

a bill or resolution upon any subject in which he feels an interest, and a dozen of these may be presented upon the same subject, which differ entirely from one another. Mr. Woodrow Wilson gives a very amusing sketch(*u*), too long to quote, of what would be the experience of a new member going to Washington as the representative of a particular line of policy and endeavouring to bring the matter up for legislation before the House. No debate at all is allowed upon the first or second reading of bills, which, of course, prevents the public being necessarily apprised of what measures are before Congress. Without debate the bill is sent to the proper committee, discussion only being allowed as to what committee it shall be sent to. And we are told that the fate of a bill committed is not uncertain, for as a rule a bill committed is a bill doomed. Mr. Joseph Chamberlain has told us in 1890, that in the preceding session of Congress more than sixteen thousand separate bills were introduced, of which less than one-tenth were finally dealt with by the House, the remainder being either rejected in committee or practically stifled by not being reported to the House(*v*). It is perfectly easy for the committee to which a bill has been referred, and therefore common, to let the session pass without making any report at all upon the bills deemed objectionable or unimportant, or to substitute for reports upon them a few bills of the committee's own drafting(*w*). So that the practical effect of this committee organization by the House is to consign to each of the standing committees the entire direction of legislation upon the subjects which have come under its consideration.

When, however, these committees do report upon a bill it might be supposed that full debate would be allowed. On the contrary we are told on the authority of Senator Hoar of Massachusetts, a man of very long Congressional experience, that, supposing the two sessions which make up the life of the House to

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(*u*) Congressional Government, p. 64 et seq.

(*v*) "Shall We Americanize our Institutions?" *Nineteenth Century* for December, 1890, Vol. 28, p. 863-4.

(*w*) Congressional Government, pp. 69-70.