

Levi Pennington

People

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NUMBER 8. ⁹
Levi T. Pennington

There are things that could be worse
Even than this doggerel verse.
It should gladden every friend
That these sketches now will end.
For another task like this
Nothing you could do, I wis,
To attempt it e'er could bribe
Your true friend, Levi the Scribe.

It has become my not-very-painful duty to tell some things about myself after telling about eight other members of the Club.

It was on a quiet Sunday morning, August 29, 1875, that I discovered America -- that is, it was quiet till I arrived, when the quiet was broken, shattered; and there has never been a surplus of quiet where I was from that day to this.

This advent into the world of tears and taxes occurred at a little town named Amo, and there is a good story about the name of that town that I have no intention of telling. I was all ready for my discovery of America (which America did not even notice); indeed I had been preparing for a considerable time, but I do not remember one thing about it, though I was there at the time. But I have the inform^{ation} that I was born on the testimony of my mother. She was there, and she remembered. (Many years later when I wanted a passport for a trip to Europe I had a hard time to convince the authorities that I had ever been born.)

When I was seven years old my parents moved to Michigan, and I went with them -- I didn't want to break up the family. There were five brothers of us, and each of the brothers had five sisters, so it made quite a large family. When we all got together for a meal it looked like a picnic, but I am sure that cooking for all that aggregation was no picnic for my mother.

I attended the little red schoolhouse (which as usual was painted white). Later I was graduated from two High Schools. I taught in the public schools, my last public school job being head of the educational system in a county seat town that was bigger than Dundee.

I worked on one daily newspaper as city circulator but part of the time writing more news than all the rest of the force; with the unanimous consent of this daily I went to the rival paper and worked myself up from cub reporter to city editor.

Successively Leaving the newspaper job I entered the work of pastor, serving ^{at} four different churches until I came to Oregon as president of Pacific College, a job which I held for thirty years.

I headed the Forward Movement of Friends in America for the two years of its existence; lectured for the Ellison-White Lyceum Bureau for years; I've worked in the lumber woods, clerked in a store, sold life insurance, agricultural implements and nursery stock; traveled more than 80,000 miles in two years; have been in half a dozen countries besides the United States; I have

a bachelor's degree from one college, a master's degree from another and doctor's degrees from two others; with sixteen hours per week considered a full teaching load I have taught as many as twenty-three hours while serving as president; and if I should mention other things I have done it might seem that I have lived a rather varied life.

In 1898 I was married to Bertha May Waters, who died in 1903 leaving me with two daughters. In 1905 I was married to Florence Rebecca Kidd, who was my joy, my comfort and my inspiration for more than fifty-five years.

I retired from the presidency of the college in 1941, and since that time have worked for the college, the church, the American Friends Service Committee, the Heifers Project (for overseas relief), Friends Committee for National Legislation, the Hoover Foundation, National Council for Prevention of War, and other organizations and causes in which I believe.

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