

Levi Pennington

People

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Levi Pennington Writing to His Sister Hannah, October 2, 1946

Levi T. Pennington

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October 2, 1946.

Dear Sister Hannah:--

Your card mailed on the 26th. arrived today, and it was good to hear from you again.

If you forgot to say your thanks for those nuts, and I am not at all sure that you did forget, that did not worry me in the least. I would have had no doubt that you appreciated the sending of them, even if you could not eat a nut a year.

Yes, those Australian nuts are hard-shells. They can be cracked, but cracking them and picking out the kernels would be too much like what Father used to call "shearing a pig."

You know as much as we do about the exact whereabouts of Mary and Cecil and Esther. Cecil has relatives in a number of places in Indiana, and they were going to visit some of them. But I can't give you the address of any of them, nor even the names. Some of them are in Kokomo. Bertha May, the older daughter, is at Earlham College, Richmond.

Hope Park's visits are not hard on you. One of the big doubts a year ago about our proposed trip was the question as to whether it might not be too hard on you. No matter how much you love folks, their presence sometimes is an additional strain. I had a visit during my severe illness in 1934 from one of the men who is as near an intimate friend of mine as anybody in Oregon -- and it pretty nearly killed me. You've had a lot of company the past summer, and maybe I'd better quit thinking about the possibility of another trip east next summer. If you could surely come out here -- oh, well, next summer is a long time away -- yet not so long, either, the way time flies these days.

Rebecca and I were due at two places this evening, the monthly meeting at the church and the ladies' night meeting of the Rotary Club. We went to monthly meeting, where I had to preside in the absence of the presiding clerk who has moved to Iowa. Then we went to the Rotary Club meeting, getting there in time for most of the address given by a woman teacher from the Salem schools, who was a really good speaker.

Rebecca had to see her Portland doctor yesterday, and is to go back to see him tomorrow. He was well pleased with all that he found yesterday, and he gave her a pretty thorough going-over. Hope he can arrest the progress of the trouble that makes her dear hands shake. But she is so much better than she was a month ago. Maybe we shall get to the coast yet.

Friday evening is the reception for the new pastor and his wife and for the students and faculty of the college. We'll be here for that. Then I should think that we might be on our way, as far as our work here ~~is~~ concerned. (Of course we do not have the yard cleared of the old shingles off of the house, <

October 3. Did not get this finished last night, and soon we'll be starting for Portland.

Did I tell you the result of my effort to raise some money for the relief of the suffering peoples across the seas last Sunday? I put the matter as well as I could to the morning meeting at the Friends Church, and we raised more than \$1,000.00 right then, and enough more has come in since to make the total nearly or quite \$1,200.00. That's a good start for the town, and if the other churches will do half as well, we'll make the total of this campaign bigger than the entire Community Chest budget. But the other churches will not hit it as hard as Friends do. This \$1,200.00 in this campaign is in addition to more than \$2,000.00 which we sent during the year from September 1, 1945 to September 1, 1946 (\$2,116.32 is the exact figure), and we sent nearly or quite a ton of used clothing during that period, most of it very good stuff, too. Rebecca and I packed 200 pounds of it at one time, and there were clothes in that bunch that I could well have worn to church if they had been mine and had fit me; and in that shipment or another there were a lot of clothes that Rebecca had worn right up to the time they were sent. They say this is to be a grimmer winter in western Europe even than the terrible one last year. One of the recently condemned German war criminals was charged, among other things, with reducing the diet of occupied Poland to 1760 calories per day. There are areas in American occupied Germany where the daily ration is 500 calories less than that right now. And great areas where only one child out of five that are born lives to reach the age of one year.

Well, it's such things as these that make me the kind of advocate that I am of relief across the seas. The situation in parts of Asia are probably even worse than those of Western Europe, but Asia seems farther away, even to those of us on the Pacific Coast. There are 500,000,000 folks going to bed hungry every night. All that we can feed are a drop in the ocean by comparison, but I'd not like to meet a lot of folks, even a hundred of them, who died of starvation and the diseases accompanying malnutrition because I failed to do what I could to save their lives.

But I must quit this and get at something "profitable." I started this before Rebecca had got down stairs, but just after I had put some bread on the stove to toast. Well, Rebecca has just come down, and the house is pretty well filled up with smoke. Yes, I got so interested in writing this letter that I forgot the toast -- there are four slices of bread that I might have saved for those hungry folks across the water, and I feel like a criminal. More careful next time, Levi.

With love from both of us to all of you,

Affectionately your brother,

Mrs. T. S. Baird,
135 W. Bond St.,
Hastings, Mich.