

A WOMAN PROMOTES THE PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDACY OF SENATOR ALLISON, 1888

By Edward A. White

Although the Democrats held the presidency in 1888, the Republicans thought their chances of displacing them considerably better than four years before, when Grover Cleveland had defeated James G. Blaine by only a narrow margin. Various party leaders believed that success at the national convention that year would give them not only control of the Republican party, but also of the government. As a result, the field of aspirants was large. When the convention opened at Chicago on June 19, six candidates contested the nomination, while about as many more urged their availability in case a deadlock among the leaders should prolong the convention. The leading candidates were Benjamin Harrison and Walter Q. Gresham of Indiana, William B. Allison of Iowa, John Sherman of Ohio, Chauncey M. Depew of New York, and Russell A. Alger of Michigan.

Blaine, who had lost New York in 1884 by a scant 1,100 votes, and with it the election, had waited until February of 1888 to announce that for personal reasons he would not seek the nomination. In the convention, however, he was well represented by eager supporters who hoped until the end to win him the nomination by a spontaneous demonstration of enthusiasm on the convention floor.

The outward signs of the spirited activities of the 1888 Republican convention in Chicago were the eight ballots for the presidential nomination, beginning with the first roll call on Friday, June 22, and concluding with the nomination of Benjamin Harrison of Indiana on the eighth ballot on Monday, June 25. For Harrison, the decisive moments in the convention were the critical ballots on Saturday, when he jumped from fourth to second place, and on Monday, when he went into the lead. And in these developments, the determining influences were, first, winning the New York vote for Harrison, and secondly, circumventing the Blaine candidacy, which alone was sufficiently powerful among the convention delegates to threaten a nomination based on sentiment rather than on commitments.

The most critical decision of the convention was that of the New York

delegation to support Harrison. Harrison's rivals for the nomination believed that this decision had been purchased by a promise of patronage to Thomas Collier Platt, political boss of New York and leader of the New York delegation to the convention. If this is true, there were two times during the convention week when it could have been made. One was Friday afternoon, when Harrison's manager, Louis T. Michener, negotiated with Platt; another was Sunday morning, when Stephen B. Elkins, the personal representative of Blaine, took Platt for a carriage ride along the shores of Lake Michigan, and upon returning predicted that New York would give its full vote to Harrison. Meanwhile, Harrison's managers at Chicago were urging him to promise the appointment of a cabinet officer to Matthew S. Quay, the boss of Pennsylvania, in return for Quay's support at the convention, but Harrison refused to sign a letter for Quay as evidence of his willingness to grant this request.¹

Another conference, not recorded by Platt or Sherman, also occurred, according to George F. Hoar of Massachusetts, on Friday afternoon, when the convention had taken a recess from 12 to 4 o'clock. During this recess the heads of various state delegations had met in a room at the convention hall "to see if they could agree upon a candidate." Hoar represented the Massachusetts delegation; Platt and two others were there in behalf of New York, while Chauncey Depew, the fourth member of the New York group, was absent. Politicians from Pennsylvania, Wisconsin, and Illinois each had authority to decide their state's vote. James S. Clarkson of Iowa attended, "with authority to vote for Mr. Allison from the beginning." Hoar, who had originally favored Sherman, found that he could not carry the Massachusetts delegation with him and had, therefore, changed his support to Allison. After various discussions, the group of state leaders had agreed to cast their votes for Allison. This decision seemed agreeable to the New York men, but when the group convened again just before the convention met at 4, the New Yorkers announced that, because of the opposition of

¹ On this much-argued point, see Thomas Collier Platt, *The Autobiography of Thomas Collier Platt* (New York, 1910), 205-206, 218-19. Louis T. Michener in an undated memorandum in the *Michener Papers*, Box 2 (Library of Congress), denies that any bargain was made with Platt. John Sherman thought that any bargain, if one were made, did not involve Harrison. John Sherman, *John Sherman's Recollections of Forty Years in the House, Senate and Cabinet: An Autobiography* (2 vols., Chicago, 1895), 2:1029. John B. Elam and L. T. Michener to Harrison, June 17, 1888, in *Harrison Papers* (Library of Congress), Vol. 29. This collection, now open to the historian, throws new light on the convention of 1888.

Depew, they could not carry out the agreement. Depew, a railroad man, who had withdrawn as a candidate because of the opposition of the agrarian element represented by Allison, refused to vote for his Iowa opponent. Allison's support came from Iowa and the agricultural states of the Northwest; Depew had agreed to withdraw his own name, but "he would not so far submit to such an unreasonable and socialistic sentiment as to give his consent" to the nomination of Allison. Thus, writes Hoar, "the thing fell through. If it had gone over, New York, Illinois, Wisconsin, Pennsylvania, Massachusetts, Iowa, California, and perhaps Missouri, would have cast their votes unanimously for Allison, and his nomination would have been sure. I think no other person ever came so near the Presidency of the United States, and missed it."²

Whatever the relative strength of these various agreements, Harrison emerged from the balloting Saturday morning as a strong contender for the nomination. Many delegates feared, however, that the Blaine movement was growing, and that the convention might resolve the deadlock at any moment by the sudden nomination of Blaine.³

But even before the convention had reassembled after another afternoon recess, a reaction to the Blaine scare had set in. In part this can be attributed to the determined opposition of a group of powerful convention leaders whose only basis for union hitherto had been their common hostility to Harrison. For other reasons, also, the temper of the convention appeared skeptical both of the trend toward Blaine and of the leadership of the New York politicians. A caucus of the Wisconsin delegation during the afternoon agreed not to support Blaine, which the *Chicago Tribune*, friendly to the candidacy of Walter Q. Gresham of Indiana, took to mean that Wisconsin would desert Harrison on the next ballot.⁴ Moreover, with Blaine's nomination so near, the fear grew that his name at the head of the national

² George F. Hoar, *Autobiography of Seventy Years* (2 vols., London, 1904), 1:410-13.

³ See, for example, the telegrams of Sherman's advisers in the convention of June 23, 1888, in the *Sherman Papers*, Vol. 450 (Library of Congress). Sherman urged his supporters to resist the "carefully arranged plot" to nominate Blaine. Sherman to H. C. Hedges, n.d., telegram, in *Sherman Papers*, Vol. 450, No. 29,393. Elkins, who had been Blaine's manager in 1884, was universally recognized as the politician best able to control the large Blaine following at the convention. See, for example, J. S. Clarkson to Elkins, May 18, 1888; B. F. Jones to Elkins, May 23, 1888; L. T. Michener to Elkins, June 9, 1888, etc., in *Elkins Papers* (University of West Virginia Archives, Morgantown, W. Va.).

⁴ *Chicago Tribune*, June 24, 1888.

ticket would defeat it in the election.⁵ And finally, the Blaine leaders themselves, discovering the opposition to their program, began to take fright and concluded that the best way to promote the candidacy of their man was to continue the strategy of Fabian withdrawal before the united opposition of their enemies. They therefore allowed the convention to be adjourned; but in doing so they lost their one opportunity to accomplish Blaine's nomination, for by the time the delegates reassembled Monday morning the winning combination had already settled upon Harrison.⁶

On Monday, James S. Clarkson and the Iowa people held the center of the stage. Clarkson was one of the group of leaders who, admitting the possibility of Blaine's nomination, had conferred secretly with Elkins and Platt; but openly he had acted with the opponents of Harrison and had continued to advocate the nomination of Senator William B. Allison. When Blaine's withdrawal seemed assured, Clarkson entered into the Harrison movement and took Iowa with him. Monday morning a caucus of the Iowa delegation had considered a second choice, in case they should fail to nominate Allison. Clarkson explained that the Iowa men were willing to abandon their candidate because they were "more governed by the party interest than [by] interest . . . [in] Senator Allison."⁷ For a second choice the Iowa people preferred Gresham to Harrison, but Clarkson convinced them that Gresham's candidacy at that stage of the convention was even more hopeless than Allison's. Some of Sherman's supporters believed that with the choice narrowed to the Ohio and Indiana candidates, the action of Allison's men had been decisive.⁸ Most significant was the Iowa delegation's refusal to cooperate further in the convention with the opponents of Harrison.

Without the support of the Allison men, the opposition to Harrison collapsed. The Allison and Gresham strength had formed the center of the bulwark against Harrison, cooperating with the Sherman faction as long as Blaine's nomination threatened. But when Clarkson, together with power-

⁵ One of Allison's correspondents, for example, asserted that the nomination of Blaine "under the circumstances . . . [would be] a violation of the first maxim of war. 'Never do that which your enemy wishes you to do.'" J. Fred Meyers to Allison, June 23, 1888, in *Allison Papers*, Box 264 (Iowa State Department of History and Archives, Des Moines, Iowa).

⁶ See the *New York World*, June 24, 1888.

⁷ Interview with Clarkson, in *Des Moines Iowa State Register*, June 28, 1888.

⁸ Frank B. Baird to Sherman, June 25, 1888, telegram, in *Sherman Papers*, Vol. 451, Nos. 29,600-29,601.

ful leaders from New England, withdrew from the combination, the Gresham men were powerless to continue their opposition. Sherman counted heavily on the support of Illinois, but at the last moment Illinois deserted him. The disintegration of the rival candidacies allowed the convention to conform rigidly to the pattern Elkins and Platt had evidently drawn for it on Sunday.

Assured of victory, Michener telegraphed Harrison Monday morning that he would be nominated that day. While the delegates were assembling, Michener and William F. Dudley, a confederate, took command of the Harrison organization in the convention hall. Dudley "used the left aisle," Michener explained, "and I the right one. We walked the aisles, talked right and left with the delegates, met in the rear aisle to confer, and then resumed our work, and so on to the end."⁹ A few minutes before the chairman called the convention to order, Clarkson held a consultation with Platt and the other New Yorkers to find out whether they proposed to stay with Harrison when the balloting began or to leave him and divide their votes between Sherman and Russell A. Alger of Michigan. Platt promised that New York would carry out the plan, and Clarkson returned to the Iowa delegation to await developments.¹⁰

When the final session began, a spokesman for Blaine read two messages received from him the day before, asking his friends not to seek his nomination. The California delegation, however, which from the beginning had been the nucleus of the Blaine strength, refused to change its vote. Although New York for the first time cast its full strength for Harrison, there were no other additions, and Harrison's total was not appreciably increased. But Michener learned from the Iowa leaders that they would withdraw Allison's name at the end of the next ballot. With this information Michener went to the California men and suggested that they lead the break to Harrison. He argued that they could demonstrate how they exercised more influence in national party councils than the California delegates to the Democratic convention, who had been able to obtain only the temporary chairmanship.

On the next ballot, the seventh of the convention, California came to Harrison with fifteen of its sixteen votes, putting him in first place with a

⁹ Michener, "The National Convention of 1888," 5-6, unpublished manuscript, in *Michener Papers*, Box 1.

¹⁰ Interview with Clarkson, in *Chicago Tribune*, June 26, 1888.

total of 279. Immediately a group formed in the aisle in front of the New York delegation. It consisted of Platt, Depew, Matthew Quay of Pennsylvania, and David B. Henderson of Iowa. Shortly Clarkson came over. They talked vigorously. When they separated, "knowing persons said, 'That settles it.'" In Clarkson's opinion, the situation "had become nervous and was fast growing morbid." He thought the party could best meet it by nominating a ticket agreeable to the two doubtful states, New York and Indiana. Clarkson went to the leaders of several other delegations, among them New Jersey, Wisconsin, and West Virginia, and announced that in view of New York's determination to leave Sherman, Iowa would give up Allison and join the Harrison movement if the other states would participate. He made what he described in a newspaper interview as "a patriotic appeal, unselfish and purely in the interest of the party."¹¹

When Clarkson reported to his delegation that the other states had accepted the proposal to unite on Harrison, Henderson arose, thanked the friends of Senator Allison for their support, and withdrew Allison's name. On the final ballot Allison's entire following of 99 votes went to Harrison. When New York continued its support, Quay brought the Pennsylvania delegation into the Harrison column. The vote of Tennessee gave Harrison a majority, and the remaining states fell quickly into line. On the eighth ballot, Harrison was nominated with 544 votes, to 118 for Sherman, 100 for Alger, and 59 for Gresham.

An interlude in the story of this convention at Chicago in 1888, which is an item in the social history of American politics, played a small part in the presidential candidacy of Senator William B. Allison of Iowa. Without much political significance, the brief but bizarre career of Annette W. W. Hicks Lord as a convention conspirator is notable because it reveals, better than newspaper accounts or secret messages, the richly colored human qualities mixed in the palette of politics at Chicago. And more, in the personality of this woman one discovers something of the intense personal loyalty which was so much a part of the politics of the eighties. The temptation is all too great to treat the convention as a smoothly working machine, responding to the delicate manipulations of the Stephen B. Elkins's, the Thomas Collier Platts, and the Mark Hannas. But the men and the few women who gathered at Chicago were human beings, in none of whom can

¹¹ Interview with Clarkson, in *Des Moines Iowa State Register*, June 28, 1888.

the qualities of personal and party devotion be seen so intimately as in Annette.

The story of Mrs. Hicks Lord's activities in the Allison cause is told in a series of fourteen letters to Allison covering the period from the beginning of March to the end of August. During this period Annette was in Washington, at her home in New York, attending the convention at Chicago, and in Paris and London on a holiday. She was at the time a widow, but had been married to one Henry W. Hicks who had considerable property interests in Toledo and in Hicksville, Ohio. Her double name suggests that she may have been married again after the death of her husband, but she did not write of this to Allison. Annette was probably in her late fifties, or older; she mentioned that the late Chief Justice Waite had served her husband's interests at Toledo for twenty-three years, and she had in her employ at the time a maid who had been with her for twenty-six years. She was apparently a woman of some wealth and had good connections. She kept half a dozen servants at her New York residence at 32 Washington Square, West, where she lived alone. It is impossible to give, in any summary of Annette's correspondence with Allison, an adequate impression of the personal challenge which Allison's prospects for the nomination gave her, or of the convention scene which met her eyes. Allison's candidacy took on with her something of the fervor of a crusade, and only by quoting generous extracts from her letters can one hope to reproduce anything of the flavor of her experiences.

Annette spent the spring months of 1888 in Washington. While there she occupied her spare time with politics, heard Allison speak in the Senate, met him on occasion at dinner parties, and began to show an interest in his campaign for the presidential nomination. Her interest in Allison's career probably dates from this time, although she mentioned an offer to help Allison "obtain the Presidency of that California College . . . long before I knew who you were." She had made this offer at the table of a Washington friend, "Mother" Dahlgreen, who seems to have been an important link between Annette and Allison. Many of the politically ambitious public men of Washington attended Mrs. Dahlgreen's parties, for she was thought to have some influence with the Catholic vote.

At the point where we break in upon Annette's correspondence with Allison, we find her scolding the Senator for not having paid his dinner call

to Mrs. Dahlgreen. "Don't you know," she remarked, "she is power (through high dignitaries of her church) as regards the *Catholic vote*. It seems Shermans friends have been after her." Annette had called on Mrs. Dahlgreen that morning and she had been told "in a very casual way all her guests except yourself had paid her their digestion visit and she attributed this contrast to your former regard for all social obligations [to] the results of the strain upon you relative to the Presidency matters. . . ." ¹²

The first meeting between Annette and Allison had been at one of Mrs. Dahlgreen's dinner parties. Next day her hostess "came to the Arlington to see me and talk it all over. She told me then for the first [time] who and what you were, and admitted her motive in placing me at the table as she did; was to make a *tool* of me to secure the Catholic vote in N York for the Rep-n Presidency. I roared at the idea, was flattered into the belief, I could do it if I liked."

Annette had no designs upon the person or the public reputation of the unmarried senator. Her "nameless infatuation, that passion of my heart and soul," was a passion not for Allison but for politics. Of course she recognized that if he were President "Any single woman would have set their cap for handsome Allison," but for herself Annette would say that she was "not in the market, nor have I an axe to grind, having had my day over and over again. . . ." On the contrary, her political efforts were dictated by an interest quite impersonal. "I do it for the fun of the thing in a sly way just to see the wheel go. . . ." And if it should turn out that at the same time she could be useful to Allison, she would be gratifying one of the major impulses of her nature, for she was the sort of person who took great "delight in obliging people, in doing kind acts. . . ." Add to that an interest in politics which gave her "amusement and occupation . . . in trying to understand the public questions which concern our blessed Country," and the fact that she had "nothing special on hand" to occupy her mind, and Annette lacked only the opportunity to become a political intriguer. ¹³

The opportunity presented itself when she was approached by three "prominent Republicans" to go to Chicago in their interest. She declined, with the excuse that she had had no political experience, and if she went at

¹² Annette W. W. Hicks Lord to Allison, March 2, 1888. (The letters used in this article are all to be found in Box 263 of the *Allison Papers*.)

¹³ Mrs. Hicks Lord to Allison, Mar. 12, May 31, June 17, 25, 1888.

all it would be only as a spectator. But meantime she had determined to do what she could at Chicago for Allison. "The fact is," she wrote him, "I am going to throw myself, neck and heels, heart and soul, in dead earnest, and work hammer and tongues [sic] in getting votes for — Hon. Senator Allison."¹⁴

Annette's participation in the Allison campaign raised the delicate question of how communication between her and her candidate was to be arranged. Even while in Washington she had discouraged his coming to see her, believing that his political opponents would find some avenue for attacking him on what might appear to be a compromising situation. Now that she was in New York, communication seemed even more difficult. She had at first felt that Allison's writing to her "might in some way jeopardize [his] interests," and had therefore suggested that he keep in touch with her through Mrs. Dahlgreen. But when Allison wrote acknowledging her "three months performance" in Washington, Annette was "not the least bit displeased . . . (on the contrary was rather set up)," and concluded that her "strict injunctions" not to write had perhaps been "a far fetched delicacy. . . ." From her caution in so small a matter, one gets the impression that Annette was scrupulously observing all the proprieties which her somewhat unusual undertaking dictated. Now, however, she not only encouraged Allison to write directly, but to call at her house if he should be in New York. She needed advice on the ways of politicians.

I really would like to have a talk with you [Annette wrote] and have you tell me, whether my putting my oar in for you, at Chicago, would be judicious, and if so tell me how and what to do. I have talked around, in an indirect way and find New York politicians have an idea I am [a] sort of power. I swallow it all, look wise, and knowing, but confess to you, I am as green as grass, all in the dark and realize it is about time I understood myself.¹⁵

Allison could not come to New York, but he wrote her in June and promised to send James S. Clarkson around to her at Chicago:

I find now it will not be possible for me to reach N. Y. before you will be on your way to Chicago. I am sure you will be much interested there. No, I cannot mark out for you any special line of policy. I have asked my friend Clarkson whom you call a trump to call on you when he ascertains your address, which I

¹⁴ Mrs. Hicks Lord to Allison, May 31, 1888.

¹⁵ *Idem.*

have promised to send him, and may I kindly ask you to send it to me. He may and probably will have suggestions to make. I thank you for your kindness, and now that the ice is clear all will go well with us in our correspondence.¹⁶

Annette took what seems to be the unnecessary precaution of returning this letter to Allison. "I *always* send back all confidential letters for the writer to burn up," she explained. "It is either *bit* or *miss* with you now days, and as I am a stranger to you and a self imposed political friend, *mum* and *caution* are the words."¹⁷

With "mum and caution," then, Annette prepared for her adventure. She engaged a suite of rooms at the Palmer House for herself, a maid, a manservant, and her friend, Mrs. Eugene McLean, whom she was taking along as her guest to serve as a "good blinder for my purposes." Annette described Mrs. McLean as one of her "seven special intimate friends who are as much at home in my house as their own." In Annette's opinion, she was "very lovely" and a "splendid talker," with the additional advantage that her husband was a Democrat, which might help to obscure the nature of Annette's visit to Chicago. Mrs. McLean's own political affiliations were, "like a garter or suspender, very adjustable indeed." Unlike the Washington circle in which she had moved, few of Annette's New York friends were interested in politics, so she could tell them without arousing their suspicions that she was going to Chicago "to see the Circus" and to take a look, on her way back, at her "weighty interests in Ohio. . . ." Even Mrs. McLean must be kept in the dark about Annette's real mission to Chicago. She would tell her that of course they must have a candidate, because "to attend the Convention without a special interest would be tame enough for both of us." She would acknowledge Allison as hers, but would point out that she had met him only once in Washington, for since he moved in a select circle and was a hard working statesman, she "had never stumbled over" him.¹⁸ She would arrive in Chicago Friday morning, June 15, and so have about a week to get in her work before the convention opened.

In just what capacity did Annette W. W. Hicks Lord propose to serve Allison at the convention? She was apparently a close friend of the Sher-

¹⁶ Allison to Mrs. Hicks Lord, June 7, 1888.

¹⁷ Mrs. Hicks Lord to Allison, June 8, 1888.

¹⁸ Mrs. Hicks Lord to Allison, June 8, 12, 1888.

man family, and although she might have been willing to do a turn for General William T. Sherman, she had no love for his brother, John. Annette proposed to help Allison's candidacy by discovering the sources of Sherman's strength and swinging as much of it as she could to Allison. She was to go to the Shermans' that evening for dinner. "I'll get my pay," she announced, "by pumping the whole concern, to night, sort of in the family nag style, you know. . . . I will have a sort of *Sherman's March*, grope my way, feel about and perhaps pick up a *handle* to work on in Chicago. . . ." If there were anything deceitful in action of this sort, she intimated rather petulantly that she had been left to it as her only course by Allison's failure to see her and give her a more specific program, "for nobody gives me a helping hand, s'pose they think me of no account, so as usual I'll paddle my own canoe alone."¹⁹

Annette did not get to the family dinner at the Shermans'. "The Senator was too driven to eat. The Genl had lumbago in his back, and Mrs. Sherman gone to the Sanitarium in New Jersey. . . ." Instead, she went to call the following Sunday afternoon. Pretending that she wished to make herself useful to Senator Sherman at Chicago, Annette asked the General to give her what information he could about his brother's following in the convention. The General gave her notes of introduction to ex-Governor Charles Foster of Ohio and to J. B. Drake, the proprietor of the Grand Pacific Hotel. Foster and Drake, the General said, "know all the *secrets* of this Convention and Drake knows of *every* meeting in his Hotel and what is going on, all the time." He told her that through them she would be able to work to the best possible advantage to Sherman.

Just present these cards [the General said], say you are a friend of the Sherman family and desire to serve the Senator, ask what *man* you had best know, then go to work and be agreeable. If you want to invite them to dinner, they will designate the men to ask. Said I, thunder and lightning Genl, I shall do not such thing at all. Well said he, I'll give you the ammunition and you fire off what guns you like.

Other avenues of influence were suggested to Annette in General Crook and Horace Pullman. General Grant's son, Fred, came into the room and told her that Mrs. Potter Palmer was preparing to entertain for her in Chicago. The total effect Annette found somewhat overwhelming. "Oh,

¹⁹ Mrs. Hicks Lord to Allison, June 8, 1888.

dear! oh dear," she wailed in writing to Allison of her afternoon at the Sherman's, "I am in such a mess."

But of the workings of a convention she thought she had learned something. Ben Butler dropped in to call on the General. It was the first time Annette had ever seen him. She asked him to describe a convention for her.

. . . he blew his nose got very red pulled his long hair first with one hand then the other and then played and felt of the ends of the hair, till he looked like an enraged old rooster. He said the first day would be ballots. That day all the Candidates would know by night where they stood. Next day would be deliberation, and the last day, when candidates get down to 3, and 2, and 1, we would know who was nominated. Gen. S—n said, Blaine was out and sincere, and all the others had agreed to [word illegible] and work for the strongest man.²⁰

Somewhere within the machinery of the convention, Annette thought, there must be a place for her to serve Allison's candidacy.

Disappointed at first because Allison had not seen fit to visit her in New York, Annette reluctantly came to admit that he had perhaps chosen the wiser course. She agreed that it was "smart" for him not to come. "Fixed it as slick as you liked, it would have leaked out." What finally placated her was Allison's promise that Clarkson would undertake to direct her work at Chicago. She would make no further protest; that arrangement

. . . settles the whole thing. What would be the use of an interview, if Mr. Clarkson will come to my rescue, on the spot too, in Chicago. To be bossed by such an intelligent person as he seems to be, is just the thing I want. He will discover every lady who attends the Chicago Convention and takes an interest in politics has her own standard and ideas.²¹

While pleased at the prospect of working under Clarkson's supervision, Annette was impatient to know just what she might do. "The question is, where can I come in and be of use and not betray my hand." At times supremely confident of her ability to effect Allison's nomination almost single-handed, Annette occasionally confessed that she understood nothing of the political operations which she believed were going on all about her. "It seems to me at times as if I should burst for I feel so in the dark, so beyond my depth, so fearful of making a mistake, so pent-up and excited."

²⁰ Mrs. Hicks Lord to Allison [June 10, 1888].

²¹ Mrs. Hicks Lord to Allison, June 8, 1888.

What she really wanted seems clear enough: first of all, just a grand spree, an exciting political lark to break the tedium of a life in which only servants, society, and a little social work mitigated the irresponsibility of her widowhood. "In Chicago," she hoped, "I can let myself go, perhaps." But in addition she needed more of an excuse for her Chicago trip than the mere prospect of a holiday had given her. With an approach to politics typically feminine, she began to see everywhere the opportunities for intrigue and quickly placed herself, in her fantasies, at the center of a complex of devious operations. She trembled at the thought that any false step might betray her hand. The role in which she cast herself was perhaps an inconspicuous one but not, to her mind, without decisive effect: she wished to be "the mouse that made a hole in the net and let the *Lion* out."²²

General Sherman's suggestions on Sunday about how she could serve his brother gave her an idea; Butler's analysis of the convention provided its setting.

I can't see why our Mr. Clarkson cant give me the names of some men to ask to dinner on *deliberation day*, and why I cant get Potter Palmer at the Palmer House to help us. If I give him carte-blanche to get up the handsomest dinner he knows how to get up at his Palmer House perhaps that would sweeten him up. You see I arrive Friday at 9. a m, so I would have Saturday Sunday Monday and Tuesday to get up the dinner, and stuff those old fellows so, they would vote for you.²³

Here indeed was an important mission, and it lay in a field where no one could doubt her competence. The dinners she planned would, of course, be costly, "with best of wines, flowers, and so on." Her parties "would be big things. But I can handle dinners and know how to do them up, whether political or social, at least I am vain enough to think so."²⁴ Her contacts with the Sherman people would make it possible for her to gather many of the opposition leaders around her table. She would have an opportunity "to pump Mr. Drake," if Clarkson wished it. Not a large undertaking, to be sure, but Annette felt that "as the end nears, all hands grab everything within reach, and utilize it, even poor ignorant me. . . ."

²² *Idem*.

²³ Mrs. Hicks Lord to Allison [June 10, 1888].

²⁴ Mrs. Hicks Lord to Allison, June 16, 1888. The last sentence quoted is scratched out in the letter.

In time of way, any stratagem a woman might resort to is all right, particularly such a green horn as yrs. . . ."²⁵ Meantime, then, she would wait for her interview with Clarkson in Chicago, and she asked Allison to send him to her Friday morning almost the moment she arrived.

She found a few little things to do for Allison in New York, such as having her agents see that articles favorable to his candidacy got into the Ohio newspapers. For the Republican cause in general she sent her house guests to participate in the Memorial Day demonstration, where they joined other partisans in giving Cleveland an unfriendly reception by cheering Buffalo Bill more enthusiastically than they did the President. But in the main she concluded that, with the formulation of a definite plan of operation, she could rest quietly until she reached the convention. Her best plan, she decided in her last letter from New York, was "to hold on till I reach the battle ground, then ask questions."²⁶

And so to Chicago. The trip itself was an adventure, for Pullman travel in the eighties was not the comfortable pastime it has since become. Annette paid \$150 for her accommodations, taking "two *entire* private rooms with dressing rooms adjoining." Mrs. McLean occupied one of them, Annette and her maid (who "always sleeps near me on a sofa or cot even if she has her section or hotel room") the other.

Such a high old time as I had getting here to Chicago. Mrs. McLean is sick abed, and my maid has sick head-ache, from want of sleep. The engine broke. We got another at Altoona, and went like mad to catch up and make up time. The track was rough, the night hot, the whistle of the engine was perpetual and how I slept as I did through thick and thin is a wonder. . . .

Well an accident happened to the fine car, in which my rooms were secured and they put on an old rattle trap at Jersey City, the best substitute they had. It bounced and flew around the curves and we were jolted and shook up, but of the three, I stood it best, and think a drive in the air will restore my friend.²⁷

Annette busied herself her first day in Chicago unpacking and caring for her sick. She was visited by three reporters — one of them came twice to see her — and she wished she "was less conspicuous. I am sure I do not seek it." At the same time she admitted frankly that "Any delight is nov-

²⁵ Mrs. Hicks Lord to Allison [June 10, 1888].

²⁶ Mrs. Hicks Lord to Allison, June 12, 1888.

²⁷ Mrs. Hicks Lord to Allison, June 15, 16, 1888.

elty and occupation. I guess I've got it now." With her rooms at the Palmer House she was very much pleased. She accommodated herself quickly to her new surroundings, an adjustment made easier by the fact that her section of the hotel was "as retired as a private house." She was well cared for by her servants and the hotel management, and fascinated by the scenes of bustling activity about the lobbies and corridors.

My servant sits by my door and my maid sits in my bed room. We have an excellent private waiter who serves our private table, and the manager of the Hotel has been himself *twice* to know if I am satisfied. I hear the crowd entering the dining room. Requires fifteen minutes to get to their tables. Fred Douglas and his party are the admiration of my servants. They are proud of him. He is at the Palmer. We all are proud of some one.²⁸

For Annette's part, she was proud of Allison — of his dignity of manner and his competence in statecraft. On her arrival at Chicago she had found a letter from him waiting for her, and thought she could detect in it some note of increased formality not quite in keeping with the intimate nature of her mission in his behalf. She was afraid Allison was "a little huffy" with her. Instead of beginning his letter "My dear Mrs. Hicks Lord" and ending it "Yours sincerely," he had saluted her with "Dear" and closed with only "Very truly yours." How explain this "stiffness"? All she could suggest was that in view of her proposal to use her friendship with the Shermans to Allison's advantage, he might be thinking, "if she is capable of deceiving one friend she is capable of doing ditto to another." She insisted that the confidences of the Shermans had been thrust upon her by the General, so "the consequences were *his own* look out."²⁹ Allison's good opinion of her must be won, apparently, by some definite achievement in the interest of his nomination. So she set to work.

When Clarkson called Friday afternoon Annette warned him of the danger of Drake and the Sherman men discovering secret information concerning the Allison candidacy. She was alarmed when Clarkson told her that the Allison headquarters were to be moved that night to rooms in the Grand Pacific which Drake had been "most *officious*" in urging the Allison people to occupy. Annette was convinced that Drake could not be trusted,

²⁸ Mrs. Hicks Lord to Allison, June 17, 1888. "Fred Douglas" is undoubtedly the famous ex-slave, Frederick Douglass.

²⁹ Mrs. Hicks Lord to Allison, June 15, 1888.

the more so when she learned from Clarkson that Drake was pretending to be a supporter of Gresham. One could not be too careful about guarding political secrets from a man like Drake, for "the progress of science is so great now days" that he might easily have means for overhearing everything said in his hotel. Disguising his real intentions by parading as a Gresham man, she thought,

. . . is a part of his secret telephone wires, throughout his house. I entreated of him to snoop behind the looking glasses, cracks in floor under carpet and cornices, up the chimney and realize they were in a trap. . . . Clarkson feels my *arrival has struck a thread in his mind*, for he has asked himself, WHY is Drake so eager and anxious to have me occupy the new rooms.³⁰

She told Clarkson of her own plan to utilize General Sherman's letters of introduction for the purpose of gaining information for the benefit of Allison's candidacy. Together they decided along what lines Annette should lead the conversation with Drake the next day. She would try to discover the extent of Sherman's strength, his prospects for increasing his vote, and any symptoms which Drake may have noticed of the movement of other combinations in Sherman's direction. And then, coming to the crucial point, her conversation would be something like this:

See here Mr. Drake, our friend *Genl Sherman* told me in confidence, you had a way of acquiring knowledge of the doings in your Hotel. What a clever and wonderful man you must be. How useful to Senator Sherman. Tell me, to amuse me how it is accomplished. I come to you as a sort of Sherman Delegate and you must point out the ropes to me, and tell me how you find things out.³¹

There was no doubt but that it would be a battle of wits, that conversation between Annette and Drake at the Grand Pacific. Both were schemers, both had weapons with which the other was unfamiliar. Drake had his telephone wires, and Annette, her woman's intuition. But she would not hazard a guess at this point as to which of "us two mortals is the most contemptable, he or myself, the Duck or the Drake." Next morning, however, she would "attack this old Drake after his breakfast." Now Annette was "indeed the mouse we read of in the fable, that let the Lion out of the

³⁰ *Idem.*

³¹ *Idem.*

net in which he was entrapped." Too tired to go to sleep when she went to bed that night, Annette got up, went into her parlor, took a seat in an arm chair, and "played (as the children say) the dining table was Mr. Drake." She rehearsed the interview, walked the floor, and finally collapsed with fatigue and went back to bed too sleepy to say her prayers.³²

Next morning Annette was up early and off before nine o'clock to find Drake. She had thought she would use as an excuse for approaching him the pretense of securing more comfortable rooms at the Grand Pacific than she enjoyed at the Palmer House, but when the moment arrived this stratagem did not become necessary. But Annette can explain better how she arranged the interview:

. . . This is the way I managed *this* morning, to get to the Drake den. I would not have a *carriage*, so I put on my linen duster, my green veil, my sun umbrella, and my small black bag on my arm. I ordered Tom to walk *ahead* and *stop* when within a block of *Ladies* entrance of Grand Pacific Hotel, then *leave* me and go to market buy some fruit and flowers, order a carriage to drive at three this afternoon. I was all in a muck of sweat when I entered that door. I pulled off my rough get up (duster and veil) as I was gotten up in a beautiful dress to *impress Mr. Drake*. Said I, to the waiter (who does the ladies reception room honors, he was there alone dusting with his whisk broom) said I will you oblige me, by taking that card to Mr. Drake, and say, I want to see him for a moment. Why, says he, Mr. Drake *cant* be seen marm. Said I take this \$5 bill buy some segars for yourself. Go straight to Mr. Drake tell him I have a political message for him from General Sherman. I will come up to *him*, or he can come here to me. Down came a short thick set fat man, out of breath, said I sit down and give me five minutes. I handed him Genl S's card, told him to read it and put it in his pocket. I then handed him Ex Gov Fosters card. I put *that* in my bag after he read it.

From her conversation with Drake, Annette gathered that his managers were very hopeful for Sherman's nomination. As yet, however, they did not know where the votes necessary to nominate him could be secured, and they had seen no signs of other combinations breaking up and going to him. Annette told Drake of her plan to arrange dinner parties in Sherman's interest for powerful members of the convention. That strategy, Drake thought, would have no influence on the delegates. It was an "ex-

³² Mrs. Hicks Lord to Allison, June 16, 1888.

ploded" style. All the Sherman leaders wanted was money. Drake said he had already given \$4,000 and wanted more. "He jumped at his idea of getting cash down for Sherman boom. Said, *money* was the ticket in this campaign. All things were governed by money. Men would do any thing for *money*. That all I could do was to give *money*. It would be spent for Sherman. No other influence would avail."

She asked him about his means for finding out the secrets of the rival delegations which occupied rooms at the Grand Pacific. "A nervous twitch of both shoulders, a compression of both lips, a glare at me in my eyes then with an abrupt move to get up, said he 'there is a *Delegation at work* now up stairs. *I must be off*. But for your message to me and card, I would not have come down to receive you. I see no one.'"

Drake asked to see her again next morning at nine, and promised to tell her then through whom to make contributions to the Sherman campaign. Examining her own reactions later, Annette concluded that Drake had been "agitated and fidgety and wished me to the devil." Her woman's intuition told her that he was a "rascal." She had felt decidedly uncomfortable in his presence, for, she remarked, "when we dont reach the *good* in a person, we feel sort as if we had tumbled against a hard stone wall."

Outside on the sidewalk she stood in the hot sun for a while, trying to get her bearings before striking out again for the Palmer House.

Confusion prevailed, streets full of heavily laden express wagons and ice and milk carts, men hurrying in every direction. Not a woman to be seen so I walked straight ahead till I collected my senses. The smells were fearful. A thick heavy smoke hung over the town, and the weather like July. All of a sudden I remembered I was walking *away* from the Ladies Entrance of the G. Pacific Hotel, so I marched *back* and met a telegraph boy whom I asked *the way* to the Palmer? Said he, "Come on," I am going that way. The way I had to hurry to keep up with that chap, almost put me out of breath. When within a block, said he, thats it. I gave him a quarter, and as I had my purse out I stopped on the corner and bought a bannana. I stood and ate it under my umbrella. Before I entered the Palmer I peeled off my veil and duster. . . .

When she entered the corridor leading to her rooms a strange sight met her eyes. Men were thronging the hall and crowded the door of the parlor adjoining her bedroom. Pictures of Gresham covered the walls. Her man-

servant told her that the Gresham men had taken over the suite next door that morning as their headquarters, and slept in cots in the room just off her bedroom. Annette went at once to investigate.

I went to my bath room and discovered a ventilating window of glass and wooden *slats* that are stationary and fixed, so I climbed up on my bath tub and surveyed the cots. It looked like a hospital ward. What a lovely place to peep and listen. I dare say they turn in late and are too tired out *to talk*. I shall show Mr. Clarkson the pretty view. He comes at 2 *this P M* to see me. . . . How funny that I should be thus sandwiched, in this big Hotel which will have 3000 guests by tomorrow.

While Annette waited for Clarkson she wrote at length to Allison of her day's activities, but she was much too fascinated with the prospect of eavesdropping on the Gresham managers to stay long at a time at her desk. She watched a Blaine parade pass by beneath her window, and "felt like firing my pitcher of ice water at them. . . ." She walked her parlor floor, went into the hall "a dozen times" to peek out of the corner of her eye into the Gresham rooms.

There are two double beds in the room with American flags as bed-spread, pictures of yourself, one side of the looking glass and Sherman the other side and two little flags on top of glass. Alger, Harrison and Gresham are stuck about the room. Two men sit with their coats off, and four others seem to be talking and suffering with the heat. Men by twos and threes come down the hall and drop in as the door stands wide open, with a picture of Gresham on the door. Things seem to be pretty tame, not much talk. How I'd like to go and sit on the bureau and hear what they are about. They seem to be oldish men or else chaps about 22 or 25. They wear badges on their coats.

She made another attempt to finish the letter. "I guess I'll go again and see if there is anything new next door. . . . Been, no nothing only three more men. Very slow I think." To a woman of Annette's alarmist inclinations, the possibilities for intrigue seemed unlimited. Perhaps the idea of dinner parties was, as Drake had told her, "an exploded thing of the past," but there were the Gresham headquarters, placed by a beneficent providence just beyond her bathroom door.

Annette had arranged to be alone for Clarkson's call. She had sent Mrs. McLean off with the maid for a carriage drive; the train trip had been too

much for her, "she was pretty feeble, thinks Chicago unhealthy." So she had cleared the stage for Clarkson by encouraging her companion's disabilities, apparently a task of no great difficulty.

When five thirty came and Clarkson had not appeared, Annette began to lose patience. "No Clarkson yet." She had been waiting for him since two o'clock, to tell him of her visit to Drake. Perhaps he was taking her good offices too much for granted. "Confound Clarkson. Where under the sun is he. All sort of conjectures enter my head. He knows I am a good nest egg and will always be found, and on hand, so he need not turn up till he gets ready." She could wait until bedtime. Meantime Annette had decided what to do with the money she had planned to spend on her dinner parties. She put six five hundred dollar notes in an envelope to give to Clarkson when he came, to use in any way he chose to advance the Republican cause. She believed, "*red hot patriot*" that she was, that what she was doing was "*for my country.*" She enquired, "Who dare stop me . . . if I see fit to *reach an influence* for the party with a gift instead of *down their throats.* . . ." This item in her operations would be "a secret and a part and parcel of 1888 Hicks Lord Campaign."³³ Clarkson did not come at all, but next morning Annette wrote him a note and sent the three thousand dollars along.

She made her plans for the morrow. There were to be interviews with both Drake and Foster. From one of them she was confident she could get the information she wanted about the Sherman organization's espionage. She would "pump Drake," and "sing the same Cock and Bull song to Foster." She would offer to make a generous contribution to the campaign, and then put them off with the excuse that "we women require time for consideration. . . ." There was nothing improper, so far as she could see, in making use of people who desired "to bleed and use" her.

She noticed an increased nervous tension as rival organizations set up headquarters in Chicago and began the fight for convention votes. Indeed, the letters from Annette to Allison show that the political excitement in Chicago was already having a noticeable effect upon this none-too-steady woman. Her letters were the chief outlet for her accumulating emotional intensity. "I shall get ill if I don't unburden myself to some one, so I dare to pitch ahead as I do and keep you posted with the doings, this end of the

³³ *Idem.*

line. . . . I am getting so excited, I would like to scream, and roll on the floor, or turn head over heels, or lick some-body."

When Annette wrote to Allison on Sunday she had to confess that her "second visit to Drake bore no results," for the Sherman leader had been so heavily pressed by the crowds in the hotel that he had had no opportunity to confer with her. She felt, however, that she had made better headway with Foster, but her account to Allison of the interview does not indicate just what reason she had for encouragement. Yet, to Annette's mind, she had "been, gone and done it up brown." When she reached the Grand Pacific that morning, Drake brought Foster over to her and excused himself on the ground that he was being deluged by others who wanted to see him. "Off he flew, like an old hen with her head cut off." Annette gave Foster her note of introduction from General Sherman, and told him of her Ohio connections. "Said he, enough! enough! Madam, we all know Mrs. Hicks Lord, and I regard our meeting as an interesting *combination* of circumstances. Your moneyed interests *bind* you to Ohio. The Shermans think much of you. Why, Drake tells me, you are a Sherman *man*."

Annette explained to him that she had come to Chicago "on a spree." She was on her way to her Ohio estates, and never having seen a convention nor taken any part in politics she wanted to watch what was going on and participate in it if there were anything she could do. Like Drake, Foster discouraged the dinner parties and asked for funds. Annette could not understand why they needed so much money. Foster told her. "Drake is working for *money*. He keeps this hotel to make *money*, and not for love. Said I, do you mean to tell me, those 21 States I see on that big printed notice stuck up there by the Elevator, with all their Delegates are under *this* roof. Said he, *yes*, and *there* is where the money goes. Too much said I."

She wanted to see a delegation room and asked Foster to take her up to one. He consented, gave her his arm, and ushered her upstairs, where she saw

. . . the battle ground of the struggle. Not a woman was to be seen; all men, with badges and button holeing each other, smoking, and pretty well wound up, although not quite ten o'clock. The Sherman rooms had a great deal of the Spread-Eagle in every direction. He pointed out Arkansas, Iowa and other Delegation rooms, said I, now show *me our Ohio* room. I did not dare even

turn my head to squint at Iowa. I could see it was chuck full of men by looking side ways. We went up stairs and there were at least 6 rooms, not very large any of them all *for Ohio*.

When they returned to the lobby, they took a place where Drake had assigned them, on a sofa under the hall stairs. Annette wanted to attract as little attention as possible and became a bit annoyed with the Governor when he insisted on making himself conspicuous by refusing to put on his hat. To Foster she said, "Gov, you know this is all business." She told him how much she appreciated his courtesy in showing her around the headquarters. In case she should feel inclined to make a contribution to the Sherman campaign she wanted to know to whom to address it. Either Drake or himself would be glad to receive it, the Governor said. Still with his hat off, he took her to the door.

Out in the street, Annette put on her duster and veil to conceal her French hat and dress, and pushed through the crowds on her way back to the Palmer House. The steady arrival of convention delegates had by Sunday made Chicago a place of confusion. Jostling along the sidewalk, she

. . . heard a jolly nigger laugh ready to hurt himself over a de-lapidated old horse and wagon old harness and muddy wheels, all he could get "*for a delegate to ride in.*" As I passed the front entrance there were two policemen each side of door, a fearful crowd of roughs stood in front and on side walk, some just arrived. I knew my way home to the Palmer, but when within three blocks along came a *fire engine* slam bang. The usual rush and crowd following. I jumped up on a boot-blacks high throne, and gave him half a dollar to let me stand there. His heart was touched and he said in the most patronizing tones, "dont be scared."

But in spite of all the excitement along Michigan Boulevard, Annette reached her rooms safely. She put on a "cool clean white dress," kissed Mrs. McLean good morning, and told her she had just come from her devotions. Then she wrote to Allison.

After lunch she dressed to await Clarkson, whom she had invited to drive with her that afternoon. She felt now that, "as far as I can see, I have come to the *end* of my rope for my candidate. . . ." Her advices to Allison take on a tone of pessimism which had been totally absent from her earlier communications. Perhaps her failure to find anything she could do

for Allison's candidacy except give money is an explanation. After what she had seen with Foster at the Grand Pacific, she thought it best "to educate myself to accept what comes, if it is disappointment." Whatever she had done for Allison, it was not, she insisted, with any ulterior purpose.

My dear Senator Allison, if I have overwhelmed you with my long letters excuse me. I do nothing by halves. . . . It frightens me when I think of the lengths I have gone, and what a dead set I have made at poor you. Believe me I have nothing to ask for in the gift of our Govt, no claims and no one to place.

She would not write again until after the convention. "Confound Clarkson." He would have to report the substance of his conference with Annette himself.³⁴

Allison heard nothing more from Annette until she wrote the day of Harrison's nomination and described the scene in the convention when David B. Henderson of Iowa arose to announce the withdrawal of Allison's name. When the convention opened Monday morning Annette was in the gallery with Mrs. Henderson, Mrs. Clarkson, and Mrs. McLean. Blissfully unaware of the activity of such men as Platt, Elkins, Hoar, and Depew behind the scenes of the convention, Henderson's statement came as a great blow to Annette.

I wanted to jump over the gallery, and walk over the heads of the Delegates, throw myself on Genl Hendersons shoulders, and cry for it came *without* any preparation. I braced myself up, took poor Mrs. Clarksons hand, told her to *smile* and drown her emotions and not show *the world* she cared a darn. There she sat, lips partly open, eyes gazing at Gen. H. as though he had knocked her on the head.

I bit my lip till the *blood came*, and when Gen Henderson made his address on the platform I tore my pocket handkerchief into small slits *underneath my fan* and smiled all the time.

I leaned over to Mrs. Henderson, who sat bolt upright, no emotion and when I said to her, what an ordeal for your husband, Senator Allison took the chances of war, let us laugh, and we all laughed and used our fans to fan away our feelings.

Annette covered her disappointment by continuing a flirtation she had been carrying on with delegates on the floor of the convention. "I became quite jolly, as I have four Delegates who have been making eyes at me during

³⁴ Mrs. Hicks Lord to Allison, June 17, 1888.

this convention and as I sat with the Iowa ladies, and you are a single man, my hilarity became infectious and Mrs. C and Mrs. H and Mrs. McL and myself were all up to snuff."

Clarkson looked "furiously mad," but she shook her head at him and Henderson and made them smile. For herself, Annette was determined to maintain a bold front. She held back the tears. When the nomination of Harrison became certain, Sherman's niece, Rachel Sherman, wept. But not Annette; ". . . before I'd have done that," she insisted, "I'd had fifteen fits."³⁵

Annette commiserated with Allison in his defeat and congratulated him on "the brave, manly, plucky manner you have met your disappointments."³⁶ As if it were of any comfort to him, she pointed out how many "grave cares and responsibilities" he had escaped. In a way she thought he was fortunate to have avoided the fate which overtook Arthur in the presidency, for she feared that he "would have died a premature death and perhaps not gone to Heaven." How Annette had informed herself about Arthur's post-presidential career she does not relate. She was convinced that Allison would "keep" until 1892, because the press had taken a most favorable attitude toward his unselfish withdrawal in the interest of party. "Your action was a plucky one, so like you [she wrote]. How splendid to take things *this way* what discipline! what a lesson in self restraint — what an example to those statesmen who admire you. . . ."

Finally, Annette urged Allison to try to get away from his work for a day or two, for she realized what a severe strain he had been under while the convention was in session. If he could come to New York, she thought she could give him details of the convention which would make him laugh. If not that, there was some relaxation and release to be found at the seashore. Even Coney Island might amuse him. But the chief thing now was to save himself for the campaign, in which he would, of course, have to take a part. It was to this end that she was assuming the position of "your self imposed sister," and she hoped she could still be of service to him.

Putting party above any personal attachment Annette may have felt for Allison, she determined to plunge into the campaign for the election of Harrison. "I shall work for the Republicans just as hard as I know how. The cause still exists. My patriotism is greater than ever, and to see the

³⁵ Mrs. Hicks Lord to Allison, June 25, 1888.

³⁶ Mrs. Hicks Lord to Allison, July 1, 1888.

Democrats out of power will be the [illegible] aim and purpose of my existence till Nov. You see I had got to the top notch, living here in Chicago." Allison, too, promised to work for a party victory in the election. In his letter of congratulation he assured Harrison that he was "ready to enlist under your banner and fight until victory comes."

Annette was still of the opinion that between them she and Mother Dahlgreen could bring much of the Irish vote into the Republican column. At first she was afraid Mrs. Dahlgreen might cause Allison some embarrassment by inviting him to her home in Washington at a time when she too was to be there. Annette advised him not to accept. She acknowledged her friend's good intentions, but thought "it would be horrid."³⁷

Her holiday over at Chicago, Annette made plans at once for the return trip to New York. This time the jaunt was to be made in easier stages, with overnight stops at Detroit and Niagara Falls; Annette did not look forward to an early repetition of her somewhat hectic trip west on the Pullman. With Mrs. McLean she arrived home again Thursday evening. When she reached her house at 32 Washington Square she found all of her servants lined up in the hall to welcome her home. She took one quick look, then ran upstairs to her room, flung herself down upon the bed and wept. In this moment she realized that these were her most intimate personal associates. Servants and a few close friends were all she had. If she had hoped that her interest in Allison's political future might yield some small returns in friendship for herself, her attitude is an understandable one.

For the next few weeks Annette busied herself with preparations for her trip abroad. She had promised to postpone it, had Allison been nominated; now she thought she would go and stay until after election, evidently forgetting her earlier promise to "work for the Republicans . . . till Nov." But she had barely reached Paris when she realized that it would not do. "Just now, I think I did wrong to come away," she wrote Allison, "and as it was to emancipate myself, even for a few weeks. I feel as if the campaign were a sick child I had left behind me." It soon became apparent to Annette that she was "not going to hold out," and she concluded that "staying this side of the Atlantic until after election was all nonsense." She therefore arranged earlier passage to New York; she was homesick,

³⁷ Mrs. Hicks Lord to Allison, June 25, July 1, 1888. Allison to Harrison, June 26, 1888, in *Harrison Papers*, Vol. 29.

and had "the political fever" worse than ever. She had invited Allison and all of his convention leaders to visit her; Clarkson, in fact, was living even then at her house while working at the headquarters of the National Committee. We leave Annette in Paris, waiting impatiently for her sailing date, and eager to begin participation in the campaign.

I now write [she concludes her last letter to Allison] to say I am enroute for home and when I arrive Sept 23 I want our Mr. Clarkson to tell me how to work to secure the *vote for our party* in N. Y. in my district in N. Y. The working classes all like me; the Park police and street police and grocer boys, milk men, post-men and every Thanksgiving Day 50 fat turkeys are distributed among them and the poor of the district. How to get at them and reach them is the question fore election day. I have other tricks and projects to get votes but must have a Boss to direct my doings.³⁸

Whether Annette made any personal contribution to the Republican victory in New York in November does not appear in the Allison Papers. But her correspondence during the period of the convention and after shows the political scene through somewhat different eyes than those of the party manager or newspaper reporter.

³⁸ Mrs. Hicks Lord to Allison, August 31, 1888.