

PUBLIC OPINION

Volume XXXI, Number 11

Thursday, 12 September, 1901

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THE WEEK

THE horror with which the news of the attempt upon the president's life was received, and the joy which was felt when it became almost certain that he would recover from his wounds, is a measure of the respect and affection in which President McKinley is held at home and abroad. It is always difficult to understand what an assassin expects to accomplish by murdering the head of a nation, but in the case of the murder of an elected president of a happy and prosperous country, the asylum for the oppressed of every land—a president whose life had almost precluded the possibility of his having enemies, personal or political—reason is absolutely lacking.

CZOLGOSZ says that his deed was prompted by the teachings of anarchy; he asserts that he has only done his duty as he understands it. He is a Pole, but was born in this country, speaks English well, and is, presumably, familiar with the system of government under which he lived. If so, he knew that his deed was not only brutal and criminal, but senseless as well. It is not to be compared to the "removal" of an autocratic ruler or the representative of a system of government which may be accused of bringing suffering upon a nation. Those who know Czolgosz say that he was incapable of planning and carrying out his dastardly crime; it is quite unlikely, for other reasons, that he acted alone or without the knowledge and con-

nivance of other anarchists. The inspiration of the crime is, for these reasons, more important than the crime itself, Mr. McKinley's life now being, it is believed, beyond immediate danger. "Paterson Reds Can Not Conceal Their Joy" was one of the bulletins displayed by the newspapers in New York last week. They should be compelled to conceal it, and it is recommended in more than one quarter that some radical steps be taken to prevent the propagation of anarchy in this country. The right of free speech surely does not comprehend the right to preach destruction of government and murder of government's representatives. If a band of political revolutionists should openly advocate the kidnapping of children or the burning of houses, they would be quickly exterminated, but anarchists may plot and inflame without hindrance. This is absurd and dangerous.

ON the day the president was shot, Herr Most's paper, the *Freiheit*, contained this statement on its editorial page:

Humanity can only be aimed to do away with all kinds of murder, and so long as murder itself is the best means to that end, so long will Humanity seize the weapon and become the murderer of the murderer. If murder is permitted to any human being it certainly is permitted to all, but particularly to those who practise the destruction of the murderers by profession or the Grace of God.

Strangely enough, however, Most condemns Czolgosz's act and says that it was inspired by "yellow journals," the *New York Journal* in particular. This can not be proved, but it is quite possible that the *Journal's* abuse of the administration and the means it has taken to render it contemptible and execrated would induce a slightly unbalanced person to remove the subject of the *Journal's* slanders and abuse. This is an opinion which finds frequent expression.

IF Mr. McKinley had not survived the attack on his life, he would have left a noble message to the American people in the speech he delivered at Buffalo last Thursday. This was probably the most remarkable speech of his life in that it showed the extent of the president's growth of ideas and conceptions. His main point was that reciprocity, not retaliation, was in harmony with the times. His concluding sentences might have been a farewell address to the people of America and the world:

Let us ever remember that our interest is in concord, not conflict; and that our real eminence rests in the victories of peace, not those of war. We hope that all who are represented here may be moved to higher and nobler effort for their own and the world's good and that out of this city may come not only greater commerce and trade for us all, but, more essential than these, relations of mutual respect, confidence and friendship which will deepen and endure. Our earnest prayer is that God will graciously vouchsafe prosperity, happiness and peace to all our neighbors and like blessings to all the peoples and powers of earth.