

EDITORIAL COMMENTS By DIETER KRIEG, EDITOR



The soil—farmers appreciate it

Big, rough hands, covered with callouses, a scar or two, and a mixture of axle-grease, dust and soil which not even hot water and Lava could remove thoroughly, met and shook in friendship beneath the maple trees. Tanned and wind-burned faces of farmers exchanged greetings and the latest reports on their crops and herds.

It was a Sunday just like all other Sundays. The church service was over, and after not having seen many of the neighbors for a week, the majority chatted for a while sometimes for even an hour.

Although hours of rest are scarce on the farm - especially during the planting and harvesting seasons which take up three-quarters of the year - most farmers seem to regularly find time to go to church under all sorts of conditions and in all kinds of weather.

As a group and as individuals, the men who work the soil and tend the animals probably have a deeper respect for God and wider appreciation of Nature than do many others. Their entire livelihood

depends on the mercy of God, and they know it. Made aware of the miracles of life each time a field of seeds germinates, and when a calf is born, farmers appreciate their blessings and recognize the frailty of their own abilities and profession.

Life on the farm offers rewards and satisfactions which can't easily be found elsewhere.

A farmer lives close to Nature and God's creations, which gives him a sense of knowledge, appreciation and respect for the Earth which he would not get anywhere else. The endless cycles of birth and death, sprouting and wilting, spring, summer, autumn and winter, never cease to amaze him.

Fresh air, Nature's beauty, and the type of work which develops physical capabilities in addition to the mind, is all around him. Although the hard work may be burdensome at times, the physical activity is what keeps him agile and healthy. The business decisions and problems keep his mind alert.

A sense of independence and pride

in individual achievement isn't available as often in the non-farm world. The farmer usually has these priceless rewards in his work. Unlike the assembly-line worker who is often just a "cog" in a "big machine," the farmer is "the machine." He makes the decisions and follows his own plans. He's his own boss and when his products go to market he can be proud of his accomplishments.

A farmer is at home while he's working. His wife and children are always nearby. And what better place is there to raise a family?

Exercise, stimulating surroundings, fresh air, pets, and the chance to learn the meaning of responsibility are all offered on the farm.

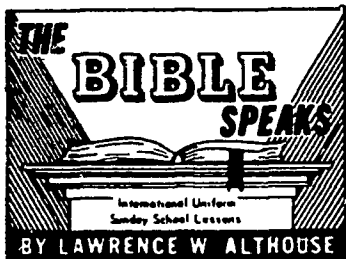
Certainly, farm life still leaves a few things to be desired, such as little or no time off, comparatively long hours, meager profit margins, and in general a "looked down upon" attitude by much of society.

But if a farmer can make it financially, chances are he's in no mood to trade his way of life for that of the suburbanite who only works from eight to five, five days a week

On Sunday mornings the farmer often takes shortcuts in order to get done in time for church. Or work is just partially completed. Only urgent circumstances such as a cow down with milk fever interferes with the Sunday schedule.

In spite of their close relationship to and dependence on Nature, which in turn develops to an awareness of God, farmers have been known for catching a few winks in the pews. Not necessarily a reflection of the worship service itself, the farmer occasionally dozes off because he is tired or because he has difficulty staying awake when he sits down with nothing to do.

I come to this conclusion because of my own experiences and beliefs, and because I have been able to stay awake in church most of the time to make observations. But I can only take partial credit for the latter - most of the credit should go to my wife who has an elbow as quick as a mule's leg.



KISSED FROG

Lesson for May 20, 1979

Background Scripture:
2 Corinthians 4:1 through 6:13.

Devotional Reading:
2 Corinthians 5:1-10.

One of the recurring themes in fairy tales and myths is the idea that there is something wonderful imprisoned within us waiting to be liberated. In "The Sleeping Beauty" it is an entranced princess. In "The Ugly Duckling" it is a beautiful swan. And in "Rumpelstiltskin" that a frog when kissed becomes a handsome prince? No matter: the idea is pervasive in myth and daily life.

From 1528 to 1536 Cabeza De Vaca explored much of the New World from Florida to the Pacific Ocean. In his account of the journey which

he made with a companion, he tells of an incident in which some Indians asked them to cure their sick. The Indians believed that the white men had superhuman power. Lost, sick and half-starved, De Vaca and his companion realized that they had to try to heal the Indians. So they prayed and blessed each Indian. And amazingly, each of the sick Indians was healed. No one was more surprised than De Vaca, who wrote in his journal: "To be more than I thought I was - a sensation utterly new to me."

The Human Point Of View
One of the great

revelations of the Gospel is that each of us, in reality, much more than we think we are. Our problem is that we are too accustomed to viewing ourselves and others through the tunnel-vision of the "human point of view."

We see only the obvious, only that which is on the surface. Paul called the church at Corinth to see themselves and others from a radically different perspective: "From now on, therefore, we regard no one from a human point of view..." (5:16). And the new point of view? "Therefore, if any one is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has passed away.

behold, the new has come" (5:17). The kissed frog becomes a handsome prince!

Ambassadors For Christ

The frog cannot change himself, no matter how much he might desire it. Someone must do it for him. And this is precisely what the Gospel proclaims: Christ does for us what we cannot do for ourselves. "All this is from God," Paul says, "who through Christ reconciled us to himself..." (5:18).

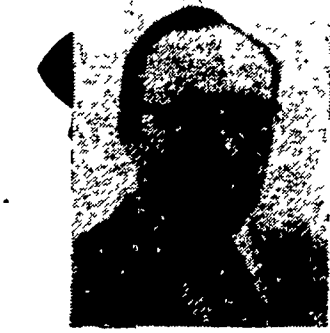
Of course, although the frog can't do it himself, he can and must co-operate. He

can still continue to act like a frog and think like a frog. And, although Christ offers us new creation through his act of reconciliation, we can still muddle through in the same old way and continue to be the same old person.

The only way to be the "new creation" Christ offers us is to live it out as the ambassadors of reconciliation he created us to be. "God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself..." (5:29) and he is also in us as well: "God making his appeal through us" (5:20). It is the kissed frog who helps others to discover their own "new creation."

NOW IS THE TIME

By Max Smith, Lancaster County Agricultural Agent
Phone 394-6851



TO BEWARE OF POISONOUS PLANTS

The pasture season is at hand and grasses are growing rapidly. Livestock owners should be on the alert for plants in the grazing area that could kill their animals. The investment per animal is at an all-time high; every effort should be made to protect these valuable animals. Wild cherry leaves

that are wilting, wilted, or dead can poison most animals. The trees should either be removed from the pasture, or checked closely after each wind storm. Evergreen shrubbery that has been trimmed and the trimmings put on the junk pile in a pasture can kill animals. Nightshade and hemlock are often found in bottom pastures or near gullies; these plants can kill animals when eaten. We urge growers to inspect their pasture fields and remove these potential livestock killers.

TO RECOGNIZE STAGE OF MATURITY

One of the most important factors in harvesting top quality hay or silage is to cut the crop at the proper stage of maturity. Too many farmers permit their crop to get too ripe before cutting. Legumes such as alfalfa or clover should be cut in the bud early blossom stage. Grasses are at their peak of feeding value when cut at heading time. Small grains are best when cut for silage or hay in the blossom stage. Weather conditions have a lot to do in making quality hay or silage. Early in the season it is often best to make the first cutting of a forage crop into silage because of poor drying

conditions. Also, I have heard research men say that forages cut for hay early in the stage of maturity, and rained upon one time, is still of higher feeding value than forages allowed to mature too far.

TO FERTILIZE ALFALFA

Alfalfa continues to be one of the most important forage crops in this part of the country. Crops that are now being harvested should have good growth and yield weights. In order to harvest maximum yield of later cuttings, a top-dressing of a phosphorus-potash fertilizer is suggested immediately after the removal of the first

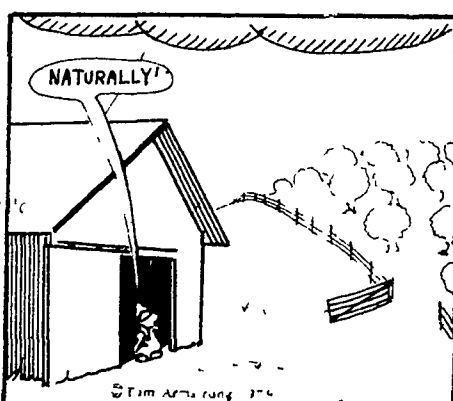
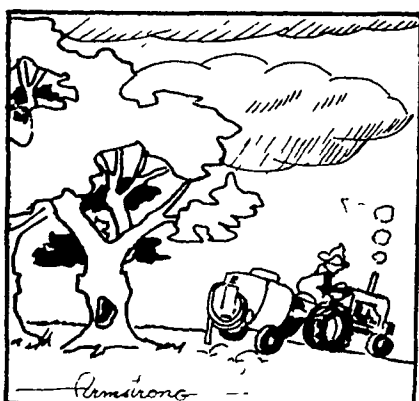
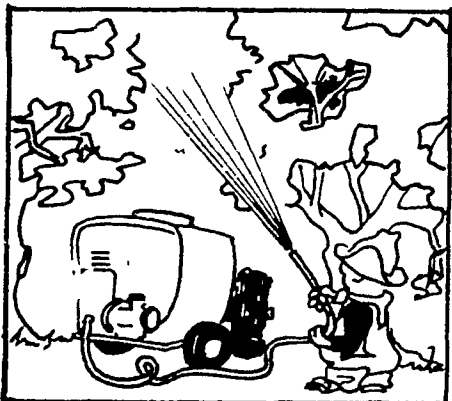
cutting. Alfalfa is a heavy feeder of both phosphorus and potash; established stands should be able to provide their own nitrogen needs. A well fertilized stand should more than pay for the extra fertilizer. Due to the good growing weather in the past month, the first cutting is ready earlier than normal. This could mean an extra cutting this year, if the growing power is provided and if the insects are controlled.

TO CONTROL HOUSE FLIES

Flies around homes and farm buildings are always a

challenge to control. The first step is a good sanitation program; clean up the premises and remove all fly breeding places. When this is accomplished there will surely be less flies. Residual wall sprays can be used. Materials such as Cygon, Korlan, and Rabon can be used. Remove all animals before spraying walls. Fly baits can be used on ledges, window sills, and gutters. In box-stalls and manure storage places larvicides such as Cygon, Rabon, or Malathion can be used as a spray or drench to kill the fly maggots. Good sanitation is the starting place.

RURAL ROUTE



By Tom Armstrong

Farm Calendar

Saturday, May 19
Berwick Vegetable Cooperative annual meeting and banquet, 6:30 p.m. dinner at the Columbia-Montour Voc-Tech School, Bloomsburg R5.
Lancaster County 4-H steers branded and weighed, 8-11 a.m. at the Black and White Farm, formerly owned by Charles Myers,

now owned by Melvin Kolb.
Thirteenth annual Oxford FFA banquet, 7 p.m. in the Oxford Area High School cafeteria.
4-H Exposition, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Flemington, N.J. Shopping Mall.
Monday, May 21
Organizational meeting of the Pequea Valley 4-H (Turn to Page 31)