

Levi Pennington

People

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Pennington to Bertha May, May 8, 1948

Levi T. Pennington

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May 8, 1948.

Dear Bertha May:--

Your letter of the 6th. arrived a little while ago, and it did not surprise us greatly, for we have known for some time that something was the matter.

First let me assure you that in every thought of you we wish for your very best interests. We wish the very best things for you, physically, mentally, socially, morally and spiritually. We'd like to have you perfectly well physically; we'd like to have your thinking always straight and true; we'd like to have you so well adjusted socially that you could have a maximum of happiness and usefulness; and we'd like above all things to have you always right with God, spiritually whole and just what God would have you to be. The thing that would make us saddest in our relation to you would be for us to interfere with your spiritual welfare.

You were perfectly free to join the Holiness Association. Your wish to associate with your Holiness friends without criticism from us might be matched with a desire to associate with us without criticism from them. We have not criticised your Holiness friends because they were Holiness people, and certainly not because they were holy people, which is a decidedly different thing, as you ought to know, both by observation and by experience. When we have criticised it has been because of things that were not holy and in some cases not even ordinarily honest. Some "Holiness" people are holy, and some are far from it. I could name a number of them with whom you have had sad experiences -- you know who they are. And after these experiences you have come back to us again and again, the two folks who love you and will stand by you as long as we live.

We do not want you to be in bondage to our way of thinking, nor to anybody else's way of thinking. We want you to think straight, seeing things for what they are. Some of the truest friends I have are members of the Holiness Association; some of the people who have done the greatest harm to the cause of Christ here on the coast and elsewhere have belonged to the same organization. It is not what a person belongs to, it's what he is that counts.

We shall be glad indeed when you find a place in your religious life where you can be happy and permanently established. And don't let anything ever make you feel that we do not love you, or that we have anything but a desire to be helpful to you.

While writing the above, your call came over the 'phone. And after that I called the doctor and told him that Mother had apparently been improving during the day, and that she had insisted on helping me with the dishes this evening. But he advised against that, saying that she had better keep very quiet for two more days. But we shall be glad to see you Tuesday.

I have just sent some nuts to my brothers and some

to Bertha May and Esther. I wonder if you would like some. If you would, we'll be glad to have you take some of them back with you, walnuts or filberts or both.

Two recent letters we have received will be of interest to you. One tells of the coming visit of Harry T. Silcock, long the leader of the foreign missionary work of London Yearly Meeting, and now returning from a special visit to Japan and China. We expect him here May 29 or May 31. We could have had him on Sunday morning, the 30th., but that is the last Sunday before college baccalaureate, and it did not seem best to me to ask Carl Byrd to give up that Sunday, especially since outside speakers have occupied the pulpit so many times of late.

The other is an invitation for me to be one of the principal speakers at a yearly meeting of Friends east of the Mississippi. No definite arrangement has been made as yet, but the invitation has come and I must presently ~~either~~ say either yes or no. If I could be sure of Mother's health it would be easier to decide.

But I must end this and read to her a bit, and we shall be going to bed before very long. Mrs. VanBlaricom was here when you called, and after that I mowed some more on the parkways, went down town for some shopping, etc., before I came back to your letter.

With love from both of us,

Miss Bertha May Pennington,
3635 N. E. 114th.,
Portland, Oregon.

Mr. and Mrs. Burch,

distinct cousins, were
here yesterday afternoon.
She is the daughter of Harold Marshall,
David White's nephew. Mother seems
to be still improving. Insisted on
helping me with the dishes last evening.