

Levi Pennington

People

5-17-1947

Pennington to John Raymond, May 17, 1947

Levi T. Pennington

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Recommended Citation

Pennington, Levi T., "Pennington to John Raymond, May 17, 1947" (1947). *Levi Pennington*. 142.
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May 17, 1947.

Master John Raymond Carson,
1726 Britt St. (side),
Philadelphia 24, Penn.

Dear John Raymond:--

The news of your arrival has just reached us, and we hope you will extend to your parents our sincere congratulations, and our wish for them that they may be increasingly glad all their lives that you came to be with them. Of course you will have to determine that, and I trust that you will so conduct yourself for the next three quarters of a century that the pleasure they have in you now may increase with the years and the decades.

In some respects there are those who would say that you have not chosen a very fortunate time in which to enter this world. Two wars have been fought in the past third of a century, each the worst in many ways that has ever occurred up to its time. Each left mankind in desperate straits, and so far as we can see, the worst right now in the history of the world, so far as the destruction of life and the means of living are concerned. Hundreds of millions are now hungry and homeless, with nothing at all adequate being done to relieve their suffering.

And the nations of the world, apparently unable to learn from the terrible experiences through which they have passed, seem less concerned to find the path to permanent peace than they are to find the means for making more awful some war in the future than ever these others have been.

Crime has increased, as is always the case after a war which makes both life and property so very cheap, and hardens the hearts of all who participate in the actual fighting or in the spirit which is necessary if war is to be successfully carried on. Hate and fear are the dominant emotions in too many millions of the people of the earth.

Isn't that and much more of the same sort of thing enough to make you wish you had not come into this world? But there is another side to the story, and that you ought to see, too.

In the first place, not all the people on earth are moved by hate and fear. There are many who maintain the spirit of love, no matter what comes. They have learned to love their enemies, to bless them that curse them, to pray for them that despitefully use them and persecute them, that they may be the children of their Father in Heaven.

And there is another great truth that you will, I trust, come to recognize early in your life among us, and that is that God is supreme in His universe, whatever may be the appearance of things, and that God is love, and that love is the most powerful thing in the world. That is hard for some folks to believe when they think of high explosives, atomic bombs, etc.

But I trust that you will early come to the faith in God and in good, and may maintain it all your life.

You will have help in this from your parents, who are committed to the law of love and good will. It has not been easy during recent war years, when your father had to face the hardest sort of thing for a brave man to face, and that is the accusation of being a coward. But he had the supreme courage of facing that accusation, with all that it meant, and of giving himself to unselfish service without the honor and advancement and profit that could have been his in another line of activity. I have not had the privilege of knowing your mother so well, but I have every reason to suppose that she is of the same heroic material as your father.

So I can congratulate you on the parents you have selected; and I can even congratulate you on the time in which you have come into the world, even though some have great fear for any child born during these troublous days. Times great stress and rapid change are the times when one's influence can be most effective. The next generation needs to build a far better world than has been made by those who have preceded, and you can have a real part in the building of that new and better world.

With best wishes and high hopes, for you and your parents, in which my wife joins heartily, I am

Sincerely your friend,

Levi T. Pennington.