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THE INAUGURATION.

WASHINGTON, February 17th, 1897.

 FOUND the servants packing up President Cleveland's things when I visited the White House today. The most of his and Mrs. Cleveland's personal property is already in boxes, and much of it will be shipped away before the 4th of March. I saw Mr. Cleveland's first load of household goods come into the presidential mansion. It was on the day that he was inaugurated. He had been sworn in at the Capitol, but had not yet come to the White House to take his place on the grand stand there and review the procession. There was a big crowd waiting about the White House to see him, when an express wagon drove up, and, with the assistance of a policeman, passed through. This wagon was piled high with trunks and boxes, and upon the top of it was a bright, new baby carriage. How the crowd cheered when they saw it! They bowed down at once to Baby Ruth, even as they had been bowing down to Baby McKee for the past four years. It was the strongest evidence I had yet seen that Harrison as a president was dead and Cleveland, the new president, alive. So it is today—President Cleveland is almost forgotten in the preparations for President McKinley. Pennsylvania avenue is already lined with stands built up for the inaugural procession. Flags are being bought by the thousands to wave in his honor, and the Ebbitt house, where he is to stay for the night of March 3rd, has had the carpenters, painters, plumbers and upholsterers at work for two weeks getting ready for him. They have had a new bath room, with walls of the purest white marble, built for him. The carpets upon which he is to walk have never been used before, and the woven wire mattress upon which his stately limbs will lie will give its first creak for him. Even the mirrors before which he will dress for the inaugural ceremony will be new. By their reflection he will put on his new suit of black broadcloth woven by a New England factory for this very day, and will then go down and eat his breakfast in a new private dining room, before he orders the new carriage which is to be sent here from the Ohio factory, to call upon the old President, and then go out in state to the Capitol to become a brand-new President himself.

This change from the old President to

the new is one of the most interesting sights in the world. A great government is transformed in the twinkling of an eye, and every four years this wonderful change takes place. It will be a great sight this year, and it is expected that there will be at least a hundred thousand strangers here to see it. Washington is preparing for them, and she expects that at least a million dollars will be spent by them here on March 4th. This would be only \$10 a person, and that is not much for a traveler to spend in Washington. You can live here cheaper now than ever before. The citizens of the capital look upon the inauguration as their reception to the President, and they have made full arrangements for the comfort of their guests. There are twenty one committees at work, and things are to be done this year on a broader and grander scale than ever before. Old Washingtonians tell me that they are determined no one shall be cheated if it can be possibly helped. They have established what is known as the department of public comfort, and by writing here any one can get full information about board or lodging, and he can even engage them in advance of his coming. There are in the neighborhood of 30,000 lodging places already registered. Every one of these has been inspected by the agents of this department, and only those which are respectable have been put upon the list.

The accommodations are of all kinds. You can get a place to stay over night for 50 cents, but at this rate you will have to sleep on a cot with from six to ten other persons in the same room. Or you can pay as high as \$5 a day, in which case you may have a good double bed, with a tiled bath room attached. There are more than forty rooms of this kind which have been given by people who want to make a little money out of the inauguration, and who in some cases own their own houses. These prices are for rooms without board. The boarding houses, of which there are 200 in Washington, will charge from \$2 to \$3 a day for board and lodging, and you will have to pay about the same in the private houses which will take boarders for the occasion. The best way to do, if you wish to visit Washington at this time, is to send a letter to Col. Wright of the department of public comfort, telling what kind of accommodations you want and inclosing a check for \$5. He will engage a place for you and will hand your check over to the person with whom you are to stop. Upon your arrival at the depot a boy in uniform will meet you and direct you where to go.

There are in the neighborhood of 300,000 people living in Washington. It

is safe to say that 100,000 of them will be on the streets at the time of the grand procession. This added to the 100,000 strangers will make 200,000. It is estimated that there is room for this many people to stand on both sides of Pennsylvania avenue, along the line of march. You can easily crowd 100,000 about the Capitol steps, and there will be room in Lafayette park and in other places about the grand stand. President McKinley will deliver his address on the front steps of the Capitol. He will review the procession from the grand stand in front of the White House. This stand is now being put up. As much delay as possible has been made concerning it, owing to the wishes of President Cleveland. Putting up such a stand in front of the White House is like erecting a gallows in a jail yard in sight of the man to be executed. Every blow of the hammer is a warning to Cleveland that his end is approaching, and he naturally is in no hurry to have the pounding begin. There will be about 1,000 seats on this stand, but they will be given to invited guests. There will be seats on other stands, however, upon Pennsylvania avenue where you can see the President as he passes by in the procession, and there are hundreds of windows which are offered for rent along the line of the parade. The seats on the stands will be very good without the weather is bad. They will cost from 50 cents to \$1 apiece. Windows will be rented for what they will bring. The department of public comfort had about 400 windows registered the other day when I called upon Colonel Wright. I was told that the prices ranged from \$10 to \$50 a window, and that some single rooms were bringing as high as \$300. So far it is the highest priced windows that have been taken. Among the curious things I learned was that some of the best places have been applied for by colored people from the south. Forty negroes from Texas, representing a large club, have written saying that they want the best sight-seeing and boarding accommodations.

The inaugural ball is to be wonderfully fine. The tickets to it are rapidly selling. They cost \$5 each. There will be no passes, and the probability is that there will be at least 12,000 people at the ball. There were that many at Cleveland's last inaugural ball, and the night was very stormy. The sale from the tickets will in all probability pay all the inauguration expenses. The ball will be given, you know, in the pension building. This is the biggest brick building in the United States, if not in the whole world. Its area is more than two acres, and its great central court, which is to be the ball room, covers more than one acre. There is no such