

MORE TARIFF TALK

Proposal for Republican Caucus to Urge Extra Session.

OKLAHOMA PUZZLES PARTY

Democrats Would Like Jim Crow Provision in Constitution of New State But Fear to Incur Enmity of Its People.

WASHINGTON, Jan. 31.—As one sensation after another dies out in Congress and matters begin to run along in the old-fashioned, quiet manner that pleases those who are willing to avoid hard work, the tariff revisionists bring out from its hiding place their "tariff reform" banner and start the agitation. With the cessation of the struggle in the Senate over the Brownsville affair and the increase of the salary of members that stirred the House from top to bottom, legislative matters began to grow monotonous. The Northwestern members, unmindful of the dismal failure of the New England revisionists under the leadership of Butler Ames, of Massachusetts, have begun a talk energetically of tariff revision and are now circulating a petition calling for a caucus of Republicans for the purpose of urging an extraordinary session of the Sixtieth Congress to take up the tariff question.

Just how a caucus of members of the present Congress can control the action of the Congress which is not yet in existence does not appear, except that if a caucus of the present Republican members were to declare in favor of the vision of such action, the President might be guided in that direction. President Roosevelt, however, has shown that he is quite capable of doing what he believes should be done, regardless of whether such action meets the approval of members of Congress or not. If he believes the time is not ripe for the consideration of the tariff question he will not call Congress together, no matter how insistent the tariff reformers may be.

Judged by the consensus of Congressional opinion, however, there would seem to be little danger of a caucus being called. Some time ago the impression was gathered from the talks of party leaders that nothing would be done with regard to the tariff until after the next Presidential election; and nothing has happened since to indicate a change in this program. The Republican party managers favor going to the people in the next presidential campaign with a plank in the platform that will pledge the party specifically to a moderate revision of the tariff, and if the people believe that it is the party of revision they will endorse the party at the polls. As to the result of such a platform Republicans profess to have no doubt.

On the other hand, the Democrats in Congress declare their readiness to go to the country on the tariff issue alone. Recent events in Congress and the speeches of the President suggest to many that it is upon the tariff and that only the two parties now disagree. There is little hope for revision so long as the speaker and the party leaders oppose it, and certainly

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LYDIA E. PINKHAM

nothing of the kind will come about before the next Presidential election. Scattered throughout the city of Washington and the country at large there is an army of government clerks

and other employees aggregating something like 200,000 persons, and every one of this army of wage earners is looking to Washington in the hope that the long discussed and oft-postponed proposition to make a general increase in their pay may be realized. There is little hope of action in this direction being taken at the present session of Congress, but events seem surely to be moving toward the end. Only last week Congress increased, by fifty per cent the salary of its members, the Speaker, the Vice President and the members of the Cabinet. Having done this similar action in behalf of the other government employees can not well be denied.

Congress already has recognized the fact that salaries need adjustment. The post office committee in its bill to be reported next week will increase the pay of railway mail clerks, rural and city carriers, involving an increase in the budget on that account of something like \$10,000,000. A resolution is pending to give an increase of 20 per cent to all Congressional employees. The legislative bill which is now in conference carries a large number of increases in salary for bureau chiefs and other important officials. The trend of public opinion is decidedly favorable to pay more for government clerks and all the arguments advanced by members of Congress with regard to the increase of living are applicable, and probably with added force, to the more humble public servant. It is probable that when the legislative bill is taken up by the

House Committee in the long session of the next Congress some scheme of general revision of salaries will be agreed upon.

Both parties are just now tending every energy to capture the new state of Oklahoma. The republicans have been greatly cheered of late because of what they believe will be a big political mistake on the part of the Democrats that will surely put the new state in the Republican column at the first general election. Democratic leaders in Washington realize the situation, too, and are doing all they can to prevent this mistake from being made. As the territory now stands, owing to the large influx of population from Arkansas, Texas and other states, the indications are that it would be Democratic. The Democratic party controls the constitutional is now in session. There appears to be a strong determination on the part of the convention to put into the state constitution a "Jim Crow" law similar to that in force in some of the Southern states. Some politicians hold that to do this would cause Congress to refuse to approve the constitution and prevent the President from issuing his proclamation declaring the admission of the state into the Union.

They likewise fear that such a proviso in the constitution at this critical juncture would throw the state to the Republicans. Influential Democrats here have sent sharp telegrams to the members of the convention urging them not to make this mistake and

pointing out that after the state is admitted and given all the sovereign rights of every other state, it would be within the power of the state by legislation to make this proposed discrimination against negroes as effective as by its incorporation in the Constitution. If Congressional influence has any weight among the members of the convention there will be no reference to "Jim Crow" law or anything squinting at it. Democratic politicians are convinced the proposition at this precise moment is decidedly dangerous, but they know how to accomplish the same results later on when the matter may not be disastrous to the party.

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