfaction of knowing what to teach and how to present it to the class effectively."

My uncle Henry Zook reached for his hat on Sunday morning to go to church when he was seized with pain. They took him to the hospital, but in 24 hours he was dead. He was 71. We went to the funeral and saw the new church the Beachy Amish have erected, and heard them preach from the word. Henry chose his own funeral sermon material and wrote it in a letter and laid it away to be read after his death. He chose Romans chap. 12.

I have personally never heard a funeral sermon quite like it, for this is a chapter in the Bible that's not written to the dead, but the living. And doubtless Henry knew this and wanted a sermon preached to those who attend his funeral rather than to his dead corpse. And indeed it was so. It seemed more like an evangelistic service than a funeral. Dan King was the preacher, and it didn't take one long to find out what he believed and why he believed. It was a very contentious type of sermon, and very narrow. It earnestly contended for the faith that once was delivered to the saints, and was just as narrow as the straight and narrow road that leads to life. Dan claimed the number one ailment that plagues

STILLWATER, PA.

Sept. 19—Many are the ones who complain how dry it is, but we think it is worse here than most other places. All summer long there were showers but they just went out around here. Of late it has not rained much anyplace, and all over the east it's brown for lack of moisture. Yes, I heard how much it rained in the coastal areas, but it sure did not come inland very far. In Benton the creek is drying up, and the fish are dying for lack of water. Many people could have fish to eat because they could not swim any more, and could easily be caught with the hands.

I was up in Warren County this week for a load of hay, and it looks normal up there. Everywhere you look, for as far as you can see, the hills are all nice and green, and there seems to be plenty of hay, but the people there also know that it was dry other places and they would like to profit by selling their hay at a high price. There is kind of a lull in the hay business right now. The price is not very high and it's all in the barn, and those who have hay to sell are not willing to sell because they think it will go up higher, which it probably will. There are some now who will need hay later and they would like to buy before the price rises. One farmer told me he sold some land and he wants to buy hay in this year to keep his income tax down. There is very little going on at the Ephrata auction, only a few loads there, and selling around \$35.

There is one way to get water out of the dews and previous rains, and I've seen several results from this practice. This is to put hay or straw on the garden after it's planted. I mean they put it on real heavy. One man had his about six inches thick, and such good tomatoes and corn as he could raise in spite of the drought.

The ground underneath that hay was so wet you could just about make mud balls, where out around where there had been no hay it was dry and hard. This garden was down near Strausstown, in Lebanon County.

Then down near Stuarts Draft, Va. I delivered a load of hay to Noah Troyer, and they invited me to stay for dinner, which invitation I seldom refuse. And those big slices of

the tomatoes they served impressed me. Some of those slices were just about as big around as my face. I was talking Dutch, and I was always taught to call tomatoes "mat-sa," but they call them "tomatus." I told them they sure must have watered heavy, but they said no, they didn't water them at all, they just mulched them. And they were of a much better texture and flavor than ours were. They are full of rich red meat, and are nice and solid, and very few seeds in them.

John Renno

STILLWATER, PA.

Sept. 26—The drought still prevails, and the creek that used to flow past Benton flows no more. There is not a trace of water there—just a dry creek bed. This they tell me is something that has never happened before. There is a dam there where last spring the waters rushed down over the falls with a mighty roar continuously, but now all is quiet and still, for there is no water.

We read in the papers of reports where they have mighty rains, and many inches falling in a very short time, doing thousands of dollars of property damage. And now here all over the eastern part of the state of Pa. there has been no rain for a long time. Lebanon and Lancaster Counties have not suffered very severely during the summer, and therefore have good crops, but here the crops are poor, although not as poor as they could be. We have many small stones mixed in our soil, and this acts as a mulch, to retain what moisture is there, and also collects the dews that fall, and we do have a very water retaining subsoil.

I was in the lower part of Juniata County yesterday, and it looks worse there than here. Even though it is dry, and the people can do nothing about it for they know that God holds the powers in his hands, yet they curse and carry on as though there were no God, before whom they must one day give an account.

When there is no water for a

man's cattle, then he really starts to complain. It does not take too much to haul water for the house, if it stops, but when it stops at the barn, then there is trouble. Those who drill wells for a living are very busy and far behind schedule. And those who haul hay are also busy, providing they can find the hay to haul. One dealer said they almost charge you money just to look at their hay, and they certainly will not sell, because they know it is scarce. For this reason I have gone farther west where there has been an abundance of rain, and bring hay back east.

Last spring I hauled much hay out of this community, but now the tides have turned. There is none to haul out, and already I have an order to bring some back in.

I was at a farm sale in Center County, and there were quite a few there from Belleville, also looking for hay, and because there was hay advertised at this sale they came, but one man from there bought it all, so they got none. But it was interesting to visit, and renew old acquaintances.

I don't know if there is more trouble in the world now than there was when I was younger or not, but I sure hear a lot more about it now than formerly. And I think there is more. The percentage of people who will not create problems is getting smaller, while those who do are becoming lovers of their own selves, boasters, proud blasphemers, etc., just as it has been prophesied a long time ago, by the Apostles.

There was one man here in this community who I thought a lot of. He always was so kind and considerate, and always had a friendly word. But according to the papers, I will see him no more, for he has gone the way of all flesh. He was born in October 1889, just a few months younger than my own father. His name was Howard Dildine, a very nice man: I doubt that he can be replaced. They say no one is indispensable, and perhaps it's just old age creeping up on me, but I feel the younger generation by and large, is not made of the same stuff as the former generation was. They are soft and lovers of ease and pleasure, always looking for something for nothing, and they just don't know that there is nothing in this world that you can get for nothing. It must be paid for one time or another. The grace and mercy of God is for free, but that is not of this world. John Renno

STILLWATER, PA.

Oct. 2—It appears as though the long dry spell has been broken. And it doesn't matter how long it does not rain, when it does there is always someone who is not ready for it. And I was that someone. You see I'm in the hay and straw business and this must needs be kept dry, and to do this involves extra work. But it does us good to have our plans changed sometimes. Helps us to remember the one who changes not.

I spent the biggest part of a day looking for more hay. You see here in the Northeast, hay is very scarce, and those who have it hold on to it. I just let them hold and go where it's not such a scarce item.

I started for the western part of the state in the Butler area, but a barber changed my thinking. I was away from home longer than I expected and whiskers grow night and day, so I stopped at a barber shop, the first time ever in my life that anyone other than myself shaved me. This was in Indiana, Pa. The barber said, "Why go so far—there is much hay right here." They do have a lot of hay, but there is one difficulty if you have it in mind to go there and buy for your own use—they want to sell whole hog or none.

They had a very good year in Indiana County. One main said, the best corn crop ever.

Was I surprised when I drove into a little village and saw two Amish girls walking down the street. I was so taken by surprise that I backed up, and they looked very scared to see an "English" man after them, but when I talked Dutch their expression changed. I was near Smicksburg and didn't know it. Irvin U. Byler has about 15 ton of beautiful second cutting alfalfa to sell, but he is asking a little too much for it for me to be able to buy, and resell at a reasonable profit, but if you want some nice hay there it is if you go and get it.

I had a load of hay at the Belleville Auction, to see what it would bring, and again saw many friends. Ezra Kanagy, the scribe from there, said the reason some of his articles are so short is because he thought he did not have the time, until he re-evaluated the situation and decided he has 24 hours every day and it's up to him to make the best possible use of it.

I was glad to see an explanation in the Letterbox of the Bermuda shorts at the Mennonite Youth Convention. John R. Renno

STILLWATER, PA.

Oct. 10—The politicians are going forth with unabated fury, each claiming they are in the right and the other is in the wrong. Each pointing out the good that he will do, and how he is superior to the other. But the one who is in now has a very great advantage over the one who is trying to enter. In the first place he is pointing out that we have never had it so good, and gives himself and his administration the credit for making such prosperous times. And he has most of the press in his favor, and they can do much to swing popular opinion.

But the strength of Goldwater is not to be underestimated either, for he has won the candidacy in spite of the Republican party, and not because of it. The main powers of the party were against him, and thought him so far to the right that he would not even be considered, but against all odds, he won the nomination, and it could be the same in one month from now, but personally, I doubt it.

It does seem strange when you hear them wrangling that the main

strength of their argument is the weakness of the opposition. Goldwater says Johnson is soft on Communism, and Johnson says Goldwater is not even a Republican, but a radical. William Miller, who is running for the vice-presidency, says Johnson is in for a rude awakening when the voters show their choice this fall. William Miller is a Catholic, and is trying to get into the White House, and you hear no objections whatsoever like you did four years ago when Kennedy was running. It seems the American people are getting used to it, and the great ecumenical movement is making slow but very sure progress.

And speaking of Catholics. They have for the first time now said Mass in the English language, and soon all Catholic churches will follow suit. Mass is the equivalent of our communion service, and they have it every Sunday, but they always spoke the words in Latin and the people did not understand what was being spoken. They just went through the motions as they were supposed to out of ritual, and not knowing what it all meant, but that somehow it was supposed to help them gain the favor of God. But now the words are spoken in English, and even Martin Luther's hymn, "A Mighty Fortress Is Our God," was being sung at the first such English service, and many former Protestants were much enthused about it, and ready to fall back into the arms of the so-called mother church. John Renno

STILLWATER, PA.

Oct. 16—We had a preacher in our church last Sunday that was on a prescribed schedule, and with a pre-determined topic of discussion, or sermon. There are many different subjects that the ministry of the conference feels are of vital importance, and they have given a certain subject to a certain preacher, and he is supposed to go over the while district, and preach this certain message.

Several weeks ago there was one at church speaking about non-conformity, and this Sunday there was a Landis there from the Mellingers congregation who spoke on Stewardship in Every Area of Life. He claimed the Lord is not interested in how much we give. He does not take notice of that at all. He looks how much we keep back for our own use. But he said the act of giving is only a minor part of one's stewardship; and stressed the fact that the Lord placed us here on earth for two reasons; the first is to obey and bring glory to Him, and the other reason is to tell others to do the same.

He also said something, that was a question in my mind for a long time. Some seem to think that our forefathers did not meet with God's requirements of telling others of the Gospel. Sixty or so years ago there was very little of what we know as mission work done in other lands. It is just in this last era that it seems a bright beam of mission activity has sprung up. But this preacher said he's not so sure that our forefathers did not do any mission work. It is true he said that they did not go to Africa, etc. or travel very far, but their next door neighbors knew where they stood. Their next door neighbors knew that they believed in God and served Him. They lived the gospel rather than proclaimed it by word of mouth. The civil magistrates did not demand an oath of them to confirm a truth, their yes and no were just as good or better than oaths are today.

In our day we have a tremendous amount of activity, but we seem to be continually losing ground. Of what avail is all our mission activities if we cannot impart to our own offspring that which is good and right?

In my mind the main reason for

so many seemingly young people going wrong is that we give them too much. They want money of their own, and are not satisfied with a little "pigeon" money which is all I had when a boy, but they demand much more; and the sad part of it is they get what they want. And, in many instances, when parents are told that their child is in trouble with the law they cannot understand it. They claim they gave them everything they wanted. Why shouldn't they be satisfied.

The news reports are that Nikita Khrushchev has resigned as Premier of Russia because of old age and ill health. I don't know whether this is true or not, but since his son-in-law who had a prominent position of editor of the government-controlled newspaper, was fired at the same time, it would seem likely that Khrushchev was put away in disgrace. I am not happy about this just because he is now out of the way, because for every one of him, who knows that there are not two others more ruthless (if that is possible) than him to take his place.

There is also much political unrest and insecurity in England at the present. And things are really happening fast all over, as there is great turmoil around the world. In our own country the two who are running for the highest office in the land are busy slinging mud, and trying to build up their platform and popularity, by maligning the opposing one. Now if I wanted to run for an office I would demand better material than the failures of someone else to build me a platform.

John Renno

STILLWATER, PA.

Oct. 24—We had communion services on Sunday, and our bishop, Paul Landis, who is at home at the Mellingers congregation, spoke to us. He says we are not Protestants and, as Mennonites, we never were.

The word Protestant began when Martin Luther, and later Zwingli, protested against the practices of the Catholic church. Luther studied long and hard as to how to find peace with God and forgiveness of sins, and finally through an intensive study of Romans he discovered what was there all the time—that the Just Shall Live By Faith; and he was judged by the council, and asked to recant, but he said "Here I stand, I can do no other, I cannot and will not recant." He protested vigorously against the practices and doctrines of the Catholic church. And he was militant with his faith, and felt it needed to be defended with force if need be. And that is where the Protestants come from.

But Mennonites never were Protestants. If they were, they protested equally as strong against Luther and Zwingli, as against Catholicism. And this group started at a prayer meeting of three well-educated men, Conrad Grebel, Felix Manz, and George Blaurok. Through their study of the scripture they came to the conclusion that a human is not automatically a Christian because he happens to be born in a certain country, or parish, and then in his infancy baptized into that church. They believed that a man is not a christian until he of his own free will acknowledges the claims of Christ on his life, and is baptized on his confession of faith.

These three were never baptized in that way and no one to do it; so one of them baptized another one, and this one in turn baptized the other two, and thus they all

three were baptized, and they held as unscriptural the practices of Luther, and this caused much friction, and persecution. They were so-called Ana-baptists, which means re-baptizers, and they were hunted up and put to death just for being baptized upon the confession of their faith by both Catholics and the Lutherans and the Reformed; who all three believed that anyone who does not belong to the state church is worthy of death.

There was at that time great animosity between the faiths, and to be rebaptized meant death to many people. But now things have changed very much. To be baptized upon the confession of your faith often does not cost you anything, and you can be a good christian, and still have the smile of approval from society. It is now the popular and the right thing to do to accept Christ your Saviour, for you have nothing else to lose.

And now great changes are even more evident than ever before, between Catholics and Protestants and even Jewish. All three are joining hand in a great ecumenical movement which is sweeping the world, and the Reverend John O'Brien, professor of theology at Notre Dame University has an article in the Reader's Digest saying that an unprecedented change of relations is taking place that grew more rapidly in the last five years, then in the last 2000 years before. He says antagonism, and hostility, are changing to understanding and brotherhood.

Virtually all sections of the Christian faith are seeking to establish closer co-operation in civic and social affairs, as well as bringing churches closer together. And the man responsible for this great change more than any other is the late Pope John the 23rd, when he called the ecumenical council together, the first in almost a century, for the purpose of renewing and reforming christian unity. This deed was revolutionary and far-reaching in bringing together the three major segments of the faith. And now Cardinal Cushing can kneel and pray with an Episcopal Rector.

Barriers in church publications have almost disappeared, and now a Presbyterian theologian has a monthly article in the Catholic Weekly, The Commonwealth. And The Christian Century, the oldest Protestant magazine in this country has columns in by Catholic theologians. Even the Knights of Columbus, and the Masons are having friendly co-operation together. These are two lodges, or fraternal orders. And in May 1963 a Lutheran theologian, Dr. Jeroslav Pelikan, was the first Protestant minister ever to speak on the Catholic Hour, a national radio network.

Even in Australia illustrations are given how Orthodox Christians met together for reading sessions to pave the way for a dialogue between Christianity and Hinduism. They read from the bible and Upanishads, the Hindu holy book. And in Scotland a Catholic bishop authorized the use of the Revised Standard Version. And in Germany they are trying to work out a text of the Lord's Prayer that would be acceptable to all Christians. And they are even talking of translating the New Testament again that it can be used by all Christians.

And last, but not least, is the fact that last June a Catholic priest, Dom T. Leonard Jackson, and the Reverend Claudius Miller an Episcopalian, jointly officiated in a wedding, of Susan Ekberg, an Episcopalian, and Patrick Barker, a Catholic.

John Renno

STILLWATER, PA.

Oct. 31—We have had beautiful weather during this month. There was not much rain and the water is far below normal. The weather is a topic of major proportions. Seems it has been like this with man since time immemorial. The things he can do least about is what troubles him most.

Getting old is something I have never in my life done before, and it's a new experience for me. Now, understand, I do not admit that I am old yet, and very few people will admit that they have now arrived at old age. But I assume that it is true that I run the same race my father's have run, and think the same thoughts and view the same sun; but every day brings me closer to the last day of my life.

Even this does not trouble me, but I often wonder just what is the aim and purpose of man? Is it to be born into this world, grow thru childhood, and irresponsible youth, and find a life companion, if that is possible, and raise a family and try to support them so that they can go on and do the same as he did. Get up in the morning, eat, go to work—whatever that is, come back home at night, eat, and sleep and on the morrow do the same things over again. Is this the prime purpose of man? It seems to be about all many a man gets done. What does he get out of life? What has it benefitted him to go through life?

Solomon, the wisest man that ever lived, said the above things are an evil disease, and all is vanity and vexation of spirit. But he very often reminds his readers that he is speaking only of things taking place under the sun, and if a man's aim

is no higher than the sun, then it is true what Solomon said, "the day of man's death is better than the day of his birth," and an infant that has never seen light is better off than living man.

I find that as I get older I live much in the past, for all my waking hours I am thinking about something, and I compare things as they were with what they are, and am prone to think of the past as the good old days, and present as much worse than it used to be. Even if I could still have it just the way I used to have it, yet a vital and most important thing would be missing—I would not be young any more. Last week I wrote much concerning the great ecumenical movement that is taking place right in our time. There is a world council of churches in which all the churches of the world can get together and confer with one another. Inside of this is the national council of churches, comprised only of churches in America, and inside of this, in our state, is the Pennsylvania council of churches. Then all the local conferences are invited to belong to this, and of course, the local churches mostly belong to some conference. So that it's the church, the conference, the state, the nation, and then the world, and over this big world council must needs be a head, and this head needs to be a man. And what a big man this must be to be head over such a vast populace.

The purpose of all the different councils is to get people together and think along the same line of thought, so that they can be the more easily led by the one head. Yes, I know Christ has said he is the head and there seems to be no need of a head on earth if there's one in heavn, but we in this age are different than people used to be, and Christ has been away for so long a time now that many doubt that he's ever going to come back again.

Humans are very clannish, and want to belong to something bigger than themselves, so they organize the council of churches. And the governments are merging too, and finally we will have a one world government, one world church, one world bank, etc. And if there is a one-world government, there will be no nations to make trouble with any more. Can't you visualize a great utopia of peace? And Paul says when they say peace and safety,

there is no more danger, then sudden destruction comes upon them as pain upon a woman in travail, and they shall not escape.

Personally, I am not in favor of this great ecumenical movement, and am not a member of it, but I can see that that time is approaching very fast when one will either have to unite and be at peace with society, or refuse to unite, and cause all kinds of contention. As I see it, things are shaping up perfectly to fit in with the pattern described in Revelations, when that great man known as the man of sin will be revealed and be the head of this great world organization, also known as the mystery of iniquity.

STILLWATER, PA.

Nov. 7—In the article of Oct. 24 I said to be baptized upon confession of your faith does not cost you anything. You can be a good Christian and still have the smile of society. And I still stay this is the way the matter stands, but not the way it should be or the way it is when you are truly converted—when you have truly met Jesus Christ face to face. Those who say they accept Christ but their acceptance of him makes no difference in their everyday life are none of His. They may have accepted Him, but He has not accepted them. Those who get through their Christian life on easy street are likely to come to a rude awakening when it's too late; just like I did in the following.

I was a member of the Gideon organization for about 5 years. This is a good organization whose main purpose is to distribute bibles in hotels and motels, and to school children they give New Testaments if the school permits it. They're non-denominational and non-sectarian and in order to become a member you must be a business man and you must have a Christian testimony.

You fill in an application blank and send it in to headquarters in Chicago. You must give the name of your pastor and references of those who know you and can bear witness that you are living a consistent Christian life. Then the main office will investigate.

Once a month members have a meeting, preferably in a hotel or public place. There business is taken

care of in a business-like way and after business there is a discussion of bible study and the meeting is closed by everyone getting down on their knees and praying.

The cost of being a member is \$15.00 a year. And there is where I failed, for years come around so fast that you forget yourself. They send you three notices, but you get much mail from them and when you see a third-class letter you are liable to discard it as unimportant.

So I didn't send my dues until they were long past due, but I sent enough for two years. They sent the money back, saying I was no longer a member and hadn't been for six months. If I wanted to be one I must again send in an application and come in the front door.

This was an important lesson for me. I thought how like this it will be at the Day of the Lord. Many there are who think they are members in good standing of the kingdom of heaven, but they forget to pay their dues—dues of thankfulness, obedience, prayer and bible study, just to name a few. They get busy with the affairs of this life and try to be good mixers with an unregenerate society. They are not members at all—they just take membership for granted, and the Lord will say, "Depart from me, I never knew you".

So it is with this great ecumenical movement. It is not of God. Many will be sucked down into the whirl of things trying to win the world by becoming like it and making friends with it just like Lot did down in Sodom, and in the end will lose everything. The church of Christ never was and never will be the popular religion. To be a Christian is to suffer reproach for it. Down through history, persecution always came from those who professed to be followers of God. The professors persecute the possessors.

Christ's people are in the world but not of it, and it is best expressed in the words of a German song which we used to sing when I was a youth. Speaking of Christians, it says they are Adam's natural children, and carry the image of natural men. They suffer in the flesh, as all other sinners; they eat and drink according to bodily necessity; in sleeping and waking, and bodily things, men do not notice anything different; its just that they do not go along with sinful society because in the inside they are of God's seed.

We who live in this present generation with open eyes are constantly amazed at the great accuracy of the word of God in foretelling what will come to pass in the last days, and this great ecumenical movement is one of the major things we see.

John Renno

STILLWATER, PA.

Nov. 14—Still no rain and the water situation is critical. The weather report for the month of November indicates that the moisture will be below normal and the temperature above normal. The moon was far to the south, and setting on its edge. The Indian is supposed to have said that if you can't hang your bow on it, it means it will not rain. Seems everywhere the weather is abnormal. I suppose it's the forces of nature, revolting against the wickedness of man. The scripture predicts that the last days of this era shall be unusual, and that men's hearts shall fail them for fear, and for waiting for those things that shall come upon the earth.

I was to the Norfolk, Virginia area with a load of hay for Menno Yoder this week and the way he told about the weather, it made one wonder whether dry weather is not to be desired rather than what they had. During the hurricane season, and just at the time to fill silo with corn it started to rain, and in just a short time it had rained 26 inches. The corn was a good crop, and it was out in the fields but very hard to harvest. That which was left for picking was so bashed down by the rain that it's hard to get. He gets what he can with the picker, then there are colored people who glean what is left on the field for the half, and they make good wages doing this.

On my way down I saw something unusual too. We were driving all night and stopped at midnight for something to eat, and when we entered the restaurant, it almost looked like the Amish were having church there. Two small bus loads of them were having refreshments, and sitting around the tables. They were all descendants of Yonie Zook, and he was along too. I did not know him at first because he has aged so much since I last saw him. But he claimed he knew me right away, when I came in and asked them who left the gate open. Now eating at a restaurant is not so unusual, but for people who just came from a wedding that is noted for the fine and abundant food they set out, having to stop to eat on the way home, one had to wonder if the Amish cooks are falling down on the job.

Hay is becoming tighter and tighter, and harder to get. I have more than I can do elsewhere so I haven't been to the Ephrata auction for many weeks. But those who do get there say it is bringing just about as much and perhaps more than for what I am selling it. I am still sell-

ing good hay for \$40.00 a ton if I don't have to haul it more than 200 miles. I would ask more except that I had it promised for that before the price raise.

That is for first cutting hay. Second cutting that has good color now needs to sell for \$50.00, and I'm not at all sure how long this price will stay, for those who have hay to sell want all they can get, and perhaps a little more. I still have some second cutting that is not promised to anyone for it seems farmers would rather have a lower quality hay for less money.

This week I was home and did my excavating work, mostly, for we at the church are in the process of ordaining a deacon, and it seems this takes a lot of time, and different preachers come in to tell us all about it, and what kind of men it takes for this office. If you have meetings at your own church you should attend if you can, and you usually can if you want to.

John Renno

STILLWATER, PA.

Nov. 21—If life gets drab and uninteresting, and routine, sometimes a change in schedule helps. The other morning, soon after I was out of bed, a man for whom I had dug a ditch 4 feet deep, came and wanted me to come over right away and dig up his cows. You see cows are very inquisitive animals and they must investigate everything new, and they saw this new dirt laying alongside, and of course they had to try out the ditch. The ditch was only about 12 ft. wide; four cows got in and two had to stay there. They were heavy with calf and wedged in so tight they just hung on their bellies. They were scared of the backhoe operating right beside them, but all of their struggling availed them nothing. I had to dig down alongside and give them more elbow room, then they got out. I have been called on to dig holes to bury cows that died, but never before have I been asked to dig up cows that were alive.

We read in the Bible about how the latter days will be, and so we are not unduly surprised when men who make no claims of piety suddenly get involved in moral issues; but when you hear someone preach and then soon afterwards hear that he has deserted his wife, and children, and run off, you begin to wonder just what is taking place, and where it will all end. Now, we are often reminded that preachers are only human, and we shouldn't expect more than human actions, but for anyone who names the name of Christ to get involved in a moral issue, then try to get away from it all by running away, is very serious, but doubly so for any preacher. I know of two such, and they were not so called modernistic preachers either, but Bible preachers.

I have been told by a preacher and if I would mention his name, many would know him personally, that the best way to get away from temptations is to steer clear as soon as you get a smell of it. He claimed a certain woman told him she has a serious problem and would like to discuss it with him privately. He granted her request, and then she confided that she has a great temptation towards another man who is not her husband, and asked how to cope with it; this preacher played it smart, for it didn't take him long to find out who this other man was. He merely told her to resist the devil, and opened the door and got himself out in a hurry. He said he will not again counsel with another woman alone.

He had been warned of this very thing, and it had quite slipped my mind until I was vividly reminded of it by an incident that happened in this area.

There is a man held in the county jail condemned to death for murder. He has one more appeal to make, but his chances are very slim. His wife attended one of the local Bible-believing churches, and she needed much counseling, and called on the pastor for help, etc. The end result was that he got involved and ended his ministry in disgrace. We are continually being warned of the subtlety of Satan, and it seems he is getting wiser or we are getting weaker.

David Thomas is a Bishop in the Lancaster conference. Not only is he a bishop, but you might say he is THE bishop, for he is the moderator of the conference, and this makes his words very weighty, for he has been entrusted with a very strategic office. I told him I was afraid that the way things are shaping up, the future looks very dark for the Mennonite church. He granted that my fears were well grounded, and conceded that we as Mennonites are on a sinking ship, but he plans to stay on it and save as many as he can while there is yet any part of it above water.

I mentioned the fact that certain factions have seceded, but he said this is not the answer, for they are no sooner away than they begin to quarrel among themselves, and only get themselves deeper involved in tragedy.

It is important that we lean on the everlasting arms, and do not look to man or man's organizations to save us from our dilemma. It seems the Lord is showing us that none can save beside Him. Jeremiah might have a word for us where he says, "Cursed is the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the Lord. For he shall be like a heathen in the desert and shall not see when good cometh; but still inhabit the parched places of the earth and in a salt land not inhabited. Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is, for he shall be as a tree planted by the waters, and that spreadeth her roots by the river, and shall not see when heat cometh, but her leaf shall be green; and shall not be careful in the year of drought, neither shall cease from yielding fruit." John Renno

STILLWATER, PA.

Nov. 28—My goal in life is to glorify and please my Creator. He has so designed that his children should gather together, and worship Him in unity. This place and assembly is known as church; and hence it is of much interest to me just what transpires at our local church. Well, the church we attend is not exactly what you would call local, for it lies thirty miles away; but it's the best we can do under the circumstances.

This church has been in existence for eleven years. Ben Lapp has been the lone pastor of it for most of these years, and he desired assistance; so this desire was granted by conference, and a deacon was ordained last Saturday. We voted for whom we want the Sunday before.

There are 53 members in the church, and as is customary, only those who wish to need to vote in an important decision of this type. No, we do not vote by ballot, but go to the anteroom and there the clergy awaits to receive our choice. Of the 53 members only 26 voted, but our bishop Paul Landis said to me that this was a very high percentage compared with some churches. Where there are 300 members, sometimes no more than 20 to 30 vote at all. They are so irresponsible that they do not wish to be in-

involved. They are satisfied to sit back as spectators.

Three men had received the desired number of votes to be eligible for consideration for this office of deacon; they must receive at least three votes each. Walter Clemmens, Paul Landis and Chester Stoltzfus were the three that had the desired number. At the ordination service last Saturday, two men took three books at the request of the bishop and went down to the basement. One put the ordination card into one of the books, then gave the books to the other, who did not know in which book the card was, and he mixed them up so no one knew where it was. They brought them up and set them side by side. The men each took a book, and the first book taken was the one in which it was found, so we took this as God's revelation as to whom he wants for this office.

Now this may seem like casting the dice or gambling, but when several are chosen with equal qualifications, who is to decide which one shall have it? Yes, we could later vote for one of these three, but that may be a popularity contest, and result in a personality clash. Paul Landis is the one on whom the lot fell, and it was indeed meet that it should, for he has been a co-laborer with Ben since the time the church began. Also it was befitting that his father and mother were there, along with all his brothers, and his wife's mother, to witness his ordination. His wife is certainly well fitted to have a husband with such an office, for she is a woman of integrity, and good moral character, and one who has the fear of God before her; she is not a gossip, as is the nature of some. She will need all the natural talents she has, plus the sustaining grace of God to bear up under the burdens that shall be laid upon her. They have four children, 3 sons and a daughter.

A prophet is not without honor save in his own country. And it used to be that I could write to the Budget, and say what I would, and no neighbor would know or hear. But it is not so any more. As women do, my wife started giving a copy to Mrs. Ben Yarmel, who talks with us quite frequently, and she, being a typical American woman, in turn gives it to Mrs. John Bowman, who is an old widow woman living alone during the summer. She is in her 80's. She lives on the farm where she and her husband worked together, but he died and she has a farmer doing her farming by the name of Melvin Savage (no, he's not as the name sounds, he's a civilized savage). She gives the Budget to him to read also, so from now on I must watch what I write. There is a privilege of writing to this paper for being in the hay business I sell much because people read what I am doing and want some. But then it also has its disadvantages for if I am away in some Budget-infested territory, and someone asks my name, he immediately knows just who I am. This is a challenge for I never know just who I will meet and I must write only those things of which I am not ashamed, so I can face the people of whom I wrote. John Renno

STILLWATER, PA.

Dec. 5—In spite of the very dry weather we had this summer, we still had around 40 inches of rainfall so far this year, and that is 3 inches above normal. But the amount was so poorly divided. It came when we didn't need it in the spring when it was very wet anyway. Now the rains are starting to come again, and perhaps this will help our water level to rise during the winter.

Well drillers are booked up far into the future. They just cannot keep up with the demand, and they are also going to unheard of depths for water, and then sometimes it is insufficient. They have gotten quite away from smelling for water with a peach limb. This is laughed at as so much tom-foolery, but personally I think it is still the best way, mainly because it works. But now they are so very wise and just drill wherever they would like to have a well, and the well-driller's theory is that there is water everywhere down below, but I rather doubt it, because up here on top there isn't water every place, just in the streams, and lakes, and rivers, and I assume it's the same way underneath. There are streams which you must hit if you have an abundance of water.

I usually pay no attention to letters I receive from persons who are too small to sign their name to it, but this time I will make an exception for I received one that I think is amusing. It is postmarked Geneva, Ind., and I will quote it in its entirety, mistakes and all . . .

"Hello:

"I want to put an answer to your letter in the Budget for this week.

"What was wrong for them people to eat in a restaurant. Why did you go in there and eat, did your wife stop cooking, or maybe she can't? Here you left the Amish and don't want anything of them. But still you always talking about them.

"If the Amish weren't good enough for you that you had to leave them then I'd keep my mouth shut, and wouldn't talk about them. What

wrong? Do you feel guilty about something? Why can't you look like your Dad? That remark you put in the Budget about you thought there was a Amish church in the restaurant. Most all the people with common sense know that it didn't look like any church or maybe one of them Conservative church.

"I don't want no hard feeling, but just don't appreciate your smart talk about the Amish . . . From a Budget reader."

I assume this letter was from a man, and probably a young man. It is written in good hand writing, and looks like a man's writing. Probably a young man because older people have more wisdom, and use more tact when writing. And I believe there are not too many older people who would write without signing their name. I have more confidence in the elderly than that. But be that as it may; I wish to make a few comments on this letter, for I assume everyone that writes there are 101 others who feel the same way but just don't go to the trouble to write.

What peeves this young man the most is the fact that I have left the Amish people, and still can't leave them alone. But he cannot understand that I did not leave them by my own violation or choosing, but because of circumstances completely out of my control, and these I am not about to discuss publicly.

But I certainly would not advise anyone to leave the Amish if it can be avoided. You will not find more happiness or pleasure, or joy, for these things are not brought about by a change of environment, or by having more of what the temporal things have to offer. Human beings were created with an eternal spirit, and when this spirit does not have its needs met, is when one is restless and unhappy. The man in the Bible who had his barns full of produce said to his soul, take thine ease, eat drink, and be merry; but he was a fool, for the soul cannot enjoy those things, only the body can enjoy those. And the soul is far more important than the soul is the spirit of man, which makes him God-conscious, and unless this consciousness is put at ease and at peace with God, he will feel guilty and afraid, and this in turn will creat soul unrest, and fear, and unhappiness. And for all this many people do not know what's wrong with them, so they will try anything else but the right thing; which is an obedient walk with God. And this allegiance to God must be first and foremost.

I wish to inform this young man that I do not despise the Amish from which I came. They are in my heart and mind, and I like to meet them anywhere and everywhere. Does not the Bible say; what the heat is full of will come out of the mouth? John Renno

STILLWATER, PA.

Dec. 13 — Them there Loveville Henyard folks put in a request as to the size of them there cows that I dug up from the ground. I know that the size of the ditch stated in the Budget was enormous, but figured everyone would know that this was an error by the linotypist. I can write and see that there are no mistakes on my paper before it goes out of here, but after that I can no more control what gets into print, or what doesn't. And there is little that I despise as much to read in the Budget the correction of mistakes, so if there appear mistakes in my articles, either due to my own shortcomings or those of someone else, I reckon only those who make no mistakes themselves are in a position to criticize. There is also a printer's mistake in the last issue, but if it makes no sense to you just regard it is unimportant.

Oh yes! I also saw where someone wondered just who those Loveville Henyard folks were. I wondered that myself until I sold a load of hay to a man named Daniel Stauffer down by Port Treverton, Pa., and he claimed the author of those articles is his own sister, and that she, along with her husband, live in the vicinity of Loveville, Md. and they raise chickens and sell eggs to make a living. And as eggs come from chickens, or hens, they just call themselves the henyard folks.

Today John Oberholtzer from Stumptown preached at our church and his subject was, "The Heritage of Our Faith." He claimed the value of church history is to establish personal conviction. And also that there is no such thing as an historic faith. You have faith because it is your own personal faith, and not because someone else had it and

you inherited it from that certain someone. He said in the early christian church Wednesdays and Fridays were fast days, and the Lord's prayer was recited thrice daily. This was during the first century, and they would gather together in the evenings and have a common meal, then observed the Lord's Supper. But this practice was soon abandoned and just the Lord's Supper observed.

The first departure of the faith was when people believed the doctrines of the church had magical powers; that the keeping of the Communion supper could atone for sin, and that baptism could wash away sin. This caused people to delay baptism until they were ready to die, lest they again defile themselves.

Peter Waldo was the originator of the Waldenesians around the middle of the 12th century. He heard tell of the commands of Jesus to go sell what you have and give to the poor and you shall have treasure in heaven. He provided for his wife and children somewhat and sold the rest of his possessions, and after that lived a life of abject poverty, and many more followed his way, going about doing good where they could and held no possessions. Many of these were such pronounced followers of the scripture, and knew it so well that they could recite whole books of the Bible by memory.

Martin Luther was in Germany, and translated the Bible into German, and he believed that salvation was the most important thing of all; while at the same time Zwingli was the leader of the Reformed church in Switzerland, and held that doing the will of God was more important than salvation; and being dissatisfied with both of these positions and wranglings the Ana-baptists started in Jan. 21, 1525, and this caused great persecution to start afresh. For three hundred years until the 18th century they were despised, and hated and hunted like beasts, but in spite of all this they grew until their number was one hundred and sixty thousand. Then in Holland they obtained religious freedom, and they were no more hunted and despised, but the popular people, and soon their number dwindled to a mere thirty thousand. They left the faith by leaps and bounds since the following of worldly pursuits lured them away.

Now during this church service, even though the message was interesting if you listened, the Deacon sat on the front bench asleep. The Sunday School superintendent sat on the third bench asleep (his wife shook him, but it didn't do much good), the rest of the congregation that was not asleep looked cold and uninterested. A good man with a good message, and the people uninterested? Why? He read the whole message.

John Renno

STILLWATER, PA.

Dec. 24 — Butchering is a busy time; but exceedingly more so if you cannot find the pig you intend to kill. We leased a chicken house two miles away from our home, and we had four pigs there too. We always have garbage, from leftovers and peelings of various kinds, etc. so we like pigs around to eat our refuse, and we in turn will eat the pigs, so in this way we get everything. We sold three pigs and kept the other one a little longer, but she was lonely; she stayed around a while but eventually she tore some boards away and left for the woods. We wanted to butcher but could not find her. There are many pine trees close by, and many hills and deserted acres, in which a pig can hide, so we were almost a week in finding her. She was reported by the neighbors as being out in the open, so we hurried down, and one bullet laid her low. The time we butchered was unusual too. We usually could pick any day it pleased us, but not this one. We butchered her on Saturday afternoon. We had almost lost hope of finding her, as it was hunting season, and some told us that they supposed some hunter found some fresh pork and just took it along, but dragging a 300 pound pig out of the woods would not be the easiest thing to do, even if you did get it for nothing.

Another unusual thing was something I saw that I cannot recall of ever having seen before. The full eclipse of the moon. And I was favored with seeing the whole thing take place, which took about three hours. I was traveling from Warren, Pa. to Milroy, Pa. that evening and it was clear and the moon in full view. And coming over the mountains with a big load of hay you

do not travel very fast so have plenty of time to look around. I was fascinated with the majesty of it all, it was something far beyond man's ability to duplicate.

It makes you feel small and insignificant to watch things like this taking place in the heaven. Astronomers tell us exactly just when it will take place, they know the exact day, hour, and minute, and we can wait for it with expectation, but when we see it actually take place it is somehow different than what we had anticipated for it to be. It made me think of the time when the Son of Man shall appear with clouds and great glory, and all the angels with him. When the trump of God shall sound, and the dead shall rise incorruptable, and we that are alive and remain shall be changed. This will be a spectacular array, and something that has never taken place before, and because it is so unusual, many people refuse to believe it.

While watching the moon I thought of all my friends, known and unknown that are watching the same moon. Even though we are separated by many miles yet we can watch the same thing take place at the same time. We cannot cease to marvel at the great power of the Creator, and we are sure that the heavens declare the glory of God and the firmament sheweth his handiwork.

John Renno