

THE FIFTY-FIRST CONGRESS.

THE Fifty-first Congress of the United States will meet in regular session on Monday, December 2, and already the clans are beginning to congregate and speculate upon what will be done first. The Senate is presumably always in a state of organization, being a continuous body, but the House of Representatives becomes completely *non est* on the 4th of March of each odd numbered year, so that most of the planning, contriving and guessing are directed toward it.

The last House contained 325 members, the Democrats having an average majority of about fifteen. The present body contains 330, the recent admissions of States in the Northwest having added five to the list, all of these being Republicans and giving that body a majority of eight—enough to work on and elect officers with, but not enough to rely upon throughout the term, or even the present session as a thing fixed and determined. There have already been three deaths among the members elect, and the reaper never forgets to thrust in his sickle one or more times during a Congress; besides, one member stands a fair chance of being chosen a senator from Iowa, vice Allison, but this, unless the latter should from some cause step aside in the meantime, would not make a difference in the House as the member would simply proceed from the lower branch to the upper when the present term expires.

Besides all the conjectures, the Republican preponderance is too small to be relied upon for extreme partisan measures or very obnoxious proceedings even if they should all hold out in the flesh to the last for two reasons—there are several of their number who are known to be conservative and independent, and who would hardly follow the party leaders in the roll call on such measures, for example, as the enforcement and Ku Klux bills for the South; and there are still more of them who are already classed as against the Senate tariff bill, the substitute adopted by that body for the Mills bill of the last Congress, which caused the longest debate and longest session of any measure ever introduced. As the Democrats will go against it almost if not quite unanimously, the Republican majority will be unable to pass it or any similar measure, and this being the great issue now between the parties, the question of Republican

supremacy for any other purpose than organization and technical party points may be considered as practically a negation.

Then, besides, it should be considered that the minority always has advantages which the majority has not, the former being always on the offensive while the latter of necessity is on the defensive. The last time the Republicans had control of the House—from 1881 to 1883—they had a larger majority than they have now and party lines were more distinctly and closely drawn; and yet they were "tied up" for days at a time on obnoxious legislation through the strategy and skillful leadership of the minority. It would seem, therefore, considered from all points of view, as if the Democrats occupied a moderately advantageous position—being possibly able to defeat objectionable legislation while the responsibility for everything naturally rests with the other party. Besides, they can be quietly accumulating the materials with which to go before the country next fall, when the Fifty-second Congress will be chosen, and getting themselves in trim for the Presidential race. They will have ample time and opportunities for this, as the drudgery of the term, so called, will have to be performed by those who are responsible for it.

The political status of the Senate cannot yet be determined, on account of the squabble in Montana. The new state is reveling in the luxury of two legislatures, one unanimously Democratic, the other totally Republican, the former claiming recognition by virtue of certificates of election from the county clerks under the territorial law, the latter because of certificates from the returning board under the new State law. It is quite probable that each of the bodies will elect the two Senators to which the State is entitled, but it is also morally certain that Governor Toole will commission those elected by the Democrats. If these should be admitted, the Republican majority in the Senate would be four, but if the Republicans should be seated it would be eight; otherwise, six.

The contest for the Speakership of the House seems to have narrowed down to three contestants—Thomas B. Reed, of Maine; William McKinley, of Ohio, and Joseph G. Cannon, of Illinois. The complimentary nomination on the Democratic side will be likely to fall upon John G. Carlisle, of Kentucky, Speaker of the last House and the Forty-eighth and Forty-ninth also.

AWAITING THE DECISION.

THE proceedings in the John Moore naturalization case are completed and in the hands of the court. The public await, with deep interest, Judge Anderson's decision.

Those who have perused the evidence from an unbiased standpoint cannot help being impressed with the failure of the anti-"Mormon" prosecution to prove anything to the detriment of the community against which their assault was directed. The evidence they produced was voluminous, its distended proportions being equaled only by its transparency. It was snowed under by the sterling facts produced by the defense.

The testimony was so completely reviewed in the arguments, that it is unnecessary to analyze it further than has already been done in these columns. The prosecution handled what material they possessed with considerable skill and adroitness, not to say cunning, but as grass was short with them, the attorneys on the side of the defense had a splendid field. Mr. Le Grand Young delivered an argument that does him great credit. It was clear, forcible, independent and logical throughout, leaving the other side scarcely a footing on which to stand. The argument of Mr. Thurman, though comparatively brief, was of similar quality. The labors of Mr. James H. Moyle and Mr. R. W. Young were confined to the examination, and they performed that duty with commendable ability.

APROPOS to the article of November 21st, regarding the want of professional amenity exhibited toward Mr. C. W. Penrose by the leading "Liberal" organ in this city, we take pleasure in quoting from the Ogden *Union* of last evening. Referring to the imprisonment of the editor in chief of this journal by Judge Anderson for constructive contempt, the *Union* says:

"Brother Penrose is entitled to a fair share of the sympathies of his fellow-journalists."

One of the headings over the article quoted read thus: "The court shows no mercy."

NEW YORK recently abolished the hand organ from the public streets, but has reconsidered its action and will now allow the rasping sounds provided they are for the poor. This seems unnecessary; the rich seldom require it.