virtues and exalted character, President McKinley stood upon the highest pedestal. He fell from the very pinnacle of human fame.

From his boyhood to his entrance into the army, from his noble stand for his country to the close of the Civil War, from his obscure beginning as a public man to the grand successes that pointed to him as a fit representative of his State in Congress, from his proud triumphs under the dome of our National Capitol to the Governorship of his State, and Presidency of the United States, the reader follows him with ever-increasing interest and admiration.

He was the master statesman of his age, the magnetic leader and gallant defender of American rights, the idol of his nation, unsurpassed in eloquence, invincible in debate—the man who was greater than any party and who will rank in history with Washington, Lincoln, Grant and Garfield. This memorial volume contains the complete and fascinating story of his life and depicts in glowing colors his marvelous career.

In Congress he was considered an authority on every subject upon which he expressed an opinion. Clear in his grasp of public questions, eloquent in advocating the principles he professed, considerate and lenient toward his opponents, affable in all his intercourse with others, and manifesting always a certain dignity, strength and sincerity that impressed all who knew him, he was for years one of the most conspicuous figures in the halls of Congress. For William McKinley to become President of the United States was only a natural step from the commanding position he had gained.

The story of President McKinley's life is much like that of nearly all our renowned statesmen and rulers. He was born in humble life. He had that contact with Mother Earth which falls to the lot of the farmer's son. While his advantages for education were not the best, he made such diligent use of his time and opportunities that he became distinguished as a scholar, and especially as a student of political economy. He is an admirable example for young men. Let them emulate his diligence, his lawful ambition, his devotion to duty, and enthusiasm as a worker.

INTRODUCTION.

BY

HON. JAMES RANKIN YOUNG,

Member of Congress and Late Clerk of the United States Senate.

Probably there is no one fact in the history of the Republic, of which Americans are prouder than that all their Presidents were exceptionally good men—men who filled the great office with credit to themselves and honor to the Nation. They were especially noted for their earnest love of country, their rigid integrity and the simplicity of their lives.

Simplicity was the ruling point in view when our fathers founded the Government, and the Presidents, in the performance of their duties, never seemed to have lost sight of the fact. Simplicity is known to be the leading characteristic of all great men, probably it would be better to say men who combine that which is good with that which is great. We saw it as a shining mark in Washington; it was the ruling spirit with Jefferson, it made Jackson more famous than did his deeds of heroism and aggressiveness, it was personified in Lincoln and Grant, but with no desire to retract from the others, I am free to say that the perfect model of simplicity was found in McKinley.

It was his life and staff. It permeated every fibre of his make up. It came with him at his birth. It clung to him through life—as the youth at school, as the soldier in the field, in his profession as a lawyer, as the servant of the public in the trusted positions in which they placed him. You had but to look at the benign expression ever present in his countenance to see that gentleness of nature was his leading characteristic.

Probably no better idea of just what the character of man our late President was can be found than in what was said of him

by my brother, the late John Russell Young, who was his constant companion in his home at Canton, during the week when the Republican National Convention was held at St. Louis, June, 1896.

"While," says Mr. Young, writing from a table adjoining that occupied by Mr. McKinley, "the Major," as the late President was then called, "is in touch with whatever is going on in St. Louis, and as much in command of his forces in attendance at the Convention there, as Napoleon when he saw the gray morning skies brighten over the frosty plains of Austerlitz, there is in what he says a spirit of generosity and magnanimity. Here is a gentleman with opinions, and by no means reserved in their expression, running over men, events, happenings, possibilities, and ever just and true.

"He states a case or an estimate of a man, not as you would like it to be, but as it is, seeking always to find the best side and exhibit that. There is no throwing a man over a precipice with a phrase as Conkling would have done, nor some withering question of invective as so often fell from the lips of Blaine, but rather Uncle Toby's way, that the world is big enough for us all, and let us adjust ourselves without jostling. Behind this you have a granite wall of party stalwartism, reverence, a reverence for the Union, adoration for the men who saved the Union."

Continuing Mr. Young says:—"Because of the doings in the St. Louis Convention Canton lives in a state of uneasy hope and expectation. Mr. McKinley is apparently the only placid man in town. He takes the concentration of the eyes of the world upon him with entire composure. He has been under fire before, has ridden by the side of Sheridan and Hancock in the great war, and is not to be disturbed by a mere political cannonade. You find him at the trains greeting friends with words of welcome or farewell, or jogging about the town or driving over shaded lanes and pointing out to some companions the growth and beauty of Canton, or the centre of a group of political parties who have come to adore the rising sun.

"What they see is a resolute, quiet, courteous, kindly man, with sun beaming eyes, thoughtful, considerate. It has been my

privilege to ride with him and learn all that is involved in his beloved Canton, to sit with him on his spacious piazza and look out upon the calm hushed town while we talked of men and events."

Speaking further on Mr. Young makes allusion to the beautiful homelife of Mr. McKinley and his dearly beloved wife. "The McKinley homestead," he says, "is an ideal American home, as its master is an ideal American citizen. Taste, comfort, good books, attractive decorations, the touch of the woman's hand everywhere, for how could there have been an Eden unless Eve had made it so. An atmosphere of gentleness and repose. In spite of the excitement because of the doings at the convention—nobody seemed to be in a hurry; not even Governor McKinley, who, with his shoulders thrown against his easy chair, talks and listens—listens rather than talks—his fine eyes beaming through the smoke of a cigar. The stillest, cosiest, sunniest place in the world, the very birds picking crumbs on the window ledge, as if in a doze, yet the heart of a great nation beating and throbbing towards this modest home in Canton.

"As the news comes over the wires from the convention Mr. McKinley sits in his modest home—the portraits of Washington, Lincoln and Grant above him—and goes from pile to pile of correspondence as though the theme of his letters were orders for iron or snuff and not a diadem richer than ever rested upon an imperial brow—a thoroughly self-contained man, who says precisely what he means to say; never taken at a disadvantage, eminently serious, whether listening or talking his mind upon the one thing that concerns him. You divine in him a capacity for doing business, of hearing what has to be said and closing the conversation. When all that is useful has been said, wit, humor, imagination are not apparent qualities. This man has something to do and must do it.

"You see in him a man of patience and courtesy. If you are not answered as to your wants you carry away the impression that he is more grieved over your disappointment than you could possibly be. This is something like Henry Clay. He has a quiet, prompt, narrative faculty. We talked much of the war

days of Lincoln, Grant and Sheridan, and he was always luminous and lucid, every detail coming out as though it were an etching. He had served with Sheridan, was in fact the first officer Sheridan addressed when he came upon his beaten command, having ridden that immortal twenty miles, and in all his references to Sheridan and Crook and other famous captains there was a beautiful spirit of loyalty which noted the comradeship of the drum and the bivouac. Mr. McKinley impresses you as one who knows his mind—who would have a host of friends but few of what the world calls chums.

"I noted that his estimates of public men—and few escaped the scrutiny of a long conversation—were invariably academic and impartial—without censure, criticism or feeling. Lincoln, Stanton, Blaine, Grant, Garfield, Arthur, Randall were like so many photographs, and carefully studied and reverently put aside. For no one had he an unkind word. His ruling faculty is justice, wide embracing justice, tempered with kindness.

"I have to say that when the character of Mr. McKinley shall have been submitted to the political autopsy inseparable from the political canvass, an examination imposed something like a masonic ritual, upon every candidate for the exalted position of President, there is nothing in Mr. McKinley that may not be called genuine and true."

He came from Scotch ancestry, or rather Scotch-Irish, like Jackson, Buchanan and Arthur, His ancestors had a Pennsylvania nurture like those of Blaine, Lincoln and Grant. McKinley's father was a Pennsylvanian ; his mother an Allison, a name dear to those who recall and love the names of the Scottish Covenant. He became a Methodist like so many Covenanters, of amiable mood, who settled in the West, and was of course an Abolitionist nourished on the corn of Garrison, Sumner and Wendell Phillips.

JAMES RANKIN YOUNG.

CONTENTS.

CHAPTER VII. PAGE

CHAPTER VIII.

CHAPTER IX.

CHAPTER X.

CHAPTER XI.

CHAPTER XII.

CHAPTER XIII.

CHAPTER XIV. PAGE

CHAPTER XV.

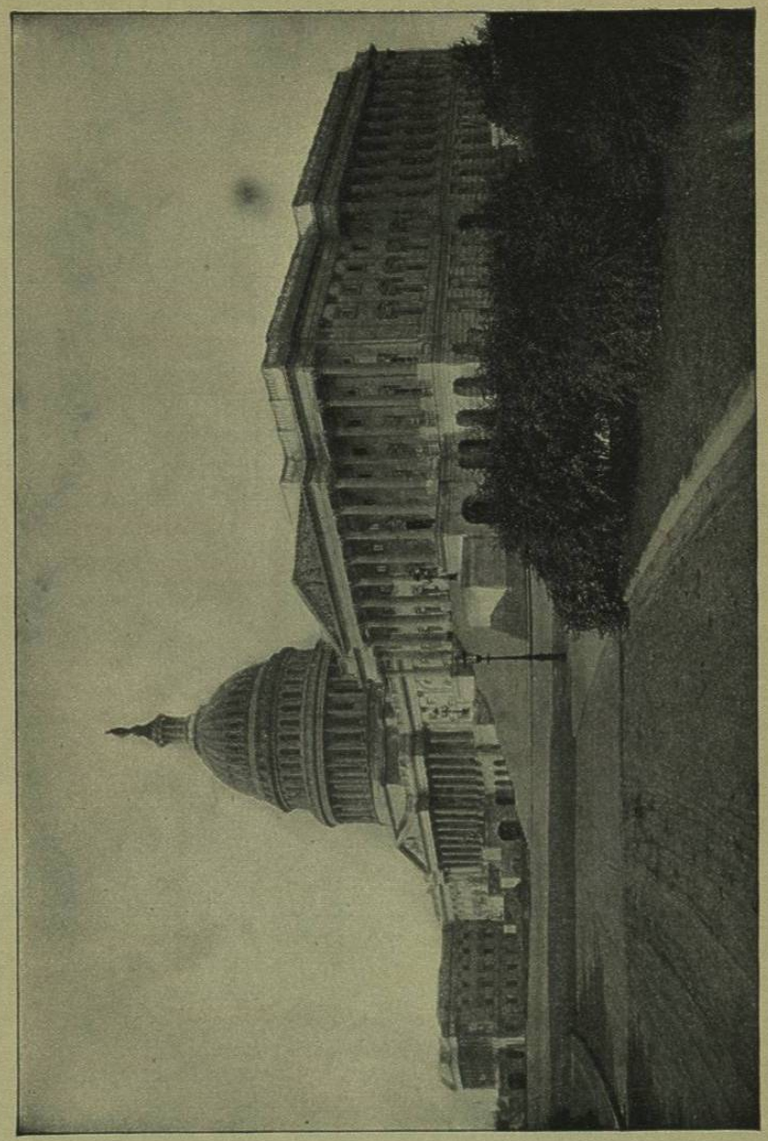
CHAPTER XVI.

CHAPTER XVII.

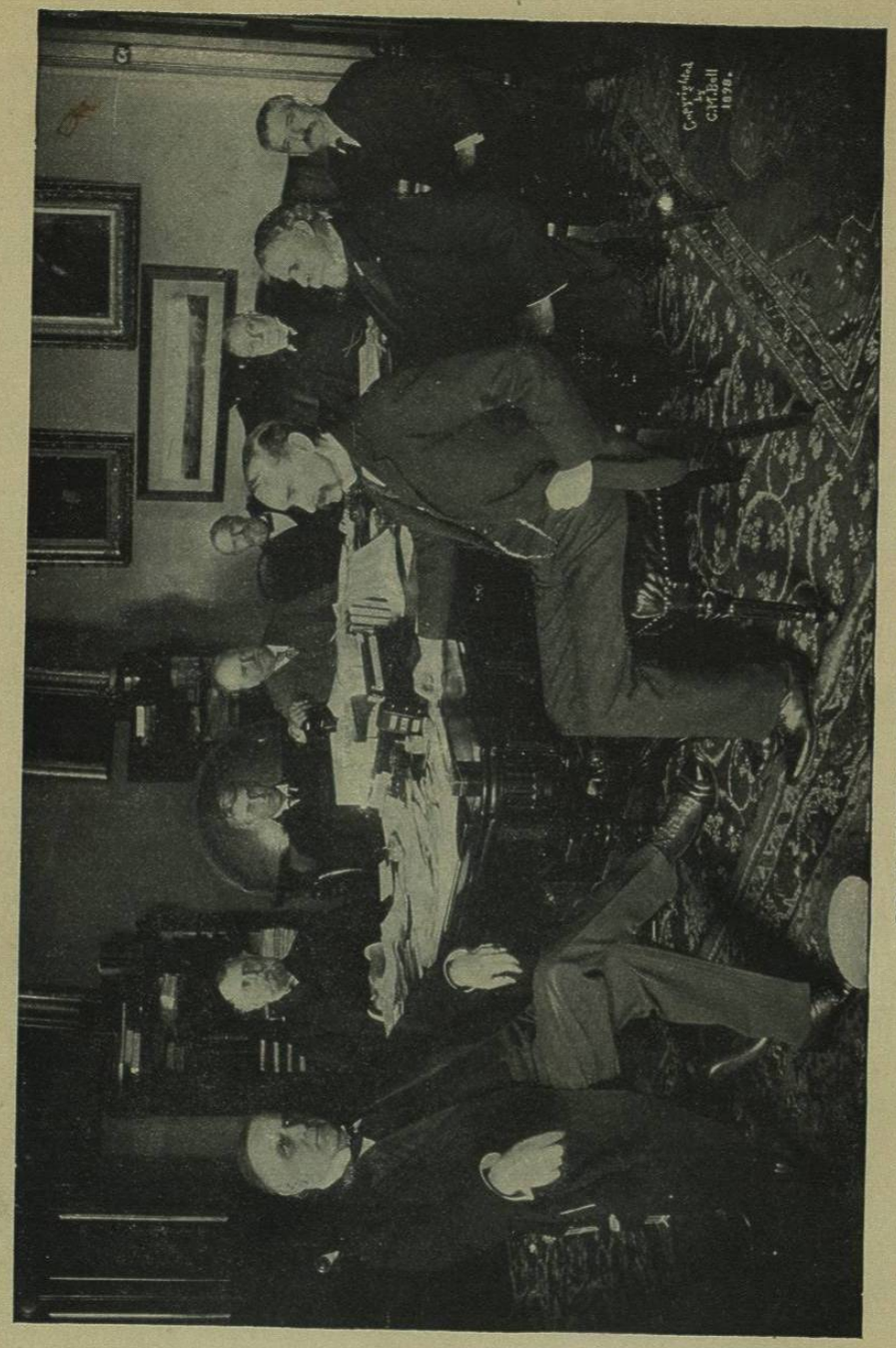
CHAPTER XVIII.

CHAPTER XIX.

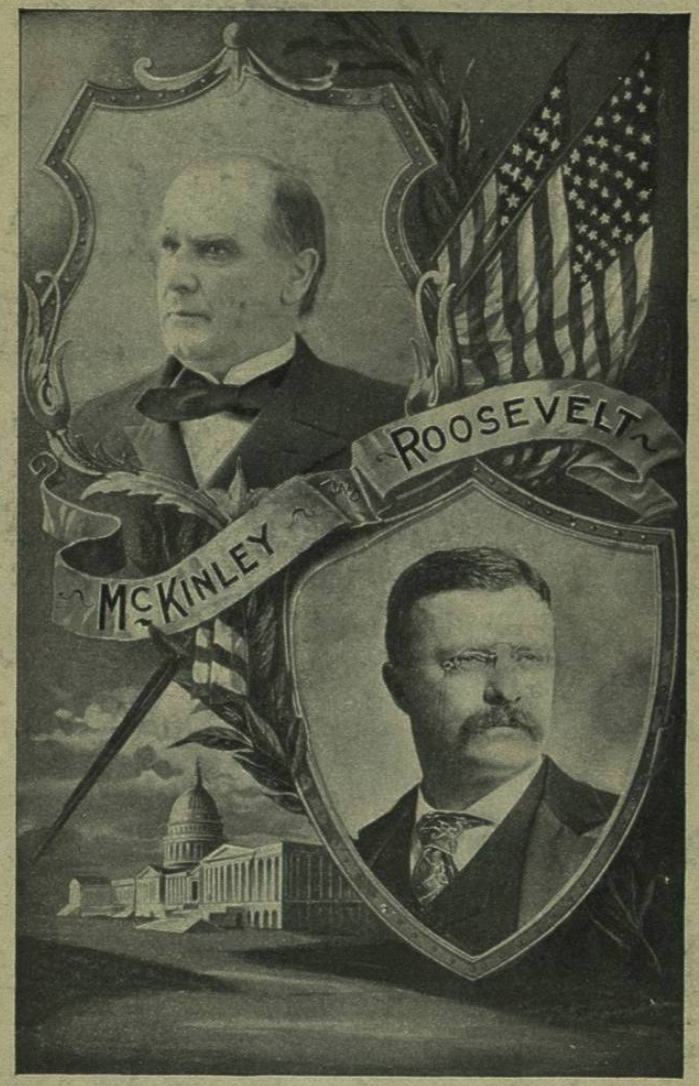
CHAPTER XX.



THE CAPITOL AT WASHINGTON



PRESIDENT McKINLEY AND HIS CABINET



GROUP OF OFFICERS AND MEMBERS OF THE REPUBLICAN NATIONAL COMMITTEE OF 1900, WHO CONDUCTED THE CAMPAIGN RESULTING IN MR. McKINLEY'S RE-ELECTION

CHAPTER I.

Birth and Education of President McKinley—His Brilliant Career in the Army and Promotion for Bravery—Distinguished as a Lawyer, Congressman and Governor—Champion of the Rights of Labor.

A CROWDED public reception in the Temple of Music at the Pan-American Exposition at Buffalo. President McKinley shaking hands with the throng. Suddenly the sharp crack of a pistol shot, repeated in an instant. The President twice wounded by a desperate assassin. Horror, commotion and indignation on every side.

Such is the short and appalling story of that fatal Friday afternoon, the sixth of September, 1901. Our honored President, who held so strong a place in the hearts of the whole American people was stricken by the dastardly hand of a coward and murderer. The shot was winged with death.

He was in the apparent enjoyment of health, honor and every token of happiness. He was applauded by the vast throng that crowded around him at the Exposition Grounds. In the twinkling of an eye a ghastly change came over the whole scene. Men were petrified by the infamous deed; others were maddened to desperation. We shall relate the story of Mr. McKinley's life, with the earnest endeavor to make these pages worthy of the illustrious President, whose tragic death has stirred the hearts of the whole American people to their lowest depths.

Seldom in the public life of the statesmen of this republic has the wisdom of pertinacious, continuous application to one broad issue of national policy as a road to highest preferment been so completely approved as in the career of President William McKinley. Twice his conspicuous championship of protection and home markets for American workmen almost stampeded conventions to his nomination, when acceptance