

NOTES FROM THE NATIONAL CAPITAL

Washington, D. C., Jan. 8.—There is a wide difference of opinion as to how long the debate in the house on the Philippine bill will last. Some of the prominent democrats who remained here during the holidays seem to think that the republican managers will be liberal and grant all the time that could reasonably be expected. Others incline to the belief that the rules committee will bring in a characteristic resolution so framed that the triumvirate can shut off the discussion whenever it becomes apparent to the rulers that enough has been said on the subject of the islands, their present and future needs and the existing tariff in the United States, for it is generally conceded and understood that many more speeches will be made by the democrats on the iniquities of the Dingley law than on the particular subject to be considered—duties on Philippine products brought into the United States.

Before the usual Christmas recess was taken Mr. Payne, of New York, gave notice that as soon as congress reassembled it was his intention to proceed with the Philippine bill. This will suit the democrats.

One of the most valuable and forcible men on the democratic side in this congress, and thoroughly equipped for any discussion likely to be precipitated during the session, is Hon. Charles A. Towne. It was not possible for the democrats to secure a place on ways and means for Mr. Towne and he was put on foreign affairs—an assignment fitting his prominence, and one likely to give him a chance to distinguish himself in the event the democrats can force to the front certain matters before the close of the congress. Mr. Tawney, of Minnesota, the chairman of the appropriations committee, says that he was hopeful before the announcement of the committees by the speaker that Mr. Towne might be given a position on appropriations. Mr. Tawney, although an intense republican in politics, recognizes in Mr. Towne a man of genius in legislative affairs, and while they parted company politically during the memorable campaign of 1896 they had been in congress from the same state and have always been friendly. Tawney has witnessed the remarkable growth of Towne in intellect and influence, and for that reason was desirous of having him associated with him, even though they might cross swords frequently.

Try as hard as they may the republicans can not conceal the fact that they are in a bad row of stumps with regard to the Philippines. They want to let go, but just when and how not a man of prominence in that party would venture an open, honest opinion on the floor of the house. All they can say now is that "it is definitely settled that we retain them (the islands) until the people are prepared for self-government. To bring about this will require at least a generation."

So far as the Philippines are concerned the democratic contention in a nut shell is that in justice to the Filipinos and ourselves they should be considered as altogether American or altogether foreign. That is the meat of the view

expressed in the minority report made to the house by Mr. Williams. The democrats have let it plainly be known that they want to get rid of the Philippines at the earliest practicable moment, but if the islands are to be retained the democratic position is that free trade should exist between them and the United States.

As the republicans have such an overwhelming majority in this house it would be silly to assert at this juncture that the policy of the majority of the ways and means committee will not prevail and the bill passed. But the republican brethren are not happy, and a mighty cracking of the party whip will have to be resorted to to keep all in line when the vote is taken. The men behind the beet sugar industry of this country appear to be able to wield a wonderful influence over congressmen in whose districts this business is assuming large proportions, and accounts, no doubt, for the unruly action of Congressmen Babcock, of Wisconsin, William Alden Smith, of Michigan, and Needham of California, when the Philippine bill was considered by the ways and means committee.

It is too early to risk a prediction as to the likelihood of an open rupture between the president and the senate on the railroad rate and other questions. Since my last advices there are signs that several of the republican senators are weakening and are at this writing more disposed to get around to the side of President Roosevelt. The situation is a worrying one for these senators, but they have by no means given up the fight. The attitude of the representatives of many of the leading railroad companies in stating to members of the interstate commerce commission that they are willing to shut off rebates and furnish information that will aid in the efforts to prevent discriminating charges, may tend to heal the breach between the republicans standing with the president and those who have been regarded as "conservative," or in other words, more favorable to the companies than to following the recommendations of the chief executive.

The republican members of the senate interstate and foreign commerce committee are thought to be a long way from agreeing on a bill. The Dolliver plan, supposed to have the sanction of President Roosevelt in the main as perhaps the best possible compromise between the discordant elements, does not suit Senator Foraker, who stands out against any proposition that would give the interstate commerce commission the absolute power to make and unmake rates. With a tendency, however, on the part of such a large number of the trans-Mississippi lines to make the concessions referred to it may ultimately result, as heretofore pointed out in this correspondence, in a compromise in the senate that will be entirely satisfactory to the railroads and not at all pleasing to the strenuous gentleman in the White House. Ex-Senator Chandler, of New Hampshire, has contended in interviews and cards to the newspapers for the past eight months that if the president gets what he is after so far as regulating rates is concerned, it will be found that the democrats will have to come to the

rescue. This has been a very pleasing situation for Mr. Chandler, ardent republican that he is, but he would rather give the democrats credit for their assistance than to permit the railroad managers to escape.

For the sake of argument, at least, most well informed people here concede that some sort of a railroad bill is going to be passed before the session ends. Suppose the measure that is finally sent up to the White House does not suit President Roosevelt. Will he veto it and send instantly to congress a ringing message on the subject? That is a question the republicans do not like to think of, much less answer. A few of the intense admirers of the executive assert with a confidence that might have been inspired that if the president's party does not enact a measure to his liking he is apt to lock horns with congress. But this may be a bluff and time alone will demonstrate the true state of feeling between Mr. Roosevelt and his fellow republicans in congress.

No veto of importance has been sent to congress since the last term of Grover Cleveland expired. That was when he disapproved a river and harbor bill, and members of both the senate and house were so bent on distributing those favors in various sections of the country that they very promptly passed the measure in spite of his veto by an overwhelming majority. During the fifty-third congress Mr. Cleveland would neither sign nor veto the Wilson-Gorman tariff bill. He simply contented himself by letting it become a law and writing letters to certain congressmen to express his dissatisfaction.

President McKinley exercised the veto power most sparingly, and the few bills he disapproved were of no general public interest. Mr. McKinley had served eighteen years in the house, and seemed to understand the ways of legislators in a manner that saved him from friction with the law making power of the government. Mr. Roosevelt has never been a member of congress. His only legislative experience was at Albany, having been a member of the New York assembly while a very young man. Until elected president it was understood by men of all parties that he was carrying out as nearly as possible the policies of the man who was elevated for the second time in 1904 to that high position by the voters of the United States. There was not sufficient time to carry out any of the policies recommended in President Roosevelt's message transmitted to congress in December, 1904, for it was a short session; and as Mr. Roosevelt failed to call the threatened extra session it was reasonable for his party associates to assume that he was in no hurry about taking up the question of railroad rates, the adjustment of matters on the isthmus of Panama, the Philippine situation and the reciprocity treaties that have been hanging fire so long in the senate. But now careful observers of events here have about reached the conclusion that if the powers that be do not live up to the promises solemnly made, the democrats will be in a position to expose the hollowness of their pretensions.

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MR. ROOSEVELT'S LEGISLATURE

The Omaha (Nebraska) Bee says: "The election of the Roosevelt candidate for speaker of the New York legislative assembly would indicate that the Roosevelt policy can not be cried down on the plea of political imperialism."

And now the interesting question is what will be the policy of Mr. Roosevelt's New York legislature with respect to insurance evils. Can a legislature organized with the aid of the insurance magnates be depended upon to protect the interests of the policyholders and to destroy one-man power in the great insurance companies?

THE RICHEST PRINCE

Apart from the correctness of the principle "consent of the governed" is of intensely practical advantage to the state wherein that principle prevails. It promotes contentment among the peo-

ple, and consequently adds to the strength of the government. The government whose strength is due to love must be mightier and more enduring than the government whose strength depends upon the sword.

The ends of government—the contentment and happiness of the people—were well described in the splendid boast of the riches possessed by a certain German prince. The story is told in a little poem written by Kerner, a German poet, and entitled "The Richest Prince." The poem follows:

All their wealth and vast possessions,
vaunting high in choicest terms, sat the
German princes feasting in the knightly
Hall of Worms.

"Mighty," cried the Saxon ruler, "are the
wealth and power I wield; in my country's
mountain gorges sparkling silver lies con-
cealed."

"See my land with plenty growing" quoth

the Palgrave of the Rhine, "bounteous har-
vests in the valleys, on the mountains noble
wine."

"Spacious towns and wealthy convents,"
Louis spake, Bavaria's lord, "make my land
to yield me treasures great as those your
fields afford."

Wurtemberg's beloved monarch. "Eberard
the Bearded" cried: "See my land hath lit-
tle cities; among my hills no metals bide;
yet one treasure it hath borne me! Sleep-
ing in the woodland free, I may lay my head
in safety on my lowliest vassal's knee."

Then, as with a single utterance, cried
aloud those princes three: Bearded Count,
thy land hath jewels! Thou art wealthier
far than we!"

The czar of Russia is just now in a position
to understand why these three German princes
stood uncovered in the presence of Wurtemberg's
beloved monarch.