The Dalles Daily Chronicle.

MONDAY - - - - AUG. 12, 1901

FOR AN APRIL INAUGURATION.

It is to be hoped that the agitation recently started for an April presidential inauguration will bear some practical fruit. So many vague suggestions of a change of date have been put forward from time to time under the spur of a particularly blustering March experience, only to be forgotten before the two houses of congress met again in December, that public sentiment has been disposed to dismiss the choice of a more seasonable and appropriate day for our presidential installations as one of those elusive legislative reforms which everybody favors but no one will ever seriously interest himself to accomplish. The present movement seems certainly to contain more promise than any of its immediate predecessors. Heretofore some senator or representative has introduced a bill to carry over the date of the succeeding inauguration from March 4th to April 30th. After a desultory sputter of comment and commendation the measure has been left to die a natural death on some committee calendar. Now at least an organized and intelligent effort is to be made to secure the legislation needed to restore our political calendar to its original integrity. The District of Columbia committee, which so successfully conducted this year's inauguration ceremony, has planned a campaign for a change of date which contemplates the active co-operation of all the state governments and of public opinion generally throughout the Union.

The infelicities of an inauguration under present conditions are too notorious to be enumerated here. National sentiment seems bent on making each presidential installation a more imposing and more splendid spectacle. With the growth of the nation and the growth of its capital, the quadrennial pageant at Washington must continue to broaden in beauty, in dignity and in popularity. If, however, it is to develop along the lines it has begun to follow, an escape from the wintry fury of early March to the exquisite balm and serenity of early May is the first essential. Every consideration of health, of comfort, of convenience, of pictorial effectiveness pleads for this change of setting—a change in which æsthetically there is absolutely everything to gain and nothing to lose.

But other reasons than those of sentiment or of purely local convenience can be found for advocating the choice of a later and more seasonable inauguration date. Each succeeding congress finds the task of crowding the work of its second year into the customary ten or eleven weeks of the shorter session a more perplexing one. What is absolutely necessary is usually accomplished, but at the cost of tremendous friction and effort. Much crude and undigested legislation is passed because there is no time to consider it carefully; many meritorious measures are beaten because a small minority can easily keep them from coming to a vote. An extension of the second session from March 4th to April 30th would mean a vast addition to the working capacity of the two houses and a notable enlargement of their power of selection and judgment.

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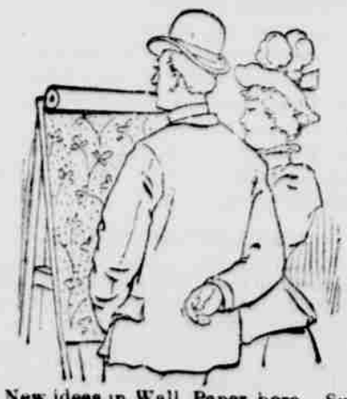

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