

I concluded to go to Governor Kirkwood and get him to call an extra session. I did so, spending all the night on the train to go from Dubuque to Davenport. There was no direct road then, and I had to go out into Illinois and there connect with the C. B. and Q. and come back. I presented the situation to the governor. I told him that it was certain that Wilson could not be elected, and that I doubted whether I could be, but that my chances were better than his. Governor Kirkwood did not think the matter so serious at first, but upon my showing him the real status of affairs, he said that if I would go and get a letter from Senator Grimes, advising the matter, he would call the extra session. Kirkwood had a great respect for Grimes' judgment. I then went to see Grimes. He lived at Burlington, and I walked from the train to his house. I was told he was down in the city. I looked him up and found him in a grocery store owned by a young man named Gear, the same young man who had just been elected from my state to take Wilson's place in the United States Senate. Well, I presented the situation to Senator Grimes. He laughed at first, but I soon showed him that I was right, and he said:

"Well, if that is so, and I think it is, we will certainly lose two districts in Congress if the governor does not call an extra session. If I were him, I would not hesitate a moment. I would not only call a session, but I would make this the basis of the call."

"Here I saw my chance, and said; Governor Kirkwood sent me to you to find out what you thought about the matter, and to bring him an answer. Now, if you think that there should be an extra session, he would like to know it, and I would like to carry him a note from you saying so."

"Senator Grimes then gave me a note to Governor Kirkwood, stating that I had called upon him about the matter, and that I was very much alarmed over the situation. In this note he wrote about as follows: 'I am more sanguine as to the patriotism of the people of Iowa than Allison, but I think that the situation is such that an extra session of the legislature ought to be called upon this question. The expenses of such a meeting will be a bagatelle in comparison with the great issues involved.'"

"I took this note back to Governor Kirkwood. He called a meeting of the legislature, and our soldiers were voted in the field. We sent, I think, three commissioners, and their votes were taken and returned, and through this we got a republican delegation from Iowa in Congress, and I was one of the members. Soon after this, I think," said Senator Allison, "the other states of the north adopted the same rule as to taking the votes of the soldiers in the field, but I believe that Iowa was the first to attempt this, and that I may, to a certain extent, be called the author of the movement. At any rate, in was through this that I came to Congress, and I have been here, with the exception of the two years between 1871 and 1872, from that time to this."

DOES PUBLIC LIFE PAY.

"It is nearly thirty-three years since you were elected, Senator. That is a full generation. Now, look back, will you, over your career. Do you think it has paid you to be a public man?"

"I don't know," replied Senator Allison, reflectively.

"I have thought of it many times, and I have sometimes decided that it has not. It has been pleasant in many ways, but it has often seemed to me that it would have been better for me had I closed my public career with my term in the House. There is really a great deal of hard work connected with congress, and my life in the senate has been one of hard work and much worry. When I left the House in 1871, twenty four years ago, I was, you might say, at the beginning of my prime. Had I dropped politics and devoted myself to my profession of the law I would certainly be a much richer man than I am today. I think, perhaps, I would have been happier."

THE PRESIDENCY.

"Still, Senator, you have had all that public life gives to any one, with the exception of the presidency, and you may have that."

"But I am not a candidate for the presidency," replied Senator Allison. "No! No! Not in any sense of the word! I have never looked upon the White House as many other public men do. I doubt much concerning the happiness that is supposed to come with the presidential office. I have known many presidents. I have been acquainted with them before they went into office, and I have known them after they came out. I have seen them go into the White House happy and proud in their power and in their possibilities of accomplishing great things. I have seen them come out disappointed and disgusted. I do not know that I would care for the presidency if I could have it. It is certainly not a place that I should strive for. I am in the Senate now, and I feel that my state will probably keep me there as long as I desire to stay. My experience there is worth something. I hardly feel that my work is ended yet, and the presidential position should be for the rounding out of one's career. The ex-President has no place to fill in our political activity, and, with the single exception, perhaps, of John Quincy Adams, there are none of our presidents who have accomplished much of statesmanship after they have left the White House. It is the general idea that the President should be a dignified monument of that which has been, and in a certain sense this is right."

NO SECOND TERM.

"But many Presidents have had second terms," said I.

"I do not believe in that at all," replied Senator Allison. "A President should not be re-elected, and it would be better for the country if this was a thoroughly understood fact. We are always bound to be governed by one of three great parties. The president is the choice of one of these parties, and the man who strives for re-election is tempted to use the machinery of the office for his own personal ends. In justice to his party and to the country I do not think that a President can be a candidate for a second term."

THE REPUBLICAN OUTLOOK.

"Speaking of parties, Senator, what is the outlook of the Republican party today? Is it healthy?"

"I think it is in a perfectly healthy condition," replied senator Allison, "and I think there is no doubt as to what it will do in the coming presidential campaign. It will be united and I do

not believe that there is any doubt as to its success."

"Do you not think there will soon be a change of parties in the United States? Are not the east and west drifting apart? Will we not have a party of the east and the west?"

"No, I think not," replied Senator Allison. "The Democratic and the Republican parties will be the great political parties of the United States for years to come. They may change to a certain extent their issues from time to time. But the main lines of division will be the same."

THE SILVER QUESTION.

"How about the silver question? What do you think of this little yellow book known as 'Coin's Financial School'?"

"I have read it," replied Senator Allison. "It is an interesting book and it is creating something of a sensation in the west. It is full of half truths. It is not a fair book, by any means, and it will not bear an investigation. The last chapter, in which it pretends to state how we could maintain our gold with the free coinage of silver independent of similar action on the part of the nations of Europe, fails utterly, and the author goes off into a denunciation of England and the English to blind his readers as to the weakness of his argument. As to the silver movement in the west, I think the force of it is somewhat exaggerated. The people of the United States will not act hastily about such an important matter, and the bi-metallism which we want is one which shall be reached through international agreement."

In speaking further about silver the Senator referred to the speeches which he had made during the present year and stated that they contained his exact position as to silver and gold. His talk, however, was more of a personal chat than an interview for publication, and the part of it relating to himself was most interesting.

WHY SENATOR ALLISON REFUSED THE TREASURY.

Referring to his modest statement about the Presidency, Senator Allison's conduct in the past has shown that he has again and again refused high offices, and I believe that the bee of official ambition buzzes less closely about him than about any other public man now named as a presidential candidate. He has several times refused to go into the cabinet. Garfield at one time offered him the portfolio of the Interior, and at another I am told, he intended to give him the Treasury Department. He refused to take the portfolio of the Treasury upon the organization of President Harrison's cabinet. During my talk with him I asked him why he had so persistently refused to leave the Senate for the cabinet. He replied that his duty to his state and his friends at the times these positions were offered him demanded such an action and that he did not regret having done the things which he could not help. He did not want the Interior department, and it was through his influence that Gen. Garfield gave that position to Samuel J. Kirkwood. At the time that Harrison offered to make him Secretary of the Treasury Gen. Clarkson was spoken of for a cabinet position, and Mr. Allison would not accept a position which was likely to cause trouble in his own party, especially when the people of his state