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| By distributing, by orders of the Committee, among 91 persons in cash, \$16.50; bread, meat, meal, sugar, tea, coffee, and 14¾ cords of wood, etc., etc., amounting to | 184.35½ |
| Balance, deposited in the Bank | 344.09 |
| | <hr/> |
| | \$528.44½ |

The foregoing account was settled by the committee on April 26th, 1805.

New Holland Debating Society

By WILLIAM FREDERIC WORNER

THE "movies" and the radio mark a remarkable forward step in mechanical ingenuity and in furnishing means of entertainment and information; but, like the newspapers, while they serve to entertain for the time being, yet, for the most part, what is learned from them to-day is forgotten by to-morrow. The good old days of what Wordsworth calls "Plain living and high thinking," are no more,—the days of real application to study, of serious thought, of memorizing, of reading for the purpose of retention and profit; the evenings spent in the old school house in debating, reciting, spelling bees, in contests in geography and history and other forms of mental exercise, are, alas! no more, and, as a people, we are the losers.

A very interesting paper treasured by the Lancaster County Historical Society, recalls the good old times of which we have just spoken, when debating societies were an important and helpful part of the social life of communities, and by means of which many of our young people were taught to defend their opinions successfully in open discussion. This paper, yellow with age, and only forty years younger than our nation, contains the following information, which though brief, is full of interest:

"We, for the purpose of improving in the art of speaking, having thought it expedient to form ourselves into a society denominated the 'New Holland Debating Society,' do for the well regulating of said Society, promise to obey and conform to such rules as shall by us be agreed to, and in case of any transgressions pay such fines as shall thereby be incurred."

The paper is dated January 3rd, 1816, and is signed by the following: Th. Seeger, Mat. Shirk, William Diller, David Otenbruk, John Lightner, Richard Goshen, Samuel Diffenderfer, Solomon Diller, Wendell Holl, Isaac Winters, Peter Filbert, Henry Roland, Roland Diller, Samuel Diller, Hugh Thompson, Henry A. Martens. H. G. Weaver, Jno. Leaman, Jacob Diffenderfer, John Luther, David Shirk, Geo. Thompson, Joseph Jones.

The late Dr. Frank Reid Diffenderfer, a former President of the Lancaster County Historical Society, examined this paper on September 3rd, 1907. He made a note on it at that time that all the members were dead; that he had known, in his early boyhood, ten of them; and that twenty out of the twenty-three signers were of German descent.

Another note on the paper, signed by Roland Diller, August 6th, 1879, is as follows: "Members of Debating School in New Holland, January, 1816, now all dead excepting my brother, Solomon Diller, and myself."

Of the twenty-three signers, only two use a middle initial. As two of them were alive at least sixty-three years later, in all probability the members were quite young men (school boys, doubtless) at the time of organization.