

Our Washington Letter

Special to the News from our regular Correspondent.

WASHINGTON, D. C., July 12.—

A much more warlike resolution than that for the recognition of Cuban belligerency has been reported to the Senate from the Committee on Foreign Relations. This resolution authorizes the President to compel Spain to pay the \$20,000 indemnity demanded by two naturalized American citizens wrongfully arrested in Cuba in 1895, and to "employ such means or exercise such power as may be necessary" to do so. In other words, the President is directed to make Spain pay or fight. As Spain has already positively refused the indemnity demanded in these cases, this resolution is regarded by some as a virtual declaration of war, should it be adopted by both branches of Congress and receive the President's approval.

In view of the large majority by which the tariff bill passed the Senate, one can hardly realize that a few months ago well informed men were expressing doubts of its passage. The House has disagreed to the Senate amendments to the bill, which is now in conference. The pressure to get the matter finally disposed of is so great that the conference is not likely to be a very long one, although some bluffing will probably be indulged in during its first stages.

Two things stand in the way of fixing a date for the adjournment of Congress, President McKinley's message asking for legislation authorizing a currency commission, and the determination of the Senate committee of Foreign Relations to report the Hawaiian annexation treaty at the present session, instead of allowing it to go over until next winter. If an attempt is made to bring these matters to a vote, the date of adjournment will be very uncertain; if not, adjournment is likely to speedily follow agreement on the tariff bill.

Young architects of talent have reason to rejoice at the new method of securing plans for public buildings, under the Tarsney act of Congress, which is to be inaugurated by a competition to furnish the plans for new buildings to be erected at Norfolk, Va., and at Camden, N. J. Regulations governing these and future architectural competitions were this week issued by the Treasury department. They provide that at least five architects of good standing shall be asked to submit competitive plans, drawings and specifications for each building to be erected, information as to cost, etc., to be furnished by the Supervising Architect office. The right to reject all plans submitted

is reserved, but when one of the competitors succeeds he will get quite a nice thing. He will be commissioned by the government to prepare complete plans and to locally supervise the erection of the building. Secretary Gage has great expectations of the new plans, both as an improver of public architecture and a developer of architectural talent.

Senator Allen took occasion during the short debate which preceded the laying of his beet sugar bounty tariff amendment on the table by a vote of 57 to 9 to express his opinion of Judge Bradley, of the District of Columbia Supreme Court, who presided over the trials of the sugar scandal witnesses and, with one exception, instructed the juries to bring in verdicts of not guilty. Mr. Allen said: "I do not know who Judge Bradley is nor do I care, but any man sitting on the bench in this District or elsewhere and who would hold that a question put by a member of a committee and not objected to by the balance of the committee was not a proper one, ought to be convicted of imbecility and general incompetency for not knowing one of the fundamental principles of jurisprudence that has come down to us from 600 years ago. One of the oldest principles of evidence, one upon which we act every day, is that silence gives consent. It was decided differently, however, by that distinguished jurist, Mr. Bradley, and possibly there are a few poor fellows who believe that there can be such a thing in these days as favoritism in the administration of justice."

Assistant Secretary Howell, of the Treasury department, was about the maddest man in Washington for awhile this week. It all came about through an Alabama office-seeker. Several weeks ago Mr. Howell received a letter from this man asking that his application for the position of collector of Customs at Mobile be filed. Mr. Howell filed the application and as a courtesy wrote the man that he had done so. This week Mr. Howell got another letter from the Alabama chap, in which he coolly proposed to pay Mr. Howell one-fourth of the salary, if he would procure his appointment to the office. As soon as he could command his indignation sufficiently, Mr. Howell wrote the would-be office buyer that he had been guilty of violating a statute of the U. S., by trying to bribe a Government official, and had thereby shown his own unfitness to fill any official position.

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