

NOTES FROM THE NATIONAL CAPITAL

Washington, D. C., Feb. 12.—The indications are that the railroad rate bill passed by the house will be held up several weeks in the senate. Some of the republican senators known to be hostile to the policy of President Roosevelt, and yet not bold enough to come out and fight him in the open, have declared in their conversations that the upper branch of congress will not take "snap judgment." By this is meant that they will delay final consideration as long as possible, and the general understanding is that republican senators opposed to the proposition to place so much power in the hands of the interstate commerce commission, and at the same time credited with being friendly to the corporations, will try to hatch out schemes to amend the Hepburn bill in many particulars.

The house democrats are very well satisfied with the record their party has made in connection with the movement to curb the power of the railroads. The fact that the republican members of the house interstate and foreign commerce committee adopted probably three-fourths of the ideas presented by the minority members of the committee and incorporated them in the measure with which the senate will have to wrestle, is regarded as the very strongest sort of evidence that the democrats were the prime movers in legislation demanded for so many years by the public. And the persistency of the democrats in congress it will have to be admitted by all candid people had much to do with the drafting of a bill in the popular branch of congress on which all the members of the committee reporting it agreed and which was passed by a vote of 346 to 7, the negative votes being cast by republicans.

While the house democrats are satisfied in the main with the bill they regret that no provision appears in the measure that will reach the express companies. Those companies in some respects, congressmen think, have been guilty of worse offenses than the railroads. House democrats also tried to have clauses added to the bill for the punishment of railroad corporations or the officials connected therewith who make contributions to political organizations with a view of influencing elections. Representative James, of Kentucky, offered an amendment to this effect, and made a gallant fight for its adoption while the bill was being considered in committee of the whole. Under parliamentary procedure there could be, of course, no roll call so that each and every man who voted could be put on record. First there was a viva voce vote, and then a vote by tellers. As the republicans have such a large majority in the house there was no hope for the amendment of Mr. James. They rejected it by a pronounced majority.

Early last spring the senate interstate and foreign commerce committee commenced to take testimony on the railroad rate question. Scores of the most prominent men in the United States were summoned. The list of witnesses included railroad officials with a view of obtaining their side of the controversy, and there were many men examined from other walks of life—some in favor of the proposed legislation; others decidedly opposed. The committee got to work again in the fall, and the impression was created that probably before the holiday recess of congress Mr. Elkins and the other republicans on the committee would have a bill ready. To this day nothing has actually been formulated. The truth of the matter is the republican senators never had the remotest idea of preparing a bill until after the house acted. They have been waiting to see what that body would do, and the unanimity with which the house acted has staggered the senators responsible for the delay in the upper branch.

The senate committee is composed of thirteen members—eight republicans and five democrats. As the issue is bound to be met sooner or later, and there does not seem, at this writing, any likelihood of a union of republicans and democrats in reporting a bill as was the case with the house committee, it is timely to once more

give a list of the senate committee. The republicans are: Messrs. Elkins, of West Virginia, chairman; Cullom, of Illinois; Aldrich, of Rhode Island; Kean, of New Jersey; Dolliver, of Iowa; Foraker, of Ohio; Clapp, of Minnesota, and Crane, of Massachusetts. The democratic members of the committee are: Messrs. Tillman, of South Carolina; McLaurin, of Mississippi; Carmack, of Tennessee; Foster, of Louisiana, and Newlands, of Nevada.

Terrific pressure is being brought to bear in order that the republicans may be able to agree upon a bill that will satisfy President Roosevelt and at the same time not offend the railroad magnates too seriously. Just how this can be accomplished it is difficult to figure. Mr. Cullom is thought to be in a most embarrassing position. He claims to have really been the author of the original interstate commerce commission bill. He stepped in and took the credit for that legislation away from the late Judge Reagan, of Texas. Mr. Cullom has long posed as the great champion of the people, and now the mighty question with him is whether it will be more to his interest politically to side with Mr. Elkins and his following, or to form a partnership with Messrs. Dolliver and Clapp, who, if anything is accomplished that will satisfy the house, may have to join the democrats on the committee, or else prepare a separate report that would complicate the situation. The sentiment of most of the senate democrats at present is that the house bill ought to be endorsed. It is possible that eventually all the republican members of the senate committee may be whipped into line for the house bill. However, if this should happen, it will be because Mr. Elkins and those in sympathy with him will yield because they can not do anything else.

It should be borne in mind that under the senate rules the railroad rate bill will not only be subject to amendment but the debate will not be limited. A great many speeches will doubtless be made. Senator LaFollette, of Wisconsin, is already loading up for an active participation in the discussion. He has also prepared a sweeping amendment in regard to the issuing of free passes. The agents of railway corporations made little or no effort to prevent the passage of the bill in the house. It was a foregone conclusion that the house would pass the bill by a tremendous majority. And as railroad officials generally have made up their minds that some sort of rate regulating measure will be passed in the senate whatever manipulation is going on is conducted quietly with republican senators on whom they can rely to make the new law as lenient as possible.

The Philippine tariff is still hanging up in the senate committee. The representatives of the beet and cane sugar interests appear to be having more success over at that end of the capitol than they had counted upon. The tobacco agents have also put up a stout fight, and Secretary Taft has been compelled to appear before the senate committee repeatedly to urge a favorable report upon the measure so ardently advocated by the administration. Several of the democratic senators who have looked carefully into the situation express the opinion that the bill, if it is not already beaten, will have a hard road to travel. Efforts are being made to compromise. It is said that a proposition has been submitted to the sugar and tobacco industries to make the tariff on these articles 40 per cent of the old Dingley rates instead of 25 per cent as provided in the bill passed by the house. The sugar and tobacco representatives watching the situation can not yet agree. Some think it will be to their advantage to hold out if the bill is in danger of being tied up in committee with no reasonable chance of a favorable report being made on it this session. Others, fearing that possibly the republicans may eventually unite, think that probably it would be better to accept a compromise that would fix the duties at 40 per cent.

Members of the democratic congressional campaign committee for the approaching contest are being named by the various delegations.

Doubtless within the next month all will have been selected. Then the members will have a meeting here to discuss the chairmanship. Nearly all the southern congressmen think that a northern or western man should be placed at the head of the committee. In order to obtain control of the next house of representatives it will be absolutely necessary for the democrats to make the necessary gains in the northern, New England and western states. It is frankly admitted by southern congressmen that political conditions in the south are so different from those in other sections that the head of the campaign committee must be taken from a section where the gains are to be made. A democrat might be able to conduct the contest successfully if there was danger of losing seats in the south, but no matter how shrewd he may be he may not know the political moves in the north and west. As the committee will not get down to work until summer there is no special hurry about selecting the chairman.

Representative Kline, the only democrat in this congress from Pennsylvania, says that the outlook in the Keystone state this year for the party is the brightest in years. He predicts that the democrats will elect not less than six members of the net house. Probably more districts may be carried. He will not predict greater success for the party in his state for the reason that Pennsylvania is gerrymandered outrageously in favor of the republicans, and nothing short of a heavy landslide can wrest from the republicans some of the districts that were formerly reliably democratic. Former Congressman Green, of Pennsylvania, agrees with Mr. Kline that the outlook for the democracy in the state is highly encouraging. Both Mr. Kline and Mr. Green have started democratic newspapers to enliven the political campaign this year.

From what other congressmen say the democrats can safely count on increasing their representation in the house from New York, New Jersey, Ohio, Indiana, Wisconsin and Illinois, and in Michigan, Iowa, California and many other states that did not send a single democrat to this congress the next election will show that the republicans will not be able to hold many districts they now control. Missouri has nine republicans in this house and only seven democrats. In the next house the republicans will be doing well if they have two members from Missouri.

The republican leaders of the house have re-lent and the public buildings and grounds committee will be allowed to report an "omnibus" bill carrying appropriations of \$15,000,000 or more for additional government structures.

The smaller cities, however, will not share in the benefits. The program is to distribute the money pretty evenly in the various sections. The committee is now framing the bill and the rivalry for recognition is intense.

Further aid for the Jamestown exposition to be held in Virginia next year is a matter that will soon have to be decided in the house. Speaker Cannon and the other republican members of the rules committee will not yet commit themselves. President Roosevelt has earnestly recommended liberal appropriations for Jamestown, and Speaker Cannon admits that it will be an exposition so different from anything else attempted in this country that a powerful sentiment exists for the proper celebration of the founding of the first English settlement on this continent.

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to a fault, the countess has turned a deaf ear to all such appeals. An amusing feature of the situation—if anything about such a controversy can be amusing—is that the attorneys for the countess are somewhat puzzled to know how their client can avoid making a money settlement upon her husband, and the Paris cablegram says that she may "find it expedient if the point should be pressed to allow Count Boni 'a little alimony.'" Countess de Castellane has had the common experience of American girls who go in search of titles. It is said that her "noble" husband has squandered eight million of the Gould dollars.

Where Democrats Won

Democratic Work in Pennsylvania

There May Be a Pork Barrel

Delay in the Senate

Philippine Bill in the Senate

Cullom's Embarrassing Position