

Our Washington Letter

Special to the News from our regular Correspondent.

WASHINGTON, D. C., June 28.—The Senate committee on Foreign Relations devoted the entire time of its meeting this week to the treaty for the annexation of Hawaii and the protest against the treaty that has been made by Japan. The treaty was referred to a sub-committee consisting of Senators Davis, Foraker and Morgan, all favorable to annexation, with instructions to investigate and report to the full committee. As the sub-committee will go into the subject thoroughly there is no probability of a report being made before December, unless some exigency should demand an earlier one. Japanese business men now in Washington do not hesitate to say that their government is much more anxious to increase Japanese trade with the U. S. than to quarrel with us about the annexation of Hawaii, which makes it appear that the Japanese protest has been filed more with the hope of obtaining trade concessions of some sort from us than with any idea of retarding or preventing annexation.

The tariff bill will not be a law by the 4th of July, but present indications are that it will have passed the Senate by that date, notwithstanding the wrangles, political, personal, and industrial, which have characterized the debate this week. It is perfectly clear to the Senate that the people of the country, both those who believe that the now tariff will bring better times and those who do not, want the tariff bill passed, and the Senate is going to pass it. Agreements have been reached upon all the schedules over which there was a division among the republicans, and it is difficult to see what is to prevent a final vote being reached by the close of next week.

It will be an honor seldom accorded to a new member of the Senate, even when he is of the same politics as the majority, should the republican members of the Senate Judiciary committee, to which the whole subject was referred for consideration, decide to recommend the adoption of the anti-trust amendment to the tariff bill offered by Senator Pettus, as the best amendment proposed, as report says they will.

The fact was very clearly demonstrated in the Senate this week that the necessary votes to pass the tariff bill could only be obtained by granting the greater portion of the demands made by Senators from the wool-growing states. This was made apparent to everybody just after the Senate had by the

unexpectedly large majority of 55 to 13 voted to adopt the Finance committee amendment reducing the House rates on third-class wools from 11 to 10 cents. There was more or less excitement on the floor just after that vote was taken when Senator Carter said impressively: "The vote just taken discloses a purpose to make reductions in the rates on raw wools. The day of reckoning is yet to come. The votes which have combined for this reduction will not combine to pass the bill." Senator Foraker added to the excitement by intimating bad faith on the part of Senator Allison and the committee. Senators Allison and Platt, of Conn., replied on behalf of the committee. Senators Vest and Teller nagged the republicans by charging them with delaying the tariff bill. But it was a case of must with the committee, and after a hurried consultation without leaving the chamber, Senator Allison offered the amendment demanded by the wool men—providing that scoured wool of the third-class shall pay three times the duty of unscoured wool of the same class and it was adopted by a vote of 26 to 26 and everything became calm again; but the incident shows how easy it would be to raise a storm that would wreck the bill.

Senator Butler this week called up and had read his resolution directing the Senate committee on Privileges and Elections to inquire into and report upon the practicability of applying the principle of the initiative and referendum to Federal Legislation, and Senator Perkins reintroduced his bill of last session providing for the appointment of a commission for the investigation of labor, agricultural, and industrial conditions and problems.

Somebody must have been mistaken in announcing when Mr. Calhoun first returned from Cuba that his report was not satisfactory to President McKinley. President's like other men, do not reward their agents whose work is not satisfactory, and the responsible position of Comptroller of the Treasury has been tendered to Mr. Calhoun.

Another move was made in the fight between the U. S. government and the two companies which have a monopoly of the making of armor plates for our navy vessels, when the Senate committee on Appropriations this week reported the General Deficiency Appropriation bill to the Senate. This bill limits the price that the Secretary of the Navy may pay for armor to \$425 a ton. The last Naval Appropriation bill limited the price to \$400 a ton and the two companies which have armor making plants refused to bid, claiming that they could not furnish the armor at a profit for less than \$450 a ton. Whether they will bid under the new limit remains to be ascertained.

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