

"When the gangrene which developed also affected the pancreas, this set free poisons which entered the blood and affected the heart, and so, in the end, produced death. The absorption of these poisons was what caused the weakness and exhaustion of the President. The cathartics administered Wednesday and Thursday may have caused further weakness, but death would have been inevitable without them. The wounded kidney of itself was not a serious matter, according to Dr. Mann. He says the injury to that organ might have developed in abscess, but that it was not necessarily a part of the fatal conditions. The gangrene which developed in the stomach wounds primarily and was communicated to the pancreas, which supplies food to the stomach, was the basic cause of death.

#### THE FIRST SHOT.

"The doctors commenced work on the autopsy about noon, as soon as Coroner Wilson had officially viewed the President's body, and had given them permission. They found that the first bullet fired at President McKinley by the assassin did not pass through the skin. It probably struck a button on his shirt or vest and was deflected. After the cause of death had been determined the doctors searched for the second, or fatal, bullet. They looked for two hours, Dr. Mann says, and finally gave it up. A suggestion was made that the X-ray apparatus be used to obtain a skiagraph of the wounded region, but it was not done.

"After the autopsy the following official report, written by Dr. Mann, the surgeon who performed the operation in laparotomy on the President's stomach, was issued after being signed by all of the consulting staff except Dr. McBurney. Eight other physicians also signed. The report follows:—

"The bullet which struck over the breast bone did not pass through the skin, and did little harm.

"The other bullet passed through both walls of the stomach near its lower border. Both holes were found to be perfectly closed by the stitches, but the tissue around each hole had become gangrenous. After passing through the stomach the bullet passed

into the back walls of the abdomen, hitting and tearing the upper end of the kidney. This portion of the bullet track was also gangrenous, the gangrene involving the pancreas. The bullet has not been found.

"There was no sign of peritonitis or disease of other organs. The heart walls were very thin, and there was no evidence of any attempt at repair on the part of nature, and death resulted from the gangrene, which affected the stomach around the bullet wounds as well as the tissues around the further course of the bullet. Death was unavoidable by any surgical or medical treatment, and was the direct result of the bullet wound.

"(Signed) Harvey D. Gaylord, M. D.; Herman G. Matzinger, M. D.; P. M. Rixey, M. D.; Matthew D. Mann, M. D.; Herman Mynter, M. D.; Roswell Park, M. D.; Eugene Wasdin, M. D.; Charles G. Stockton, M. D.; Edward G. Janeway, M. D.; W. W. Johnson, M. D.; W. P. Kendall, U. S. A.; Charles Cary, M. D.; Edward L. Munson, assistant surgeon, U. S. A., and Hermanus L. Baer, M. D.'

#### CONCLAVE OF DOCTORS.

"Drs. Rixey, Mann, Mynter, Park and Wasdin were the attending surgeons. Dr. Stockton was added to the staff Thursday night. Drs. Janeway and Johnson were the heart specialists sent for on Friday. Dr. Baer is Abner McKinley's son-in-law. The others were Buffalo practitioners of note, who were merely called in to assist at the autopsy."

Dr. Roswell Park, speaking of the probable direct cause of the President's death, said: "Apparently the bullet after passing through the stomach penetrated to the pancreatic gland, though we were not able to discover this fact while the President lived. The ball cut a small groove through an edge of the left kidney and then reached the pancreas, afterward imbedding itself somewhere in the muscles or tissues of the back. There was nothing to indicate that the pancreas had been struck by the bullet in the examinations that were made at the time of the first operation.

"After the wound and incision made by the operating surgeons had been closed, it seems that the pancreas fluid escaped steadily into the system. Of course, there was no way for us to know this, or we should have discovered some trace of the fact. We could not cut through to where the ball had embedded itself and trace its course backward from there. The pancreas fluid, which properly aids in the assimilation of starchy stuffs, flowed constantly from the wound and was absorbed by the tissues. It reached the veins, and through them the heart. It likewise provoked gangrene of the tissues. No, the use of the X-ray would not have aided in the discovery of this trouble."

"Did the possibility of the pancreas having been entered by the bullet ever enter into the calculation of the surgeons when they were in consultation?"

#### NO WAY TO FIND OUT.

"Not until the President took the turn for the worse, after he had taken the solid food Thursday. Then it was only discussed in a negative fashion, not regarded as among the possibilities. In any event, there was no method by which we could have discovered the fact. The President realized that there was no hope for his recovery at least forty-eight hours before he passed away. He was never told by those at his side that they knew he could not live. The X-ray was brought to the house only with the idea of having it near and in readiness should the occasion arise for its use. We did not find that it could help us at any time."

Dr. Park did not explain how President McKinley knew that he was beyond recovery at a time when the physicians were sending out favorable bulletins and all but announcing that he was out of danger.

Dr Mynter, who was in attendance upon the President almost from the moment he was struck down, said: "The assassin's bullet, from what our examinations demonstrated, passed first through the abdomen, then through the front and back of the stomach. From there it tore through the mesentery of the colon

transversum, notched off a corner of the left kidney and passed through the rear wall of the peritoneum. After that it disappeared in the muscles of the back, and we could get no trace of its resting place. It would not have been possible to cut in and reach it.

"I have treated hundreds of gunshot wounds in my experience as a surgeon, but never before have I found that conditions developed such as have come up in this case. From the point of entrance of the ball to where it disappeared there had developed a gangrenous course. There was no peritonitis.

"You ask me if the bullet was poisoned? I must tell you that I do not know. I have never come in contact with an instance of a bullet being poisoned, but there is this gangrenous course, such as neither I nor any of the other surgeons attending the President had ever encountered. I cannot account for it.

#### THERE WAS NO HOPE.

"The President's stomach was amply capable of retaining what food was given to him, but the gangrenous spots in the wall of the organ were working the mischief. Had he survived the night, I am satisfied that to-day would have found these mortified portions falling away, dropping the contents of the stomach into the abdomen, and then death would have ensued quickly.

"Most assuredly the solids given him worked not one whit of harm. We only permitted him to have a few nibbles of toast, that he might chew on them and remove the secretions from his tongue. It was absolutely necessary and worked no injury. The coffee was beneficial, what little he had of it. I give coffee as a stimulant where people suffer from heart trouble."

Dr. Matthew D. Mann, the surgeon who performed the operation on President McKinley immediately after the shooting, and who was principally in charge of the case during the President's prostration, said that the autopsy showed two unquestionable facts:

First, that the President never had the slightest chance to recover; and

Second, that the surgical steps taken immediately after he

was shot were what might have saved his life under favorable conditions.

Dr. Mann said that the President's hurt was one that under nearly any circumstances would be fatal. In the case of a young man in perfect health and vigor the same prompt surgical attention after the same injuries might save life.

"The evidence we find after the autopsy," said Dr. Mann, "is to this effect. Even the first impulse toward recovery never existed in the President's case. The bullet wound showed absolutely no intention to heal. Nature did absolutely nothing to mend the damage. The bullet punctures in the stomach were held together by the sutures, preventing the escape of foreign matter into the abdominal cavity, but the tissues had shown no disposition to unite. The President's death was due to the poison developed by the gangrenous condition of the bullet wound. The poison was absorbed into the system, and killed just as surely as would poison taken by the mouth.

#### FAVORABLE SYMPTOMS.

"There was no high inflammation. The constant low temperature, of course, demonstrates that, and there was no evidence of peritonitis or septicemia. I can only say that the President was in a low condition, and repair by nature consequently did not follow his injury.

"I do not mean by that that the President was not physically strong. The condition I define is different from physical weakness. His vitality was low; he had no recuperative powers. It was found that his heart was rather thin. I mean by that that like any other muscle of the body which is not kept at a proper development by exercise, it lacked strength."

I asked Dr. Mann if it is true that the President died simply from heart failure.

"No," said he, "that was not the cause of death. As I said a few minutes ago, the cause of death is absolutely plain. It was gangrenous poison. Many a man has a heart like President McKinley. Any man who leads a sedentary life gets short of

wind. That is due to the fact that his heart, not being sufficiently exercised, is more or less thin."

"How is it," was asked, "that the bullet was not found in the autopsy?"

"The only answer to that question is that the bullet was not discoverable. In three hours' search it could not be found. I think that fact is sufficient reply to any possible criticism which may have been offered concerning the failure of the surgeons to search for the bullet during the first operation. At the autopsy, with the abdomen open and the breastbone removed, it was impossible to find the bullet. How futile, therefore, would have been the effort to find it when the President was living?"

The following lines are expressive of the tender sympathy felt for Mrs. McKinley:

#### DEAR HEART AND TRUE.

Dear Heart, who mourning has the grief  
Of this wide world to soothe her own!  
For but to hear the name of the beloved  
Breathed by some other voice full tenderly  
Hath kept full many a heart from breaking quite;  
And thus, so she; to her the silence kept inviolate,  
Or broken but by harmony of sacred song,  
Or slow, sweet, music of the vibrant bells  
That girt the earth with sound;  
Sure this must soothe, uplift, inspire,  
To wait—to wait another day—  
A day when all her days of sorrow  
Soothed by his dear love;  
When all her days of sorrow sweetened by such memories,  
Are done. And then—The Silence, Silence!  
Then, The Wakening, The Life!  
So, fuller, richer, grander, by the depths of this,  
So, satisfying and eterne!  
So, borne above her loss by myriads;  
So, wrapt in incense of their prayers;  
So, thought on by all women and all men,  
She still may live—live on,  
Dear Heart and True!

A very appreciative notice of President McKinley appeared in the "Atlanta Constitution," and was only one of hundreds of

similar expressions of grief throughout the South. Nowhere was Mr. McKinley better loved or more sincerely mourned.

#### ALL IS OVER.

"With the final ceremonies of state, rendered in the federal capitol building yesterday, the nation has taken leave of the late president.

"Today, in Canton, he belongs to his family. Tomorrow, in his grave, he will belong to eternity.

"The assassin's work was a shock to the nation. In the desperation of the hour of affliction the public heart was hardened and called for vengeance. By the catafalque upon which the body of the victim laid so reposefully, we almost caught the smile of life—the victim, the offering upon the altar of country, was surrounded by estranged hearts made one. Let no rude voice ever presume to disturb this holy consecration to country!

"Upon the firing line of organized society Mr. McKinley had stood. The society that had fought its battle for recognition through the darkness of patriarchalism; that had found some consideration in feudalism; that had been rudely pressed back by absolutism, found its resting place upon a new continent, and its exemplars stood in an honored line, at one end of which was George Washington—at the other, William McKinley! But though society had fought this battle against power, it has not yet won in the struggle against ignorance and vice. Vice, malignant, did its work in Buffalo, but society has shown itself strong enough to rally and stand upon its feet. McKinley has fallen upon the firing line of progress; his body has been borne away from the trench to receive the honors due the soldier dead at the post of duty.

The President found a mighty nation when he was called into office. Washington had established its independence. Jefferson had outlined its civic purpose. Monroe had warned the world of its growing importance. Lincoln had held it together against an inherited struggle.

McKinley found the nation strong and rich, but torn by seeds

of dissension. With a courtesy chivalry had never approached; with a kindness so apparent that it allowed of no doubt, he touched the sensitive point, and pronounced the words that restored the unity of purpose that had marked the Continentals when they fought and starved together in 1776.

This is the man whose body has lain in the nation's Capitol, and from whom we have taken leave. Magnanimous, kind-hearted, patriotic, he has been borne away, and the nation, weeping over a fallen leader, feels the stronger for the work he has done.