

DANVILLE, PA

June--On the third Monday evening of every month the Christian laymen of this area have supper together at Paxinos, at Masser's Restaurant. Those who take their religion seriously come together for a time of fellowship, and singing, and visiting together.

They also have a speaker come in at this supper. The last time there was a judge there from Montour County. He was an unusual man for being in politics, for he new the scriptures very well.

This man also told of how lonely it is to be a judge; the friends you thought you had drop off and don't really care to socialize with you. They just feel shy in your presence. When he was a lawyer, and finally district attorney, he had friends, but when he became the judge, his prestige drove his friends away. When we went to school and anyone would get too intimate with the teacher, they would be accused of being the teacher's pet. The idea is if you socialize too intimately with the top authority you are apt to get accused of getting more than your share of justice, because you know the judge, and nobody wants the title of being intimate friends with the judge. It spoils your relationship with the rest of your friends.

Another one of my friends died recently, Joe A. Yoder. He was the son of Jonas Yoder, who was a good friend of my father. We lived right along the main road, and when Jonas came by he would often stop in. John Renno

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July 1--Kore Peachey and I have been friends for 50 years. We lived neighbors together for awhile, then I moved to Stillwater, Pa., but we kept in touch. He is older than I by several years, and also in better health. He put up a cage layer chicken house and sells eggs, and is at the Belleville Auction every week, and recently took on some produce also.

I also have a friend who is 12 years older than I am, and is in good health for his age, but he is almost blind. His name is John Yoder. He also was from The Valley where I am from. John's wife was a dau. of Kore E. Peachey, who live down by Garver's Store.

John and Kore both came to visit me the other day. I then introduced them to my friend Oliver Keener, who is 81, and still works at Martin Eshbach's store 6 days a week, although they are rather short sometimes.

We also went over to the Danville State Hospital to see Solly Hostetler. His mother is a sis. to John's first wife. Solly was in good spirits and is very keen and seems intelligent. He is alert to what is going on back in Belleville, for he knows the people and knows who's son is who. John Renno

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July 8--We are beginning a new chapter at our house. It does not seem real that we are old folks, but our children seem to tell us what we should do, and we feel obligated to listen to them. My eyesight is down to 20-60, which means I cannot legally have a driver's license, and my heart is known to lose its ability to function properly. My wife is not what she used to be by far. She is afflicted with Parkinson's disease, which works in the brain and renders the motor nerves in-effective. Such things as fixing the hair and dressing are difficult for her. But she does not give up easily.

Our youngest son lives just outside a little hamlet called Montandon, in a little circle where there are six houses, and providentially, one of those came up for sale, so it was decided that we should buy that house, so as to be near a helping hand if one is needed. We had considered building a new house here where we are, but there are none of our children within two miles, and when this came up it seemed logical that we should buy it, and we did.

This was the cause of our celebrating the 216th anniversary of our country in a way we never have before. We met at our new house and did some cleaning and painting. It is just a small house, a bi-level, 15 years old. John Renno

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Potatoes are very common, and easy to grow, if you can keep ahead of the natural enemies. Potatoes belong to the deadly night-shade family, which is very poisonous, but we do not eat the plants. Potatoes are not a root vegetable, they are tuber, which means they are not a part of the root system, but are a separate entity. They grow on a stem of their own.

The potatoes originated in South America, in Peru and Bolivia. The first mention of potatoes is in a book probably by Ceiza de Leon, of Seville, Spain, published in 1533. The Indians grew them in the high altitude of the Andes Mountains, where it was too cold to grow wheat or corn. They raised them and walked on them to break them into pieces and left them dry in the sun, from which they made bread flour called Chuno. It did not spoil because it was dry.

The Irish found they grow real well, and they grew many of them, so they are now called Irish potatoes, but in 1845 a blight destroyed their crops, and many starved, and some came to America to make a better living. They brought their potatoes with them. Now they are grown about everywhere. According to the Encyclopedia, Russia grows far more than any other country.

We have a patch of 4 rows about 60 feet long, and I have been battling with the bugs that enjoy potato vines. Now the bugs are not just being nasty, they are just out trying to make a living for themselves, and they happen to eat potato leaves. I don't like to spray them with poison and it is not very effective for the bugs have to eat the poison to die by it, and unless you put it on very heavy they don't get enough to kill them. So I pick them off by hand.

The potato beetle is about a half-inch long and has stripes down over the back. They come out of the ground in the spring and lay their eggs on the under side of the leaves and from that develops a soft-skinned yellow bug which really enjoys those potato leaves. These feed on the leaves for about three weeks, then they fall to the ground and dig themselves down in, and in ten days they come back a full-grown beetle. They do have natural enemies, the stink bug, and snakes, and birds, but they do not have enough enemies here to keep them away, so I have become their enemy.

John Renno