

## Week At Washington

Representative Spalding of North Dakota has introduced a bill providing for the appointment of a commission from civil life, no member to be engaged in the manufacture of protected articles, or a member of either branch of congress after March 4. It is provided that the commission should take testimony regarding the tariff and to investigate the subject of agriculture, manufacturing, mining, and other industries, so far as may be necessary to bring about a readjustment of existing schedules. The commission will be expected to inquire particularly into the existence of monopolies and consider the tariff question from this standpoint.

Another bill providing for a commission has been introduced by Representative Fordney of Michigan. This bill provides for the appointment of a commission of ten members of the house to report the result of its deliberations not later than the first day of the next session.

Representative Baker of New York has introduced two resolutions directed at the steel railroad pool. After reciting that 'the tariff on steel rails is imposed ostensibly for the purpose of permitting the domestic manufacturer to overcome the advantage the foreigner has by reason of lower wages paid by him, the resolution declares:

"This despicable fraud must be stopped until members of the steel rail combination furnish conclusive proof to the secretary of the treasury that the pool is paying its men more than the foreign manufacturers are giving their employes."

The Washington correspondent for the Chicago Tribune says Mr. Baker gives Charles M. Schwab as authority for his declaration that the foreign manufacturers are required to pay \$7 more per ton for steel rails than it costs the American manufacturers. From this he concludes the tariff of \$7.84 per ton is a despicable fraud.

The other resolution recites that it is a notorious fact that the manufacturers of steel rails have formed a pool. It is provided that the attorney general be requested to give his opinion as to whether or not the laws are being violated by such a combination. If the attorney general is of this opinion, Mr. Baker wants him to tell the house what, if anything, has been done toward bringing about criminal prosecutions.

Representative Lovering has presented three bills designed to encourage the export trade of the United States. These bills provide for an extension drawback system as suggested by Secretary Shaw.

By a viva voce vote the amendment introduced by Mr. Hepburn of Iowa, cutting off appropriations for the civil service commission, was lost.

An Associated Press dispatch, under date of Washington, Dec. 9, says: "That there may be changes in the diplomatic service and possibly in the cabinet is evident from a statement made by a high official of the state department today, replying to an inquiry, in which he said that the president expects all the members of his cabinet and all ambassadors and ministers to send in their resignations between now and March 4 next."

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will positively break up a deep, racking cough past relief by other means.

The house passed the legislative, judicial and executive appropriation bill as soon as it came from the committee and adjourned thereafter.

Mr. Baker of New York arraigned the department of commerce and labor in a strong speech delivered before the house, an Associated Press report of which contains the following: "The bureau of corporations Mr. Baker said that his complaint was not that too much money had been appropriated for the pay of special attorneys, special examiners and special agents, but that no use had been made of the money. There had been, he said, a demand to investigate what had come to be known as 'the trusts.'

"What is the result? Absolutely nothing."

"He had been assured by a friend in the department that an investigation had been made of one corporation whose books were so kept that it could not be ascertained whether that corporation had made \$100,000,000 or \$1,000,000. It was, he said, a notorious fact that a steel rail association existed and yet he had been informed that the house judiciary committee would report adversely on his resolution to investigate that association on the ground that it was a rumor. In stentorian tones he declared amid democratic applause that it 'was a rumor so strenuous, so terrible, that it can take the American people by the throat and exact an undue tribute of \$30,000,000.'"

Secretary Hay has recommended an increase in salary of a large number of consulates.

An Associated Press dispatch, dated Washington, Dec. 9, says: "The house committee on rivers and harbors decided today to send for some of the district engineers, as they desire to hear from them on the needs of rivers and harbors in their respective districts."

President Roosevelt and Postmaster General Wynne have commenced an investigation into the rural free delivery service. This investigation will be made for the purpose of relieving member of congress of a "hold-up" system through which it is claimed they have been "terrorized for years." Some of the postal associations are said to be organized for the purpose of compelling congressmen to raise their salaries or else drive the congressmen out of public life. In some cases it has actually been done. The belief is strong in administration circles that some of the postal associations exist for no other purpose than that of holding up congressmen, or at least that the nature of their existence is getting to be the overshadowing one. There is some talk to the effect that the association will have to be broken up and that the present investigation is the first step toward that end.

Representative Norris of Nebraska introduced an amendment to the constitution so as to provide for a term of eight years for the offices of president and vice president. He also recommended that United States senators should be elected by a direct vote of the people.

Judge Benjamin T. Baker of New Mexico has been summarily removed by the president.

The house interstate commerce committee is considering several bills along the lines suggested by the president in the matter of railroad rebates.

In his annual report Secretary Morton suggests that merit rather than political influence, determine assignments.

An Associated Press dispatch, under date of Washington, Dec. 8, says: "The hearing by the supreme court of the United States in the case of Swift versus the United States, popularly known as the 'beef trust' case, was today passed to an unfix future date, at the request of the government. The case was on the court's call for today and at the opening of the day's session Assistant Attorney Day appeared and moved that the case be passed under the twenty-sixth rule of the court, which rule provides that upon agreement by counsel any case may be postponed and restored at a future time, to be agreed upon. Mr. Day stated that the purpose of the motion was to serve the convenience of the attorney general, who desires to participate in the argument and who was not prepared at this time to proceed. He added that counsel on the other side had consented to the postponement. Under the arrangement the argument may be made at any time upon which counsel and the court agree."

Washington dispatches say that President Roosevelt is conferring daily with members of both the senate and the house on the subject of tariff revision.

The estimates of appropriation submitted for the territory of Hawaii by Governor Carter and forwarded to congress by Secretary Shaw are as follows: Dredging Honolulu harbor, \$250,000; refunds to territory, \$175,622; federal building for Honolulu, \$1,000,000; federal building at Hilo, \$1,000,000.

Major William Warner of Kansas City has declined the proffer of the office of commissioner of pensions. He is a candidate for United States senator from Missouri.

In the house of representatives, Dec. 8, Mr. Hepburn of Iowa moved to strike out the entire appropriation for the civil service commission. He declared that the civil service had not improved since the days of the spoils system, but, on the contrary, grows less and less efficient.

Among the bills introduced in the house was one to amend the homestead laws of Nebraska by Congressman Kinkaid. The text of his measure is as follows: "Be it enacted that persons who, prior to the first day of November, 1904, made entry under the act entitled 'An Act to amend the homestead laws as to certain unappropriated and unreserved lands in Nebraska, approved April 23, 1904,' shall not be required to establish or maintain residence on the lands so entered by them prior to the first day of May, 1905."

There is considerable talk of a special session for dealing with the tariff question. The general opinion is, however, that no special session will be called prior to October, 1905.

Senator Platt of New York has introduced a bill providing for the reduction of the representation of the southern states in congress. Senator Platt says that this bill originated in the republican club of New York city. He also says that the bill affects some northern states, particularly Massachusetts, and that it is therefore a non-partisan measure. The bill provides that the representation of the state shall be based on the male voting population, according to the last official census. The reduction in the southern states is estimated at sixteen members.

An Associated Press dispatch, under date of Washington, Dec. 6, says: "Representative Hill (Conn.), today introduced a bill providing for the redemption of United States treasury notes, known as silver certificates, in gold coin and directing the secretary of the treasury to set apart \$150,000,000 in gold and bullion for the purpose. The act makes it the duty of the secretary of the treasury to maintain a gold reserve corresponding to not less than 35 per cent of all United States notes in circulation. For the debt incurred by the redemption of the notes, the secretary of the treasury is to issue bonds of \$50 or any multiple thereof, bearing interest at 3 per cent."

Representative Hull of Iowa has introduced a bill providing for an annual appropriation of \$1,000,000 for the promotion of rifle practice.

The Chinese minister has been conferring with Secretary Hay in regard to a treaty with China, which treaty will be considered by the senate.

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