

Levi Pennington

People

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Pennington to Russell Lewis on 8 Nov. 1920

Levi T. Pennington

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Per

Nov. 8, 1920

Prof. Russell W. Lewis
Pacific College
Newberg, Oregon

Dear Friend:

I have before me two letters of yours, one begun October 15th and the other November 1st.

The first letter reminded me of a number of delightful things. The sensation it gave me was much like that which a man experiences when his strike after the rise of a big trout makes him know that the hook is firmly set; or like the feel of the ocean breeze when one gets out past the Grande Ronde country; or like various and sundry other delightful things in Oregon.

I am sorry that you had so much difficulty in arranging the schedule this year. It would seem that by this time such a scientific schedule should have been adopted that nobody would have any clashes. I have a scheme by which that can be worked next year. Have just one teacher for each pupil. With the regular "flunks" in Latin, Algebra, etc. and with the same teachers teaching both high school and college subjects, a schedule that will work perfectly is an impossibility though I hope it will not usually be as bad as you say ~~this~~ *letter* it is, for I note that you state this one is "rotten". One hundred eighteen students already ~~and~~ the year but just begun. This is the time, I am sure, to put the total enrollment higher than it has ever been before. Less than a score of new ones would do it now. It is a sad thing that you had to have some black sheep in the flock this year. It probably is fortunate, however, that they have been disposed of so soon. "They went out from us because they were not of us."

It certainly seems to me you must have a splendid faculty this year. Of course, I know Emma M. and Oliver and Mary Eunice and Russell W. and Mary C. and Floyd W. and Lyra B. (though I have never seen her as a full fledged professor) and Mary L. and Eva Hummer and Xander. I know John D. somewhat and know Perry though not at all well.

Lewis, Prof. Russell

From what I know of him, however, I have long figured that he would be a jewel if we could ever secure him for the faculty there. I know no bunch of teachers on the face of the earth that I should be so glad to work with.

I don't know why you should not be investigated; some of the rest of us have ^{been}. Wouldn't I be glad to see it when you were put on the rack? They could probably ask you theological questions that the highest theologian on earth could not satisfactorily answer. At least, I think I could guarantee to stump the best of them in less than three questions. It does not look too cheerful there to me and it may be possible that there is no way to reconcile the conflicting elements of Oregon Yearly Meeting. Possibly a split is inevitable though I still have hopes that they may all learn to work together or at least most of them may.

It seems to me you ought to be able to get a pretty fair basket ball team out of the material you have this year. With you for coach and Macy for assistant coach you ought to be able to put lots of pep into the team and teach them a good deal of basket ball if they do not know too much already. I considered Hubert Armstrong an unquestionably comer when I was there. Lester Wright had pretty well arrived. Horace Terrell and Alfred ought to play good basket ball by this time. I do not see why you should not have a good aggregation. I would like to see the Willamette Valley penant come to P. C. again this year.

There isn't a chance of my getting my M. A. ahead of you if you get yours by ^{May 21} 1921. I am just completing a course in contemporary novelists under Professor Howe ^{1/2} and have one more batch of rhyme to send in to Professor Bates to complete twenty-four hours of graduate work in the U. of O. If they will then accept me as a candidate for the degree on condition of a satisfactory thesis I will have only that and my oral examination to go through, for the thesis counts for six hours.

You would enjoy this course in contemporary novels immensely though it is as long as the Moral Law. There are eight authors in it and we are supposed to study intensively only one novel of each author. I am on the last one now. The list of authors and novels is as follows: Rudyard Kipling, "The Light That Failed"; George Moore, "The Lake"; Arnold Bennett, "Buried Alive"; May Sinclair, "Three Sisters"; Gilbert K. Chesterton, "Manalive"; William J. Locke, "Septimus"; John Galsworthy, "The Freeland"; and H. G. Wells, "Mr. Britling Sees It Through". I have finished lesson fifteen. There is one lesson on each author and then one on the novel and I am now reading "Mr. Britling Sees It Through" which I do not expect to enjoy as much as I really ought. Of

course, in addition to the particular novel studied intensively we are supposed to know quite a bit more about the author and his works. I have read a good deal of Kipling though not an ^{other} of his novels. Have read only the one novel of Moore and only one full novel of Bennett. Have read nothing of May Sinclair's except "The Three Sisters" and only one full novel of Chesterton's though I have read not a little other works from him. I have read "The Beloved Vagabond" and "The Wonderful Year" by Locke and part or all of the "War of the Worlds", "The Food of the Gods", "The First Men in the Moon" etc. by Wells.

I have already written considerably over fifty closely typewritten pages on this course. If Professor Howe~~X~~ does not like it, however, I am going to call his attention to the fact that again and again in his questions he has said "Discuss fully." Over and over he gives such questions as these "Compare the literary style of Miss Sinclair's with all the other authors studied in this course," or "Compare the plot~~X~~ structure of "Mr. Britling Sees It Through" with the plots of the other novels studied in this course." "Is he as good a maker of plots as the others? Discuss fully." If he objects to the fullness with which I have entered into some of these discussions I am going to say to him, "You brang it on yourself."

I would not give five cents a bushel for such thesis subjects as you have. What is worse, I fear that when my thesis subject is selected it will be worse. I have not permitted myself even to consider a subject seriously although Professor Howe~~X~~ has mentioned not a few. He has suggested such things as "The Religious Influence in the Contemporary Novel" and "The Moral Aspects of Contemporary Poetry". As soon as I get through this course and send in some more verse, part of which I have already written I shall see if I am recommended as a candidate for the Master's Degree without further work in residence. If I am, then I shall take up the question of a thesis subject more definitely.

It does look as though there might be danger of our foreign language department at Pacific becoming overbalanced. If we teach Latin, Greek, German, French and Spanish I shall vote personally against any motion to put in Russian, Chinese and Hindi until we can enlarge our faculty and increase our endowment.

Yes, I had heard repeatedly of your father's ill health. I am glad to learn that he seems better and I trust that the improvement is real and will be permanent.

I am glad to learn that Mary Eunice is in better health than for some years, but sorry to learn that your mother's health is so poor. Your grandmother has been due in heaven

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a long time ^{now} ~~though~~ I hope that her last days may be as comfortable as possible. I should like to be remembered in love to her and to the others.

Very sorry to learn that Walter's health is not better. I do wish that he might recover fully from his trouble so that he would never furnish any excuse for your leaving Newberg.

Mary seems to be enjoying her work very well. Much better than she had expected. I do not know whether you knew it or not but she always thought she would dislike teaching. She expects to be home during her Christmas holidays although she will not reach Richmond until late Christmas Day. It will not be much of a vacation for her for she thinks she must undergo an operation for the removal of her tonsils which have bothered her a great deal during the past year.

Yes, I suppose Pacific is about done or about to begin. I do not wonder that you dread the campaign. It is hard to see good people give their slender earnings in such a way ~~but~~ will mean lack of gloves, lack of over-coats, lack of carpets on the floors and other things of that character, but ~~that~~ is not the principal reason why I dread it. These people will receive in their own hearts and lives compensation for their sacrifices. The thing that I dread worst is the strife and bitterness already engendered and which I feel will grow worse and worse. I hope I am mistaken.

I hope that the teaching work which Eula is doing may prove the very best thing for her but if she gives up housekeeping and Leora takes a housekeeping job of her own who is going to cook? You or Marjorie? Has Clinton dropped out of school or are they going to do as Harold Hinshaw and Lesta did?

Glad to learn that Lester Wright is actually handling the Men's ~~Committee~~. The world certainly do move. If Margaret Gill is actually working, no man can claim that the world is not making progress.

I did not know that you had a Ford. I do not see how all these folks except myself get rich enough for automobiles. Some of these days I am going to have you diagram this for me so that I can get an automobile too.

I am trying to save myself from absolute degeneration by making an occasional trip out to a big gravel pit lake near Germantown. There is plenty of water there for some excellent fishing (I have never caught a fish there but the

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fishing is good).

How I should like to witness that class basket ball series of which you speak. I do not see just how Paul Elliott, V. Hinshaw, Ellis Beals, Macy and Perisho all beat you out for a place on the team; or possibly you are king of the whole series and thus disqualified.

I should enjoy being in that small club of which you write although with you I feel to see how I should ever get time for it. Any extension lectures on this year? If not, why not?

I am surprised to learn that you did not know how to vote. I did not either.

Do hope that the series of evangelistic meetings there may do what they ought in advancing the Kingdom of God. It certainly would seem to me that Newberg meeting is making a sufficient move toward harmony with the Yearly Meeting in calling H. Elmer Pemberton to take the lead in those services.

I note the ring of optimism in the letters of many of the Friends of Pacific. I feel with you, however, the pressure of the irreconcilables. If Cox and Jessup and Lee and Simms are determined that we must go exactly their way or have a war, my guess is that there will be a war. How hard it is to know exactly what is right; especially when one sees those who are most sure they are right so manifestly wrong.

Yes, we had heard several things from the corporation meeting but we are glad for every new light on the situation there. I should even be glad to hear from Homer Cox and Simms and Lee and Jessup on the subject.

I do not know when my work will take me toward the Pacific coast. I should be glad if I might be able to get out there during the winter. I know of no reason to suppose that I shall be able to do so, however, and yet I might possibly be on my way for that sort of a trip before Christmas. It looked at one time that I would spend more time than over in the field this year. Thus far, however, I have been in Richmond more between the first of July and the first of November than I was all the time from the first of January to the first of July. Must close and get to work.

With very best wishes to you and your family, to Pacific and its student body and faculty and to all the other Friends there, I am

Sincerely your friend,

LTP:CH

~~Director Forward Movement.~~
Who in this case is simply as indicated above.