

WASHINGTON LETTER.

Special Correspondence.
 WASHINGTON, Nov. 20, '99.
 The hearings held in this city before the Industrial Commission have brought forth some remarkable testimony as to the power and methods of the great mercantile trusts. "The tariff is the mother of trusts," said Havemeyer, president of the sugar trust, a famous contributor to Republican campaign funds. This admission will have many echoes in the campaign next fall when the question of commercial combinations in violation of law will be sure to come in for proper consideration. Now comes Gates, many times millionaire, who testifies that his combine, the American steel and wire trust, has succeeded in throttling competition in the United States to such an extent as to double the prices to consumers. But Gates goes further and states that he and his associates have tried to bring about a manufacturing monopoly with iron and steel producers of Europe. Gates blames the foreigners for failure to put through this gigantic deal; he says the American makers were only too anxious to do so. The humorous side of Gates' statement was that, although his trust controls fifty per cent. of the trade, and sells its product abroad at lower prices than it charges to Americans, yet this infant industry still must be "protected" by the tariff or it "would be driven out of business."
 Gates and his concern, and others of the same character, have contributed so many thousands to Republican campaigns at critical times that there is little danger of the tariff on their products being reduced, until the Democrats get into full control in congress, which cannot be before 1902. But as the voters have time to digest such statements fully, and compare the prices of iron and steel products which have been advanced gradually to all consumers since the Republican tariff took effect, two years ago, they will strike at the trust advocates and agents which first present themselves, and these will be the Republican candidates for president and vice president next fall.
 What is done with the millions squeezed from the taxpayers in order to give these big contributors better leverage to shut out competition? Aside from squandering the wealth of an empire, "expanding" into the hordes of Asia, and sinking our war ships on unknown coral reefs, in a manner quite in keeping with the generally inefficient campaign in the Philippines, we have had this week an illustration of where this tariff tax is needed. Secretary Gage dumped twenty-five millions of it into Wall street in order to lower the rate of interest to speculators. In order to do this he had to buy government bonds back at a large premium over the price the government received for them when issued; and the action was taken against the advice of New York business men who said the money was needed to increase speculation, and after a specific statement by Secretary Gage himself that he knew it to be the fact.
 The fact that the treasury would buy these bonds was not stated officially until after four o'clock in the afternoon, as it was claimed, that prices on Wall street would not be affected that day. But the information had been sent to Wall street early in the day, and those on the inside including, as it is said, certain government agents, were buying bonds and stocks for a rise; and as early as two o'clock the news of the intention to buy had been telegraphed back to broker's offices in Washington.
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 The statement is made, apparently from foundation, that Admiral Dewey intends to present to his wife the magnificent house donated to him by the American people. Mrs. Dewey was the widow of General Hazen, and the daughter of Mrs. Washington McLean, one of the wealthiest ladies at the capital. The McLean family do not need money. Mrs. Dewey is reputed to have an abundance of real estate. While the very fine one donated to Admiral Dewey was given him absolutely, it is quite probable that the donors would prefer him to keep it; unless indeed he had preferred to transfer it to the use of the navy, or convert it to the use of something charitable connected with the navy, as it was said he intended to do.
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 One explanation of the Admiral's purpose in disposing of the house, is that he "desires to minimize his popularity." If this is the fact, he has taken an adroit manner of accomplishing this end. When the Admiral has decided away with a gift in such a manner, it is a prediction that he can present himself in public in New York, or

anywhere else, and he will not be annoyed by a multitude of curious admirers.
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 The movement to provide a suitable home for Admiral Schley is going forward rapidly. It is in charge of a private committee, not of government officials, and the sum will be made up with more rapidity than marked the Dewey home fund.
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 The hotels are now becoming crowded with returning members of the senate and house. The majority of them look for animated debate as soon as congress reassembles, but they do not expect actual legislation of importance. They believe both parties will proceed with caution, in view of the approaching national election. The Republicans do not come here emboldened by recent elections to hurry forward any favorite legislation. Upon currency, tariff and military questions they are disposed to feel their way. They admit that nothing will be done with the Nicaraguan Canal, although its advocates will press that question as soon as the session opens.
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 Undoubtedly there is a different view of the annexation of Cuba than concerning the Philippines. Many Democrats would not oppose it. The principal opposition would be more apt to come from sugar and tobacco growers who fear the wiping out of customs duties with Cuba.
Americans in a Rush.
 MANILA, Nov. 20.—Only fragmentary reports reach Manila of the operations north, which, when the story is known, will prove to have been the most remarkable campaigning the Philippine war has known. General Lawton's division is spread thinly over the territory beyond San Jose, where the telegraph ends. General Young's two regiments of cavalry are continuing their rapid sweep into the new towns, and the infantry is being shoved forward to hold the towns the cavalry takes, all in a country whose natural difficulties are increased indescribably by the rains making rivers out of creeks and swamps out of fields. Wagon transportation is supposed to have been practically abandoned, the American troops living on captured supplies and the little produce the insurgent levies have left. Major Samuel M. Swigert's squadron of the Third Cavalry is reported to be engaging a greatly superior force at Pozzorrubio, northeast of Dagupan. These troops have fought three engagements, and are now holding their position, waiting for reinforcements.
 It is believed at headquarters that this Filipino force is covering the retreat of the insurgent leaders to the Binguet mountains, that the insurgents planned to retreat northeast, along the Tayug road, which is stocked with storehouses, which the Americans have secured to draw upon en route, and that only the insurgent advance force has passed Taugan before the American occupation, the main body of Aguinaldo's army being within our lines. The majority of these insurgents may disorganize and pose as amigos when the Americans overtake them. Among the scraps of news obtainable are stories of the hardships the American army is meeting with. It is reported, for instance, that General Lawton narrowly escaped drowning, while fording a swift river, when Lieutenant Luma and two privates were lost.
 There has been a revival of insurgent activity south of Manila, particularly in Cavite province. At Imus yesterday the Filipinos fired a smooth bore cannon, but this was soon silenced by the American artillery.
 In the course of the morning, Major Cowles, with a battalion of the Fourth Infantry and two guns, scattered the enemy from the districts around Imus and in the direction of Perez das Marinas. The Americans could not pursue the retreating insurgents because their ammunition was exhausted. The Filipinos were under the command of General Mariano Trias.
 Spies report that the insurgents are coming into Cavite province from Calamba, in Laguna province, and the other southerly provinces, and the insurgents have smooth bores and two modern cannon.
 Firing was in progress this afternoon and it is reported that there are more insurgents in the vicinity of Imus than ever before.
 The Province of Panama, which has practically cut loose from the Republic of Colombia, is said to desire annexation to the United States.
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HEAVY FIGHTING AT LADYSMITH.
British Troops Being Sent to Gen. White's Relief.
 Late reports say that 23,500 British troops have arrived at Cape Town as reinforcements. The number at Durban, with those between Estcourt and that place, is considered enough to enable General Hildyard to take the aggressive against the Boers south of Ladysmith. All is ready at Durban for the forward movement.
 It is considered certain that the Boers will make determined efforts to hurl back the British reinforcements before they can join the troops at Estcourt.
 Dispatches show that heavy fighting has occurred at Ladysmith recently, but General White is believed to be still holding out. Four thousand Boers have been detached from the force around Ladysmith and sent to aid in intercepting the British advance.
 The total British loss in the armored train disaster near Estcourt Wednesday is now stated to have been 3 killed, 12 wounded and about 100 missing. Late reports show that Lieut. Winston Churchill distinguished himself by bravery in the fighting, and he is temporarily the popular hero of London.
 All accounts agree that the British prisoners at Pretoria are well treated by the Boers.
 General Joubert, the Boer commander, is reported to be hurrying south with an army of 10,000 men to meet the British advance from Estcourt, Natal. The 3,000 Boers already at Estcourt are threatening an attack on the town.
 The English commander, General Buller, seems to have entirely changed his original plan of campaign. Besides dispatching a column to relieve Ladysmith, he is forced to send help to Kimberley and to meet the Boer advance in Northern Cape Colony.
 The Boer invasion of Cape Colony is proceeding apace. Aliwal North has been occupied by a Boer command 600 strong. At Knopdaar is a command of 1,000; at Naauwpoort one of 600, and at Burghersdorp another of 500. Colesberg is still unmolested, and no advance has as yet been made on the British camp at De Aar.
 Kimberley has been again shelled by the Boers, but little damage has been done. The British force to relieve Kimberley has been concentrated at Orange river, and has doubtless begun its advance.
The Trusts' Citadel.
 Mr. Lawson Purdy, the eminent economist, in a letter to the New England Free Trade League on the subject of trust monopolies, takes the position that the first effective and practical measure to curb the trusts is to attack the artificial monopolies with the weapons at hand. This can be done by removing the tariff on all articles the manufacture of which the trusts have monopolized.
 "Repeal," he declares, should be the battle cry of those who believe in equal rights before the law. The tariff is under control of the Federal Government. The abolition of duties upon articles produced by trusts is easy, immediate and effective. Law has made trusts by conferring special privileges. These privileges can be abolished. The chief privilege, and the one most easily reached, is the tariff. When this special privilege is withdrawn we shall be in a better position to do what further may be necessary.
 The logic of these contentions is unanswerable. A great many Republicans, oppressed and plundered by trust exaction, are becoming as alive as Democrats to the fact that the high tariff is responsible for the exorbitant prices which the trusts have put upon so many indispensable articles of consumption. This truth is forcing a probability that a respectable number of Republican members in the next congress will favor radical tariff reduction.
Terms For Cuban Freedom.
 HAVANA, Nov. 20.—The Havana Council of Delegates of the Cuban League and National Party met last night and adopted a resolution declaring that, the United States having recognized the right of Cuba to be free, the Cubans might expect the United States to deliver the island to an independent government.
 "While establishing a government," the resolution continues, "the Cubans should offer to the United States guarantees respecting property and a preference in commercial treaties, which the Americans have a right to expect and which the Cubans not only have no reason to deny, but can grant without any weakening of their own independence."
 Beyond this the resolution states that the "greatest efforts should be made to shorten the military occupation."

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A THOUSAND KILLED.
 Two Thousand Wounded in a Two Days Battle.
 Panama, Nov. 21.—Dispatches from Pajota, dated the 18th, report a two days battle. The government troops overcome ten thousand insurgents near Bucaranga and defeated them with great slaughter. Ten thousand were engaged on each side. The rebels lost a thousand killed and two thousand wounded. The government loss is not stated.
 The President has refused to accept the resignation of Mr. Damon, the Hawaiian minister of finance, and that official will remain in office at least until such time as congress formulates a system of government for the Hawaiian Island.

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