

Friday, May 7, 1926.

Report of the Newspaper Conference.

I haven't any information about the indictment that it is reported has been brought in the American Metals case.

I have this afternoon signed a bill providing for the purchase and the building of American embassies abroad. That probably doesn't have near the public interest that it is entitled to have on account of its importance. Every one who has been abroad tells me of the inconvenience and the lack of appreciation of its standing that this country suffers on account of not having its embassies properly housed, so that it was with a good deal of pleasure that I approved the bill as recently passed by the Congress. It really marks a new departure and a step forward in our foreign relations and supplements that bill that we passed two or three years ago, known as the Rogers bill for classification and regularity in the Diplomatic Service. These two, taken together, take a long step in advance by our country in placing it in a position adequately to discharge for the people of the country its foreign relations in a manner worthy of the place and dignity of the American people.

I am very glad too that apparently a substantial agreement has been reached in the matter of a retirement bill. I have been willing, as I have indicated before, to see the retirement legislation liberalized, but when we liberalize legislation of that kind we can never recede at all. I thought it would be better to stop at \$1000, and after that has been in effect, if it doesn't appear to be enough we will have had advantage as to experience in costs

and so on, whereas at \$1200 it would be impossible to lower it. Undoubtedly that expense will be chargeable to this Government from now on as long as the Government might exist.

Then along with the bill, which is really a bill for public buildings abroad, the Senate and House have passed a public building bill for this country. It is another very important measure, not only on account of what it does but on account of the way in which it has been done. That adopts the new policy of making a lump sum appropriation and gets entirely away from what used to be characterized as a "pork barrel" bill. This leaves to the determination of the Treasury Department the location of the buildings. Of course with that kind of a measure it is possible to pass a bill that isn't nearly so expensive and which will result in a more judicious location of public buildings than if it had been necessary to make their location in the old-fashioned way.

I am anticipating with considerable pleasure a visit to the Town of Williamsburg, a city I think it is, in Virginia, on the 15th, where I am to speak at the celebration of the 150th anniversary of the adoption of the Virginia Resolutions which were instructions from the Commonwealth of Virginia to its delegates in the Continental Congress to support a measure for a Declaration of Independence. There is located there the College of William and Mary. I think this celebration is under their auspices. I shall leave here on the late afternoon of the 14th, if my present plans are carried out, and go down on the Mayflower to Yorktown, which is about a dozen miles from Williamsburg,

3.

go up to Williamsburg in the morning, speak there and have luncheon, return to the Mayflower and come back that afternoon and evening to Washington.