

tion was due solely to the action of the digitalis, strychnine and other medicine that had been given him to sustain the heart action.

Senator Hanna, who went to Cleveland, jubilant in the certainty that the President was going to get well, and that he might safely attend the meeting of the G. A. R. in his home city, reached the Milburn house at two minutes before 10 o'clock. In his anxiety to reach the President's bedside he had come from Cleveland, a distance of 183 miles, at the rate of sixty-eight miles an hour.

DISTINGUISHED ARRIVALS.

With Senator Hanna came Mrs. Hanna, Judge Day, of Canton; Colonel Myron P. Herrick, of Cleveland; Senator Fairbanks of Indiana; Mrs. Duncan and Miss McKinley, sisters of the President; Miss Duncan and Mrs. Herrick. Senator Hanna reached the house first. The members of his party arrived soon afterward. They joined Secretaries Wilson and Hitchcock, Mr. and Mrs. Herman Baer, Abner McKinley, Mrs. Lafayette McWilliams, Mr. Milburn, Wilson S. Bissel, John N. Scatcherd and Representative Alexander, who were in the house. The new arrivals were immediately informed of the critical condition of the President and their faces, which had been grave, became still graver as they listened.

At this time anxiety in regard to the President's condition had become intense throughout Buffalo. Hundreds of men, women and children were massed at the ropes, their faces turned in the direction of the house, though many of them were unable to see it, and, of course, all were too far away to be able to hear anything. So many persons had gathered in the Milburn house that it was crowded. Groups formed on the lawn in front of the house to discuss the situation, and to exchange the latest news from the doctors.

Across the street from the house there were scores of newspaper men waiting for news of the President's condition, and dozens of telegraph instruments were ticking noisily under the

tents which had been erected to shelter them. At a quarter before 11 o'clock President McKinley had another nap. Dr. Park and Dr. Rixey remained by his side.

Early in the morning, on the advice of the surgeons, Dr. Edward Janeway, of New York city, and Dr. W. W. Johnson, of Washington, were summoned. Dr. Janeway was at St. Hubert's Inn, in the Adirondacks. He started for Buffalo as soon as he had been notified by Mr. Cortelyou that his presence was desired. Dr. Johnson was at Jamaica Island, off Portsmouth, N. H.

Secretary Cortelyou was asked whether it was true that the physicians had been compelled to begin feeding the President through the stomach before it was safe to do so because the means first taken to give nourishment had caused irritation, resulting in the rejection of the food which had been injected before it had imparted any nourishment to the patient. This was the explanation commonly accepted of the surprisingly short time, that had been permitted to elapse before the President was allowed to receive liquid and even solid food into his stomach.

SATISFACTORY RESULTS.

Mr. Cortelyou said that he had not been informed upon this point. He said that the stoppage of the functions of the bowels had created a poison in the President's system, but that during the day this had been practically eliminated.

Dr. Roswell Park said: "The President was not given solid food before he could stand it. He was perfectly able to assimilate the food given him, had it not been that the impoverished food affected the heart. The heart refused to act properly without strong blood food, and that was why the toast, soaked in hot beef juice, was given him. He was not given coffee. He relished the food, and asked for a cigar, but this was denied. Everything known to medical science was done for him, and there was no mistake made." Dr. Herman Mynter said: "At the time solid food was given him he was able to take it. There can be no mistake about that. I do not believe that the food in his stomach had much effect on the heart."

The President was asleep at half-past 1 o'clock. Only injections of saline solution and digitalis in light doses had been used up to that hour. One of the physicians sat constantly at the bedside, with his fingers on the President's pulse, ready at any alarming change in the action of the heart to apply remedies which were in readiness to be used as a last resort. Tanks of oxygen were ready at hand to be drawn upon, and all the appliances that medical skill and science could provide were within reach. The beating of the pulse was sufficiently strong to enable the physicians to permit the President to have his sleep out.

Dr. McBurney arrived at the Milburn house a little before 8 o'clock. Shortly after his arrival oxygen was administered to the President, and under its influence the patient aroused.

He was fully conscious, and whispered to Dr. Rixey that he knew that the end was at hand. He asked to see his wife, and Mrs. McKinley was sent for. She entered his room, and it was apparent to those present that of the two principal figures in this intense drama President McKinley, about to solve the great mystery, the more fully realized the significance of the awful moment. There was no show of fear in the attitude of the nation's Executive.

INFORMED HE WAS DYING.

On the outside Mr. Milburn explained to Mrs. McKinley that the President was dying, and that he could live till morning only in the event of the direct interposition of Providence. She then came to a full realization of the loss that was upon her, and she showed symptoms of a collapse. Herbert P. Bissell rushed to the assistance of the sorrowing wife, who was being literally supported by Mr. Milburn. Word was sent to Dr. Wasdin, who came from the President's chamber and administered a restorative. Little by little she came back to her normal condition. Several women friends were with her, and in their sympathy she found surcease. To one she whispered: "I will be strong for his sake."

An attempt was made to persuade Mrs. McKinley to retire and get some rest. She refused. She said that her duty was

there, and there she would remain within call of those who were with her husband. She said that she hoped that the President would arouse, and she might then have the comfort of a last word with him.

As soon as it was known that oxygen was being administered, all knew that the beginning of the end had come. This bulletin was as follows:

"The President's physicians report that his condition is grave at this hour. He is suffering from extreme prostration. Oxygen is being used. He responds to stimulation, but poorly."

As the oxygen had been provided only as a last resort, everybody understood that its use meant that the President's hour had come. His condition was such that there was no hope of his gaining strength through the stimulant sufficient to enable him to combat death. After this announcement the bulletins telling the story of the final struggle followed each other rapidly. The streets in front of the bulletin boards were filled with men and women who watched sadly each fresh announcement of the nearer approach of the end.

OLD PASTOR PRESENT.

The Rev. C. V. Wilson, of North Tonawanda, pastor of Mr. McKinley's old church in Canton, was with the President and prayed with him. Mr. Wilson left the Milburn house shortly before 9 o'clock. Tears were streaming from his eyes, and he was almost completely overcome by grief.

The relatives of the dying President, the members of his Cabinet and those personal friends who were in the house were taking their leave of him. After all had seen Mr. McKinley, the situation developed into one of mere waiting for the announcement of the President's death.

The last offices about the bedside had been said, and the President had again lapsed into unconsciousness. During his conscious moments Mrs. McKinley was brought into the chamber, and there was an affecting farewell. Members of the Cabinet,

one by one, saw the President for a few moments. Then the President softly chanted a hymn. Just before he lapsed into unconsciousness he begged the doctors to let him die. His last audible words were, as already stated, were said by Dr. Mann to be, "Good-bye all, good-bye. It is God's way. Let His will, not ours, be done."

The following intensely interesting account of the President's last moments is furnished by one of the faithful female nurses who watched over him:

"The President occupied a bed in the north wing of the Milburn home, the room formerly occupied by the Milburn boys before entering college. It was simple in its arrangement, and yet attractive and handsome. Two beds of the ordinary hospital style were located in the room.

SHOWED RESTLESSNESS.

"Previous to the relapse suffered by the President he had become somewhat whimsical, and had several times asked that he be moved to a new bed, thus accounting for the presence of the two beds in the room. A large easy-chair occupied the northeast corner of the room, and when Mrs. McKinley visited her husband, this chair was drawn alongside the bed for her comfort.

"The President lay with the foot of his bed westward, thereby preventing the sun from shining in his face. On the west wall there hung a large picture of Washington, a magnificent creation by Graves, and this particularly pleased the stricken President. Often during his confinement I heard him comment on the picture, characterizing Washington as a noble statesman, who was created to meet an emergency.

"All the nurses lived within easy calling distance of the house, and messengers were constantly on hand prepared to rouse them. None of the medicines were either kept or prepared in the sick room. All this was done in an adjoining room which was fitted up temporarily for the purpose.

"It was customary for the doctors to blend the medicines, but the dressings were usually prepared by Miss McKenzie, the

Philadelphia nurse, who was summoned a few days before the President died. The corps of nurses was made up of Steward Elliott and Privates Hodgkins and Vollmeyer, of the United States Hospital Corps, and Misses Hunt, Mohun and Connelly, the corps being under the charge of Miss McKenzie.

"The day which brought the fatal relapse brought surprise to us all. In the morning we had lifted him from one bed to another at his request. In his new bed he seemed to rest very easy. He turned without causing himself pain or suffering. 'See how I am progressing, doctor,' he said when Dr. Waddin came that morning, and he turned from one side to another without apparent effort. The doctor smiled and assured him that he was progressing well, but advised him to remain as quiet as possible.

TIDY PERSONAL HABITS.

"Ordinarily the President was a man of remarkably clean and tidy personal habits, and never was known to pass from one day to another without a shave. His beard grew very fast, and naturally, after lying in bed almost a week without shaving, his face was very rough. He made many comments on it the day that he began to grow worse, and he asked me when I thought it would be permissible to have a barber shave him. He even joked a bit about it with the doctors when they came.

"That morning they gave him some beef juice, just a little bit at a time. This he relished greatly, for his had been a continuous fast for a week. He smacked his lips after the beef juice was given him and asked if he could not take more. This was denied him, and he was compelled to wait another twenty minutes before taking more. Then he took considerable. He remained quiet for some time, apparently satisfied.

"About this time he had occasion to speak of the press and how it was treating his case. All information was denied him, and his queries were turned aside in some way or another. Then he asked for toast and coffee. This was a serious problem and occasioned a consultation of the doctors. When they returned

with the news that he might have the toast and coffee his face lighted up and he appeared to be very grateful.

"The toast and coffee, just a little of each, was given him, and he ate it with relish and turned on his right side and prepared to sleep. His sleep lasted for several hours, and when he awoke he appeared to be greatly refreshed. From that time, however, the fatigue which eventually resulted in the relapse was noticeable. At 3 o'clock he was very tired, but made no complaint that would indicate that the food had ill effects.

"Later in the afternoon he became somewhat worse, and in the evening, when the usual night reaction came, he fared worse than ever before. Grave apprehensions were felt then, and the nurses, including Miss McKenzie, and the doctors, were all summoned. Then followed a series of consultations and conferences which continued until midnight, when he took a decided change for the worse.

BRIGHT AND CHEERY.

"It has been said that the President was in a stupor at this time. That is not true. The patient was as bright and cheery as could possibly be expected, and occasionally conversed in a low tone. He was somewhat tired, however, and seldom moved in bed. As morning approached he became worse. The bulletins given out from time to time during the morning hours describing his condition were absolutely correct. It was a gradual decline. Friday morning Mrs. McKinley made her usual visit to the sick room. The President knew he was worse, and here again his first thoughts were of his helpmate. It would worry her.

"He summoned one of the doctors, Dr. Wasdin, I believe, and asked that the truth of his condition be kept from her. This was a difficult proposition, however, as Mrs. McKinley had watched his condition closely, and quickly detected the smallest and most insignificant change. Then he offered to co-operate in keeping the news from her. He gathered all his strength together, and made a herculean effort to allay any suspicions she might have. He succeeded admirably, and she left the room

after ten minutes with her husband in the belief that he was at least holding his own.

"When she left he lapsed into the state which characterized the very early morning. He was not in a stupor, however, and recognized everybody. The morning was marked by frequent consultations and conferences, and nearly all of them were followed by bulletins on the President's condition. Dr. Rixey was the prime figure in nearly all these conferences, yet he would take no step without the consent of the other physicians. Late in the afternoon it became apparent that the President was not to last for long, his life was slowly ebbing away.

Slowly, but surely, the sands in President McKinley's life glass were dropping away. No person made that statement about the house at this time, but the very atmosphere seemed to contain something that said plainly that the President was passing away. About 4 o'clock his pulsation became so alarming that saline solution injections were resorted to. This had the effect of buoying up hopes for a time, just for a short time, however, and then he suffered a slight change for the worse again.

NO RESPONSE TO TREATMENT.

"At this time he was in a stupor. I went to his bedside and touched his lips with water, but there was no response either by sign or action. He appeared to be conscious and yet unconscious. He knew none of us. Every one considered the case hopeless, and knew that it was but a question of vitality; that he must soon die. As the hour of 9 o'clock approached his condition became rapidly worse, and I have since learned that even in the house the report was circulated that the President was dying.

"At this time it was deemed advisable to bring the family to the death chamber. They came one at a time. First came the members of the Cabinet singly, glanced at their dying chief and passed on. Tears were in the eyes of all of them. Then came Abner McKinley and his wife and Mr. and Mrs. Baer, the latter a niece of the President. They remained only a minute and passed on out of the room. Then came Senator Hanna, the dearest

friend the President ever had. He, too, was to be denied by death the joy of recognition.

"Then Mrs. McKinley came—poor, brave little woman.

"The easy chair was drawn close to the bedside, and she was seated there. The President's face lighted up. He recognized her, and it seemed as if the nurses and doctors would burst into tears. She took his hand, the hand which in one short week had become emaciated and thin, and held it.

"His face lighted up and he murmured: 'God's will, not ours, be done.'

"To my knowledge these were the last words the President ever uttered.

WAS LED AWAY WEeping.

"Mrs. McKinley remained with him for a half hour and was then led, weeping, from the room. The President had lapsed into the sleep which knows no awakening. He was wholly unconscious. Once, near 11 o'clock, I thought I saw him move and try to say something, but it was not audible. At 11.15 o'clock Mrs. McKinley came again and this time remained with her dying husband for an hour. She said nothing and the President lay like one who had passed the river of death.

"The extremities were becoming cold and the pulse was so faint that it could not be recorded by the most sensitive instruments. After an hour's time Mrs. McKinley was led away to her room. It was the last time she would ever see her husband alive. For the next two hours his condition became worse, if such a thing were possible, and it seemed several times as if he must be dead.

"Application of the instruments which record the respiration, however, showed that he was still breathing. At 2.15 o'clock he died.

"Dr. Rixey thought best to wait a few minutes before giving out the bulletin, to make sure that the vital spark had left the body. He applied the apparatus and the dial remained unmoved. He was dead.

"The undertaker came and laid out the body on the bed on which it had lain for a week. The hands were folded across the breast, and a sheet was drawn over the face. Private Hodgins, of the Hospital Corps, was detailed to guard the body, and throughout the remainder of the night he stood at attention at the foot of the bed. At 5.30 o'clock he was relieved by Private Voltmeyer, of the same branch of the service."