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NEWS FROM OUR NATIONAL CAPITAL

Revision of Tariff Expected to be First Thing on the Program.

Washington, D. C.—New Year's day in the national capital was made brilliant as usual with the president's reception at the White House, the customary breakfast given by the secretary of state for the foreign diplomats, and the exchange of visits by all persons prominent in official life.

Congress reassembled Wednesday. The big business of the immediate future promises to be the tariff, as far as the house of representatives is concerned. Messages are expected from the president at an early date dealing with Alaska, the cotton schedule and the report of the tariff board on that subject, the postal commission's report and probably one on financial and monetary reforms.

The senate interstate commerce committee, which is investigating trust problems, will resume its earnings shortly, but the Lorimer investigating committee, the Stanley committee that is investigating the steel trust and several other committees of similar nature will not resume their activities until the next week.

Steel Schedule is First on List.

Revision of the iron and steel schedule is likely to be the first thing on the tariff legislative programme of the House. Representative Underwood, chairman of the ways and means committee, made it known on his return that the committee would postpone consideration of the wool schedule until every feature of the tariff board's report on the subject had been studied thoroughly. In the meantime it will press its work on other tariff measures, with a view to adjournment in time for the national conventions.

After the introduction and consideration of the steel schedule the Democratic leaders contemplate presenting to the House a revised chemical schedule and a sugar tariff bill. It also is possible that a cotton schedule will be submitted with the wool bill, dependent, of course, upon the report of the tariff board. This is not expected till late next month. If cotton is not included in the wool bill, it will be submitted as soon afterwards as possible.

Timber Bill Opposed in West.

Western senators and representatives are not satisfied with the phraseology of the bill, passed by the House just before Christmas, providing for the sale of timber that was killed or seriously injured by the forest fires of 1910, and the public lands committee will undertake to redraft this bill in order to extend greater and quicker benefits to settlers who were burned out a year ago last summer.

As the bill passed the House, it provided that the secretary of the interior might sell burned timber on the public domain, and also authorized the sale of timber on unperfected entries, the receipts to go into a special "burned timber" fund in the treasury. Those homesteaders and other settlers who had suffered losses in the fires were to be reimbursed by the treasury from this fund.

Labor Commission Urged.

Using the McNamara as an illustration of what might be expected again in this country if labor conditions are not improved, a delegation of social workers urged President Taft to "create a labor commission."

Such a commission, the delegation told the president, would have powers co-extensive with those of the interstate commerce commission and should be able to compel testimony. President Taft promised to do all possible to create such a commission. It was said he might incorporate a suggestion for a labor commission in one of his post-holiday messages.

National Capital Brevities.

Representative Oscar W. Underwood, of Alabama, Democratic leader of the House of Representatives, is confined to his bed in his Washington apartments, threatened with appendicitis.

The forest service has decided to make a material cut in grazing fees to be charged for the range in national forests during 1912. The new schedule will reduce the rate on sheep 1 to 1½ cents a head, with proportionate reduction on cattle.

American pulp and print paper manufacturers are bringing pressure to bear upon President Taft to induce him to refuse to yield to the demand of European governments for the free admission of their pulp and print paper on terms of equality with the Canadian product.

It was credibly reported at the capitol that the Democrats of the House have determined to eliminate from the Sundry Civil appropriation bill for next year the \$225,000 estimate for the president's tariff board; the \$75,000 estimate for the president's economy and efficiency commission, and the \$25,000 estimate for the president's traveling expenses.

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