

Levi Pennington

People

1-9-1947

Levi Pennington Writing to Harold Byrd, January 9, 1947

Levi T. Pennington

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.georgefox.edu/levi_pennington

Recommended Citation

Pennington, Levi T., "Levi Pennington Writing to Harold Byrd, January 9, 1947" (1947). *Levi Pennington*. 137.

https://digitalcommons.georgefox.edu/levi_pennington/137

This Book is brought to you for free and open access by the People at Digital Commons @ George Fox University. It has been accepted for inclusion in Levi Pennington by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons @ George Fox University. For more information, please contact arolfe@georgefox.edu.

January 9, 1947.

Dear Harold:--

You may be sure that I am glad for the outcome of this morning, and that I could be with your father and mother when they faced what I am sure was the hardest thing they have ever known. If anything that I was able to do or to say to the sheriff, the district attorney or the judge helped to bring about the outcome, I am more than glad.

The situation which the whole affair leaves you in is not one that you would choose if you could turn time back two months or so, but it is so much better than a long term in the state penitentiary that I am sure we all have reason to be thankful. It is better than I dared to hope -- that is, it is if you will make it so.

You are at liberty, with the opportunity to live a good life and to escape what might have been your penalty, but only on condition, as the judge made very clear. You have your chance to be all that you ought to be from now on; but if you do not live as you are now not only advised but required to live, the penalty for what you have done can be inflicted, and will be sure to be much more severe than if a penalty had been imposed today.

There surely should be no need for me nor for anybody else to dwell on what you have done. With your intelligence you know what it has meant to you and your difficulties, to your parents, to the work of your father, and to everybody who loves you and wants to see you all that you ought to be. But with no discount on all that, but facing it squarely and honestly, the thing to do is to face the future and make the best of things from here on. You can make your future what it ought to be, and so live that some day others will have forgotten this stretch of time in your life, and you will almost have forgotten it yourself.

I don't want to be disagreeably "preachy", but I do want to encourage you to face that future wisely and courageously. And one of the things that will be necessary if you are to win in the future fight to make life what it ought to be is determination, a fixedness of purpose that settles once for all time and yet that is renewed every day, to do the right thing, the required thing, the good thing, no matter how hard that may be. There will need to be a fixed will to cooperate with parents and others who want to help, and it won't always be easy. You need to throw every ounce of strength of will that you have into the will to go straight, to do right, to avoid wrong and all associations and influences that would influence you in the wrong direction. You are free to do the right things, to be with the right people, to live in the right surroundings; you are not free to associate with the wrong people, to go to the wrong places, to put yourself under bad influences.

And every one of us needs help if we are to go through

life as we ought. We have all sinned. Every one of us needs a repentance not to be repented of, sorrow not for the penalties for our wrong doing, but for the wrong doing itself. I shall hope most earnestly that you will seek and find a place of complete reconciliation with God, that with everything right between you and Him, you may have His help for the tasks ahead of you. It won't be easy to maintain just the right relation to Him and to your parents and to all the influences for good that you can have to aid you if you will; but it is not impossible, and better things than you have ever known may be yours if you will do your part.

With the earnest hope and prayer that as the years pass you may make your parents and your friends gladder and gladder, and as you stay as far as possible from the wrong and as clearly as possible in the right you may make them more and more confident, more secure, I am

Sincerely your friend,

Levi T. Pennington.

Harold Byrd,
205 East Third St.,
Newberg, Oregon.

I wish I knew just what you ought to do from here on. That is for you and your parents to decide. It goes without saying that so far as your health will permit, you ought to have something to fill your days so full of good that there will be no idle time in which evil gets its best chance. Whether school or some job would be best, I do not know; but I am sure that there would best be something useful and difficult enough to challenge your best energy, whether mental or physical or both.