

[R6001 : page 360]

ADDRESSES AT AFTERNOON SERVICE
PASTOR RUSSELL'S LAST DAYS – BY MENTA STURGEON –
NEW YORK

On Monday afternoon, October 16th, at five o'clock, Brother Russell left the Bethel Home for the last time. At the noon hour he informed the dearest family (to him) on earth that he expected to be absent from them for a short time, and expressed for them the hope that during his absence they might be happy and prosperous under the blessings of the Lord. He also said that he expected that he and the one accompanying him would enjoy themselves in the Lord's service. Then, while he and the family stood at their places, he offered a solemn prayer, beginning with the words:

"O Lord, Thy promised grace impart,
And fill each consecrated heart!"

and quietly withdrew to his Study. There he dictated nine letters, giving instructions to various ones respecting their duties. At the appointed hour he went forth, never more to return, saying "goodby" to the friends in the hall as he passed out and started for the station.

When the Lehigh Valley train pulled out of Jersey City at six o'clock p. m., it carried away our precious Brother on his last pilgrim journey, which was to end in Heaven. Having held public meetings at Providence and Fall River the day previous, he was tired to start with, and consequently did not dictate on the train that evening, as was his custom. In fact, he retired earlier than usual, saying "Good-night" as he did so. In the morning, in answer to the question as to how he rested, he gave his usual answer [R6001 : page 361] during his recent trips, "On both sides," meaning, of course, that he changed sides frequently during the night.

He often told us of late that he scarcely slept at all, was awake every hour of the night, and thought pretty much day and night. He had the care of all the churches upon his heart, and his physical ailments would not permit much rest. He always ate sparingly, and would carefully note the effect of everything he ate or drank. Frequently would he divide his portion with his companion, in order to economize. It was his invariable custom to return thanks before all meals, whether in hotels, on trains, or where not. He had a beautiful way of making the one who traveled with him feel at ease, and not consider himself merely as a servant, by handing him enough money at the beginning of the journey to cover all his incidental expenses during the trip. He would then arrange that we pay each other's expenses alternately; he paying all expenses for both one day, and his companion paying all expenses for both the next day, and so on during the entire trip.

On Tuesday morning we passed over the line into Canada; and he wittily inquired, "Did you not feel the bridge bulge in the center as we crossed over?" Respecting Canada he said, "They will not molest us so long as we are just passing through; and as to visiting Canada, I have no desire to do so if they do not want me." On two previous occasions he had had severe trials in Hamilton, Ontario; but on this occasion he did not even recognize Hamilton as we passed through. We changed trains, and also our watches, at London; and ere long made our first stop, Detroit, on Tuesday afternoon. It was at this point that Brother Russell's trials began; and they grew steadily deeper and severer until the end of the way. He was physically weak and weary, yet listened patiently to a brother's grievances as he recited them, and then did what he could to reconcile two brethren. The chauffeur took us to the wrong place and consumed valuable time. Our street car connections were poorly made. A matter of the greatest importance in connection with the Harvest work fell flat. He was much disappointed and perplexed.

DIFFICULTIES ON THE WAY

Aboard the Pere Marquette en route for Lansing, Mich., he remarked, "We did not expect that we would be traveling together to Lansing when first we met"; and the listener was surprised to find that he well remembered our first meeting together years ago, in Allegheny. This was his way of showing his interest in and love for the one whom he had taken with him from Bethel to accompany him on this last journey. The public meeting at Lansing was well attended; but, for some reason, the interest waned and many left; so much so, that Brother Russell spoke of it afterwards, and seemed puzzled. At the railroad station he conversed with a dear brother on business matters until midnight, when he remarked that he would have to retire.

The next morning, Wednesday, at seven o'clock we expected to be in Chicago, but found ourselves instead side-tracked at Kalamazoo, without any reliable information as to what to expect. The wreckage of a freight train during the night had caused the delay, we were informed, and a detour of fifty miles would be necessary to enable us to reach our destination. There was no dining car on the train, and neither could we secure anything to eat on account of uncertainties. It was at this point that a box of peanut butter sandwiches, which had been given to us by a thoughtful friend in Brooklyn, came in just right. It made our breakfast, and afterwards our lunch. Reaching Chicago some six and a half hours late, we found that we had missed our connections for Springfield and would consequently be unable to make the appointment for that place, even though we figured every possible way. It was at Chicago that his physical endurance was taxed to the limit. Circumstances made it necessary for us to walk several miles, until the writer was growing weary and was sure that Brother Russell must be worn out also, although no remarks of the kind passed between us. All of this occurred after a few hours' rest during the previous night and with but little to eat.

It was in the Union Station at Chicago, while making preparations for leaving on the Wednesday evening train [R6002 : page 361] for Kansas City via Springfield, that a lady from the South, who had been visiting with her daughter and her son in Chicago for some time, came up to Brother Russell, introduced herself as the daughter of a certain lady who had formerly lived in Allegheny, who was a believer in the Truth, and whose funeral Brother Russell had conducted. She explained that, while she was not "one of us" in the fullest sense, yet she believed, and was especially interested in the PHOTO-DRAMA OF CREATION – so much so that she was writing a book on it, calling it The Golden Age; and she desired to have a copy of the SCENARIO. This SCENARIO was both promised and sent. Brother Russell, as usual, inquired respecting the consecration of herself and daughter, and they expressed themselves as seriously considering the matter.

How many times have I heard him ask people on the trains, in the stations, hotels, everywhere, "Are you consecrated?" He nearly always brought this in. He had many opportunities; for people recognized him everywhere and desired to speak or have a few words with him. People on the train knew him – brakemen, porters, conductors and passengers. In the stations, hotels, on the streets, everywhere, he was recognized. Many a time people came to me on the train and inquired, "Is that not Pastor Russell? and would say, "I knew him by his picture in the paper," or "I heard him lecture at such and such a place." Sometimes they would inquire just after he had walked through the train, "Who is that distinguished gentleman with you?" In this way we were able to send out many First Volumes and other printed matter of the Society.

LOSS OF BROTHER RUSSELL'S VALISE

It was toward midnight when we reached Springfield, where tickets would have to be procured. Brother Russell sat up late and intended to stay up until we reached Springfield; but, responding to

gentle persuasion, he left the matters to be attended to in my hands, and retired. It was a rainy, cold night; but still there were faithful friends waiting at the station in order to give him his mail and have a few words with him. They were satisfied when we explained the conditions to them, gave the writer Brother Russell's mail and sent much Christian love to him, which he much appreciated. The brother who substituted for Brother Russell at Springfield said that the friends had encountered less objection in preparing for the public lecture than at any previous time; and he attributed this to the good and thorough work done on a previous visit, when Brother Russell spoke at the State Fair.

At Kansas City on Thursday morning we encountered so many difficulties in purchasing tickets for the West that it became necessary that I make a trip up into the city through the rain, and with such delay that Brother Russell did here what we had never before known him to do; viz., run to catch a train. We are saying these things to show how different this trip was from anything that had ever preceded it, and how his trials increased as he proceeded on his journey. We reached Wichita Thursday afternoon in time for an afternoon meeting; but it, with other work in Wichita, was more or less interfered with by the loss of Brother Russell's valise. The dear brother who took it in charge, in getting his auto ready, placed the valise on the foot-board, and in starting off, forgot to take it in with him, with the result that it fell off somewhere between the station and the place of meeting. This caused the writer to leave off taking notes of the discourse, and go back with the brother in an effort to locate the lost article. We did everything we could, to no avail, and finally inserted a notice in the newspaper offering a reward to anyone who would return the grip.

We remained over the next day in the hope of getting it, and in the meantime made some necessary purchases of articles that Brother Russell would need on the journey. The public meeting was held at night, after which he was quite tired. The next morning he

was later than usual in coming from his room; but after breakfast we worked together until noon on some documents and letters that he had previously dictated. It was here that a traveling salesman of fine appearance introduced himself to Brother [R6002 : page 362] Russell as interested in his writings. He proved to be the son of a prominent minister in Allegheny who, at one time, bitterly opposed Brother Russell and the work he was doing. This gentleman's wife was also interested; and we afterwards met her at the public meeting in Dallas, Texas. Having done everything we could to locate the missing valise, we finally gave up the search, and were shortly on the train en route for the Dallas Convention.

EXPERIENCES AT DALLAS

As we arrived at Fort Worth at an early hour, it was not convenient for the friends to meet us, and we took the Electric for Dallas. The State Fair at Dallas was in progress, and every hotel was crowded. On account of Brother Russell's physical condition we were obliged to leave the car before reaching Dallas; so that when we came in by foot, after walking some seven blocks through crowded streets, all connections with the brethren were broken. After some difficulty they found us. The hotels were all overcrowded; we were consequently taken to a private rooming house, where several of the brethren attending the Convention were located. There we remained Saturday and Sunday, until our departure for his next appointment.

Brother Russell closed the Dallas Convention with a Love Feast and was much impressed with the earnestness and evident sincerity of the friends there. That night he spoke to the public for two and a half hours, during the course of which talk there was no little confusion on the rear of the stage by the coming and going of a theatrical troupe that was to play in the theater that night. One of the members of this troop recognized Pastor Russell as the speaker and asked permission to join in the closing song. He had a strong,

mellow voice, and joined heartily in singing, "All hail the power of Jesus' name!" After a little rest at the nearest hotel, several of us walked to the station, and there had to work our way slowly through the jam as best we could, it taking us fully a half-hour to reach our train after arriving at the station. Boarding the train at Dallas that night, October 22d, Brother Russell was tired, and his head was aching. Some medicine was taken, and he retired.

Upon arriving in Galveston the next morning, he was not well by any means; but the brethren having arranged for a morning meeting, he consented to speak to the friends at 11:30, following a discourse by Brother Sturgeon. It was at this meeting that he did something we never knew him to do before. He wrote on a piece of paper his text and one verse of a song, and told the friends that he had done so that he might make no mistake. This paper is now before us and reads:

"WHEN YE SEE THESE THINGS begin to come to pass, then lift up your heads and rejoice, knowing that your deliverance draweth nigh."

"Then let our songs abound,
And every tear be dry;
We're traveling through Immanuel's ground,
To fairer prospects nigh."

BROTHER RUSSELL'S LAST MEAL

This discourse was taken down, and will be printed in due time. The last letters Brother Russell dictated were just before going to this meeting. After it was over the brethren gave him a drive down the Sea Wall Boulevard; and he seemed to enjoy the balmy sea breeze and the beautiful, rolling waters of the Gulf of Mexico. During the little outing on the Boulevard, a dear brother laid before Brother Russell his troubles and received advice. There were nine

brethren who took dinner with us that day at the Hotel Galvez; and he answered their questions, and seemed to enjoy the fellowship and the meal. This proved to be the last meal that Brother Russell ate. Hereafter it was to be a little fruit juice, a swallow or two of a soft-boiled egg, or something like that.

We were presently off for the public meeting in Galveston, which was held in a capacious, beautiful auditorium; but, it being Monday afternoon, not more than 500 were present. However, he had to work just as hard, and even harder, and was very tired at the close. Going by auto to the Post Office and then to the train, the friends were there to talk and ask questions until time for leaving, he, in the meantime, eating nothing. At 7:45 we were at Houston, and there were eager, earnest friends waiting for him, who accompanied him to a well-filled auditorium containing some 1,200 people, to whom he spoke for about two and a half hours, making a total of six hours talking on Monday, Oct. 23d. Was he tired? Was he worn and weary?

Traveling all night then and reaching the home of Sister Frost Tuesday morning, it was not surprising to find him in much physical pain. His labors were telling on him more than ever. His overworked body began to break at its weakest point. Cystitis was becoming acute. We secured various things for him that morning – in fact, everything he wished, and he seemed to know exactly what to get and do. He worked faithfully on his case all morning; and although we had gone to see a doctor who was somewhat interested in the Truth and who would gladly have called to see him, yet it was not his wish. He appreciated the kind offer, but indicated that he would not need a physician's services. He had himself the best knowledge of the case to be had, was most skilful in its treatment, and had a servant at hand who would do readily and gladly anything he desired. This was all he wished. The choicest of fruit was placed just outside his door, but he did not touch it. **[R6003 : page 362]**

Conditions were getting serious. Brother Russell signed a few letters we had written, gave us to understand that we were doing a more important work than we realized and then had us substitute for him at the 11 o'clock meeting at the Hall. Sister Frost generously placed her auto at our disposal, so that we could easily and quickly go to and fro. He went to dinner with us, talked pleasantly to everyone, and was as humorous as usual; but he ate nothing, although the dinner was excellent. After the meal we went upstairs together arm in arm to his room; and after talking for awhile, he asked us to take the consecration service at the Hall at 3 o'clock. This we did and returned immediately to his room.

I then went to every telegraph office in town in search for a telegram which he felt sure would be here from Chicago, since we had not received it at Dallas. His valise had, however, been received at Dallas. A little girl, having found it in Wichita, had held it until she learned what to do with it, through the notice we had inserted in the newspaper. She received her reward, and was glad. Brother Russell was disappointed again and again at not receiving certain telegrams. Returning, we remained close to him the rest of the day, and in fact, was very close to him for the next week. One week thence he would be in glory.

HIS LAST PUBLIC DISCOURSE

The night was drawing on. I was seated on the low window sill close by his side, my hands rested upon his knee and my face was turned up toward his. Love like electricity was flowing from face to face and heart to heart. We talked in whispered tones; and he said during the quiet, lovely conversation, "Dear brother, please remain close tonight and be ready to pick up the thread of thought where I drop it." All this seemed very unusual, and yet was spoken in such a way as not to be disquieting. His companion was being deeply impressed, and watched his face, eyes and words as with an under-sight. He was meditative. He was responsive without saying a word.

The evening lecture was given in the largest and best theater in San Antonio. It is indeed a beautiful structure. The dress circle below and the three balconies above were filled with earnest, intelligent faces. We have never seen a meeting more beautiful. The lecture on the subject of "The World on Fire" was begun under the most favorable conditions. You can picture it at your best, and you will not miss it far.

When all was in readiness at 8:10, Brother Russell stepped to the front of the platform and began his last public discourse. The scene was most beautiful and impressive. I was seated at his right, behind the screen, and could see every motion he made. All went well for about forty-five minutes, when I thought I could see that he was going to leave the platform. Without any sign of suffering, with perfect self-poise, quietly did he walk off the rostrum, while I endeavored [R6003 : page 363] to walk on just as orderly and quietly, and, without a word of explanation, "picked up the thread where he had dropped it." I continued for about five minutes, when he returned, at which time it became my privilege to retire as quietly as did he, and resume my seat behind the curtain. My eyes were riveted upon him for another half hour, when he left again and I came on, endeavoring to clinch what he had taught them by the use of Elijah as a type.

He returned the second time, after an absence of seven minutes, and proceeded with his discourse. He was telling the audience about the formation of the first creed at Nicaea, by the Bishops under the direction of the Roman Emperor Constantine, when he left again. The thread of history was easily gathered up and carried forward for about ten minutes, when the thought began to run through my mind, "I wonder if he wishes me to close the discourse?" Then in our dear teacher came, just in time to bring the whole discourse to a fitting close. It was a wonderful climax to all his public lectures. He seemed to me to stand in a halo of glory. Leading the great audience in singing, "All hail the power of Jesus' name," he prayed most

impressively, and found me waiting for him as he came from the platform. He sat in the chair which I had been using; and while resting, a friend took several kodak pictures of him. They being the last, we hope they may be the best.

EN ROUTE TO CALIFORNIA

We were escorted to the train by the one who had entertained us in her home and supplied our every need, of whom it may be truly said, "She hath done what she could." She said that she was glad to break the alabaster box, and handed me money enough to secure a Pullman drawing-room from San Antonio to our western destination. Brother Russell at first refused this, thinking it was too much, but was afterwards induced to accept the kind offer, and well he did; for that night he was up thirty-six times in seven hours!

It was just after leaving San Antonio that I had the privilege and pleasure of untying and removing his shoes for the first time. Hitherto he would not permit this, although I had several times made the offer; but now he acquiesced readily, and said, in his gracious manner, "Thank you!" The next morning he was a sick man, although he was not ready to admit it. He kept to his bed all day Wednesday. While he lay there in his berth, I took a seat on the couch, near him. I watched every move he made, stroked his head, and thought what a stupendous amount of work that brain had done! Taking his soft, gentle right hand and letting it rest in the palm of my left hand, I gently stroked it with my right; and thinking of his lecture at San Antonio the previous night and of the many times I had seen him use that hand so graciously when exposing the errors of the creeds of men as contrasted with the Word of God, I said to him, "That is the greatest creed-smashing hand I ever saw!" He replied that he did not think it would smash any more creeds.

This led me to inquire, "Who will smite the River Jordan?" To this he responded, "Some one else can do that." "But how about the payment of the penny?" I asked. He hesitated for a moment and said,

"I don't know." Brother Russell was evidently perplexed. We then talked about his physical condition. What he said about his sufferings was this: "I always thought I should have some severe sufferings before I finished my course, but thought when I had the trouble in Pittsburgh, that was it. But if the Lord wants to add this also, it is all right."

During the course of this conversation he said, "What shall we do?" Prayerfully considering the matter, I said, "Well, Brother Russell, you seem to know your case better than anyone else could know, and you have thought of everything that can be done. Have I done everything that you can think of that I ought to do?" His answer will never be forgotten. His words were laden with comfort ocean-deep, when in a still, small voice he said, "Yes, you have; I do not know what I would do without you."

Every move he made and every word he uttered only made me think the deeper, and yet I could hardly think of Brother Russell's life coming to a close. My thought was his thought, and the thought of all the friends, that he would probably be here until the last, and would be translated after the work is over. Having this in mind, I answered his question by saying, "Since we have done everything we know, and you are getting weaker all the time – your vitality is being drained while you are eating nothing to replenish it – I think that if we return to Brooklyn, you will find something there that will put you on your feet again." His reply to this suggestion was, "The Lord permitted us to make out this route." From this I inferred that he meant: The route that we had laid out, and according to which our whole schedule had been arranged, represented the will of the Lord for us; and we must therefore do our utmost in carrying it out. The writer's original thought about this route was, that after Brother Russell had had such a heavy, strenuous summer season on account of the many Conventions attended, it would be better to take the Mallory Line Steamer at New York and go all the way to Galveston

by water; but his objection was that it was too round-about and would take too much time.

DETAINED AT DEL RIO

We were moving rapidly through southern Texas on the Southern Pacific and were approaching Del Rio when we learned that a bridge ahead of us had been burned during the night and that we would likely be held up for some time. Our train halted at Del Rio; and we found ourselves in the midst of an encampment of border soldiers. The soldiers were marching through the streets, the bands were playing, and much noise was made in every direction. In addition to this, three train loads of troopers were pulled in on the siding near us; and these men, not being permitted to leave the trains, were continually yelling and engaging in all kinds of frivolities and jokes. This continued all through that day and night. Besides, the weather was hot down there. But never one word of complaint did Brother Russell make. He did not even make mention of the soldiers and the noise.

Del Rio being a town of some 10,000 inhabitants, we were able to get a few needful things there. At one time we suggested to Brother Russell that he let us go up into the town – get the leading doctor, and ascertain his idea of what would be the best thing to do in a case similar to his without letting him know for whom we were seeking the information; but this did not appeal to him to be the proper thing. The steward on the dining car knew Brother Russell, came in to see him, showed us many kindnesses, and offered to do anything he could. The diner was three Pullmans ahead **[R6004 : page 363]** of us. Consequently we had to walk that distance for every little thing needed. After one full day's delay we pulled out of Del Rio on Thursday morning, and were the first ones to pass over the rebuilt bridge.

When our train began to go over the bridge, we hastened in to tell Brother Russell. We reached the drawing-room just as our car

had come to the middle of the bridge. Upon our mentioning it to him, he sat up in bed and looked out the window. By that time we were over, whereupon we remarked, "Brother Russell, we have often heard you speak about the time when we shall pass over the river; and now, at last, we are over." A sweet smile came over his face, but he said not a word. We began to think that he might pass over, but surely not very soon. It was October, and it occurred to us that as we were delayed one day before passing over the river in southern Texas, so he might tarry with us one prophetic day and pass over by October, 1917. With these thoughts running through our mind, we were doing our best to serve our dear, patient, uncomplaining, appreciative Brother Russell in every way we could. It was difficult to give him a drink of water without spilling it except we first raised him. There was plenty to do night and day, and we esteemed it a great privilege. We often thought to be all the more faithful because of the dear friends at home.

On Friday night, when we reached a junction point in California where we had to change trains, Brother Russell arose and dressed as usual, although, of course, he was [R6004 : page 364] very weak. This is just what we thought he would do when it came time for his next meeting; for he had often done so before. All day Saturday, under severe pain, in great weakness, with obstructions piling up before him every moment, he struggled with business propositions like a giant. We have never seen or heard of anything to equal his heroism. Friends had disappointed him, and he wondered if the Lord were not against him in some things. His trials thickened and deepened. Not a murmur or complaint did he utter. He had promised the Lord that he would not, and he kept his promise. He was so great that I nearly always hesitated about drawing near to him.

ON TO LOS ANGELES

Our train was an hour or more late in arriving in Los Angeles on Sunday morning, October 29th, and we had had nothing to eat.

The brethren were rejoiced to see us, but their countenances changed when they saw our dear Brother Russell. They saw that he was weak, but they knew not how sick he was. Besides, he would not yet admit that he was really sick. By ten o'clock we had reached the hotel, and I asked him if I could not get him something to eat. He said he was not hungry and asked me to suggest something. This I did. He consented to my getting something, but only tasted a little of it. Upon bringing it to him, he asked if I had had my breakfast; and when I answered, no, he wanted to know why. I told him that it was because I wanted him to have his first. He said he would not eat his until I had first had my breakfast.

This was just like Brother Russell. He was always so considerate of others. Whenever he would ask me to do anything for him, he would say "Please"; and when it was done he would invariably say, "Thank you." He was a wonder! Brother Homer Lee did what he could for Brother Russell while we were there and, upon our departure, gave me his best remedies, and hoped they would do him good. The brethren in Los Angeles were kind in every way.

BROTHER RUSSELL'S LAST ADDRESS TO THE CHURCH

When the time came for the meeting with the friends in the afternoon, Brother Russell arose and made ready to go, the brethren having come for him in their auto. It was 4:30 Sunday afternoon when we left the hotel for the meeting, which was held in the same auditorium in which the Los Angeles Convention was held during the first part of September. It is a quiet and suitable hall. We do not know of any better or more appropriate place in which Brother Russell could have given his last message to the Church. He cautioned the brethren against exposing his physical condition by saying, "Don't give me away, Brethren."

You know that our dear Brother was so considerate of the feelings of others that he never drew much on the sympathy of the

friends – so considerate was he, that but few knew that he had been a physical sufferer for thirty years. On one occasion recently he sent word to the Bethel Family that he would not be down to breakfast; and afterwards he told me that it was on account of the family that he did not come – that they had such deep sympathy for him that he did not like to draw on their vitality. He had learned to lean on the Strong Arm alone! He did not need us particularly, but we needed him.

We were on the alert to comply with his every wish; and therefore no one called attention to his condition, and in that sense did not "give him away." However, he gave himself away. To a keen observer his very presence spoke volumes. But more than that, when he stepped to the front of the platform to begin to speak, out of consideration for the splendid audience before him (for every seat was occupied) he said, "I regret that I am not able to speak with force or power," and then beckoned to the Chairman to remove the stand and bring a chair. As he sat down, he said, "Pardon me for sitting down, please." In deep humility, in great suffering and in the most solemn manner, he spoke for about forty-five minutes, and then answered questions for a short period.

Finally he said, "I must say goodbye to you all, and give you a text for your remembrance – Numbers 6:24-26: 'The Lord bless thee and keep thee; the Lord make His face to shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee; the Lord lift up His countenance upon thee, and give thee peace.' May the Lord's blessing be with you richly; He has blessed the Los Angeles Class a great deal. Each one should desire to do his own share. No matter what others may do, each one do his share. Now sing Number One:

"Abide, sweet Spirit, Heavenly Dove,
With light and comfort from Above;
Be Thou our guardian, Thou our Guide,
O'er every thought and step preside."

PRESERVE THIS SPIRIT IN YOUR MIDST

Continuing, he said, "Isn't this a beautiful thought? Preserve this spirit in your midst. Have perfect confidence in the Lord, and you will be led aright. We were not brought into the Truth by any human catch-word, but by the Word of the Lord. We know that the Lord will bring out everything all right. I bid you all good by." Thus, at 6:05 p. m. Sunday, October 29th, when he left that platform, he had delivered his last address to the Church on this side of the veil, forever. Our hearts are bowed low! We humbly worship God, our Heavenly Father, at the feet of Jesus. We would prefer to keep silent; but for the Church's sake we will proceed:

Several tried to speak to Brother Russell in the auto as we rode away, but they were too late. We were presently at the station; and when we stepped out, we left one behind. It was the privilege of Brother Sherman to be with us at the station and to do us many kindnesses. When Brother Russell signed his name to the railroad ticket at Kansas City, it was his last. It was now our privilege to sign his name for him. We went to the train while Brother Sherman went to the nearest drug store to make a purchase for him. He returned at 6:30 and we said goodby. Santa Fe train No. 10 pulled out; we entered the drawing-room of car Roseisle; and in shutting to and locking the door, we shut him in and shut others out forever. Thenceforth Gethsemane! Victory! Glory!

THE RETURN JOURNEY BEGUN

He had me place various articles that he would need during the night in convenient places – under the covers, under his pillows, on the window-sills, so that he could reach them without disturbing me. We did everything just as he directed, were glad to do so, and told him so. He said, "Thank you; I have you do some things because you are so willing." It was my pleasure to be the nurse while he was both physician and patient; and when the patient – how true the name! – no longer needed the services of either the physician or the

nurse, the nurse became the undertaker and did those last sad and solemn rites which he had seen others do before. I was careful to inquire, "Is everything all right, Brother Russell?" He assured me that it was, thanked me, asked me to take my rest, indicated how he would call in case he needed me, bade me good night, and turned on his left side with his face toward the window.

We do not know how long it was afterwards when we were aroused from slumber by his knocking and calling us by name – it was probably a couple of hours. But we went to him quickly, did what was required, heard him say again "Thank you," and again lay down. This time, however, we did so with the thought that we would not sleep so soundly. In another hour he knocked and called again; and we were at his side, and soon discovered that another chill was coming on. He had had his first one two nights before. We put five Pullman blankets upon him and tucked them in close on every side; but still he shook. We gave him what was required, and was glad when the rigors ceased. We remained by his side, lying down at times on the couch beside him.

PREPARATIONS FOR DEATH

Toward morning he had me make a robe for convenience sake by pinning a sheet inside of a blanket, wrapping him in it like a robe and fastening it under his chin. He stood up on the floor for this purpose, and then lay down on the couch instead of returning to his berth. I therefore sat on his bed while he lay before me. After several hours his robe proved to be rather inconvenient, because the sheet **[R6005 : page 365]** and blanket could not be kept together. It was then that he stood again and said, "Please make me a Roman toga."

I did not understand what he meant, but did not like to have him repeat, because he was so weak. His voice had become so weak that he had to repeat nearly everything he said. I had said to him at several times, "Dear Brother Russell, I do not like to ask you to

repeat anything (It had always been my custom to listen to him so closely in all his dictation as not to require any repetition); but your voice is so weak that one can scarcely hear you." He would always repeat until at last the repetition would do no good, after which he made signs. Finally the signs failed.

I said, "Brother Russell, I do not understand what you mean." He said, "I will show you." He had me take a clean sheet and turn it down twelve inches from the top; and then a second one the same. Placing his left hand on his right shoulder, he said, "Fasten them together here." Having in my pocket a paper of safety-pins which I had recently purchased, it was easy for me to hold the sheets together on his right shoulder and at the same time reach into my pocket and get a safety-pin. The sheets being fastened with the pin, as he had directed, he said, "Now fasten them together on the other shoulder." This I did. There he stood, one sheet extending from his neck to his feet in front and the other in the back, fastened together on his two shoulders, and folded together at the edges. He stood erect before me for a moment without saying a word, then lay down on the couch on his back, closed his eyes, and lay there before me as in a shroud, a perfect picture of death.

I sat on the side of the bed watching him, beholding him, and the thought of death went through my mind. It was difficult for me to get the thought into my head that Brother Russell was going to die. I could not exactly believe it, even now. It all seemed so foreign to what we had expected. However, I know now that the Lord was gradually teaching us both from the time we had left San Antonio until now that Brother Russell's end was drawing on apace. How much Brother Russell may have understood or meant by these movements we may not surely know. They were at least the wisest things that could be done in his case; but to us they mean far more, and we believe that the Lord so arranged. The toga was worn by Roman officials and sometimes by priests, and sometimes symbolized victory and peace, and at other times that the one

wearing it had fulfilled his vows. To the writer's mind all these things are meant. He had fulfilled his vows! he had gained the victory! he was at peace! Thenceforth there was laid up for him a Crown of Righteousness, which the Lord would shortly place upon his noble brow.

CONCERNING THE SEVENTH VOLUME

With those scenes before me and with thoughts of the end running through my mind, it was only natural for me to say to myself, Had you not better ask Brother Russell concerning some things? It was in this mood and in this connection that we inquired respecting the Seventh Volume, and received his answer, "Some one else can write that." We were satisfied. He had spoken concerning the smiting of the Jordan, the payment of the Penny and the writing of the Seventh Volume; and this was enough. There was nothing left to doubt or fear. We believe that he said everything that he desired to say, and that the Lord gave through him all that He wished the Church to have respecting these great, vital and important matters. Brother Russell seemed to have no desire, neither did there seem to be any need, to say and do a lot of little things at the close of his life that had been left undone. He had finished his course. His labors were o'er. He was ready to be offered.

We were solemnly busy throughout the day (Monday), so much so that we had no time for either dinner or supper. When night drew on, he was in his berth; and I lay down on the couch, with clothes on, to rest awhile. I was just about to sink into sleep when I thought I heard the words, "Brother Sturgeon." As I came to, the experiences of Samuel came into my mind. I leaned over him and said, "Brother Russell, did you call me?" He answered "Yes," and gave me some little thing to do, after which I lay down the second time. Ere long I thought I heard my name called again. I inquired as before, bent over close to him and heard him whisper, "I am trying to find something

for you to do." From this I inferred, "Brother Russell wants me to stay awake tonight"; and it proved to be even so.

DEATH DRAWING NEAR

I kept doing many little, necessary things in harmony with his words or signs until another chill (the third one) came on. I folded blanket after blanket over him, tucked them in close to him; but still he shook. I therefore lay on him and pressed my face to his until I felt the warmth returning to his body. The fact that this was the third chill in four nights deepened the impression in my mind that the end was drawing near.

About midnight a great change came over him. He no longer cared for any of his medicine, and did not even seem to thirst for water as heretofore. Some things almost ceased. His pain settled deeper in. He could no longer lie straight in bed as formerly. He must sit up; and when he would lie down, he would double together, and his head would rest straight toward the window and free from the pillows. In this posture he would be quiet for awhile until his mouth would fill from his stomach, and he would signal to be raised. Being relieved of this, he would request to be lowered for comfort, until, to prevent strangulation, he would be raised again. This prevented it, and proper attention given, he would lie down again to get relief from pain.

This continued for seven hours with increased frequency and weakness. When he could no longer make his wishes known by words, he would do so by signs. When lying across the bed and desiring to be raised, he would lift his right hand and arm in such a way that my head would fit in the curvature of his arm and he could cling to my neck, while my left arm could fit around his neck, and thus elevate him to a sitting posture. This continued until the thought arose in my mind as to who would become exhausted first. I thought of the friends at home, of the many interested friends everywhere. I

looked to the Lord, and steeled myself, saying, "I will stay with him to the finish."

In the early morning he surrendered. He was exhausted; and I could now lay him straight in bed with his head on the pillow in its accustomed place, and he could at last rest. The calm after the storm had come. He was now to die gradually, regularly, peacefully; and I was to stand by watching him, loving him, and expressing my affection for him by gently stroking his hair and his beard and rubbing his head, his face, his hands, and his feet. I did not seem to be able to do enough for him, now that he had passed beyond a certain line.

THE LAST HOURS

Several times on Monday I raised him up in bed, sat behind him so as to brace him; and his head would lean against mine. Once he whispered, "Have you anything to suggest?" I had; for I wished him to return direct to Galveston and take the steamer for New York, or else go through by train without stopping at Topeka, Tulsa or Lincoln. He answered, "Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof," by which I understood him to mean that Topeka and other places would take care of themselves when we got to them, and that we need not consider them as yet. It was then that I asked him respecting the Seventh Volume, and afterwards sat meditating what to suggest. After a period of perfect silence I thought I would say something to him about dying and certain matters connected therewith, but I hesitated and hardly knew how to begin. He was sitting up in bed and I put my arm around his neck and said, "Brother Russell, you are a very sick man." His lip quivered; we lowered him, and turned away to weep. I had gone far enough in that direction. I knew not to attempt that again. It was evident that neither he nor I could stand it, and that nothing more could be done.

The most wonderful thing about this most wonderful man was that, during all his sufferings, trials, inconveniences and

perplexities, he spoke not a word of complaint; [R6005 : page 366] he heaved not a sigh; he uttered not a moan; he shed not a tear. He had resolved that he would not murmur nor complain, and he kept his resolution to the end. He literally died in doing the Father's will, and thus fulfilled his vow. "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from *henceforth*."

BROTHER RUSSELL'S DEATH

We watched by his side all Tuesday morning with but little to do except to watch and pray. Noticing that this was the last day of October, we concluded that he would die before midnight, and consequently wrote out the following telegram to the friends in Brooklyn: "Before October closes our dearly Beloved Brother Russell will be with the Lord in glory. We are alone in Car Roseisle on Santa Fe train No. 10, due in Kansas City 7:35 Wednesday morning, and he is dying like a hero. After embalming will come home with his remains, or else go direct to Pittsburgh." We called in the Pullman conductor and also the porter and said, "We want you to see how a great man of God can die." The sight deeply impressed them, especially the porter. [R6006 : page 366] I called in the regular conductor, and telegraphed for a physician to board the train at Panhandle; and he did. He saw the condition, recognized the correctness of the diagnosis and conclusion, gave me his name, and was off before the train got under headway.

At one o'clock all were dismissed from the room, the door was locked, and we quietly watched over him until he breathed his last. We had observed the approaching signs of death before calling in the trainmen. These continued until the finger nails became discolored, the cold perspiration settled upon that noble forehead, his hands and feet grew cold, his face indicated a break, he drew his feet up in the bed like Jacob of old, his quiet breathing became less frequent, his drooping eyelids opened like the petals of a flower and disclosed those eyes – those wonderful eyes! in all their

magnificence – that we will never forget. Presently he breathed no more; we pressed our lips upon his noble brow, and knew that he had gone to be forever with and like the Lord, whom he loved so well. "Dear Lord, oh, use me as the Angel in Gethsemane! Oh, fill me with Thy Holy Spirit of Divinest love! Oh, make me sympathetic, wise, that every anguished heart May come, nor seek in vain for consolation from Thy Word, And strengthened, comforted, go forth to prison or to death, To suffer patiently the cruel mockings of the tongue; To bear the cross unto the bitter end, and then to calmly say, 'Tis finished,' and with faith unwavering pass beneath 'the veil!'"

