

CHAPTER XII

Strong Hopes at First of the President's Recovery—Days of Anxious Suspense—Some Account of the Assassin—Arrest of Notorious Anarchists.

FOR six days after the President was shot the bulletins announced that his condition was favorable and there was a prospect of his recovery. This intelligence was everywhere received with great rejoicing, and relieved the agony of suspense. On September 8th the following statement was made by a prominent surgeon, who was among those in attendance upon the President:

"In regard to the present condition of President McKinley, I would call your attention to the fact that it is but little over forty-eight hours since the shot was fired. It is as yet too soon to speak confidently of the outcome. At the present hour, however, and giving due consideration to the severity of the injury and the importance and extent of the operation required, the patient's condition is entirely satisfactory.

"It is gratifying to find that up to the present time none of the numerous signs of inflammation or septic conditions have appeared. The temperature is not too high. It is lower to-night than it was this morning. The pulse is better; the facial expression is entirely satisfactory; the mind is clear; there is no pain or tenderness, no nausea, and no distension of the abdomen. At this stage I consider that this is a satisfactory condition, and yet it is much too soon to feel real confidence that unfavorable conditions have been entirely escaped—entirely too soon to make any such statements. For the present we are entirely satisfied, and if these conditions continue for the next two days we shall feel further confidence.

"I may add to that this truthful tribute: If the President

lives, he will owe his life to the promptness and surgical skill which his professional attendants showed."

A correspondent who learned all the particulars of the President's condition made the following comments:

"President McKinley maintains a good measure of his strength, and those who watch at his bedside hold higher hope for his ultimate recovery. The shock from the wounds inflicted upon him by Leon Czolgosz seems to have been less than was anticipated, and that is regarded as highly favorable to him. It is admitted that the crisis in his condition has not yet come, and that there is the gravest danger until it has been safely passed. All the bulletins sent from the chamber of the wounded President indicated a spirit of hopefulness.

FEAR OF BLOOD POISONING.

"The greatest fear of the President's physicians is that septic poisoning will set in, and it is for the first symptoms of this that they are now watching. One bullet lodged in the muscles of the back, and the physicians have decided that, for the present, it is of secondary importance. The bullet took a horizontal course, but neither the intestines nor the kidneys were injured. Of this the physicians are confident. If inflammation should appear in the neighborhood of the place where the bullet is believed to have lodged, the Roentgen ray will be used to locate the bullet, and the doctors do not think there will be difficulty in extracting it.

"Two physicians and two trained nurses are with the President constantly. All others were excluded from the sick chamber this morning, as it was found that the distinguished patient could not be restrained from speaking to those who entered the room. Quiet and absolute freedom from the least excitement are considered extremely essential.

"Mrs. McKinley bears up bravely in her sorrow and the physicians in attendance feel but little concern on her account. At the request of the President, whose first thoughts were of her, she was told that he was not seriously wounded, and when she

first saw him he had rallied from the operation, and was suffering little pain. She was content to leave his side during the night and rest herself.

"With common impulse to spare the sufferer the annoyance that noise would inflict, the public keeps off the street in the neighborhood of the Milburn residence. The police have no trouble to keep the people at proper distance. A detachment of the Fourteenth United States Infantry was ordered to the house from Fort Porter. A picket line was established in front of the house but the sentries found no work to do. Ropes were stretched across Delaware Avenue in order to keep teams off that thoroughfare.

THE MILBURN RESIDENCE.

"The Milburn residence is a large two and a half story brick building. Graceful ivy climbs over the front of it, and on the large lawn which surrounds it are a number of pretty shade trees. The President lies in the rear room on the second floor. The room was chosen because it insured the most complete quiet. Telegraph wires have been led to the stable in the rear of the Milburn residence and offices opened there. The bulletins telling of the condition of the President are sent there by Dr. Rixey and at once transmitted to the world.

"Czolgosz insists that he alone planned the crime which may rob the United States of its Chief Executive, but that statement is not accepted as true. There is a belief that he was aided by others in a deliberate plot, and that confederates accompanied him to Buffalo and assisted in its execution."

This buoyant hope that the President's life would be spared was encouraged from day to day. The Governors of some of the States appointed a day of thanksgiving and rejoicing and a hopeful feeling pervaded the entire country.

"We trust in God, and believe Mr. McKinley is going to recover speedily. I know that he has the best medical attendance that can be obtained, and I am perfectly satisfied that these doctors are handling the case splendidly. It is a great pleasure to know the deep interest and sympathy felt by the American

people. The case is progressing so favorably that we are very happy."

Mrs. McKinley, the wife of the President, said this at the Milburn house, just after the three o'clock bulletin of the physicians was issued. This bulletin was the strongest and most favorable that had been put forward by the physicians since the President was shot. The seventy-two hours, which was the limit they had fixed for the development of peritonitis, had almost expired, and their confidence had wonderfully encouraged the wife of the President.

Mrs. McKinley was bearing up wonderfully under the ordeal. Stories were published that it had been deemed unwise to inform her of the shooting of her husband; that she did not know that an attempt had been made on his life, and that she had been told he had been injured by a fall. This preposterous fiction, carrying with it the inference that it was not safe to acquaint Mrs. McKinley with the real danger that had menaced her husband, aroused intense indignation, and was demolished by the most sweeping denials.

BORE UP WITH GREAT COMPOSURE.

As a matter of fact, Mrs. McKinley was informed of the attempt on her husband's life by Czolgosz within a few hours of the firing of the shots. She received the news with calmness, and bore up with heroic composure, being much with her husband and having the utmost faith in his recuperative powers. These reports were regarded in Buffalo, not only by the members of the Cabinet, but by the public generally, as heartless and mischievous inventions.

President McKinley improved so rapidly that on Monday, September 9th, it was confidently believed that the danger line had been passed. The President asked for the daily papers and for food, which were, of course, denied him. He jokingly remarked that it was hard enough to be shot, without being starved to death. For the first time since the shooting he spoke of his assailant, and said: "He must have been crazy." When told

that the man was an Anarchist, he said that he hoped he would get fair treatment.

On the same day, Senator M. A. Hanna wore a look of supreme contentment when he left the house where the President was lying, bravely battling with death. He felt absolutely certain that the President's recovery was only a matter of a few weeks, and he dictated this statement to a correspondent:

"You may say, for the information of the American people, that all the news we have is good news. We know that the greatest danger is already past. We hope that in a few hours the President's physicians will announce that his case is beyond the possibility of a relapse.

"Just say that for me, and I think it will give more satisfaction than if I talked a column."

"You have no fears that there may be a change for the worse?" I asked.

SENATOR HANNA'S DREAM.

"That reminds me of a dream I had last night. You know dreams go by contraries. Well, sir, in this dream I was up at the Milburn house waiting to hear how the President was getting along, and everybody was feeling very good. We thought the danger was all past. I was sitting there talking with General Brooke and Mr. Cortelyou, and we were felicitating ourselves on how well the physicians had been carrying the case.

"Suddenly, in my dream, Dr. McBurney entered the room through the door leading from the sick room with a look of the utmost horror and distress on his face. I rushed up to him, and, putting a hand on either shoulder, said: 'What is it, doctor? What is it? Let us know the worst.'"

"Dr. McBurney replied: 'My dear Senator, it is absolutely the worst that could happen. The President has had a tremendous change for the worse. His temperature is now 440 degrees.' I fell back in my chair in utter collapse, and then I awoke. But, do you know, I couldn't rest easy until I saw the early bulletins this morning."

"I am overjoyed to know that everything is going all right."

In these words, Vice-President Roosevelt signified his pleasure at the encouraging reports from the sick chamber of President McKinley. His manner indicated that they were heartfelt. We know now that everything was not "going right," and the confidence of Mr. Roosevelt was ill founded.

The Vice-President occupied a position of extreme delicacy after the President was shot and uncertainty remained as to the result of his wounds. He felt the blow so keenly, however, that no room was left in his mind for the thought that his enemies were watching every word and action in the hope of finding something which might be misconstrued to his disadvantage. His first impulse was to come immediately to Buffalo, and he did so without delay.

MESSAGES OF SYMPATHY.

A newspaper correspondent furnishes the following:

"President McKinley was told that from all parts of the world messages of sympathy had arrived. He was also told that the American public had shown great grief over his misfortune, and had demonstrated that he holds a strong grip upon the affections of his fellow countrymen. He was deeply touched, and said that he felt himself to be too highly honored. To Dr. Rixey he said that he hoped to recover to show that he appreciated all that had been done for him.

"Nothing has caused so deep distress to the friends of President McKinley as the publication of the cruel canard that Mrs. McKinley has not yet been informed of the attack made upon her husband. This publication carries with it the impression that the President's wife is in no mental condition to realize what is going on about her, as it has been known that she had seen her husband each day since his injury, and that she has known of the crowds that gather in front of the house eager to learn of his condition.

"The truth is that Mrs. McKinley was told a few hours after the shooting, and more, she has been kept in no ignorance of his

condition since. She is stronger to-day than she has been before in years, and the physicians are all of the opinion that the tragedy has aroused her from that lethargy which was perhaps the prime cause of her illness.

"The strangest feature of the progress that has been made toward recovery by President McKinley is that he has at no time shown any symptoms of relapse. After the operation there was no sinking spell which usually results from such a shock, and from the moment that his wounds were dressed his progress has been steady and satisfactory. Each hour has shown an improvement over the previous one.

"Dr. McBurney said that in all his experience as a physician he has never known another patient who exhibited so great a tendency to respond to medical treatment as does President McKinley. 'It is marvelous,' said he, 'and it is worthy of the study of men who are capable of understanding such matters.'

HER VISITS QUIETED HIM.

"Mrs. McKinley was permitted to have more than the hour with her husband. This was granted for the reason that the physicians have found that her visits, if anything, had a beneficial effect upon the President. He seems to rest more easily when she is with him than at any other time. She obeys the injunction not to permit her husband to talk, and it seems to give the President confidence in himself to see that his wife is so greatly improved in health.

"She went to his rooms a little before ten o'clock this morning, and remained there until after eleven. After she left him the President asked how long it would be before he would be permitted to partake of food. Dr. Rixey told him that the wounds in his stomach would not heal inside of a week or ten days, and, during that time it would be impossible for him to take any solid substance. This information was far from pleasant, but the President made no complaint.

"There seems to be no abatement in the interest displayed in President McKinley's condition, and there is certainly no

abatement in the sympathy of the public. It is a paradoxical condition of affairs that the attempted assassination of President McKinley has drawn to Buffalo more people than have been in the city at any other time since the Pan-American Exposition opened, and yet, the effect has been to cut the attendance to the fair almost fifty per cent. Visitors seem to be here for the purpose of extending sympathy to the President and to learn of his condition. It is the opinion of the management of the Exposition that the attendance will mend in a few days.

"At the hour when Buffalonians most generally retire, the announcement was made last night that President McKinley was constantly improving and that his condition was entirely satisfactory. Yet, in spite of all this, the crowds refused to be satisfied, and all night long they lingered in the streets near the Milburn house. They pushed in as close as the guard would permit them, and at the half hour intervals insisted upon sending messengers into the newspaper tent to obtain the latest information.

THOUSANDS GATHERED OUTSIDE.

"After each bulletin a few would retire, but others were ready to take their places, and at sunrise this morning more than two thousand persons were within two blocks of the house in which the stricken President lies. It is so cold to-night that this will hardly be repeated. But so persistent are the demands for the latest information that arrangements have been made with the telephone company to give the bulletins to all who may request them. This service is continuous, and four telephone stations have been set apart for the dissemination of news from the Milburn house.

"Another indication of confidence in the President's recovery was the announcement made by Mr. Buchanan, of the Pan-American Exposition, that there would be another President's day before the exhibition closed. It is proposed to make the occasion a festival of rejoicing over the President's recovery. Mr. Buchanan did not make the announcement until he had received rather positive assurances that the President would recover."

From these statements it will be seen how confident were those nearest the President that he would recover, and his valuable life would be spared to his countrymen and the world. Alas, for human hope!

"I look upon the President's recovery as assured," said Lyman J. Gage, Secretary of the Treasury, at the Buffalo Club, before his departure for Washington. "Dr. McBurney told me to-day that the wounds in the stomach were healing nicely, and that there was no longer any thing to fear from them.

"There has not been the slightest symptom of peritonitis, and, in fact, there have been absolutely no bad symptoms in the case. Dr. McBurney told me that one or two things might happen to the bullet, which has not yet been removed. It would either remain lodged in the muscles of the back, or else it had fallen down into some one of the abdominal spaces. In either case, nothing was to be feared from it, unless it should cause inflammation, and in that event it could be located at once and removed without difficulty.

CRITICAL PERIOD.

"I asked the doctor how long it would be before inflammation appeared if I should shoot myself in the leg and the bullet should lodge there. He told me that it would appear within thirty-six hours after the operation. In the President's case that period has been passed, and, as no unfavorable symptoms have occurred, I believe that nothing serious is to be feared from the presence of the bullet. It has probably been encysted long ago."

Secretary Gage said that there were no pending matters of importance at present, the settlement of which would be embarrassed by the attack upon the President's life. He and Senator Hanna then joked about the monetary affairs of the Government, their tones indicating even more clearly than their assurances that the two men were completely reassured as to the President's condition.

"I shall go to Washington," said Secretary Gage. "It seems to me that my place is there."

The deep interest manifested in the President's welfare overshadowed everything else, even the Exposition and business. Special services were held daily at St. Paul's Church, where noon-day prayers were offered for the President's recovery. When the Right Rev. Bishop Walker began the service on Tuesday the church was well filled with worshipers.

At ten o'clock Abner McKinley, brother of the President; William Hawk, of Canton, an intimate of the President's family, and Charles Miller, also of Canton and a cousin of the President, with Colonel W. C. Brown, of New York, came up the avenue in an automobile at lively speed and were promptly admitted. Later, when Abner McKinley emphasized the statement that the President was rapidly improving, the glad tidings went along the line of anxious watchers.

As Mr. McKinley's brother departed Senator Hanna and other friends arrived, and presently the cottage piazza was full of guests. Messengers were running with joyful briskness, and a score of cameras were leveled at Mr. Hanna, who simply beamed on everybody and even addressed pleasant words to the photographers.

FAVORABLE NEWS.

When Senator Hanna left the cottage, half an hour later, his face was in smiles, and he walked arm in arm with a friend down the pavement telling every one that the day for anxiety had passed. Senator Fairbanks and Mr. Dawes, Controller of the Currency, emerged from the cottage ten minutes later, their faces also smiling, and the exclamations "Splendid! Splendid! Good news indeed!" fell from the lips of Senator Fairbanks.

As the rising temperature drove the chill of the morning from the atmosphere it had a new rallying effect on the President. In an incredibly short time the news was on every lip that the President was really going to recover. The temperature continued falling and the pulse and respiration gradually returned toward that much longed for point, normal.

At noon the President was said to be asleep, and later his condition was reported as improving so rapidly as to make an

X-ray search for the bullet unnecessary. A second operation was not considered imperative, unless the bullet should be found near the spine and liable to cause paralysis. All these points were discussed with surprising freedom by the crowds strung along the barricade north and south of the cottage.

Vice-President Roosevelt came at noon, and when he left the cottage his manner indicated that danger had passed. He was accosted by a negro trimming a lawn on the avenue.

"May I shake your hand?" asked the black man, as he approached Mr. Roosevelt. "You certainly may," replied the Vice-President, grasping his hand heartily. Two workmen with dinner pails came along, and they, too, greeted the Vice-President, who shook them warmly by the hand.

"Are you not afraid to be stopped?" one of them asked.

HAS NO FEAR.

"No," replied Mr. Roosevelt, with animation. "I hope no official in our country will ever be afraid. You workmen are our protection, and I am sure that the crime of Friday will only make you more determined to have the laws enforced and the lives of public officials whom you elect to office protected. Such men as you, with the ballot, are the salvation of the country, and there is no need of resorting to violence."

As Mr. Roosevelt continued walking he was asked about the President's condition. "I have every faith," he said, "in the physicians, and I believe the bulletins are not too sanguine. I am convinced that the President will recover, and rapidly, too. As a matter of fact, the country is full of old soldiers, many of whom carry bullets in their bodies, and they do not suffer any great inconvenience or pain. I remember two of my own men who were shot in the same manner in the Cuban War. Yet they lay in the marshes, as extraordinary as it may seem, for some considerable time without attendance, and both recovered. Yes, I believe the President is out of danger."

The day following came another reassuring statement from the President's chamber.

"President McKinley's condition continues favorable. While this is true, and there is no intention to give needless alarm, it is not unfair now to say that optimism may be carried to an extreme. The President is still far on the wrong side of the line of absolute safety. This is established by the information given by a member of his official family, which is to the effect that even if President McKinley continues to improve as steadily as he has during the last four days it will not be less than three weeks, and probably a month, before he can leave Buffalo.

"So far is it from my intention to give cause for alarm concerning President McKinley that I will say that all news from him to-day was good news. The President is becoming stronger every hour. He is now able to move himself about in bed with little difficulty.

LIKELY TO CARRY THE BULLET.

"That he will probably carry the bullet of the assassin with him to the grave, is the opinion of Dr. Charles McBurney. In a statement this morning after the consultation of the physicians he said that unless the bullet embedded in the muscles of the back caused trouble there would be no necessity to extract it. In his opinion, it would not even be located with the X-ray. Nothing could be gained by the use of the X-ray, he said, except the satisfaction of curiosity. President McKinley has been permitted several times to-day to drink water, the first he has had since the attempt was made upon his life. The amount given has been small, but that he has received any indicates the confidence of his physicians.

"Nourishment in a liquid form is also being administered to him in the normal manner and without the slightest ill effect. This is considered one of the best symptoms of his convalescence. Gradually this liquid nourishment will be strengthened, and if there are no setbacks it will be only a few days before Mr. McKinley will be allowed solid food. At first it will be only in infinitely small quantities, but if no ill effects follow the amount will be increased as the physicians think best.

"Realizing the intense interest that exists on the part of the

public in everything that pertains to President McKinley, the authorities to-day gave permission to an artist to sketch within the Milburn house. He was not permitted to enter the room where the President rests, but that room was carefully described to him by those who do go in and out.

"Great interest in current events is being manifested by President McKinley, but thus far all knowledge of the world outside the room he occupies has been kept from him. While perhaps no harm would come from his being informed of the world's doings, it is deemed wise for the present to give him as little as possible to think about.

"No one has yet been allowed to see him except Mrs. McKinley, Secretary Cortelyou and the physicians. Even Mrs. McKinley goes to his room only once a day and then remains for only a short time. To-day she did not go to the President until after her drive, and then sat beside his bed only a few minutes.

DEVOTED AND COURAGEOUS.

"When Mrs. McKinley visits the President very little is said by either. Sitting beside his bed, the devoted and courageous wife holds her husband's hand and in silent communion for the most part they pass the minutes allowed them to be together by the careful physicians.

"There is little distinction between day and night in the President's room. He has no regular hours for sleeping, but every few hours he becomes drowsy and he generally sleeps several hours at a time. There is always a nurse in attendance upon him, and at least one of the physicians remains in an adjoining room. When he awakens from one of his naps he is given a small drink of water containing nourishing ingredients, and the physician in charge takes his temperature, pulse and respiration.

"It is not often that more than two persons are in his room at the same time, quiet being one of the main necessities at present, and the physicians are extremely careful not to disturb him more than is absolutely necessary. Whichever one is to

make the examination at any particular time goes in alone and makes a report to the others.

"During the visits of Mrs. McKinley to the President's bedside there has been no discussion of the attempted assassination. Mrs. McKinley, however, is in possession of all the facts connected with it. Almost immediately after the President was removed from the Exposition grounds to the Milburn residence, the operation being over, she was taken by Dr. Rixey to his room and she then knew all but the most harrowing details. The news was broken to her as gently as possible, but no effort was made to conceal the main facts from her.

"Her strength, courage and cheerfulness have been the marvel of all those who know her best, but they have feared she would by this time break down under the strain. Yet she seems stronger to-day than ever and never had been more self-contained and cheerful than when she visited the President this afternoon."

WHAT A DETECTIVE SAID.

In an interview, Secret Service Detective Ireland, who, with Detectives Foster and Gallagher, were near the President when the shots were fired, said:

"It is incorrect, as has been stated, that the least fear of an assault was entertained by the Presidential party. Since the Spanish War the President has traveled all over the country, and has met people everywhere. In Canton he walks to church and downtown without the sign of secret service men of any kind, as an escort. In Washington he walks about the White House grounds, drives out freely, and has enjoyed much freedom from the presence of detectives.

"It has been my custom to stand back of the President, and just to his left, so that I could see the right hand of every person approaching, but yesterday I was requested to stand opposite the President so that Mr. Milburn could stand to the left and introduce the people who approached. That way I was unable to get a good look at everyone's right hand.

"A few moments before Czolgosz approached, a man came

along with three fingers of his right hand tied in a bandage and he had shaken hands with his left. When Czolgosz came up I noticed he was a boyish looking fellow, with an innocent face, perfectly calm, and I also noticed that his right hand was wrapped in what appeared to be a bandage.

"I watched him closely, but was interrupted by the man in front of him, who held on to the President's hand an unusually long time. This man appeared to be an Italian, and wore a short, heavy, black mustache. He was persistent, and it was necessary for me to push him along so that the others could reach the President.

"Just as he released the President's hand, and as the President was reaching for the hand of the assassin, there were two quick shots. Startled for a moment, I looked up and saw the President draw his right hand up under his coat, straighten up, and, pressing his lips together, give Czolgosz the most scornful and contemptuous look possible to imagine.

THE BIG COLORED MAN.

"At the same time I reached for the young man and caught his left arm. The big colored man standing just back of him, and who would have been the next to take the President's hand, struck the young man in the neck with one hand, and with the other reached for the revolver, which had been discharged through the handkerchief and the shots from which had set fire to the linen.

"Immediately a dozen men fell upon the assassin and bore him to the floor. While on the floor Czolgosz again tried to discharge the revolver, but before he could point it at the President, it was knocked from his hand by the colored man. It flew across the floor and one of the artillerymen picked it up and put it in his pocket. On the way down to the station Czolgosz would not say a word, but seemed greatly agitated."

CHAPTER XIII.

Last Hours of the President—"It is God's Way, His Will be Done"—Anxious Multitudes Await the Sorrowful Tidings—Universal Grief and Sympathy.

ON Friday morning, September thirteenth, the unexpected intelligence was sent forth to the world that President McKinley had suffered a serious relapse and was at death's door. The news came with greater force from the fact that through five preceding days the bulletins from the sick room had been so encouraging and satisfactory.

All the hopes that had been inspired of the illustrious patient's recovery were suddenly extinguished. The country may be said to have almost held its breath during the day, which closed with the gloomy announcement that the President could not live. The suspense was universal and gloom was written on every face.

Milburn House, Buffalo, N. Y., Sept. 14.—President McKinley died at the Milburn house at 2.15 A. M. in the morning of September 14th. He has been unconscious since 7.50 P. M. His last conscious hour on earth was spent with the wife to whom he devoted a lifetime of care. His last words were an humble submission to the will of the God in whom he believed. He was reconciled to the cruel fate to which an assassin's bullet had condemned him, and faced death in the same spirit of calmness and poise which marked his long and honorable career.

His relatives and the members of his official family were at the Milburn house, except Secretary Wilson, who did not avail himself of the opportunity, and some of his personal and political friends took leave of him. This painful ceremony was simple. His friends came to the door of the sick room, took a longing glance at him and turned tearfully away. He was practically unconscious during this time. But the powerful heart stimulants, including oxygen, were employed to restore him to consciousness for his final parting with his wife. He asked for her, and she sat at his