

DANVILLE, PA

I was to visit my nephew Ezra Renno who presently resides at Odessa, Fla. which is about 10 miles east of Tampa. I had promised him I would come to see him if he stayed there for 6 months. His habit has been to go from one boarding home to the other. Because of his uncouth conduct, they will soon have him leave, for his behavior and eating habits are so obnoxious that few will tolerate him around. He is presently residing at a place somewhat like a rescue mission. This man takes in the homeless, and destitute, and tries to induce dignity into them.

The man's name is Robert Acevedo, his place of business is at 8725 Race Track Road, at the end of Race Track Road just before it merges into Gunn Road, coming from Tampa.

Mr. Acevedo has a very rare gift. He can handle those whom everyone else has given up on. He is only a young man, 34 years old, with a wife and family of 7 children. His children are very well mannered, and show an excellent character. This proves that the method he treats other with, works with his own family. He is the operator of this mission, but is not the sole sponsor. It is managed by a board of directors.

Ezra has been banished from two different Baptist churches, because of his unbecoming attitude, which shows in his conduct. His idea of civil rights is that he has the right to do what he wants to, when, and however he wants to do it. He craves attention. This seems to be the driving force of his life, and to get it he behaves in unbecoming ways, just like a small child will go through capers to get attention.

I spoke to Pastor McCall at the Sarasota Baptist Church. He told me, while Ezra was listening on, that his conduct was so that the people of the congregation told him he must banish that man from their assembly. He would call them

at any and all hours of the night, using vulgar and abusive language. They worked with him for 10 yrs. trying to help him become a useful citizen, but to no avail. Drastic action had to be taken. In their history he said there are only two others whom they could not help.

Ezra stood listening to the charges Pastor McCall gave, also in the hearing of others who stood by. I asked Ezra later if he was not ashamed of himself for having such a record. He said no, he has done no wrong.

Ezra is now 42 years old, has been in and out of state hospitals, but they will not keep him incarcerated, for they do not keep anyone unless he is criminally insane. Ezra is not insane. He is just determined to have his own way at your expense.

Mr. Acevedo takes all his money. Ezra gets \$475.00 from S.S.I. He gives Ezra \$15.00 per week for his own personal needs and the rest he keeps, thus Ezra is hindered from traveling about. This is good, and should have happened much sooner, if someone would have taken the initiative. More than that, Robert has a personal concern for Ezra.

John Renno

March 9

DANVILLE, PA

We took a day and visited some of those in the land of our nativity. Visiting the old, the infirm, and the Godly.

Urie, is the son of Aaron Peachey, who was the son of Dan Y. Peachey, who was the son of the late Dea. Jacob Peachey and his offspring are numerous in the Big Valley. Now this Urie Peachey is married to the daughter of my sister Malinda, whose husband is Ezra, the son of Noah, also the son of Jacob Peachey.

Urie is 36 years old, and evidently had ambitions just like any normal young man would have. He is now the father of 8 children, the oldest about 14, and the youngest a year, and two of his children are also deaf. But he is afflicted with a disease, for which no cure has yet been found, called muscular dystrophy, or MD. It affects the nervous system and the members of the body do not respond to the central control, the brain. Somewhat like many churches, where each member does his own thing.

This renders him almost helpless. He can still sit in the wheelchair, but his speech is hard to understand and his eyes do not focus properly, he cannot read. Life would look very discouraging from the perspective of that family. They have lost all their earning power, their source of income is gone. He had worked at the pallet shop, but that is now through for him. His wife, although she would have much reason to be distressed, seems to take it all in stride, taking good care of her husband and family. She has a very composed nature, accepting the things she cannot change, somewhat like her grandfather, the late John B. Renno.

I also took the occasion to visit Levi Kanagy, the deacon of the church district where I was born and raised. Levi is old and full of days and completely helpless, having now laid in bed for a year and a half on his back with his mouth wide open. He is not unconscious for he pays attention by turning his eyes to those who speak to him, but how much he perceives of his surroundings is unknown.

He is cared for at the home of his son Daniel, who has gotten himself a wife that is equal to the occasion also. Giving her father-in-law excellent care and also not a discouraging word is heard from her. She has adapted herself to the situation at hand, and leaves the consequences with God. It is an encourage-

ment just to visit that home and to hear her proclaim the lesson she has learned. Her attitude is commendable.

Last, but not least, we visited the home in "The Hemlocks," where Lee Kanagy, who also writes in the Budget, now resides, evidently expecting to live here until he is carried out to the cemetery, which lies out from him towards the midst of the valley, where many of his contemporaries are buried.

Lee was reared in the same church that I was, although in another district, and is several years older. I knew him as a boy but not too well. He is a retired missionary from Japan and fluent in that language.

He still caters to those people, of which there are many living in nearby State College, and he does what he can to help them both spiritually, socially, and in every way they may have need. Lee seems to be of that noble character who has God first, in his priorities, and others second, and his own self last. This life style is an art that does not come easy, nor natural, it comes as a result of many years walking with God. For when you walk with him you eventually take on more of his character.

Lee has many interests and that makes a visit to his home a memorable experience. He appreciates people, loves to mingle with them, and helps where he can. He can read the scriptures in three languages.

We also visited many people who now reside at the Valley View Haven. This was begun, and is maintained by the Mennonite churches of the area, and I would suppose as good a place to stay as any if you need a place to live and need care. They also have cottages surrounding the main home, where you can live, while you are still able to care for yourself. Many live there in their retirement years. Some even say living there is next to being in heaven.

Ben Zook, and his wife Martha, live in one of these cottages. Ben is the son of the late Israel B. Zook and Martha was the daughter of (Oppy) David Byler. Ben is two years older than I, and we grew up in the same church and our parents used to visit together. I have known him since childhood. His mother was a granddaughter of Rosanna of the Amish. Many of you have read that book by Prof. J.W. Yoder.

Ben had hardening of the arteries and is under heavy medication and his wife says in the morning, at times, he thinks he must go out and get the cows in. But he was very coherent when we visited him.

Another family living in those cottages (they are more like mansions than cottages), are Elam Peachey and his wife. Elam is one of the younger sons of John S. Peachey. John raised his family biblically oriented. Aaron, the eldest, just died a few days before we were there.

Elam has had by-pass surgery several years ago, seems to be in good health, and does much preaching in different areas. It certain is an inspiration to visit with men of his calibre. John Renno

DANVILLE, PA

April 6--We have been to another wedding recently, and it was been casually suggested that I give a report.

Amos Rovenolt was married to Marlene Zimmerman, at the East Dist. Menn. Church. Amos is the son of Donald Rovenolt, and Donald is the son of Orlando Rovenolt. This is not a Menn. name. But 30 some years ago the Stumptown Menn. Church of Lanc. Co., decided to establish a mission station in the Washingtonville, Pa. area, and they opened Bible school, at the Beaver Run schoolhouse. Clarence Zeager had already lived in the area, the first Menn. to move here to Montour Co.

Ben Lapp was born and raised in the Weavertown (better known as the John A. Stoltzfus group at that time) who withdrew from the Old Order Amish some 50 years years ago. Ben Lapp had always decided when he grew up he would like to join the Menn. church, and his plans were realized. He joined up with Stumptown, and when this mission work got under way, he was one of the helpers. He eventually was ordained as pastor here, and they built a new church. They went canvassing, for Bible school, and Donald Rovenolt was some of the results of their labor. This is how a new name was entered into the Menn. church.

Marlene Zimmerman is the dau. of Allen Zimmerman. I do not know his history, except that he married a former Belleville girl. They also lived in Belleville for several years. Mrs. Zimmerman was the dau. of Merle Peachey, who was the son of Ez Peachey and for identification they called him "Windy Ez" the name suited him, for he had no lack of verbiage.

Because she was a former valley girl, this brought quite a number of valley folks to the wedding. We were not related, but we were long-line friends of the Rovenolts. It was not only a wedding but a reunion for us.

Ben Lapp used to be my pastor, but he has been transferred to Lanc. Co., about 8 years ago and we sat together for the wedding dinner.

We sat across the table from Kore Kauffman family. His wife and mine lived neighbors, and they were married about the same time we were 43 years ago. We were at their wedding, although they were in the other church that seceded from ours back in 1918.

The young Rovenolts whose wedding we celebrated will live on land which Amos purchased. He has a good job, employed by his father who has an auto parts store.

John Renno

DANVILLE, PA

We received a call from an old-time friend. We went to school together and are about the same age. We were neighbors, and we were second cousins. But we were not in the same denomination for several decades before we were born. The church we were born in had a division, and my father decided to go with one group and his father decided to go with the other.

The man I am referring to is David Peachey, who writes in the Budget from Honduras. His daughter, who is married to a native from here, now lives in this area. Her husband wants to learn English, and it's possible to make more for your labor here than in Honduras. Also David's entire family was up this time. We went to visit David at his daughter's place.

David is a man of God. That is, he lives a God-like life. You don't have to be around a man very long before you can tell where his affections lie.

He gave some interesting history of the beginning of the Amish in Honduras. Old man Stoll was mission-minded and decided to move to Honduras and help those poor benighted people to a better life here and hereafter.

He bought a large tract of land, and bought good horses, and shipped a plane load down there, and quite a few people moved there, and they lived there as a colony. But the horse farming did not work out too well. The horses were not used to that climate, neither could you buy horse equipment, or harness very readily. But tractors were available, readily.

Now the native takes his machette, goes out and cuts down a tree, takes a pole and fashions it to tie each end to a native ox used to that climate. He takes another pole, fastens it to the first pole which he tied to the horns of the ox, and onto this he fastens a stick, with a metal object on the bottom and with one hand on the plow and in the other a goad, he tills his ground. It's not plowed, just chiseled, and he can get it done for practically nothing. Time and labor both are plentiful. Those natives have lots of time.

September 7

The Amish had begun a children's home and things were going quite well, but when the old man died, much of the initiative died with him. They then decided to use tractors for farming. As for modes of travel, there was no place to go where you could not walk. They lived in a colony.

There were natives living a distance who were interested in their religion, and one of them moved to that area, and they had services there. But it was too far to go there with a horse. They always had to go to town, and hire someone and his vehicle to go. So they decided it's not practical to insist on horse power, and hire the motor power, so they made use of automation for travel also. This of course did not please everyone, and those who could not conscientiously do this moved to the mainland again. Some had good businesses, but took their loss and sold out and moved away.

But the work there did not stop. They now have about 30 members in each place, but many more come to church, for they send out trucks to gather people, who want to come but have no other means of travel. They do not own cars, or horses. Much transportation is done by foot.

David explained the culture of the natives. They do not think it is wrong to steal, if someone has more than you do, there is no wrong in helping yourself. And lying is not wrong if it is needed. They are not dependable. If a man promises to meet you the next day, you can be sure he will be at least an hour late, or if something turns up unexpectedly, he just won't show up, and never let you know. They see nothing wrong in that.

I asked David how this works if a native gets converted to the gospel of The Lord Jesus Crist. Does that change what was implanted in their minds from their youth. He said no, not immediately, it takes a long time for them to become acclimated to a new way of life. It is a violation of their old tradition, their culture, which always was right before, but now suddenly it is wrong.

It is hard for us to understand why anyone would think stealing could be right, or lying, or cheating in any way, but you are born with this planted in your mind. It takes much teaching, and a strong faith in the God of Truth, and even if a man is converted, this does not automatically change his frame of reference. The conscience is not a safe guide unless it has been programmed correctly. Very much like a modern computer. It does not know anything of itself, it only puts out what someone has put in first.

They grow much coffee in Honduras. It is like our huckleberries, grows on bushes about 5 feet high, and grows along steep mountain sides, where you have to hold yourself from rolling down the mountain.

Western culture does not work too well in Latin America but truth flourishes.

John R. Renno

September 28

DANVILLE, PA

I was to Pittsburgh recently and brought a load of fire brick back east. Having some free time I decided to go by the land of my nativity. The first stop was Allensville, where my sister Mary lives. She was quilting, just a fraction physically of her former self, having lost 70 pounds. She said she does not have cancer, as was quoted in the Budget. Her ailment is in her bone marrow and an enlarged liver.

Next I stopped at White Hall and took an historic and sentimental tour, by shoe leather. How many times have I walked to the White Hall store, a mile from the house where I was born. Also the school house where I received all my formal education is between the store and my home.

Arriving at the house things have changed in the last 30 years. My parental house is now a bee hive of activity. John Kanagy now lives there, married to my brother Joshua's daughter.

The peach orchard is gone, back of the house. There is a little building there where they sell baked goods and there used to be the front porch, where I spent many of my childhood hours. There is where I received much education from my father. Occasionally Ike Hostetler would come up, and many issues were discussed. But now it is closed in, enlarged, and a food store established.

I walked on down to where Uncle Ezra lived, which is now inhabited by

Israel Swarey, my sister's son. He is very innovative, and inventive. The field where I spent many hours making hay and grain is now a fertile plain, well watered, for there is the creek where I used to go wading and fishing. Now on the bank sets a diesel engine which turns an irrigation pump to water the field which now grows an abundance of melons, tomatoes and peppers. Many customers coming and going, a prolific business.

Nearby is the Presbyterian Cemetery where the Locust Grove Church had it's first meeting. They met the in open air one summer till they erected their building for less than \$3,000.00.

I went on to where Jake Peachey lived, now inhabited by Sam Swarey, the son of David Swarey, who married Yonie Zook's daughter. Yonie bought the farm for \$20,000 when Jake moved to Selinsgrove.

Then I walked up the long hill to the school house that we used to slide down 6 times a day when the road was slippery. Many memories kept flooding back. Then I proceeded back to the store and got into the truck and headed for Wilkes-Barre, Pa.

John R. Renno