

June 1, 1921.—A telegram from Marshall Sheppey at Paris saying that he would arrive at 5:15! It was then six o'clock, and before I could think what to do, there was Marshall himself.

At 10:30 tonight, Marshall sent young Berdan to bed, and we sat up until one, he telling me all the news about Harding, about my staying at the post, and so on. It was a long, tiresome, futile story, valuable as showing the degradation of politics in America, and especially in Ohio. Marshall has long been friends with Harding, and Harding is under all sorts of personal obligations to him. Marshall worked hard to secure his nomination, and after the nomination told him that he wished nothing for himself, that all he wished was for him "to keep Brand at Brussels." Harding then told him that he would be glad, of course, to do that. Marshall made a large contribution, I don't know how much, to his campaign fund; and gave him many gifts—a fine pair of cuff-links at Christmas, and so on, and just before the inauguration, took him, Harding, to his tailor in Fifth Avenue, or rather had the cutter go to Ohio to Harding, to have his clothes made, and Marshall paid for them. He was most amusing about this. Harding knows nothing of dress, has had his clothes made by a cheap tailor at Toledo—and Marshall was disturbed by his appearance; so he sent George Kramer to him at Washington. He wished him to have a frock coat, but Harding would not, said that he had never worn one in his life. So Marshall had a morning coat made, which Harding wore to his inauguration. Later there was the famous dog Laddie, with his picture in all the newspapers.

Marshall had been at Harding's home at Marion in February, had lunched there, "Colonel" Harvey being the other guest. Marshall had said nothing about me; but after luncheon, Harding left the table on some excuse, leaving Marshall and Harvey sitting there—Harvey with a bottle of Scotch whiskey which he had brought with him, and from which he was constantly pouring out for himself high-balls, as they call whiskey and soda in America. Without a word Harvey at once began on me, saying that I should not be kept here, that it would be an unheard of thing, and so on. Mar-

shall said nothing. His suspicion was that Harding had put Harvey up to say what he did, and had left the room to give him the chance. Marshall had heard, too, that Hoover was much opposed to my being kept at this post.

When Harding was on his southern trip, Marshall went to Palm Beach, and so on to St. Augustine to see him, by appointment of course. The result of that interview was the cable that Marshall sent to me from Chattanooga, a telegram written out by Harding's own hand, in which he said, "rest easy," and so on.

In the meantime Walter Brown . . . came to St. Augustine. Walter was also opposed to my retention, on the ground that I was a Democrat; had told Marshall that he should not embarrass Harding by asking for my retention, and Marshall supposes, advised Harding against it. Marshall had not specifically asked Harding to do this, but had assumed that he would do so, especially after the telegram he authorized. The understanding with Harding was that I was to be kept here as long as possible, during his whole term, he hoped, "unless the pressure became too great," but certainly this year, and possibly longer. At any rate Harding was to do nothing without consulting Marshall.

Such, in brief, was Marshall's report, and, in a sense, the President's message to me, according to his letter of the other day.

The whole thing, however, was so ambiguous, so vague, shifty and evasive, that it meant to me but one thing, namely, that the President had no intention other than to appease Marshall, to temporize, and in the end, probably very soon, turn me out.¹ It was all so familiar to me, so perfectly typical of the politician of the Ohio school. . . .

Marshall told me much gossip! The whole state of affairs at Washington disgusted him; Harvey's appointment he considered a scandal, and while he liked Herrick, thought he would never go to Paris, for he was too ill, and faces a desperate operation.

He gave us, too, an amusing picture of Mrs. Harding, a typical provincial from central Ohio, whose standards are those of Marion, wholly without manner or experience of society, perplexed, bewildered, and yet intoxicated by her sudden elevation to the White House. She listens to gossip, and silly tales, too.

¹ Mr. Marshall Sheppey writes the editor that he believes President-elect Harding was sincere in his promise to keep Whitlock as long as possible. In the fall of 1921 Harding called Mr. Sheppey to Washington and explained that Republican pressure would compel him to appoint Henry P. Fletcher to the place, but he wished Whitlock to remain until spring. Whitlock, however, as we shall see, chose to resign as soon as he heard of this message.