

friends. One of these is Cardinal Gibbons, who spent some time with me here at Elkins not long ago, and who is by the way, one of the great men of the United States. My daughter married a Catholic. She asked my advice about the matter, and I told her that if she really loved the man she was about to marry I did not think the difference of religion was to be considered. Her husband was very strong in his faith, and as she did not think the question of denomination made much difference, she became a Catholic. As for me, I believe in the Christian religion, but I am not much of a sectarian. All of the churches are doing great good for civilization, law, peace and order. If I cannot attend my own church, I am content to worship at any other at hand. I was a vestryman five years in All Souls' Episcopal Church in New York. Here at home my family and I worship at the Presbyterian Church. My religious belief, in short may be summed up in a quotation from Tennyson, which is:

"There's a Something that watches over us and our individuality endures."

"That's my faith, and that's all my faith"

HOW JOHN SHERMAN LOST THE PRESIDENCY.

"Speaking of Tom Sherman, Senator, what do you think of his Uncle John, the Senator? Will he cut any figure in the coming national convention?"

"I think not," replied Senator Elkins, "for I have understood that he will not be a candidate. He is perhaps the best equipped for the presidency of any of our public men. He is a great statesman and a great all around man, and he would have made a good President. He might have been nominated in 1888. The choice wavered for some time between him and Harrison. It swung on the turning of a hair, but the hair was turned in the direction of Harrison, and he was nominated. The turn was made through the friends of Blaine. They felt that their favorite had been defeated partly by Sherman's friends in 1876, and again in 1880, and they could not forget this. The truth is, it was understood among the friends of Blaine that if it came to be a question between Harrison and Sherman, the Blaine strength would, as far as possible, be cast for Harrison. But there should be no mistake, Mr. Blaine was asked by cable, being in Europe at the time, and the answer came back, 'Harrison.'"

THE COVENTION OF 1880.

"You can't tell anything about a convention, however," Mr. Elkins went on. "Take that of 1880. We thought we would surely nominate Blaine. I foresaw the close contest which was bound to come between Grant and Blaine, and I urged Gen. Garfield, who was for Sherman, but alter him for Blaine, to give us twenty-five votes from Ohio, if at any time it should be shown that this would nominate Blaine. He promised to do this. But during the next ballot his own name was sprung, and, in order to end the contest, he was nominated."

THE PRESIDENCY.

"You are mentioned as a presidential candidate. Senator. Have you aspirations that way?"

"No, I have not," replied Senator Elkins. "I have you know, lived a long time both in the east and the west, engaged all the time in active business."

For sixteen years I have served on the national committee, have attended the four national conventions and have taken part in all the campaigns. This has given me a wide acquaintance and made me many friends throughout the country, some of whom, in their partiality, have mentioned my name, even in connection with the presidency. That is all. I do not say that if the presidency were in my grasp that I would not reach out and take it. I am ambitious, but I do not believe that I am the logical conclusion of the situation. I am content to be a United States Senator. I see in that position a field where I believe I can work to advantage and where I think I can do good to my state and the country. It is a position which I think is worthy of any man and his best energies."

"How about the vice presidency, Senator?"

"I am not a candidate for the vice presidency," replied Senator Elkins. "I don't know that I would like to give up the six years of my senatorship, which I am now assured of, for four years of the vice presidency, even if I were sure I could have it. The position in the Senate is an active one, and I like it for that reason. I would not like to give up a possibility of doing something, which I think I have as Senator, to that of the vice presidency, where I could do nothing but preside."

THE CAMPAIGN ONE OF ISSUES, NOT OF MEN.

"You say you are not the logical candidate for the presidency, Senator Elkins. Who is?"

"That I cannot yet say," was the reply. "The talk about myself comes, in addition to what I have said before, from my being the first republican Senator elected from West Virginia in twenty five years, and from a southern state in a long time. This together with the fact that the West Virginia republicans broke the solid south, and with West Virginia republican we could lose New York and win the presidency next year, has drawn attention to this state. But this is not enough. The issues to be fought this year are not those of the north and south. That kind of campaigning has, I hope, passed away forever. This is an era of business—not sentiment. We want the issues which tend to the up-building of the United States, the development of the country and the making us more than ever a great and prosperous nation; indeed, the greatest and most prosperous in the world. As to candidates, there are plenty of good men and great men in the field."

"Tom Reed of Maine would make a good President. So would Harrison, McKinley, Morton or Ailison. Although I have no right to speak for Gen. Harrison, yet I believe he will not enter into any scramble for the position before the convention. Having been one of the greatest Presidents the country has had, and having received a second nomination, in my judgment he'll not enter into any contest for the place. He might accept if the nomination were given him unanimously."

"How about McKinley?"

"I think Gov. McKinley would make a strong candidate," replied Senator Elkins, though his selection will depend somewhat upon whether the party at this time concludes to make a fight for an entirely new tariff. He stands as a

great leader in this line. I don't think, however, that the important question now is that of candidates. What we want is to secure party harmony, and to decide upon the issues which will insure success. It is not a question of men; it is of principles."

MR. ELKINS' SENATORIAL HOPES.

"Senator, I know you have been ambitious to come to the Senate. Now, won't you tell me what you expect to do when you get there. Will you drop into your seat as a member of the Millionaires' Club, and to be content with the honor and the salary? Will you be an advocate of sensational attacks on capital and corporations, or will you be the slave and agent of the monopolies? In other words, Senator, what do you propose to do?"

"I don't know that I ought to answer that question," replied Senator Elkins.

"I can say, however, that I am not going into the Senate to take any one of the three places you have laid out for me. In the first place, I could not be inactive if I tried. In the second, while I am in sympathy with honest labor and the laboring man, I believe I am too fair to attempt to gain influence and notoriety by supporting any of the semi-anarchistic or socialistic elements. And, in the third place, I am not and have never been the slave of any corporation. Such interests as I have I control in connection with two or three men, and while the corporations of the country may not want to, they know that they cannot control me. No, I am going into the Senate to do what I can to help along my state and to better the condition of the country. I don't know that it will be much. But I have my own ideas, and I think there is room for me to do some good."

AMERICA AS MISTRESS OF THE SEAS.

"Along what lines, Senator?"

"I believe, in the first place," replied Senator Elkins, "that the business interests of the United States are the ones we should look out for. We have reached the point where government is, after all, more a matter of sound business administration than of sentiment. We, the people, are, in a certain sense, a great stock company, owning this United States, and the executive and Congress are our trustees, to whom we look to manage our internal and foreign relations for our own individual and national advantage. We have passed the formative period and the era of experiment in government, and we are now in the era of progress and development. We must now adopt and seek out such measures and policies as will, in the surest and most rapid ways, promote these ends. I believe the ultimate destiny of the United States is to lead in the business affairs of the world. I want to see New York take the place of London as the financial center. In a word, I want and expect to see this country lead the world in trade, commerce, mining and manufactures, and in my small way I desire to do what I can in the Senate to aid in bringing this about."

"Among the questions which are pressing now are those of our foreign trade and shipping. We ought to extend and enlarge our foreign trade and have our own shipping, and carry our own goods to and from the foreign markets. Think of it! We pay England \$200,000,000 a year for cartage before we begin to compete with her as to