



The distance from the barn to the road wasn't much more than a snowball's throw away. And yet it was so awfully far. On a good day I could run along this path from one end to the other in about ten seconds. But I had been here, off and on, for half the morning.

What a frustrated feeling it is to know how easy something can be on a good day, and then look around and find oneself completely defeated on another.

I was surrounded by a vast sea of snow. Two tractors were hitched to one manure spreader and trying to get it out to the field was the problem.

Marvin, our hired man, and I tried once more after having accomplished very little on previous attempts.

With wheels spinning and snow flying, we managed to inch the equipment forward at a steady pace. Still, every foot seemed like 100 yards, and for the next few minutes I sat on the tractor seat in suspense to see whether or not we'd really make it this time.

We did.

Normally one tractor was all it took to pull the spreader, but on a few exceptionally nasty winter days that wasn't enough. This was one of those days, so both tractors stayed on the job.

Arctic winds swept across the white and frozen fields as we plowed our way through the snow. Fingers became numb on the steering wheel, even though they were gloved. Ice crystals began to form on my eyelids.

This was the kind of day when many a farmer, including myself, would trade for an indoor job.

Our next job was indoors, but it turned out to be no consolation at all compared to what we had been through so far.

The spreader broke down.

After unloading it by hand - a job which certainly kept us warm enough - we pulled the spreader down to the barn where we washed it off with hot water. After that we were in the relative comfort (by comparison to the icy weather outside) of an unheated but protected shed.

That wasn't all good either, because as I worked on the bottom side of the equipment, some of the debris in the spreader melted and dripped down on my clothing and face.

By this time the ordeal had evolved into a battle of patience and will against cold weather, cold steel, dirt, a running nose and a gradually pounding headache.

As great as a life on the farm can be, this was one of those days when a fellow would just about sell lock, stock and barrel for two aspirins, a hot mug of tea, and a cozy place to forget his frustrations.

The cold weather brought with it an entire conglomeration of difficulties and problems.

Youngstock bawling for water due to frozen pipes, cows turning up their noses at feed which was turned into a soupy mess because of a broken pipe, a tractor that wouldn't start, a manure spreader which took a half day to get out to the field and then broke down.

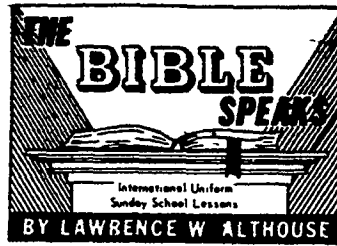
It could have been worse:

We could also have been without electrical service, the bulk tank could have been overflowing with milk and the tank truck might not have been able to get in. That could have spelled hundreds of dollars down the drain instead of hours taken up by the inconveniences of snow and ice.

Ah, none of us had to drive to work. The weather wasn't by any means severe enough to keep a man from walking.

At any rate, when such days are over and the jobs were done right, it makes a fellow feel pretty good. The calves, for example, were well bedded and protected from the cold blasts of air. Cows chewed their cud contentedly. And the cats huddled on top of straw bales after lapping up a bowlful of warm milk.

That's what makes life on the farm enjoyable every day and bearable even on the most frustrating days such as many farmers are experiencing right now.



INTO THE DEEP!

Lesson for January 23, 1977

Background Scripture:
Mark 1:16-20; 3:13-19;
Luke 5:1-11; 6:12-16; 9:1-6.
Devotional Reading:
John 17:6-19.

If you had been Simon Peter, what would you have done?

After all, you had labored all night and had caught not one fish. That was disappointing, but not surprising for sometimes the fishing was good and other times it was not good at all. Last night had been one of the latter times.

Returning to shore at last you joined a throng of people who had gathered to hear the Nazarene prophet whom some were suggesting was the Messiah. In fact, when the crowds became so large, you agreed to let this man use your boat, pushing off from shore a few yards where he proceeded to speak to his audience.

Let down your nets

His words had challenged and intrigued you. Whatever or whoever he was, this man was a powerful man of the spirit. It seemed that God himself spoke through him. In time it seemed you hung on every word. But when at last he finished speaking to the crowd, he turned to you with his amazing command: "Put out into the deep and let down your nets for a catch" (Luke 5:4).

Who did this Nazarene think he was? Did he know more about fishing than you and your brothers? Was he trying to make you look foolish? Was he after all just another wild-eyed fanatic?

So what would you do if the Master were to say something similar to you? "Launch out into the deep!" - plant that barren field one more time - take apart that automobile engine and you will find the problem this time - don't mind the rejection slips, but send that book to another publisher - give your friend yet another chance - ...and let down your nets for a catch!

Simon Peter's reaction was understandable: "Master we toiled all night and took nothing" (5:5). But when Jesus does not reply, Simon Peter finds himself saying: "But at your word I will let down the nets."

Breaking nets!

So, partly because this man has spoken with such authority and partly because you want to see for yourself whether this man has the powers other ascribe to him, you and your co-workers do as he says. Almost im-



NOW IS THE TIME...

Max Smith
County Agr. Agent
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TO PREVENT MILK ODORS

Milk supplies will be more than adequate this Spring. Therefore, dairymen should be extremely careful about barn odors causing off-flavored milk. Exhaust fans are very useful to remove manure and silage odors from the barn. Milking cows should not be fed silage for at least two to three hours before the milking period; also, they should not be fed during the milking period; it takes less than 30 minutes for the silage odor to appear in the milk flow after being consumed. Quality milk should be the objective of every producer and barn odors can be the cause of a rejected tank of milk.

TO ORDER

SPRING SUPPLIES

The recent weather does not remind us of Spring plantings but actually two months from now many farmers and gardeners will be getting ready for action. To have the materials on hand when needed is good management. We urge farmers to place their orders now for seeds, lime, and fertilizer, as well as other needs. Some supplies may be short and in that case the farmer will have to accept what is left. Good farm planning should be done now so that action can take place when weather and time permits. Many distributors will appreciate early orders with special discounts. The same is true with machinery repair and service; don't wait until spring to get these jobs out of the way.

TO BECOME CERTIFIED APPLICATORS

Too many local farmers

are not making any effort to become certified applicators of pesticides; the deadline is October of this year and we urge more attention to this program. Even though some farmers may not welcome the regulation, it should be of benefit to producers, as well as to the general public. Obtaining the maximum amount of information about pesticides and their application should be the objective of every gardener and farmer. You will be a better person because of this effort and present a better agricultural image to the consumer. The place to start is to enroll in the Penn State correspondence course on pesticide certification. Application blanks are available at any Extension office.

TO REDUCE FEED WASTE

Profits in the livestock and poultry business are not sufficient to offset the large amount of grain that is being wasted in some feedlots and feeders. Producers are urged to inspect their automatic feeders frequently and adjust them to stop the wasting of feed. Many hog feeders let the feed down too rapidly and we notice the floor covered with high-priced feed. It is better to let the animals work for the feed rather than have too much in front of them. In outside feeders it might be necessary to install windbreaks in order to keep the dry grain from blowing away. Feed wastage is too high on many farms and this loophole should be eliminated.

Farm Calendar

Today, Jan. 22

Second annual Winter seminar for beef cattle producers, 9:30 a.m. to 4:15 p.m. at the Montgomery County

(Maryland) Agricultural Center, Gaithersburg. Co-sponsored by the University of Maryland, Maryland Cattlemen's Association, the Extension Service and the State Department of Agriculture.

Lehigh County 4-H banquet, Seipestown Grange Hall, 6:30 p.m.

Monday, Jan. 24

Red Lion Young Farmers meeting, 8 p.m. at the high school. Topic: pesticide applicators certification course.

Chester County DHIA reorganizational meeting at Engleside Diner, Thorndale

Pennsylvania Farmers Union annual convention begins at the Penn Harris Motel, Camp Hill, registration at 9 a.m., programs begin at 10 a.m.

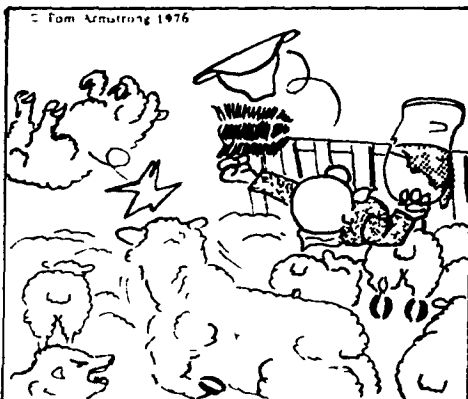
Tuesday, Jan. 25

Cattle Feeders' Day at Lancaster Farm and Home Center, doors open 8:30 a.m. official program begins 9:30 a.m. Exhibits on display. Presentations continue throughout the day until mid-afternoon.

New Jersey Dept. of Ag.

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RURAL ROUTE



By Tom Armstrong

WHO EVER THOUGHT OF THAT EXPRESSION, "GENTLE AS A LAMB," WAS NEVER AROUND HERE AT FEEDING TIME.