

Levi Pennington

People

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Pennington to Reverend J.P. Pennington, August 11, 1947

Levi T. Pennington

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August 11, 1947.

Dear Joe:--

The Advance came today, and I read to Rebecca your article, "Ten Years in the Wilderness is Not Enough." We both enjoyed it, appreciated it, and it did us good.

There is a tree on the ten acres owned by a former pastor of this meeting which is one of the biggest things in the way of "acreage" that I've seen in a blue moon. Just how much ^{over} 100 feet it is from the end of its branches that grow eastward ^{to the end of} and the ones that grow toward the west I do not know, but I'm sure it is nearly 150 feet in its spread. I have a little peach tree in the garden from which I picked all the peaches standing on the ground, well over a bushel of them, and they are now in glass cans and will make delicious eating next winter. The big tree will drop a lot of leaves this fall, of a sort that do not make good compost.

Well, I believe in big churches, churches in the city, churches for the rich, who in many cases are really more in need of real Christian ministry than the people who are poor and live in the country. But it is the churches in the country and the small country towns that really produce the fruit.

Anybody who doubts that can satisfy himself by asking the next hundred preachers he meets, the next hundred teachers, the next hundred missionaries, the next hundred Christian business men, or any other group of the folks who are really doing things and trying to live on a Christian basis, where they were born and brought up. Some of them will be from the cities, of course, where the big advantages are. But most of them -- "as it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be" -- come from the open country or the small town. New York could not run without its country boys, nor could Chicago, Philadelphia, or any other great city you care to name.

As you suggest, there are some "city fellers" who could not work successfully in country churches to save their lives, just as there are some men who were definitely cut out for country work. A lot of them go to the city, and are in many cases successful, especially in a financial way. But the man who was really intended for the country ought to stick to his job. It may not be showy, it may not swing the big crowds, but it swings the big influence.

Well, who should I spread all these words on paper? You know every thing I've said which is true, as your article plainly shows. My guess is that some day, in the not too dim and distant future The Advance will have your name in it again without waiting for the obit.

I've peeled peaches, picked and sorted and stored pears, diced cantaloupe, chopped nuts and done other nutty things all day, and I'm tired. But Rebecca has done the harder work of actually putting up the things which we shall be putting down next winter. (Wish you could help us eat these fruits when the time comes to empty the cans and get them ready for next year.) Our Bartlett