

Levi Pennington

People

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5-19-1946

## Levi Pennington Writing to Brother Parker, May 19, 1946

Levi T. Pe

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May 19, 1946.

Dear Brother Parker:--

How'd you like to catch a Kamloops rainbow trout? (See clipping enclosed.) Even a tiny salmon like that of the Troutdale man wouldn't be bad, though I have my heart set on a fifty pounder.

We had a very interesting speaker at the Rotary Club last Wednesday, a man named Caldwell, head of a manufacturing concern in Portland. He was introduced by Scott Leavitt, who was his predecessor as president of the Milwaukee, Wis., Kiwanis Club. In his introduction, Scott mentioned a time when Caldwell had introduced an uncle of his with the statement that this uncle had a bandit, a pirate and a counterfeiter in his ancestry. When Caldwell, who wears a moustache, got up to speak, he said that Leavitt had not told of his uncle's response, but the uncle had said that the only thing that prevented Caldwell from being a bare-faced liar was his moustache.

Caldwell's principal concern was the denunciation of the O.P.A., which he holds to be responsible for most of the business ills of today. The Jantzen Knitting Co. of Portland was held to its price schedule of 1941, though all costs have increased greatly. So they had to abandon the lines they had been manufacturing on which they had a cost structure in 1941, and go into new lines entirely, while other firms took up the lines that Jantzen had been manufacturing, and because they had no cost structure as of 1941 they are now charging twice as much for the same line of goods as the Jantzens would be allowed to charge if they were manufacturing these lines. He piled up instances of this sort in numbers that were decidedly impressive.

But it was his quiet humor that made a big hit with the fellows. He played tricks on us, told jokes on himself, and kept us all feeling good while he made his attack on the O.P.A.

At one time he told us he wanted to see if we could follow instructions. He had us all hold up our hands, with the instruction that when he said "Down!" we were to bang them on the table. We all held up our hands, and he brought his down with a slam, and all but three of us did the same. He looked us over and I said "Not yet" and he said "Down" and I brought mine to the table, along with the two other men, who were behind me and I did not see them.

He told of a time when he was asked to speak to the inmates of an insane hospital (said he did not know why he was reminded of that happening as he looked at us), and as he spoke one of the patients in the back of the room stood up and yelled "Rotten!" He was somewhat disconcerted, but went on with his speech till this patient again got to his feet and yelled "Very rotten!" He continued, but more nervously, till the patient once more arose and yelled "Perfectly terrible!" Then Caldwell said he left the platform, but was met at the wings by the superintendent, who said, "You must not let that man's yelling disturb you. He has been here for twenty years, and that's the



first sensible thing he has said in all that time."

He told of another time when he was asked to speak to a big club, and at the close of the meeting they gave him a check for \$50.00. He told the president of the club that he was not in the habit of being paid for his speeches, and that he would like to contribute the \$50.00 to any cause for which the club was laying up money, if they were collecting such a fund. The president told him they were, and accepted the endorsed check, when Caldwell asked him for what purpose the fund was being collected, and was told that it was to secure better speakers for next year.

He told of spending a night in the Imperial Hotel in Newberg, and taking up the Gideon Bible to read a chapter. In the front of it was a printed slip that said, "If you are discouraged, read -----; if you are tempted read -----; if you are lonesome, read the Twenty-third Psalm; etc." Feeling lonesome, he did read the Twenty-third Psalm, and at the bottom he read these words, "If you are still lonesome, call 124W."

His final laugh-producer (most of his address was dead serious) was the definition of the various political isms, with which you are probably familiar.

- SOCIALISM** -- If you have two cows you give one to your neighbor.
- COMMUNISM** -- If you have two cows you give them to the government and the government then gives you some milk.
- FASCISM** -- If you have two cows you keep the cows and give the milk to the government, and the government then sells you some milk.
- NAZIISM** -- If you have two cows, the government shoots you and keeps the cows.
- REPUBLICANISM** -- If you have two cows, you water the cows and milk the public.
- NEW DEALISM** -- If you have two cows you shoot one and milk the other; then you pour the milk down the drain and apply for relief.
- CAPITALISM** -- If you have two cows you sell one and buy a bull.

The previous week we had had an interesting speaker, who talked on the rubber industry. I remember one thing he said when he was telling of what a Scotchman had done with an invention made by a man in some other country. He said the Scotch were like that, they used the inventions of other folks. He said an Irishman invented the bagpipe and gave it to a Scotchman, and told him it was a musical instrument -- and the Scotch had never caught on yet.

The Chamber of Commerce had a Candidates' Meeting a week ago Monday, with most of the candidates on hand, each telling why he should be elected -- or rather nominated, for this was the primary election, held day before yesterday. (Gulley was defeated for nomination to the state senate by some 500 votes, and his friends feel that this was not a bad showing, considering the length of time his opponent has been in politics and his prestige as speaker of the house.)

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I've got the garden all planted, unless I spade up that big iris bed at the south end of the lot, and the things that show above ground are looking fine. That included onions, peas, lettuce, radishes, tomatoes, cabbage and peppers, these last three plants that we set out. The rest of the stuff has not been planted long enough, beets, Swiss chard, spinach, mustard, two kinds of squash, pie pumpkins, two kinds of corn, three kinds of beans, carrots, parsnips, and probably some things that I do not think of at the moment. The ground was moist enough when it was planted, but the last few days have been very warm and very dry, and unless we get a rain in the next week, I shall do a bit of sprinkling down there.

I'm seriously considering a trout fishing trip tomorrow or next day, and on Wednesday I'll be driving to Sisters for a High School commencement address. That's where Lloyd Baker, who is superintendent of the Sisters schools, told me of the fine fishing in their vicinity, and in his letter of invitation he remarked that if I were interested in fishing he would try to have one or two "staked out" for me. I am going with the idea of staying over Thursday for a trip after the trout, and coming home Friday -- or even Saturday.

Next week we hope to get out to the coast again for a week or more. Three weeks from today is Baccalaureate Sunday for the college, commencement comes on the 11th, and then Oregon Yearly Meeting will follow and last until the 18th. Then we hope to get out to El TeePee for a good long stay.

Wonder if you did get to Wausau for Mother's Day. A letter from Mary said that she was expecting you, then got word that you were not coming, then had just had a 'phone call from Otis saying that you were coming.

I suppose that you are now at Interlochen, and I do hope that the work is going well there, and that you will soon have your road built, the lots sold, the deal closed for your friend's house, and everything closed up there so far as anything is concerned that would necessarily hold you there.

But Rebecca and I are going out for a walk (we may call on some sick folks and shut-ins on the trip) and I must end this.

With love from both of us,

Mr. Parker O. Pennington,  
Interlochen, Michigan.