

sary for every legislative body to evolve some kind of organization, and being debarred from having the ministers of the day as a ruling committee controlling all business as in England, the Houses of Congress took the alternative of distributing business amongst a number of small standing committees to each of which is assigned a specific class of subjects indicated by the names of the committees, such as Ways and Means, Appropriations, Banking and Currency, Rivers and Harbours, and so on. These committees consist of only from three to, at most, sixteen members each. We may confine our view to the House of Representatives, but the system in both Houses is the same. And while I shall derive mainly what I am about to state, from the pages of Mr. Woodrow Wilson's work on Congressional Government, I may say at once that his statements seem to be in no way impugned by other American writers.

Now to some of these small standing committees each and every Bill, Memorial, Proposition, or Report of a Department, is referred without debate, and what we find is, that all legislation is at the mercy practically of the particular committee to which a bill is assigned. These committees deliberate in secret, and no member speaking in the House is entitled to state anything that has taken place in committee other than what is stated in the report of that committee. They are practically under the control of their chairman, who are strict party men, appointed by the Speaker, himself under the American system a staunch and avowed partisan, and as I shall presently have occasion to point out when I refer to him again, the most powerful man in the House by virtue of his power of appointing these chairmen of the standing committees, and of his other functions. "I know not how better to describe our form of government in a single phrase," says Mr. Wilson, "than by calling it a government by the chairman of the standing committees of Congress"(s).

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(s) Congressional Government, p. 102. References are to the 4th edition published in 1887. However in letters written to the writer of this pamphlet in March, 1906, of which Mr. Woodrow Wilson has kindly authorized quotation, he says: "In many details the present method of conducting business in Congress differs from that described in my Congressional Government, but not in any essential particular, except that the House Com-