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MERRY CHRISTMAS

Merry Christmas.

Lancaster Farming joins in wishing you the most merry, the most happy Yuletide.

Christmas has gone commercial to a great extent, but there is always the dominance of the birth of the Christ Child with those who carry the true Christmas spirit.

Christmas is a time of good fellowship, good food, but a time to recall most of all what His birth means to you. It's a time of merriment, often unjustly so, and sacrifice falls on the true spirit. It's a time of memory, when you recall hanging your sock by the fireplace (or the cook stove) and awakening the next morning to find it crammed from top to toe. And you laughed and laughed at the stick of wood Santa Claus snatched from the wood box nearby and stuck in pop's sock.

There were popcorn strings on the Christmas tree bright balls and colorful candles, tinsel and toys, gifts stacked beneath the tree or hung from the branches, and snow on the spruce in the yard.

No one thought during the bountiful meal, with Old Tom the turkey (the only one saved from a brood that lived a self-demanded wild existence) in the center of the table, about the stacks of food that suddenly became stacks of dirty dishes.

But it's Christmas again — and we're wishing you the most Merry one of all.

FIRE

That word strikes deep fear whenever it is heard. When it becomes a personal experience, reasons for this fear are more pronounced. Such was the editor's experience last week. First consideration was to the safety of the tenants personally, next their household belongings. Personal items lost can be of no consideration.

A lot of memories went up with the old place, good times, times of tragedy, hard times, good times. Tables were never bare, even in the midst of the depression; family life was strict but correct. Some of the family were born there, some died there.

But after the death of both parents, the farm and home were rented to a couple known for years who made it as much of a home as if it were their own. Their care and consideration for the home were equal to that of the owner.

Next consideration must be to housing these tenants, for replacing the residence as quickly as possible. So many things go through your mind when tragedy as this strikes.

At the same time, disregarding the sentimental value of the rooms, halls and the attic where you romped as a youngster, or the cool, cool basement with its rows and rows of home canned goods, fried meats packed in lard, consideration was given insurance coverage.

You wonder if that insurance revision you made a few years ago, when you tried to adjust values more nearly to present day conditions, was sufficient. You wonder if your other building coverage should not be reviewed more closely now.

Fire can be fearful, tragic. At the same time, you find the real humanity in friends who offer consolation when you need it most. You realize the worth of fire companies that serve the farm districts.

But most of all, you think of the thinking that perhaps should have been done before the event that couldn't possibly happen did happen.

PHILOSOPHY

One of the best philosophies we've encountered in many a year, one that can be applied so well, is this:

"I cried because I had no shoes, until I met a man who had no feet."

Voice Of Lancaster Farms

AND FARM FRIENDS

(Readers are invited to write comments on Lancaster Farming, about current events, or other topics. Letters should be brief, and must be signed. Names will be withheld if requested. — Editor).

83 YEARS YOUNG

Pequea — 83 years young I enjoy reading your paper — Joseph Cramer.

INTERESTING

Manheim — I like Lancaster Farming very much. Lots of interesting news and good recipes — Mrs. Nelson K. Cooper.

WONDERFUL

Honey Brook (Chester County) — Your paper is wonderful. — Charles I. Wilson.

FOR PEN PAL

Elizabethtown — We have subscribed to Lancaster Farming and now I am sending it a pen pal of mine. Hoping she will receive her first copy soon — Mrs. J. A. Stumpf.

Editor's Note: Mighty thoughtful idea some others might try. If I'm correct, the pen pal in this case is in Minnesota. For an unusual Christmas present, why not send a year's subscription to Lancaster Farming? E.J.N.)

CONGRATULATIONS

Elizabethtown — Want to congratulate you on your clean farm paper, with the farm news and also enjoy the women's page so much. May you have many successful years ahead. Enclosed find my charter subscription check. — Mrs. Irvin K. Snyder.

WE LIKE

Manheim — Please find \$1.00 enclosed for charter subscription to Lancaster Farming. We like the paper very much. — Mr. and Mrs. Emmert B. Will.

Governor and Family Write Holiday Plans

HARRISBURG—Plans for observance of Christmas in the Executive Mansion by Governor George M. Leader and the Leader family were revealed today in a letter from Mrs. Leader, published in the December issue of a news bulletin issued from the Harrisburg office of the Pennsylvania State Poultry Federation of which the Governor is an honorary director. The letter follows:

"CHRISTMAS AT THE GOVERNOR'S MANSION

"This will be our first Christmas in the Governor's Mansion. It will be different. I am sure the boys will miss going out on the farm with their father, choosing a tree, cutting it, bringing it in, setting it up and decorating it.

"For our family, probably the highlight of the Christmas Season is the Leader Family traditional party when Great Grandma Leader, and Grandpa Leader, their seven children, wives and husbands, and eighteen grandchildren — all get together—have a buffet supper and exchange Christmas presents.

"The group has grown so large in recent years that few of us have a house big enough to accommodate all the relatives. But here in the Executive Mansion, with its twenty-four rooms and eight baths, there will be no question about space and we are looking forward to making full use of it.

"We hope that you will have the same joyous Holiday Season with your families."

/s/ -Mary Jane Leader (Mrs. George M. Leader)

50 Years Ago

This Week on Lancaster Farms

(This Week In 1905)
 By JACK REICHARD

Fifty years ago this week members of the Octoraro Farmers' Club met at the residence of Benjamin H. Pownall, near Smyrna, in Sadsbury Township.

Subjects up for discussion at that meeting included: "Will Better Agriculture Education Courses lead the boy back to the Farm? Will the establishment of Parcel Post be an advantage to farmers? Is care enough exercised in the selection of pictures for our homes? Will a cow give more milk in pasture than if the grass was cut and fed to her in the stable?"

During this same week in 1905 the livery stable at the West End Hotel and an adjoining one owned by Dr. J. E. Aungstadt, Elizabethtown, were destroyed by fire reported of incendiary origin. All contents including vehicles, harness, farm implements, some hay, straw and grain were consumed in the blaze. All horses kept at the stables were saved.

John C. Hoyt and Robert H. Anderson, of the Hydrographic Branch of the U. S. Geological Survey, reported that the Susquehanna River was most important drainage basin in the North Atlantic States. The report showed that 47 per cent of the drainage area of Pennsylvania lay in the watershed along the Susquehanna River.

Wilson, Pugh & Wilson, carriage builders, offered 56 used sleighs for sale at public auction at their factory at Oxford, Pa. The sleighs, consisted of Partlands, Speeders and Half-speeders of their own design, "all selected stock without a blemish".

Bernard Shaw remarked in one of his plays that "The man with a toothache thinks everyone whose teeth are sound, and the poverty-stricken man makes the same mistake about the rich man".

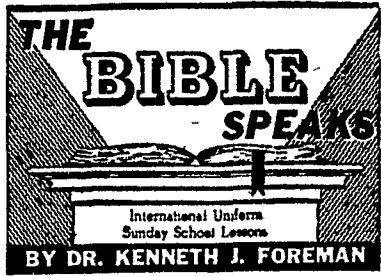
In Berks County the scarcity of game was attributed to foxes. Members of organized hunting clubs pledged not to shoot the animals. Farmers organized to destroy them.

Down in Delaware a number of persons were arrested for evading the holly law passed by the 1905 legislature in that state. The new law imposed a penalty of \$50 fine for every twig or branch cut on any farm or woods without the owner's consent.

Not Too Much

An old lady was celebrating her 100th birthday and as she sat rocking in her chair on the front porch, her glasses perched on her nose, a newspaper reporter said to her:

"Grandma, you must have seen a lot in the past 100 years."
 "Not much," was the sad reply. "Everything was always over by the time I'd find my glasses."



Background Scripture: Luke 11:14-12:3, 54-59.
 Devotional Reading: Psalm 24:1-6.

Being a Hypocrite

Lesson for January 1, 1956

NOBODY ever began his list of New Year's Resolutions with this: "I resolve this year to be a hypocrite." Nobody wants to be a hypocrite, no one loves such a person. As if they were not already detested enough, Jesus shot at them his most piercing sarcasms. The pathetic thing is that even the best people can slip into hypocrisy without knowing it. Since Jesus "told off" the hypocrites of Dr. Foreman Galilee very plainly, we can see just what it is that makes hypocrites what they are, and be warned.



Jesus condemned the Pharisees for being concerned with the looks of things most of all. As he put it, they cleaned up the outside of the cup and the platter but the inside was left dirty. They themselves, he said, were like graves over which men walked without knowing they were there. Outside, they were a grassy park. Down under, inside, they were nothing but decay. The other day a bulldozer turned up four little coffins under what is now an airport. Nobody had guessed those bodies were under the grass. The first thing any one asked, after, "Who were these?" was "Where shall we put them now?" It turned out that the four little bodies, buried a century ago, belonged to one family; and one living relative could be found—but she did not even want to look. Let them be put under grass somewhere else, hide them as soon as possible. Well, there are characters like that. Cover all the dead stuff with something pretty,—whatever looks right is right . . . Keep thinking that way, live that way, and you will be a hypocrite too.

Showy Stuff

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Trifling Stuff
 Another count against the Phar-

isees was that they spent so much time and energy on little things that they missed the greater things that a truly good life will have. You could see Pharisees out in their back yards counting their mint-leaves. Every tenth leaf belonged to the Lord, they said; every tenth bean, every tenth lettuce-leaf, and so on. But leaf-counting took up too much of their time. Justice? The love of God? They had no time for it. They were too busy with mint-leaves. Now it is good to be conscientious about tithes; Jesus had nothing to say against that in itself. But it is rather interesting that the only times when Jesus mentioned tithing, he condemned the people who did it.—Not for doing it, but for supposing that that was the main thing in religion. When Jesus picked out something on which all the "law and the prophets" hang, a kind of nail holding up the rest of the Bible, he picked something big: Love to God and love to one's neighbor.

Old Stuff

Another way to be a hypocrite is to be so much interested in the past that you do not apply religion to the present. In Jesus' vivid language, the hypocrites built the prophets' tombs, but they were children of those who had murdered the prophets, and they were the people who would murder Jesus himself. They honored the prophets of the past; but prophets of the living present they could not see and did not honor. It is an ancient and still strong temptation. There are persons in America who are very proud of ancestors who crossed the ocean to worship God freely; but who themselves will not cross a wet street to go to church. There are persons proud of their revolutionary ancestors, who attack with every weapon of slander any one who has any proposals for change today. Revolution in the 18th century—fine!

Revolution in the twentieth century—horrible! There are people who wish to preserve every line of some historic creed and shout down every one who has the least suggestion of change; they forget that the creed-makers they honor were themselves radicals, innovators, dangerous men in the eyes of their time. A church that becomes a preserver of antiquities, a historical society, and nothing more, with nothing to say to now, is a church the Pharisees would have loved . . . but not Jesus.

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