

April 6, 1944

Dear Summer:

Do you remember the recent widely publicized incident about Bob Hale? He was at a tea at the British Embassy and engrossed in conversation with another person when a lady whom he did not know sidled up, pinched him in the ass, and then, horrified to learn that she did not know him, exclaimed, "I thought you were Justice Frankfurter", and fled into the large attending crowd. That story made the front page of many a newspaper. Here, Brooks Whitehouse, one of Hale's associates in his law office, telegraphed him the last line of Robert W. Service's poem, The Shooting of Dan McGrew, which reads:

"The woman that kissed him and - pinched his poke @ was the lady that is known as Lou."

To that Bob made a clever reply and when Brooks read it to me I asked for a copy because I knew you would relish the rich humor. And here it is enclosed. I know you will agree with me that Bob's retort to Lippmann should be rated as a classic. In the words of Oscar Wilde who, when attending the party at which James McNeil Whistler was present, heard Whistler get off a clever bon mot and exclaimed, "I wish I had said that"!

The only exciting news of the moment is Willkie's throwing up the political sponge. Truly as a run of the mine, unimportant Republican, I feel sad, for here was the only forthright courageous candidate who was talking soundly, appealing to the intelligence of the multitude, and urging a program that was basically sound and healthy from the domestic and the international standards. There was no rabble rousing and no muck raking in any of his speeches. He appealed to reason and intelligence as well as to heart, but not to mob psychology and demagogic chicanery. It's a pity that he should have had so poor a response. Compared to all the other candidates he is, as the New York Times put it the other day, "heads and shoulders above them all".

What are the Republicans going to do now? Look to Dewey, who is silent as the Sphinx? That may be one way to get votes; by silence he can be all things to all people. Certainly in that way he can make no enemies and antagonize no one. To me, that type of a campaign is an insult to intelligence. Or will Harding-like Bricker be the sorrowfully successful nominee? Or will it be some isolationist? As things look at the moment I believe Roosevelt will win in a walk.

Of course we are eagerly awaiting your first letter from California. We have tried to figure out just how long air mail takes, but since we have no standard by which to gauge the time we will have to wait until that first letter and note the postmark. No doubt then there will be much to comment on.

Well here I close for the day. More tomorrow.

Affectionately,