

Levi Pennington

People

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Pennington to Lewis Hoskins, April 1, 1965

Levi T. Pennington

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Dr. Lewis M. Hoskins,
Earlham College,
Richmond, Indiana.

April 1, 1965.

Dear Friend:--

It was good to get your letter of March 26, and to know that there is a chance that I may have an opportunity for a visit with the Lewis Hoskins family. You might have an opportunity to see Mary and Cecil Pearson. There is no certainty that they will visit Oregon this summer, but the last word is that the other things that made the visit doubtful have disappeared except the matter of the health of the two of them. If they feel that health will permit it, they will be coming out as soon as they well can after the close of school in June.

I'll venture that your wife could explain why in an area where there is sure to be considerable dust everything in the house should be dusted before the house is left vacant for two or three months, even with the positive knowledge that the first thing after the return from the vacation will be to repeat the dusting job which was the last thing that was done before the start of the vacation. I would not expect you to understand it, though you might; I'm practically that your wife would understand it perfectly, and would not understand why you did not understand it.)

About the matter of a study of "Quakers and the Ku Klux Klan", I agree that it is not a simple topic; as to the need of sensitivity and care, I'd think that the need for care would be for care as to the discovery and revelation of truth, no matter whom it helped or hurt, and sensitivity of the sort that makes one sensitive to the suffering of others, no matter how sincere the one who causes the suffering. If one is dealing with the Spanish Inquisition, even if he believes that some who burned people at the stake were sincere in their belief that they were "doing God service", that should not prevent as complete a revelation as possible of the many varieties of torture and death-dealing Torquemada and his ilk. Torture, arson, murder, political corruption, financial crookedness, the taking advantage of one's position to carry on the work of an organization guilty of so many forms of perversion, cruelty and crime -- these are not things to be handled with kid gloves, as I see it. (You can see how much I'd lack in "sensitiveness and care" if I were going to prepare a dissertation on "Quakers and the Ku Klux Klan." However much I might want to be unprejudiced and be willing to try my best to be unprejudiced, I'd never be accepted by the defence in the trial of the Grand Dragon of the KKK, or any other dragon in the lot, clear down to the smallest lizard. I've seen too much heartbreak as a result of the KKK invasion to look on that organization "with the least bit of allowance."

Now after that unsympathetic outburst I am ready to subside, and to say with all heartiness,

With best wishes to all of you I am

Sincerely your friend,