

## From Where We Stand...

### At The Check-Out Counter

Recently, we were in a grocery store at the check-out counter and the lady in front of us was complaining about the high cost of food "If you could only stop eating," she said, "you would not have it so bad."

Sure we know food prices have increased in recent months. And yet, despite food price increases, disposable income has increased even faster; thus, relative to family income, food prices are actually down.

The United States Department of Agriculture recently reported that in 1968, the per cent of disposable income spent for food dropped to 16.8 per cent and was expected to go down to 16.5 per cent in 1969 — the lowest point in history. The decline has continued consistently for the past 20 years.

And a food chain association thinks further reductions can be expected in the future as incomes go up and the food industry adopts new technological innovations which will assist in keeping distribution costs from rising faster than wage increases for food business employees.

We don't know about that. But we do know that other countries don't stack up very well along side the American consumer when it comes to using disposable income for food. The people of northern European countries must set aside about 30 per cent of their disposable income for food; Mediterranean countries and Japan, about 40 per cent; and Russia, 50 per cent.

The lady at the check-out counter really had no true gripe. At least that's the way it looks from where we stand.

### Winter Comes Again

Most of the U.S. is blessed with four distinct seasons determined by the rhythmic movement of celestial bodies. As the sun moves North in the spring, it crosses an imaginary line, and lo, it is summer. In the fall, it works its way South until it again crosses this imaginary line, and we have entered winter.

The metabolism of nature is so finely balanced that not a living creature escapes the influence of the seasons. As winter approaches, the sap recedes from the trees, small creatures burrow into the ground and store up stocks of food, animals put on their winter coats and man surrounds himself with a thousand and one wondrous contrivances of technology that make winter one of the most enjoyable periods of the year.

Yes, winter is nearly here. It arrives December 21 — just one jump ahead of Santa Claus. Whatever man's other accomplishments, it is doubtful if he can ever change the march of the seasons. Those who wish to beat old man winter have but one recourse. They can follow the sun, as it moves South. For those who live in the North, the time has come to get out the Christmas tree trimmings, sleighs and popcorn poppers, and enjoy the days of the new season.

### Farm News This Week

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#### LANCASTER FARMING

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### The Christmas Spirit

Theologians and historians may have many interpretations of Christmas. But, in our own country, as in other lands, no matter how it is observed, the power of Christmas makes itself felt in every home. Even the most cynical must bow before the moving experience of Christmas. Perhaps this is the best evidence of the authenticity of the events of nearly 2000 years ago that introduced reverence and humility in the life of man.

Christianity has given man a conscience, a sense of right and wrong and a determination to appear worthy in the eyes of his creator. The tenets of Christianity are the basis of modern civilization. They stand between man and the jungle from which he emerged so long ago. Much of the confusion, much of the strife and intellectual decay we see around us today but reflect a denial of the ancient truths that have guided Christian behavior for some twenty centuries.

As we approach another Christmas Season, we should try to analyze the thing we call the Christmas spirit. It is far more than good cheer, happy Christmas cards and presents under the Christmas tree. The Christmas spirit separates man from the beast. Christmas is a time of renewal, as well as rejoicing. It is the most important moment of the year.

### Across The Fence Row

#### Good Timber

The tree that never had to fight  
For sun and sky and air and light,  
That stood out in the open plain  
And always got its share of rain  
Never became a forest king,  
But lived and died a scrubby thing.

The man who never had to toil  
To heaven from the common soil,  
Who never had to win his share  
Of sun and sky and light and air,  
Never became a manly man,  
But lived and died as he began.

Good timber does not grow in ease—  
The stronger wind, the tougher trees,  
The farther sky, the greater length,  
The more the storm, the more the strength,  
By sun and cold, by rain and snows,  
In tree or man good timber grows.

Where thickest stands the forest growth  
We find the patriarchs of both;  
And they hold converse with the stars,  
Whose broken branches show the scars  
Of many winds and utmost strife—  
This is the common law of life.

—D. Malloch

If fifty million people say a foolish thing,  
it is still a foolish thing. — Anatole France

You would probably not worry about  
what people think of you if you could know  
how seldom they do.

If a speaker does not strike oil in ten  
minutes he should stop boring.

### Local Weather Forecast

(From the U. S. Weather Bureau at the Harrisburg State Airport)

The five-day forecast for the period Saturday through next Wednesday calls for temperatures to average near normal with daytime highs in the mid 40's and over-night lows in the 20's. Cool on Saturday with some moderation Sunday. Cool again Monday and Tuesday and moderating again Wednesday.

Precipitation may total one-fourth to one-half inch as rain or snow showers Sunday or Monday and again at the end of the period.

### STILL LOOKING

Lesson for December 14, 1969

Background Scriptures: Psalms 1; 119:1-16, Luke 1:57 through 2:3  
Devotional Reading: Psalms 130.

And they all lived happily ever after. Perhaps it seems that that is the way the Old Testament ought to end. But it doesn't.

The people of Israel had certainly had their up's and down's. Led out of Egyptian captivity by Moses and wandering in the wilderness of Sinai for forty years, they had finally come to the Promised Land of Canaan. Under Saul and David they had become, at least for a short while, a united monarchy. Yet, at the death of Solomon, the nation had been split into two, never again to re-unite. Both ruled by a succession of many bad kings and a few good ones, the two nations grew farther and farther away from the covenant relationship with God. Consequently, in 726 B.C., Israel was carried into captivity by Assyria and in 586 B.C. Judah fell to the Babylonians. Thus began the long exile and the days of longing to return.

#### Not "happily ever after"

During the exile the prophets counseled the Jews with the promise of a new restoration which God would send. At last, when the Persians had replaced the Babylonians, the Jews were allowed to return to their homeland. Some did return and we have been studying the story of how they began to rebuild both the city and the temple under the leadership of Ezra and Nehemiah.

And that is where the Old Testament narrative ends. We leave the returned exiles rebuilding the Jewish state. When we enter the New Testament, we find that roughly four centuries have elapsed and many changes have taken place which indicate that these people had not lived "happily ever after."

What had happened in those four hundred years is told in part in the Apocrypha, the writings that are not included in Protestant versions of the Bible. Protestant reformers held that these books were not authoritative as scripture. For the most part, they were written in and are about the period that separates the Old and New Testaments.

#### A history of domination

Actually, the restoration after the Babylonian exile had never been full or complete. Cyrus had allowed them to return to Jerusalem and rebuild the nation under his protection, but that did not mean they were free and independent. When, in turn, the Persian rule was ended and replaced by the Macedonians under Alexander the Great and his successors, the situation remained very much the same.

The conquest of the Jewish state by the Greek King of Syria, Antiochus II, at the beginning of the second century B.C. had a serious effect upon the Jews. Already threatened and divided by the Greek culture (Hellenism), their faith was threatened with extinction. A priest named Matthias, slew the Syrian officer sent to erect a heathen altar in a place named Modein. From that act of defiance, there was ignited, first an underground resistance, then guerilla warfare, and finally open armed conflict, that drove out the oppressors and regained Jewish independence once again. The revolt was led by the sons of Matthias, particularly by Judas Maccabaeus, for whom the era is named.

#### Puppets again

This family ruled briefly until the rise of Rome brought new domination and internal division. The nation was divided and ruled by a number of Roman puppet rulers, the situation which we find as the New Testament opens.

Despite the end of the Babylonian exile and the brave new beginning, the messianic prophecies had not been fulfilled. Jews still looked for God to send a Messiah to usher in a new day for Israel.

It was in response to this need and into this world that Jesus came.

(Based on outlines copyrighted by the Division of Christian Education, National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U. S. A. Released by Community Press Service)

## Read Lancaster Farming For Full Market Reports



NOW IS THE TIME...

By Max Smith  
Lancaster County Agent

#### To Get Income Tax Guide

The filing of a proper income tax reports seems to get more important each year; there are many changes and many small details that may turn out to be very important. All farmers and all folks helping farmers to file a tax report are urged to get an Income Tax Guide and be prepared.

#### To Add Phosphate

Many local soils are low in available phosphorus; complete soil tests reveal this shortage. Livestock men may supplement their barnyard manure by adding superphosphate in the gutters of dairy barns or with the bedding in cattle pens. This will help keep the barn more sanitary and will add one of the very important fertilizer elements to the manure.

#### To Provide Salt and Minerals

All livestock should have free access to loose salt and minerals at all times. They are many ways to do this but both of these items should be provided from a container under roof and out of the weather. Block salt is too commonly used because many animals may not get sufficient salt before their tongue becomes sore. Both salt and minerals are important to efficient gains and production.

Joe Kuharich was the only Notre Dame football coach never to have a losing record.

The southernmost point in the United States is South Cape, Hawaii.

Bright's disease is named after Richard Bright, an English physician.

The Green Bay Packers won the first two Super Bowls in 1967 and 1968.