

March 13, 1933

F. I. Kerr, Esq.,  
THE HAMILTON SPECTATOR,  
Hamilton, Ontario.

Dear Mr. Kerr,

I have your letter of March 11th with reference to the desire of the American Newspaper Publishers' Association to have Stephen Leacock as one of their speakers on the occasion of their Annual Dinner on Thursday, April 27th. I shall put the matter up to Stephen when I see him, though I do not think that he will accept the invitation.

Let me tell you an interesting story about Stephen. At one time the American Bankers' Association wished him to be their dinner speaker. They offered him several hundred dollars and his expenses to New York. Stephen refused. They then approached the Bank of Montreal in New York, who got in touch with the Bank here, and the Bank asked me to use what influence I had to induce Stephen to go. Stephen's reply was that he was not going to be the cabaret performer for the American Bankers' Association. I may say that by that time they had offered to raise the fee to a thousand dollars and expenses. Stephen said that if they would let him attend one of their regular sessions and speak on the restoration of the gold standard or some other equally important subject he would go to New York and pay his own expenses for the privilege of speaking to them; but he would not go in order to make fun for them or for any other association. I greatly fear he will feel the same way about the American Publishers' Association.

I notice that Miss Amelia Earhart has accepted. Her claim to fame, I suppose, is that she flew the Atlantic. I do not think it is quite fair to Leacock to ask him to mix up with such "celebrities" when the principal reason for asking him is that he shall make fun for those who wish to have a pleasant evening. However, I shall let you know what he says.

Ever yours faithfully,

Principal