

Friday, October 15, 1926.

Report of the Newspaper Conference.

The Government has given a very considerable amount of attention in the last three or four years to the protection of valuable mail that is given to the Post Office to transmit. But in spite of such precautions as it has been able to take there have been several serious robberies. Sometimes they have resulted in the apprehension and conviction of those that were implicated in them. I think in some cases they haven't been able to apprehend the robbers. It is a difficult question to solve. The public that have currency to transmit send it oftentimes through the mail in very large amounts by parcel post, because the expense is so small. I don't know whether the express companies refuse to take shipments of that kind or not. In the case that happened yesterday there were three armed men. There was the driver, the armed guard that sat beside him, and the policeman bringing up the rear to give additional safe conduct. They were attacked by two automobiles, as you know, with a machine gun. So that what the Government can do to make the transmission of valuable packages of mail matter more safe, it is very difficult to tell you. It has some armored vans that are used. We may have to resort to using more of those, and perhaps increase the number of armed guards. There was a time when we put Marines, I think, on some trains. They shot some people, drove off some robbers, and broke up the robberies for a time of that nature. But the Post Office Department is working on this problem to see what they possibly can do to protect its crews and protect the valuables entrusted to it. I think

that is about the only thing that came up in the Cabinet meeting this morning. It was brought up by Postmaster General New.

I have one of the secret service men detailed to stay with my son at Amherst for a while. The statute provides that the secret service shall look after the protection of the President and his family. I don't know that it is a matter of great importance and I hope that the press will ^{not} feel that it is a subject which they need to discuss extensively. Sometimes to call attention to a matter of that kind in a public way stirs up the thoughts of those who otherwise wouldn't give a matter of that kind any attention. I don't know how long Colonel Starling will stay up there. He may not have to stay there very long, but it seemed best to have him stay for a time.