

Ellen G. White Estate

ELLEN G. WHITE:
THE PROGRESSIVE YEARS
VOLUME 2
1862-1876

BY ARTHUR L. WHITE

**Ellen G. White: Volume
2—The Progressive
Years: 1862-1876**

Arthur L. White

1986

**Copyright © 2017
Ellen G. White Estate, Inc.**

Information about this Book

Overview

This eBook is provided by the [Ellen G. White Estate](#). It is included in the larger free [Online Books](#) collection on the Ellen G. White Estate Web site.

About the Author

Ellen G. White (1827-1915) is considered the most widely translated American author, her works having been published in more than 160 languages. She wrote more than 100,000 pages on a wide variety of spiritual and practical topics. Guided by the Holy Spirit, she exalted Jesus and pointed to the Scriptures as the basis of one's faith.

Further Links

[A Brief Biography of Ellen G. White](#)
[About the Ellen G. White Estate](#)

End User License Agreement

The viewing, printing or downloading of this book grants you only a limited, nonexclusive and nontransferable license for use solely by you for your own personal use. This license does not permit republication, distribution, assignment, sublicense, sale, preparation of derivative works, or other use. Any unauthorized use of this book terminates the license granted hereby.

Further Information

For more information about the author, publishers, or how you can support this service, please contact the Ellen G. White Estate at mail@whiteestate.org. We are thankful for your interest and feedback and wish you God's blessing as you read.

Contents

Information about this Book	i
Foreword	xii
An Explanation the Author Would Like to Have You Read .	xii
Chapter 1—(1863) A Year to Be Remembered	14
Eyes Focus on the Tragic Inroads of a Dreaded Epidemic ..	14
Two of the Three White Children Stricken	16
The Health Vision at Otsego, Michigan	19
More Specific Counsel on Health	23
Diversified Counsel in the June 6 Vision	24
Relating to Others What She was Shown	25
Chapter 2—(1863) The Continuing Struggle to Establish	
Church Order	27
The Dissident Group in Iowa	27
Extreme Positions in Wisconsin	30
The Unwise Course Followed at Marquette, Wisconsin	31
Wrong Use of the Visions	33
The Call for a General Conference	36
Further Business of the Conference	37
Chapter 3—(1863) Seventh-day Adventists and the Civil War	
in the United States	40
The Battle of Manassas	41
The Church Given a Preview	45
Bounties to Encourage Enlistment	46
The War and the Work of the Church	51
Slavery and War Issues	53
Chapter 4—(1863) Meeting Two Major Problems	54
Forecasts of the War's Outcome	55
Strange Factors at Work	56
Counsel to Seventh-day Adventists	57
Instruction Concerning the Imminent Draft	58
The Tide Begins to Turn	61
Moses Hull Yields to Spiritualism	62
Chapter 5—(1863) The White Family Escapes to the East	69
The Extended Eastern Tour in the Summer and Fall of 1863 .	71

Diversified Activities in New England	73
A Changing Economy	74
Plans for the Immediate Future	75
The Westward Swing	77
Ellen White’s Ministry	79
Another Reason for a Switch in Plans	81
The Cold Turned to Pneumonia	82
Funeral Services in Topsham and Battle Creek	83
Chapter 6—(1864) Learning to Practice Health Reform	85
The White Family Applies Health Reform Diet	86
Important Lessons to Learn in Treating Disease	88
Spiritual Gifts,, Volumes III and IV	91
The Relation of the Vision to Books on Health	94
The Books Obtained from Dansville, New York	94
Chapter 7—(1864) An Intensive Course in Methods of Reform	96
Dr. Lay and the Health Reform Movement	100
Active Teachers of Health Reform	101
Plans for Health Publications	103
Ellen White’s Appeal to Mothers	104
An Expediously Timed Movement	105
Life in the White Home	106
Sabbath Readings, Compiled by Ellen G. White	108
Preparing People to Meet Jesus	109
Testimony for the Church No. 10	110
Supplementary Income Aided White Family Finances	110
Satan’s Intent to Destroy James White	112
Chapter 8—(1864-1865) The War and Its Unexpected Close	114
Governor Blair’s Reply	116
Now Fully Recognized as Noncombatants	117
A Call to Importune God to Stop the War	119
The Devastating War Suddenly Ends	122
Adventist Position on Relation to War Established	124
From Union Soldier to General Conference President	125
Chapter 9—(1865) Health—How to Keep It, How to Lose It	127
The Six How to Live Pamphlets	127
Ellen White’s Writing and Reading	128
Received Well in the Field	131
The Annual Meetings of 1865	132

Rebellion in Iowa	134
Stricken with Paralysis	136
Seeking Help at Dansville	137
Amusements and Diversions	139
The Important Vision of December 25	145
Chapter 10—(1866) The Agonizing Year of Captivity	147
The Promise of Full Restoration	148
The Call for the 1866 Annual Meetings	152
The 1866 General Conference Session	155
The Report of John Matteson	158
Ellen White Calls for a Revival of Health Reform	159
The Challenging Call for a Health Institution	160
The New Health Institute	163
The Health Reformer	163
Chapter 11—(1866) Rebellion in Iowa	166
The Snook and Brinkerhoff Rebellion and Confession	167
A Second Rebellion Worse than the First	170
What Happened to the Men and the Movement?	172
Uriah Smith Answers Objections to the Visions	173
The Slow Recovery of James White	175
The Autumn Journey East	175
The Visit to Father Harmon	176
Return to Battle Creek	178
Chapter 12—(1867) Liberated at Last—The Sweet and the Bitter	179
The Regular Exercise Program	183
Encouraged in Mental Activity	184
Testimonies for the Wright Church	185
An Encouraging James White Dream	188
The Six Weeks at Greenville	190
Disappointing Reception in Battle Creek	192
The Move to Greenville	196
The General Conference Session of 1867	196
Chapter 13—(1867) Advancement in Health Reform	200
The Reform Dress	201
Vital Principles of Inspiration Disclosed	203
Ellen White Begins to Wear the Reform Dress	205
Arriving at Style and Length	207

The Final Outcome	208
Skills in Public Speaking Acquired by Ellen White	209
Farming in Greenville	211
Thoughts on Revelation	212
Getting in the Hay	213
Meetings at Bushnell	214
The Unforgettable Meeting the Next Sabbath	215
Chapter 14—(1867) Battle Creek and the Health Institute . . .	217
Invited to a Four-Day September Convocation in Wisconsin	219
Preparing for the Confrontation	219
The Crucial Weekend at Battle Creek	220
The Wholesome Response	221
Modest Plans Announced	222
The Wisconsin Convocation	223
The Disclosure of Strange Criticism	224
The Iowa Convocation	225
Testimony No. 12, and Battle Creek	226
Significant Changes in Battle Creek	227
“In This I Did Wrong”	230
Chapter 15—(1867-1868) Dreams, Testimony No. 13, and the Tour East	232
Lessons Gained From Dreams	233
The Difficult Position of a Messenger for God	236
Loughborough’s Dream	237
The Glorious Fulfillment in Battle Creek	238
Off on the Eastern Tour	240
Labors in Maine	242
J. N. Andrews and the Visions	242
At Washington, New Hampshire, on the Homeward Journey	243
Continued Evidences	245
On to Vermont and West	247
Back Home in Battle Creek	248
Chapter 16—(1868) Bearing Testimony by Voice and Pen . .	250
The Almost Fatal Accident of Seneca King	252
Ellen White’s Continued Ministry as God’s Messenger . . .	255
The 1868 General Conference Session	259
The Decision to Publish Personal Testimonies	260
The Vision of June 12, 1868	262

Impressions of Other Eyewitnesses	267
Ellen White Overwhelmed	268
The Broad Field Reached By Personal Testimonies	269
Chapter 17—(1868) The First Annual Camp Meetings	271
An Annual Camp Meeting	272
Seventh-day Adventist Benevolent Association	273
The Mission to California	274
Work on Life Incidents	275
Ellen G. White Busy Writing	277
The Camp Meeting at Wright, Michigan	278
The Hasty Trip to Battle Creek, and a Dream	280
The Camp Layout	280
Activities and Speakers	281
Two More Camp Meetings Planned for 1868	283
Involved Again in Important Interests at Battle Creek	283
An Eastern Tour	285
Chapter 18—(1869) A Year to Regroup and Prepare to Advance	287
Churches without Pastors	287
Residing Again in Beloved Battle Creek	288
The 1869 General Conference Session	291
A Trying Time for Ellen White	293
Camp Meetings Take Hold in Earnest	294
“A Delightful Kind of Labor”	295
Europe Looms as an Important Field of Labor	295
Testimonies Published in 1869	297
The Continued Buffetings of Satan	297
Acquaintance With Ellen White Allayed Prejudice	298
In Defense of James and Ellen White	299
Chapter 19—(1870) At Last the Tide Turns	302
A Full Financial Disclosure Promised	303
James White’s Real Estate Transactions	305
The Sale of Writing Paper and Envelopes	306
The Many Responses	307
Wild Rumors Concerning Ellen White	307
James and Ellen White in Battle Creek	308
J. N. Andrews on the Visions	309
The Searching Messages of Testimony No. 18	311
Preparation for the 1870 General Conference Session	312

James and Ellen White Entrenched Anew in Battle Creek . . .	313
Camp Meeting Again	314
Camp Meeting Travel Vignettes	315
On to the Kansas Camp Meeting	320
Chapter 20—(1870-1871) Further Steps Toward Health Reform	322
Problems in Adopting the Vegetarian Diet	322
A Pamphlet on Raising and Canning Small Fruits	324
Meeting Problems in the Midwest	325
Failure to Promote Health Reform Devastating	326
The Dietary Program in the White Home	328
Extremes Taught in the Health Reformer Bring Crisis	330
Ellen White’s Moderate Positions	331
Back in Battle Creek for the Winter	332
Lifesaving Therapy for the Health Reformer	333
Mrs. White’s Department	334
Struggling with Copy Preparation	334
The Journal Revived	335
A Marriage in the White Family	336
Chapter 21—(1871) Restructuring for a Sound Future—1 . . .	338
Status and Working Force of the Cause	338
The One Disturbing Weakness	339
To Bring in “Picked” Businessmen	341
An Impressive Dream	343
The Testimonies in Bound Sets	345
The 1871 Western Camp Meetings	347
Midsummer in Battle Creek	348
Planning for the Eastern Camp Meetings	349
Omens that Did not Augur Well	350
Chapter 22—(1871-1872) Restructuring for a Sound Future—2	352
The “Hygienic Festival” of July 27, 1871	352
The New Review and Herald Building	355
Special Healing Blessings Signal God’s Power	356
The September Michigan Camp Meeting	357
The Tour Through New England	358
Vision at Bordoville, Vermont	359
The Tenth Annual Session of the General Conference	361
Young Men Called to the Ministry	362
George I. Butler Replaces James White	363

Seventh Day Baptist Delegate	363
The Dedication of the New Review Building	364
The Seventh-day Adventist School	364
Eyes to the West	367
An Encouraging Word for Wives Whose Husbands Must Travel	368
Chapter 23—(1872) A Surprise Vacation in the Rocky Mountains	370
Two Months in the Rocky Mountains	372
Walling's Mills	374
Enjoying the Mountains	374
The Proposed Camping Trip	377
The Caravan Starts Out	379
The Pony Throws Ellen White	381
Crossing the Continental Divide	383
A Week at Hot Sulphur Springs	384
Calls from California Cut Short the Vacation	386
Chapter 24—(1872-1873) James and Ellen White Discover California	387
In San Francisco	390
The Beginnings of the Work in California	393
First Tent Meeting in San Francisco	394
Tent Meetings in Woodland	398
Tent Effort in San Francisco	401
The Winter in California	402
Organization of the California Conference	403
Chapter 25—(1873) The Call for a School	405
The Eleventh Annual Meeting of the General Conference	406
The Dire Need of a School	408
The Conference at Work	408
The Whites Remain in Battle Creek	410
A Place to Write at the Publishing House	413
The Fourth James White Stroke of Paralysis	415
Planning for the School and the Institute	416
A Few Weeks in Their Washington Home	418
Chapter 26—(1873) Colorado Interlude	420
The Visit of Dudley and Lucretia Canright	422
Another Trip to Middle Park	423

James White Proposes Broad Plans for the Cause	424
The 1873 General Conference Session	429
Other Conference Session Actions	431
A Special Ceremony	435
Uriah Smith Confessed Further	436
The Butler Paper on Leadership	437
Chapter 27—(1874) Progressive Steps in Evangelism in the Far West	438
In the White Home in Santa Rosa	441
What Shall We Do?	443
Developments that Brought Changes	444
Ellen White’s Dream of April 1, 1874	445
Limited Evangelistic Plans	446
The Bloomfield Quarterly Meeting	448
The Precipitous Move to Oakland	450
The Fountain Farm—The Oakland Residence	450
The Tent Meetings in Oakland	451
Chapter 28—(1874) Publishing and Preaching in Oakland . .	453
The Temperance Crusade and the Tent	455
The First Issue of the Signs of the Times	456
The Struggle to Maintain the New Journal	457
An Angel Points East Over the Rocky Mountains	458
Success from the Start	460
Back in Battle Creek	460
Chapter 29—(1874) The Prophet-Apostle Relationship	464
James White Declares His Relation to the Visions and the Testimonies	465
Forgiven and Accepted	468
The Picture in the Summer of 1874	470
The Three Sensitive Letters, July 2, 8, and 10	473
Putting the Finger on the Basic Cause	474
A Second Candid Letter	476
Another Straightforward Letter	479
James White’s Potential	480
The James White Letters Take on a Positive Tone	482
James White Arrives in Battle Creek	484
A Relapse During the Ensuing Years	485
Chapter 30—(1874) James White Again in the Saddle	489

An Unexpected and Significant Turn in Affairs	490
Facing Large Responsibilities	491
The Eastern Camp Meetings	493
California and the Publishing Interests	494
Concern for the Most Effective Work in California	497
The Winter—Michigan or California?	498
The Pressing Need for a Well-Trained Ministry	499
Planning for a Biblical Institute	500
150 Attend the Institute	501
Chapter 31—(1875) Leading in Significant Advances	504
Many Subjects Revealed in the Vision of January 3	508
Plans to Return to the Pacific Coast	508
Differing Views on the Philosophy of Leadership	509
Finally, Off to California	514
Back in the East for the Camp meetings	517
The Iowa Camp Meeting	518
Uriah Smith’s Firsthand Observation	520
Chapter 32—(1875) Finishing a Successful Year	522
The Fourteenth Annual Session of the General Conference	524
The Remaining Eastern Camp Meetings	526
The New York Camp Meeting	527
A Call for Colporteur Ministry Evangelism	528
Unexpected Revival in Battle Creek	529
Hastening to the West Coast	530
The California Publishing House	532
The San Francisco Tent Meeting	534
A Dedicated Working Force in the Oakland Office	534
The Angel’s Special Message for James White	535
The Call for a Day of Fasting and Prayer	538
Looking Ahead	538
Appendix A	540
Relation to Church Fellowship	540
Spiritual Gift and Church Membership	542
The Testimony of Early Leaders	542
Disfellowshipping Members	543
Appendix B	544
Recipe for “gems”	544
Appendix C	545

Two Meals a Day	545
W. C. White Comments	546

Foreword

An Explanation the Author Would Like to Have You Read

The foundations of the Seventh-day Adventist Church had been quite well established by the early 1860s, the time with which this volume opens. The doctrinal structure was well formed, each major point having been dug from the word of God and its certainty attested to by the spirit of God. The battle for church organization had been fought and largely won.

A journal, the *Review and Herald*, was serving as the organ of communication and, in a sense, as a pastor throughout the ranks of the Sabbathkeeping Adventists. A publishing house in Michigan was in operation, supplying literature for the church and its outreach. The time had come for notable advances.

The health reform vision of June 6, 1863, within days of the official organization of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, opened up new vistas for a people preparing to meet the Lord. The vision of Christmas day, 1865, led the church into institutional medical work.

With the rapidly growing church suffering a shortage of evangelistic and administrative personnel, the need for a denominational school was keenly felt, so a college was established in Battle Creek.

[10] As the years passed, the third angel's message reached out to the West Coast, and developments in California led to a call for a church-sponsored journal, a publishing house, and a medical institution in the west. At the same time, the work of the church was getting a foothold in Europe, and J. N. Andrews was dispatched across the Atlantic to foster the developing work on another continent. These were indeed "progressive years," and in these advancements James and Ellen White stood at the forefront—James, an apostle and organizer; and Ellen, a prophet, messenger of the Lord. Theirs was a closely united ministry from which the church benefited greatly.

Camp meetings were introduced and soon became a dominating feature in binding the churches and church members together. This made it possible for the handful of ministers who were preaching the word to be free to engage in aggressive evangelism. During this period Ellen White, partly by force of circumstances and partly impelled by the Spirit of God, developed into an articulate, moving, and much-sought-after public speaker. Her ministry served not only the members of the church but the general public in popular temperance drives with their mass meetings.

These were years of prolific writing, marked by the issuance of several small volumes and seventeen numbered *Testimony* pamphlets. These currently fill the last half of volume 1 of *Testimonies for the Church*, as well as volumes 2 and 3, a total of nearly 1,650 pages.

Ellen and James became aggressive advocates of good health. In this they were guided by the visions, but obtained a practical knowledge in health lines through the study of the work of others dedicated to reforms. They moved away from the traditional, largely futile, medical procedures of the times.

With the coming of marked success in the work of James and Ellen White, Satan attacked both of them, not only through illness but in the discouragement created by disloyalty. However, faith and earnest efforts brought ultimate victory, and before the narrative of this volume closes, James White is seen as a strong leader, establishing a publishing house in California and starting the weekly journal *Signs of the Times*. At the same time he continued to give support and guidance to the longer-standing enterprises in Michigan. These were indeed the progressive years, yet years perhaps not so well known as some earlier or later in the life of Ellen G. White.

That the account this volume offers of God's guidance through years good and not so good may reinforce the structure of confidence of every reader is the sincere wish of the author.

Arthur L. White

[11]

Chapter 1—(1863) A Year to Be Remembered

Of the visions given to Ellen White, one of the ones most remembered by Seventh-day Adventists was that of June 6, 1863—the health reform vision. But this was but one of the significant events of the year. As the year opened, the Civil War—the war between the States of the United States, sparked by the issues of slavery—had reached a point of vital concern to Seventh-day Adventists. Testimony No. 9, with its lead article, “The Rebellion,” came from the press in early January. In May the structure of church organization was completed in a one-day session at which the several State conferences were linked together into a General Conference. Moses Hull, one of the few ministers of the church, left its ranks to join the spiritualists. In the autumn James and Ellen White took their family to the East to get their children away from distracting war influences in Battle Creek, but before the year ended they had lost their eldest son in death. It was truly a momentous year. We will begin its story with the health reform vision.

Eyes Focus on the Tragic Inroads of a Dreaded Epidemic

The *Review and Herald* of January 6 carried on the lower right-hand corner on the next-to-the-last page a report that four Adventists in Catlin, New York, had died of the dread disease diphtheria. One was a housewife of 22, two were children 8 and 11, and one a youth of 20. Two were children in one family.

[12]

A month before, two of the four obituary notices listed diphtheria as the cause of death. The first, written by J. and A. M. Mears, of Lovett’s Grove, Ohio, read:

That fatal scourge, diphtheria, is in our midst, and many are dying of it. Our little daughter, Elizabeth, died of it, October 31, after an illness of twenty days, aged 3 years, 11 months, and 24 days.

We feel the loss of our little one, but can say with Job, “The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord.” We feel to exclaim with the psalmist, “God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.”—[The Review and Herald, December 9, 1862](#).

Helplessly physicians and parents reached out for means of combating the disease. The Review of January 13, 1863, reprinted an item, taken from an Illinois paper, under the title “The Diphtheria Scourge in Western Illinois.” A portion of it read:

The diphtheria has been raging throughout the country to an alarming extent, and seems, to a great extent, to baffle the skill of physicians. It is confined almost exclusively to children, and when once under headway, death is almost certain to be the result. It will pass through whole towns, missing scarcely a family, and in some instances whole families of children have been swept away by it.

The obituaries appearing in the Review gave evidence in support of this frightening note. It reported that in a neighboring town, Moline, a place known “for its healthiness,” a hundred children had been swept away, leaving parents terrified.

For the medical world, and for almost everyone, these were days of great ignorance in health lines. Bacteria and viruses were unknown. When disease struck, the symptoms were treated with poisonous drugs, alcohol, and blisters and bleeding. Across from the page in the *Review* that carried the reprint from Illinois, an item was published that the editors felt might help some stricken families:

Cure for Diphtheria. A lady of Port Byron, Cayuga County, New York, cured six children (five of them her own) of diphtheria by the following remedy: “When the symptoms are first discovered, take Spanish flies, pound and mix with Venice turpentine, spread it on a piece of soft cloth, and bind it over the throat, which

will raise a blister, and soon remove the disease from the throat.”—*Farmers’ and Miners’ Journal*.

Just below this is a four-line item reading:

In the town of Pompey, Onondaga County, New York, there were two families containing eight interesting and apparently healthy children. Within two weeks seven of the eight were carried off by diphtheria.

Two of the Three White Children Stricken

There was anxiety in every home in Battle Creek. Would the dread disease strike and lay low some of the precious children?

And then it happened! In the first week of February two of James and Ellen White’s three boys complained of severe sore throats and high fever, and they could hardly utter a word—undeniable, frightening symptoms. They had diphtheria.

Fortunately—in the providence of God, no doubt—there had come into their hands, probably through an “exchange” of papers at the *Review* office, either the *Yates County Chronicle*, of Penn Yan, New York, or some journal quoting from it, an extended article entitled “Diphtheria, Its Causes, Treatment and Cure.” It was written by Dr. James C. Jackson, of Dansville, New York. How eagerly James and Ellen White read it. It made sense, and they immediately put its prescriptions into use, following every detail. The treatment called for was simple—employing only a washtub, towels, sheets, and blankets—but demanded diligent attention and earnest labor. In great detail Dr. Jackson pointed out the procedures that would bring relief and finally a cure. These were attained by the simple means we today call hydrotherapy—with proper baths, packs, rest, and fresh air, and above all, absence of anxiety.

Jackson reported that over a period of years, while employing these means in hundreds of cases involving young and old, not one patient had been lost. The methods he set forth were those that he, a physician with a good understanding of physiology, had reasoned out and put together. He stated: “Our success has been so great, while as yet our plan of treatment has been so simple, as really to introduce a

decided change in the medical practice in the particular disease, in this locality. I do not know of a physician of any school in this town who has not practically abandoned the administration of cathartics in cases of diphtheria, and ...adopted in fact our method.”—[Ibid., February 17, 1863](#)

He further reported:

Whereas great numbers of persons, four years ago, died of the disease in this town, and whose deaths caused a real panic among the people, the disease has become no more to be feared than any other morbid condition of the body common to our people. Owing to our residence here [he and associate physicians operated a water cure institution in Dansville, New York], and as the result of our teachings on the subject of health or to some silent influence affecting the views of the people of this town, there is much more care given to the conditions of living of children, especially in the cold season of the year, than formerly.—[Ibid.](#)

To James and Ellen White, who already highly valued “air, water, and light” as “God’s great remedies” ([Ibid., February 10, 1863](#)), what Dr. Jackson wrote made more sense than either drugs or a poultice of Spanish flies compounded with turpentine. The symptoms had overtaken their children very rapidly, and the Whites lost little time in carrying out—scrupulously—the directions of Dr. Jackson. They had appointments to speak in Convis, Michigan, on Sabbath and Sunday, February 7 and 8. By following Jackson’s method of treating diphtheria, which involved the better part of Friday night, on Sabbath morning they saw that they could safely leave the sick children in the hands of those who helped in the home. They drove the fifteen miles to Convis Sabbath morning and took services both morning and afternoon, meeting with new converts to the Adventist message.

Sabbath evening they returned to Battle Creek for another night of broken sleep as they treated and watched over the children. Sunday morning they were off again to Convis for morning and afternoon meetings, as promised ([Ibid.](#)).

[15] While the White children were making a speedy recovery, Ellen White was called one evening to the home of Moses Hull and his wife. Their oldest child, 6 years old, had been suddenly and severely stricken. The parents themselves were in Monterey, holding evangelistic meetings. As reported by James White in the *Review*, “Mrs. White pursued the same course of treatment as with our own children, and the child appeared well the next morning.”—*Ibid.*, February 17, 1863

As significant as the events of that week were to James and Ellen White, the pressing needs of the cause, particularly as they related to the war and the state of the churches, and confusion in the field brought about by ill-advised moves in organizing churches, left little time for the experience to become more than a passing incident. They had simply employed home remedies in combating a passing illness. James White hastened into print the Jackson article, which had been so helpful to them in their hour of emergency, on the first page of the next issue of the *Review*, “out of a sense of duty” to the readers. He introduced its eight columns with a two-paragraph note recounting his and Ellen’s experience. But no future reference is made to the article, and seemingly it made no lasting impact upon James and Ellen White.

It was a time of many issues and many pressures. But it was also a time of the dawning, on their part, of a concern in health matters. On the same *Review* page that reported the two trips to Convis while the children were being treated for diphtheria, James White inserted an editorial entitled “Pure Air.” This article was motivated, most likely, by overheating and improper ventilation in schoolhouses and churches where they had meetings, and by reading Dr. Jackson’s article, in which the importance of fresh air, properly employed, was strongly advocated. After vividly presenting the baleful effects of the hot and stuffy atmosphere that pervaded some places of worship and inhibited both the Spirit of God and the minister in accomplishing their missions, he quoted four lines from a five-stanza poem credited to “M. H. L.”:

Throw open the window and fasten it there,
Fling the curtain aside, and the blind,
And give free entrance to heaven’s pure air;

‘Tis the life and the health of mankind.

He remarked how the farmers, who perhaps could not read, knew how to take care of their horses in winter, to preserve their health; yet some, in caring for meeting rooms, act like “idiots,” creating health-imperiling conditions. He closed his editorial by referring to his and his wife’s personal practice:

[16]

We usually sleep with two windows open at opposite sides of the room, summer and winter, and take a cold-water sponge bath in the morning; hence a healthy atmosphere, not destroyed by heat, is most congenial to our feelings. But few men have as strong lungs as we have, notwithstanding they were once broken down and weak.

But few women have the strength of lungs that Mrs. White has, though she has been given over by physicians to die with consumption.

Had we allowed ourselves to be smothered in close sleeping rooms, and given up to every pain and ache of the lungs, and throat, and head, and kept up a perpetual dosing with this and that medicine, we might now be silent in death, or dragging out a miserable existence, of no benefit to anyone. Air, water, and light are God’s great remedies. If the people would *learn* to use these, doctors and their drugs would be in less demand.—[Ibid.](#), [February 10, 1863](#)

The Health Vision at Otsego, Michigan

The spring months were a time of demanding activities leading up to the General Conference session, an important meeting already mentioned.

On the back page of the May 26 issue of the *Review* appeared a woodcut of the Michigan tent, followed by a notice that read:

Providence permitting, the Michigan tent will be pitched in Otsego, Allegan County, Michigan, May 28,

to remain as long as the interest may demand. R. J. Lawrence

M. E. Cornell

When the notice was repeated the next week, it was followed by the statement:

[17] Brother and Sister White intend to be at the tent meeting at Otsego, Michigan, Sabbath and first-day, June 6 and 7.—[Ibid., June 2, 1863](#)

Otsego is about thirty miles northwest of Battle Creek. To give support to Lawrence and Cornell in the evangelistic meeting, James and Ellen White started for the place by carriage on Friday morning, June 5, along with Mr. and Mrs. George Amadon and several other families. Willie White, at the time nearing his ninth birthday, later recalled that his father was weary from the burdens he was carrying, particularly as they related to organization. Now, with the General Conference organized, he was relaxed but still somewhat depressed. The Whites were entertained at the Aaron Hilliard home a few miles west of the town. The Amadons and others came in for worship as the Sabbath was opening.

Ellen White was asked to lead in prayer. She did so, pleading fervently with God. As she prayed for James, who was close by, she moved to his side, laid her hand on his shoulder, and poured out her heart. Then her voice changed, and she was heard to exclaim, “Glory to God!” Martha Amadon, daughter of John Byington, the newly elected president of the General Conference, described the scene:

Those present at the time this vision was given will never forget the heavenly influence that filled the room. The cloud passed from the mind of Elder White, and he was full of praise to God.

Many who have witnessed these things have often wished a description could be given of the servant of

God when thus under the influence of the Holy Spirit—the illumination of the countenance, the graceful gestures of the hands, the dignity attending every movement, the musical intonations of the voice sounding as from a distance, and many, many other things which give an eyewitness confidence in their heavenly origin.... She was in vision about forty-five minutes.”—DF 105, “The Otsego Vision of 1863.”

Many matters were opened up to her in this vision, but it is noted particularly for what was shown to her in regard to health, the responsibility of all to live in harmony with principles that would prevent sickness and yield good health. This was shown to her in the practical setting of her husband’s experience. [18]

The vision was given at the setting of the sun, Friday evening; she wrote it out shortly after. In the White Estate files is the handwritten draft of the document, bearing a dateline of “Sabbath, June 6, 1863.” [The sun having set Friday evening, June 5, the new day had begun. In referring to the vision, June 6 is given as the date. In subsequently reporting various phases of what was revealed in the vision, both June 5 and June 6 are cited. See [Testimonies for the Church, 1:390, 433, 449, 517](#); and [The Review and Herald, October 8, 1867](#). See also the *Comprehensive Index to the Writings of Ellen G. White*, p. 2980, [Colossians 1](#).] It opens:

I was shown some things in regard to my husband and myself. I saw that Satan was persevering in his efforts to destroy our usefulness. I saw that we neither understood the depth and keenness of the heart trials of the other. Each heart was peculiarly sensitive; therefore each should be especially careful not to cause the other one shade of sadness or trial. Trials without will come, but strong in each other’s love, each deeply sympathizing with the other, united in the work of God, can stand nobly, faithfully together, and every trial will only work for good if well borne.—[Manuscript 1, 1863](#).

In a somewhat panoramic portrayal, there passed before her a sketchy view of some of the events that led James to sadness and discouragement. She wrote:

We have had a laborious position, but God has had a care, His hand has sustained, and that is why we have not been distracted and the mind injured. We are not as bad off as my husband feared....

I saw that my husband's mind should not be crowded and overtaxed; his mind must have rest, and he must be left free to write and attend to matters which others cannot attend to....

I saw that now we should take special care of the health God has given us, for our work was not yet done. Our testimony must yet be borne and would have influence. I saw that I had spent too much time and strength in sewing and waiting upon and entertaining company. I saw that home cares should be thrown off. The preparing of garments is a snare; others can do that. God had not given me strength for such labor. We should preserve our strength to labor in His cause, and bear our testimony when it is needed.

[19]

The matter of their health was brought to view, involving many important points for them and for Seventh-day Adventists generally:

I saw that we should encourage a cheerful, hopeful, peaceful frame of mind, for our health depends upon our doing this. I saw that it was duty for everyone to have a care for his health, but especially should we turn our attention to our health, and take time to devote to our health, that we may in a degree recover from the effects of overdoing and overtaxing the mind. The work God requires of us will not shut us away from caring for our health. The more perfect our health, the more perfect will be our labor.

More Specific Counsel on Health

As she continued in this first writing of the vision she blended what pertained more particularly to her and her husband and what was directed to others:

I saw that when we tax our strength, overlabor and weary ourselves much, then we take colds and at such times are in danger of diseases taking a dangerous form. We must not leave the care of ourselves for God to see to and to take care of that which He has left for us to watch and care for. It is not safe nor pleasing to God to violate the laws of health and then ask Him to take care of our health and keep us from disease when we are living directly contrary to our prayers.

I saw that it was a sacred duty to attend to our health, and arouse others to their duty, and yet not take the burden of their cases upon us. Yet we have a duty to speak, to come out against intemperance of every kind—intemperance in working, in eating, in drinking, and in drugging—and then point them to God's great medicine, water, pure soft water, for diseases, for health, for cleanliness, and for a luxury....

Then there was a call for an active ministry on the part of James and Ellen White along health lines:

I saw that we should not be silent upon the subject of health, but should wake up minds to the subject. I saw that our children should be instructed, and we should take time to teach them, and to study their dispositions; that we should be firm and decided, but gain their love. It does them no good to be censured and talked to in an ordering tone.

We should study what treatment would have the best influence on us, and then should pursue the same course with our children. They have our minds. They are sensitive, quick to feel. They do not mean to be wrong, but they have a great battle before them. They need

[20]

the help of their parents, who have experience. None can help them as well as we. We should take special care to interest ourselves in all their pursuits. The time which belongs to our children, company has claimed. We should not rob our children of our society, but let them find their highest pleasure with us.—[Ibid.](#)

This vision opened up new responsibilities to James and Ellen White. They were to lead in guiding the denomination into new fields of investigation and application of basic health principles. They were to forge ahead as teachers in the area of health. The vision also called for practical applications in their own home and with their own children. Were all these things within the range of possibility? Could they measure up to the task?

Diversified Counsel in the June 6 Vision

This was only one phase of the vision given that Friday evening in the Hilliard home in Otsego. It touched their personal experience closely, and she wrote of that first.

There was counsel for the Monterey church and also another nearby church. Volume 1 of the *Testimonies* carries several articles based on the vision of June 6 (there probably were others, not specifically dated):

“The Minister’s Wife,” pages 449-454 “Dangers of the Young,” pages 390-405 “The Work of God and Moses Hull,” pages 433-437

But the vision of June 6, 1863, will be remembered as introducing the health message to the church. Wrote Ellen White:

[21]

It was at the house of A. Hilliard, at Otsego, Michigan, June 6, 1863, that the great subject of health reform was opened before me in vision.—[The Review and Herald, October 8, 1867.](#)

Relating to Others What She was Shown

What Ellen White had been shown in the vision at the Hilliard home was so different from concepts commonly held at the time that it was with hesitancy she faced the bidding in the vision to take the lead in guiding Seventh-day Adventists and others to a way of life in harmony with nature's laws. When she was in the home of Dr. H. S. Lay, he pressed her to tell him what she had been shown. Reluctantly she acceded, explaining that much of what was presented to her was so different from the ordinarily accepted views that she feared she could not relate it so that it could be understood. She protested that she was not familiar with medical language and hardly knew how to present it. In the conversation that followed, she set forth in simple language what she later reduced to writing in the extended chapter entitled "Health" now found in *Spiritual Gifts*, Volume IV.

She was shown the contrast between what was so painfully visible in the human race today, on the one hand, and Adam and Eve in Eden; they were noble in stature, perfect in symmetry and beauty, sinless, and in perfect health. "I inquired," she stated, "the cause of this wonderful degeneracy, and was pointed back to Eden."—4SGg 120. It was the disobedience of our first parents, leading to intemperate desires and violation of the laws of health, that had led to degeneracy and disease. She began with eating habits; these included the use of meat—she referred to the risks incurred of contracting disease thereby, because of the increasing prevalence of disease among animals. She also detailed the harmful effects of overeating and of eating too frequently.

She mentioned the use of stimulants and narcotics, speaking particularly of alcohol, tobacco, tea, and coffee. She emphasized the importance of cleanliness of person and of the home and its premises, the importance of physical exercise and of the proper exercise of the will. She told of what she was shown concerning the value of water in the treatment of disease, and the value of pure air and sunshine. She spoke of how those who looked only to God to keep them from sickness, without doing what was in their power to maintain good health, would be disappointed, for God intended they should do their part. She emphasized that in order to preserve health, temperance in all things is necessary—in labor, in eating and drinking, and in

the exercise of the privileges of the marriage relation. It was a broad vision. She wrote it out as she was able, first in the article entitled "Health" in *Spiritual Gifts*, Volume IV, and shortly thereafter in the six *How to Live* pamphlets. She expanded the subject still more in later articles and books.

Chapter 2—(1863) The Continuing Struggle to Establish Church Order

[23]

As the organization of churches followed rather quickly the evangelistic efforts of Seventh-day Adventist ministers, church leaders often dealt with men and women who had recently come into the Adventist faith from various religious backgrounds or from no religious background at all. Many had much to learn and experience. What is more, this was the “remnant” church of the last days, against which Satan had declared war. In the Eastern States the progress was slow but steady. In the Western States organization was undertaken under the leadership of ministers who held variant views and positions; some were extreme and others were lax.

In Michigan there was steady and gratifying progress, with the Battle Creek church leading out. But in nearby States there were trouble spots. In Iowa at the turn of the year some members were involved in rebellion. In Ohio there were opposition and disunion. In Wisconsin fanaticism had reigned; T. M. Steward and his wife had been involved in spurious visions, and problems still loomed.

Announcement was made of the availability of *Testimony* No. 9.

A communication from B. F. Snook, president of the Iowa Conference, [Within a short time snook himself led in a rebellion and dropped out of the work of the Church.] reported in the *Ibid.*, [January 6, 1863](#), on the “rebel conference,” made up of those “Adventists who oppose organization and Sister White’s visions”: the item mentioned the resolutions passed by this dissident group on November 27, 1862. This rebellion had been precipitated by the proposal that the Iowa Conference organize as outlined in the *Review*.

[24]

The Dissident Group in Iowa

Snook recounted the origin of the dissident group:

When the subject of organization was first spoken of in the *Review* [some of the Sabbathkeeping Adventists

in Marion, Iowa] began to murmur and complain. Soon a meeting was called for to investigate the visions. In the interim I had a conversation with the main leader of the rebellion, in which he said, "I will admit that all that Sister White has yet seen is according to the Advent doctrine."

"Then," said I, "you must admit that her visions are good so far." He assented that they were. "Now," said I, "my impression is that if it were not for the fact that her visions are against your tobacco, you would receive them."

"Yes," said he; "because she is against me I will be against her."—*Ibid.*, January 6, 1863

Snook continued:

He was the leader of the rebellion, and he was led by tobacco with which Satan baited the hook which he was fast upon. The cry of separation was then raised.... After a lapse of some weeks the subject of organization was again talked of. Those who opposed the visions said it would be best for us to organize, that it would be no worse for them, and they would meet with us as they had done before....

The brethren then who were ready went into ...organization. The rest in a short time went off by themselves and established another meeting.—*Ibid.*

The spirit of the group was further made plain at their conference held November 27, 1862, in the charge that "one object of organization was to secure the recognition of Brother White as the 'latter-day Moses.'"—*Ibid.*

[25] The next issue of the *Review* carried an article from the pen of Uriah Smith titled "The Secession Movement in Iowa": it characterized the situation as "the anti-vision movement which has been inaugurated in Iowa" (*Ibid.*, January 13, 1863). This was accompanied by a Smith editorial of three columns titled "Do We Discard the Bible by Endorsing the Visions?" The editorial was obviously aimed

at holding the lines steady in that critical time when companies of Sabbathkeeping Adventists were moving into church organization. Smith introduced a telling illustration:

Suppose we are about to start upon a voyage. The owner of the vessel gives us a book of directions, telling us that it contains instructions sufficient for our whole journey, and that if we will heed them, we shall reach in safety our port of destination.

Setting sail, we open our book to learn its contents. We find that the author lays down general principles to govern us in our voyage, and instructs us as far as practicable, touching the various contingencies that may arise, till the end; but he also tells us that the latter part of our journey will be especially perilous; that the features of the coast are ever changing by reason of quicksands and tempests; “but for this part of the journey,” says he, “I have provided you a pilot, who will meet you, and give you such directions as the surrounding circumstances and dangers may require; and to him you must give heed.”

With these directions we reach the perilous time specified, and the pilot, according to promise, appears. But some of the crew, as he offers his services, rise up against him. “We have the original book of directions,” say they, “and that is enough for us. We stand upon that, and that alone; we want nothing of you.”

Who now heed that original book of directions? those who reject the pilot, or those who receive him, as that book instructs them? Judge ye.

But some ...may meet us at this point like this: “Then you would have us take Sister White as our pilot, would you?”

It is to forestall any efforts in this direction that this sentence is penned. We say no such thing. What we do say is distinctly this: that the gifts of the Spirit are given for our pilot through these perilous times, and wherever and in whomsoever we find genuine manifestations of

these, we are bound to respect them, nor can we do otherwise without insofar rejecting the Word of God, which directs us to receive them. Who now stand upon the Bible, and the Bible alone?—[Ibid.](#)

Extreme Positions in Wisconsin

Some months before this, as the believers in Wisconsin were moving to organize, a view was given to Ellen White of the influences at work and the discouraging results:

Satan has used as agents individuals professing to believe a part of present truth, while they were warring against a part. Such he can use more successfully than those who are at war with all our faith. His artful manner of bringing in error through partial believers in the truth has deceived many, and distracted and scattered their faith. This is the cause of the divisions in northern Wisconsin. Some receive a part of the message, and reject another portion. Some accept the Sabbath and reject the third angel's message; yet because they have received the Sabbath they claim the fellowship of those who believe all the present truth.—[Testimonies for the Church, 1:326.](#)

As she wrote at length she referred to honest souls who would see the “straight chain of present truth” with harmonious connections, link after link uniting into a great whole. Referring again to Wisconsin, she declared:

Had professed Sabbathkeepers in Wisconsin earnestly sought and labored to be in union with the prayer of Christ, to be one as He is one with the Father, Satan's work would have been defeated. If all had sought to be in union with the body, the fanaticism which has brought so deep a strain upon the cause of present truth in northern Wisconsin would not have arisen; for it is the result of drawing off from the body,

and seeking to have an original, independent faith, regardless of the faith of the body.—[Ibid.](#), 1:327.

The Unwise Course Followed at Marquette, Wisconsin

[26]

In Marquette, some twenty or thirty miles from Mauston, T. M. Steward and his wife recently had been involved in fanaticism, claiming Mrs. Steward had received visions. Of the course taken there, Ellen White wrote:

In the last vision given at Battle Creek I was shown that an unwise course was taken at Marquette in regard to the visions at the time of the organization of the church there. There were some in Marquette who were God's children, and yet doubted the visions. Others had no opposition, yet dared not take a decided stand in regard to them.... The false visions and fanatical exercises, and the wretched fruits following, had an influence upon the cause in Wisconsin to make minds jealous of everything bearing the name of visions.

[27]

All these things should have been taken into consideration, and wisdom exercised. There should be no trial or labor with those who have never seen the individual having visions, and who have had no personal knowledge of the influence of the visions. Such should not be deprived of the benefits and privileges of the church, if their Christian course is otherwise correct, and they have formed a good Christian character.—[Ibid.](#), 1:327, 328.

Present-day applications of these statements should take their context into consideration. It is clear that there were unusual circumstances that should be judiciously recognized.

The setting was that of a community of believers in Christ's second advent who kept the seventh-day Sabbath. They were newly come to these positions, and most likely held divergent views on many points. Further it was a community of people whose next-door neighbors, and perhaps those who had brought the Sabbath

and Second Advent truths to them, had within recent months been involved in fanaticism and false visions. Now steps were being taken to lead these new believers into organization and church discipline. Ellen White points out that “all these things should have been taken into consideration, and wisdom exercised.”

Also, at this time, publications from the pen of Ellen White were limited to two small volumes and eight testimony pamphlets. Opportunity for the relatively new believers in Wisconsin to judge the matter on the basis of its fruits had been very limited. These are the circumstances that led Ellen White to write as she did. She continued:

[28]

Some, I was shown, could receive the published visions, judging of the tree by its fruits. Others are like doubting Thomas; they cannot believe the published *Testimonies*, nor receive evidence through the testimony of others, but must see and have the evidence for themselves.

Such must not be set aside, but long patience and brotherly love should be exercised toward them until they find their position and become established for or against. If they fight against the visions, of which they have no knowledge; if they carry their opposition so far as to oppose that in which they have had no experience, and feel annoyed when those who believe that the visions are of God speak of them in meeting, and comfort themselves with the instruction given through vision, the church may know that they are not right.

God’s people should not cringe and yield, and give up their liberty to such disaffected ones. God has placed the gifts in the church that the church might be benefited by them; and when professed believers in the truth oppose these gifts, and fight against the visions, souls are in danger through their influence, and it is time then to labor with them, that the weak may not be led astray by their influence.—*Ibid.*, 1:328, 329.

The testimony included the following sidelight:

I was shown the case of Sister H. She was presented before me in connection with a professed sister who was strongly prejudiced against my husband and myself, and opposed to the visions. This spirit had led her to love and cherish every lying report in regard to us and the visions, and she has communicated this to Sister H. She has had a bitter spirit of war against me, when she had no personal knowledge of me. She was unacquainted with my labors, yet has nourished the most wicked feelings and prejudice against me, and has influenced Sister H, and they have united together in their bitter remarks and speeches.—[Ibid.](#), 1:329.

Wrong Use of the Visions

In *Testimony* No. 9, published in January, 1863, Ellen White devoted a chapter to the wrong use of the visions. In it she refers to the counsel quoted above from Number 8. She writes of some who were misusing the visions in Iowa, and of the patience and care that should be exercised in leading new believers into an understanding of the place of the visions in the church. At the same time, she gave counsel on dealing with dissident elements among those who had been long in the message:

[29]

Some of our brethren have had long experience in the truth and have for years been acquainted with me and with the influence of the visions. They have tested the truthfulness of these testimonies and asserted their belief in them. They have felt the powerful influence of the Spirit of God resting upon them to witness to the truthfulness of the visions. If such, when reprovved through vision, rise up against them, and work secretly to injure our influence, they should be faithfully dealt with, for their influence is endangering those who lack experience.—[Ibid.](#), 1:382, 383.

She declared:

Ministers should have compassion of some, making a difference; others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire. God's ministers should have wisdom to give to everyone his portion of meat and to make that difference with different persons which their cases require.

The course pursued with some in Iowa who are unacquainted with me has not been careful and consistent. Those who were, comparatively, strangers to the visions have been dealt with in the same manner as those who have had much light and experience in the visions.—[Ibid., 1:382.](#)

Through this experience the church was finding its way in dealing with a very sensitive and yet very vital matter relating to its welfare. [See appendix A, “relation to church fellowship,” for a significant statement by F. M. Wilcox. He was a longtime editor of the *Review and Herald* and one of the five trustees appointed by Ellen White to care for her writings.]

In one of the chapters published in May, 1862, in *Testimony* No. 8, Ellen White told how she was shown, in regard to James and herself, that Satan had sought in various ways to destroy their usefulness and even to take their lives:

[30] He had laid his plans to remove us from the work of God; he had come in different ways, and through different agencies, to accomplish his purposes; but through the ministration of holy angels he had been defeated.

I saw that in our journeying from place to place, he had frequently placed his evil angels in our path to cause accident which would destroy our lives; but holy angels were sent upon the ground to deliver.... I saw that we had been the special objects of Satan's attacks, because of our interest in and connection with the work of God.—[Ibid., 1:347.](#)

One way the great adversary sought to cripple the work of James White was in the circulation of rumors and falsehoods regarding his business integrity and honesty. Such criticism centered in northern

Wisconsin, influenced by T. M. Steward (see [Ibid.](#), 1:311-323). But criticisms were being heard from other areas where organization had been resisted. In early 1863 the Battle Creek church took steps to halt the malicious criticism. They recognized that James White's reputation was not only of great value to him but also to "those who may be connected with the cause." At a business meeting convened on Sunday, March 29, actions were taken to clear his name:

Resolved, That we, the church of Seventh-day Adventists of Battle Creek, deem it our duty to take measures to ascertain the grounds of the charges, complaints, and murmurs that are in circulation, that they may be sustained, and action taken accordingly, or may be proved to be groundless, and the envenomed mouth of calumny and slander be effectually stopped.

Resolved, That we appoint Brethren U. Smith, G. W. Amadon, and E. S. Walker, a committee to take this matter in charge.—[The Review and Herald, March 31, 1863.](#)

The breadth of the proposed investigation is seen in the next action taken by the church:

Resolved, That we hereby earnestly request all those far and near who think they have any grounds of complaint against Elder White, all who have handed to him means that he has not appropriated as directed, all who think that he has wronged the aged, the widow, and the fatherless, or that he has not in all his dealings in temporal matters manifested the strictest integrity, probity, and uprightness, to immediately report their grievances, and the grounds upon which they base them, to Uriah Smith, chairman of the above named committee, that they may be received previous to the middle of May next.—[Ibid.](#)

[31]

Testimonials were solicited from all who had had dealings with James White since the beginning of his public ministry. These were

to be laid before the coming General Conference session, called for late May.

In a last-page note in the next issue of the *Review*, White called attention to the action of the Battle Creek church. He stated:

The church deemed it necessary, for the good of the cause, that there should be an investigation of our business career connected with the cause, and a printed report made. If flying reports be true, we should be separated from the cause. If an open and critical investigation proves them false, a printed report in the hands of the friends of the cause with which we have been connected may, in some instances at least, paralyze the tongue of slander.—*Ibid.*, April 7, 1863

He urged a prompt response “for the sake of the cause.”

The Call for a General Conference

The same issue of the *Review* carried the call for a meeting of General Conference, at which it was hoped that church organization could be rounded out by binding the State conferences together in a unified body of believers across the land. The delegates were called to meet on Wednesday, May 20. The notice stated:

The several conference committees in the different States are requested to send delegates, or letters at their discretion. The brethren in those localities where there is no State conference can also be represented in the conference by delegates or letters.—*Ibid.*

[32] On Wednesday afternoon, May 20, twenty ministers and laymen assembled in Battle Creek were ready to present their credentials. The conference moved into its work, in organizing the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, as noted elsewhere (*Ellen G. White: The Early Years*, pp. 479-481). The conference elected John Byington as president; Uriah Smith, secretary; and E. S. Walker, treasurer. James White was first unanimously elected to the presidency, but he thought it best to let another carry that responsibility.

Byington would be joined by J. N. Andrews and G. W. Amadon, making an executive committee of three. The main thrust of the conference related to organization in both the State conferences and the General Conference.

Further Business of the Conference

The wording was brief, but the results were far-reaching. Actions were taken relating to the publication of charts for use in public proclamation of the message: a new prophetic chart, and one on the Ten Commandments (*Ibid.*, May 26, 1863).

The General Conference took action regarding the survey of James White's business integrity:

As no one had reported any grievances pertaining to the subject in hand, according to the request in the *Review*, the committee could only report that fact to the conference, and place in its hands the more than threescore and ten fervent testimonials which have been received on the other side, with the recommendation that, as it seemed that no one dared appear, to sustain the aforesaid reports, some action be taken by this conference to show the falsity of these reports, and vindicate before the world the character and course of Brother White....

Resolved, That the committee employed by the Battle Creek church be empowered to act further in this matter in behalf of this conference, and prepare for publication a record of the action of the Battle Creek church relative to the accusations against Brother James White, and the substance of the responses received.—*Ibid.*

It was thought well to hold open the time for reports on White for another two months. The report finally appeared in the form of a forty-page pamphlet, which was circulated under the title *Vindication of the Business Career of Elder James White*. The introduction to the pamphlet, signed by the committee of three, declared that “no one has reported himself aggrieved.” It added:

His enemies have thus betrayed their utter want of confidence in the work they have been doing. Their silence has sealed their ignominy. Hereafter, in view of this fact, none will be willing to place themselves in the contemptible position of circulating such reports, except those whose enmity and prejudice overcome their convictions of right and reason.—*Vindication of the Business Career of Elder James White*, pp. 3, 4.

The “Vindication” pamphlet consists of the signed statements of some seventy individuals who were well acquainted with White; many of these had had business dealings with him.

The conference was the first *official* General Conference session. It marked the completion of the organizational structure among Seventh-day Adventists. Attendance was such that meetings were held in the tent on the green across the street from the *Review* office. Uriah Smith, in his editorial report, declared:

Taking a general view of this meeting as a religious gathering, we hardly know what feature of the joyful occasion to notice first. We can say to the readers of the *Review*, Think of everything good that has been written of every previous meeting, and apply it to this. All this would be true, and more than this.

Perhaps no previous meeting that we have ever enjoyed was characterized by such unity of feeling and harmony of sentiment. In all the important steps taken at this conference, in the organization of a General Conference, and the further perfecting of State conferences, defining the authority of each, and the important duties belonging to their various officers, there was not a dissenting voice, and we may reasonably doubt if there was even a dissenting thought. Such union, on such points, affords the strongest grounds of hope for the immediate advancement of the cause, and its future glorious prosperity and triumph.—*Ibid.*, May 26, 1863

This step in organization brought the church into a unified denominational structure in time to meet the emergencies of the mili-

tary draft, and prepared to make advance steps as the health message came, through vision, two weeks after the session.

[34] **Chapter 3—(1863) Seventh-day Adventists and the Civil War in the United States**

Even before the first shots of the Civil War were fired, Ellen White, at Parkville, Michigan, on January 12, 1861, had been given a view of the coming conflict and its ferocity. The philosophy behind the war, and its ultimate outcome, had been opened up to her in the vision at Roosevelt, New York, on August 3, 1861. In Testimony No. 7 she opened her statement with words that threw light on the whole situation:

God is punishing this nation for the high crime of slavery. He has the destiny of the nation in His hands. He will punish the South for the sin of slavery, and the North for so long suffering its overreaching and overbearing influence.—[Testimonies for the Church, 1:264.](#)

Making reference to the vision of August 3, she declared that she was “shown the sin of slavery, which has so long been a curse to this nation.” She referred to the unconscionable law of the land, the “fugitive slave law” that required the return to their masters of any slaves who escaped to the North. This, she said, was “calculated to crush out of man every noble, generous feeling of sympathy that should rise in his heart for the oppressed and suffering slave.” Months earlier she had written:

The law of our land requiring us to deliver a slave to his master, we are not to obey; and we must abide the consequences of violating this law. The slave is not the property of any man. God is his rightful master, and man has no right to take God’s workmanship into his hands, and claim him as his own.—[Ibid., 1:202.](#)

When the laws of men conflict with the Word and law of God, we are to obey the latter, whatever the consequences may be.—[Testimonies for the Church, 1:201, 202.](#)

As to slavery, she declared:

God's scourge is now upon the North, because they have so long submitted to the advances of the slave power. The sin of Northern proslavery men is great. They have strengthened the South in their sin by sanctioning the extension of slavery; they have acted a prominent part in bringing the nation into its present distressed condition.—[Ibid., 1:264.](#)

She provided the following insight into the situation:

I was shown that many do not realize the extent of the evil which has come upon us. They have flattered themselves that the national difficulties would soon be settled and confusion and war end, but all will be convinced that there is more reality in the matter than was anticipated...

The North and South were presented before me. The North have been deceived in regard to the South. They are better prepared for war than has been represented. Most of their men are well skilled in the use of arms, some of them from experience in battle, others from habitual sporting. They have the advantage of the North in this respect, but have not, as a general thing, the valor and the power of endurance that Northern men have.—[Ibid., 1:264-266.](#)

The Battle of Manassas

Ellen White was in vision taken to the scene of the Battle of Manassas; she was shown God's hand in what took place there:

I had a view of the disastrous battle at Manassas, Virginia. It was a most exciting, distressing scene. The Southern army had everything in their favor and were prepared for a dreadful contest. The Northern army was moving on with triumph, not doubting but that they would be victorious. Many were reckless and marched forward boastfully, as though victory were already theirs.

[36]

As they neared the battlefield, many were almost fainting through weariness and want of refreshment. They did not expect so fierce an encounter. They rushed into battle and fought bravely, desperately. The dead and dying were on every side. Both the North and the South suffered severely. The Southern men felt the battle, and in a little while would have been driven back still further. The Northern men were rushing on, although their destruction was very great.

Just then an angel descended and waved his hand backward. Instantly there was confusion in the ranks. It appeared to the Northern men that their troops were retreating, when it was not so in reality, and a precipitate retreat commenced. This seemed wonderful to me.

Then it was explained that God had this nation in His own hand, and would not suffer victories to be gained faster than He ordained, and would permit no more losses to the Northern men than in His wisdom He saw fit, to punish them for their sins. And had the Northern army at this time pushed the battle still further in their fainting, exhausted condition, the far greater struggle and destruction which awaited them would have caused great triumph in the South.

God would not permit this, and sent an angel to interfere. The sudden falling back of the Northern troops is a mystery to all. They know not that God's hand was in the matter.—[Ibid.](#), 1:266, 267.

Thus was revealed God's guiding hand in the affairs of the war.

The Battle as Seen by a Southern Lieutenant Colonel W. W. Blackford, a lieutenant colonel in the Southern Army, in his book *War Years With Jeb Stuart*, gave a stirring account of what happened at Manassas in the battle of July 21, 1861:

It was now about four o'clock and the battle raged with unabated fury. The lines of blue were unbroken and their fire vigorous as ever while they surged against the solid walls of gray, standing immovable in their front. It was on that ridge earlier in the day Jackson won the name of Stonewall.

But now the most extraordinary spectacle I have ever witnessed took place. I had been gazing at the numerous well-formed lines as they moved forward to the attack, some fifteen or twenty thousand strong in full view, and for some reason had turned my head in another direction for a moment, when someone exclaimed, pointing to the battlefield, "Look! Look!"

I looked, and what a change had taken place in an instant. Where those well-dressed, well-defined lines, with clear spaces between, had been steadily pressing forward, the whole field was a confused swarm of men, like bees, running away as fast as their legs could carry them, with all order and organization abandoned. In a moment more the whole valley was filled with them as far as the eye could reach.

They plunged through Bull Run wherever they came to it, regardless of fords or bridges, and there many were drowned. Muskets, cartridge boxes, belts, knapsacks, haversacks, and blankets were thrown away in their mad race, that nothing might impede their flight. In the reckless haste, the artillery drove over everyone who did not get out of their way. Ambulance and wagon drivers cut the traces and dashed off on the mules. In [their] crossing Cub Run, a shell exploded in a team and blocked the way and twenty-eight pieces of artillery fell into our hands.

[37]

Blackford's description of the disorderly and unaccounted-for retreat is vivid:

By stepping or jumping from one thing to another of what had been thrown away in the stampede, I could have gone long distances without ever letting my foot touch the ground, and this over a belt forty or fifty yards wide on each side of the road.

[38] Numbers of gay members of Congress had come out from Washington to witness the battle from the adjacent hills, provided with baskets of champagne and lunches. So there was a regular chariot race when the rout began, with the chariots well in the lead, as was most graphically described by the prisoners I captured and by citizens afterwards.... Some of their troops, north of Bull Run, did not participate in the panic, and some did not throw away their arms, but the greater part must have done so, from the quantities we found.—W. W. Blackford, *War Years With Jeb Stuart*, pp. 34, 35 (see also DF 956).

Years later a Mr. Johnson, who had been among the Confederate forces, told J. N. Loughborough:

“I stood not four rods from General Beauregard when that stampede began. Beauregard had their cannons loaded with chain shot, and was about to fire. He looked toward the advancing host, and cried out: ‘The Yanks are all retreating. Don’t fire the guns.’” Brother Johnson said, “Had they fired that charge, they would have mowed everything down before them to the earth.”—[Pacific Union Recorder, March 21, 1912](#).

What was unclear and puzzling to the Southern generals, and in fact to almost everyone, was clearly opened up in early 1862 to members of the remnant church in *Testimony* No. 7.

The Church Given a Preview

The Union and the Confederate forces, having gained a glimpse of the involvements and proportions of the struggle ahead, began to dig in for a long and bitter conflict. Near the close of the year the government appointed a day for the nation to unite in fasting and prayer. On Sabbath, January 4, 1862, God disclosed to Ellen White in vision many elements relating to the war, its prosecution, the philosophy behind it, the protracted struggle ahead, and the futility of national fasts, under the circumstances.

It seems impossible to have the war conducted successfully, for many in our own ranks are continually working to favor the South, and our armies have been repulsed and unmercifully slaughtered on account of the management of these proslavery men. Some of our leading men in Congress also are constantly working to favor the South.

In this state of things, proclamations are issued for national fasts, for prayer that God will bring this war to a speedy and favorable termination. I was then directed to [Isaiah 58:5-7](#): ... “Is not this the fast that I have chosen? to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke?” ...I saw that these national fasts were an insult to Jehovah. He accepts no such fasts.—[Testimonies for the Church, 1:256, 257](#).

[39]

This put Seventh-day Adventists in a vantage position with an understanding of what to expect. In the lead article in *Testimony* No. 7, Ellen White declared:

Thousands have been induced to enlist with the understanding that this war was to exterminate slavery; but now that they are fixed, they find that they have been deceived, that the object of this war is not to abolish slavery, but to preserve it as it is....

In view of all this, they inquire: If we succeed in quelling this rebellion, what has been gained? They

can only answer discouragingly: Nothing. That which caused the rebellion is not removed. The system of slavery, which has ruined our nation, is left to live and stir up another rebellion. The feelings of thousands of our soldiers are bitter.—[Ibid., 1:254, 255.](#)

Referring to the treachery of Congressmen and of Union Army officers who were sympathetic with the South, she declared, “As this war was shown to me, it looked like the most singular and uncertain that has ever occurred.”—[Ibid., 1:256.](#) As to international repercussions she stated:

I was shown that if the object of this war had been to exterminate slavery, then, if desired, England would have helped the North. But England fully understands the existing feelings in the Government, and that the war is not to do away slavery, but merely to preserve the Union; and it is not for her interest to have it preserved.—[Ibid., 1:258.](#)

Bounties to Encourage Enlistment

For a time to those in Battle Creek, the war seemed far away. Little was happening on the battlefields, and James and Ellen White were involved in the various church interests.

[40] But as the war progressed, the President issued calls for more soldiers. Each State was required to furnish a certain quota of men for each call, and this in turn was apportioned to each county, city, and ward. If the number of those who freely volunteered failed to reach the required quota, it would become necessary to institute a draft. To avoid this, ways had to be found to encourage the enlistment of men to make up the required number. To promote enlistment, citizens’ committees were formed in many municipalities; they arranged to offer bounties to be paid to recruits. Beginning at \$25, they were soon raised to as high as \$100 as more and more men were called to the front.

Because Seventh-day Adventists were particularly anxious to avoid the threatened draft, which would involve Sabbathkeepers,

James White heartily participated in the matter of raising funds to pay attractive bonuses to volunteers. Seventh-day Adventists as a rule were conscientiously opposed to the bearing of arms, yet they felt it to be their duty to join to raise money for the payment of the bonuses offered to volunteers who had no religious scruples against Army service.

James White, J. P. Kellogg, and other leading Adventists attended and took part in a number of mass meetings of Battle Creek citizens. In these meetings there was free discussion of the activities of the war, but particularly the problem of furnishing the quota of men, if possible, without the necessity of the draft. White made it clear that Sabbathkeeping young men had not refrained from volunteering because they were cowards or ease-loving. Though they were generally poor, they would willingly contribute as freely as the well-to-do.

W. C. White recounts:

James White would relate to his wife some of his experiences in these mass meetings. Several of his associates would appoint him as their representative to offer their pledges to the fund at the most opportune time. So he would say in the meeting, "In behalf of my friend, A. B., who is subject to the draft, I am authorized to subscribe _____dollars. Also in behalf of my friend, C. D., who is not subject to the draft, but who is willing to share the burden of the bonus fund, I am authorized to subscribe _____dollars."—DF 320, "The Spirit of Prophecy and Military Service," p. 6.

With no end of the war in sight, the church faced the certain threat of a national draft of able-bodied men. As the summer wore on, excitement ran high in the Northern communities; Seventh-day Adventists asked themselves what they would do in such a situation. From their ranks none, or almost none, had enlisted. They had maintained a low profile, but now they were being watched. Writing of this in early 1863, Ellen White explained:

The attention of many was turned to Sabbathkeepers because they manifested no greater interest in the war

[41]

and did not volunteer. In some places they were looked upon as sympathizing with the Rebellion. The time had come for our true sentiments in relation to slavery and the Rebellion to be made known. There was need of moving with wisdom to turn away the suspicions excited against Sabbathkeepers.—*Ibid.*, 1:356. [1.6] James White's Article "The Nation"

By August, 1862, it seemed to James White that something must be said. He placed an editorial in the *Review and Herald* of August 12 titled "The Nation." In this article he expressed his own opinion of the responsibility for the acts of the drafted soldiers. This was to cause considerable controversy. He wrote:

For the past ten years the *Review* has taught that the United States of America were a subject of prophecy, and that slavery is pointed out in the prophetic word as the darkest and most damning sin upon this nation. It has taught that Heaven has wrath in store for the nation which it would drink to the very dregs, as due punishment for the sin of slavery. And the anti-slavery teachings of several of our publications based upon certain prophecies have been such that their circulation has been positively forbidden in the slave States. Those of our people who voted at all in the last Presidential election, to a man voted for Abraham Lincoln. We know of not one man among Seventh-day Adventists who has the least sympathy for secession.

But for reasons which we will here state, our people have not taken that part in the present struggle that others have....

The position which our people have taken relative to the perpetuity and sacredness of the law of God contained in the Ten Commandments is not in harmony with all the requirements of war. The fourth precept of that law says, "Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy": the sixth says, "Thou shalt not kill." *But in the case of drafting, the government assumes the re-*

sponsibility of the violation of the law of God, and it would be madness to resist. He who would resist until, in the administration of military law, he was shot down, goes too far, we think, in taking the responsibility of suicide.—[The Review and Herald, August 12, 1862](#). (Italics supplied.)

In words of commendation and praise he referred to the United States, its government, and its laws:

We are at present enjoying the protection of our civil and religious rights, by the best government under heaven. With the exception of those enactments pressed upon it by the slave power, its laws are good.... Whatever we may say of our amiable President, his cabinet, or of military officers, it is Christlike to honor every good law of our land. Said Jesus, “Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar’s; and unto God the things that are God’s” ([Matthew 22:21](#)). Those who despise civil law should at once pack up and be off for some spot on God’s footstool where there is no civil law.—[Ibid.](#)

He then declared that “for us to attempt to resist the laws of the best government under heaven, which is now struggling to put down the most hellish rebellion since that of Satan and his angels, ...would be madness.” He added:

Those who are loyal to the government of Heaven, true to the constitution and laws of the Ruler of the universe, are the last men to “sneak” off to Canada, or to Europe, or to stand trembling in their shoes for fear of a military draft. Is God their Father? He is a mighty God. “Behold, the nations are as a drop of a bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the balance: behold, he taketh up the isles as a very little thing” ([Isaiah 40:15](#)).—[Ibid.](#)

In explanation and defense of James White's position ventured on the draft—when it should come—a few weeks later Ellen White, in the heat of a very earnest discussion with various ones who were divided on the matter of the responsibility for actions of soldiers drafted into military service, declared:

I was shown the excitement created among our people by the article in the Review headed, "The Nation." Some understood it in one way, and some another. The plain statements were distorted, and made to mean what the writer did not intend. He gave the best light that he then had. It was necessary that something be said.—[Testimonies for the Church, 1:356.](#)

She wrote a statement that bridged several months of history:

I was shown that some moved very indiscreetly in regard to the article mentioned. It did not in all respects accord with their views, and instead of calmly weighing the matter, and viewing it in all its bearings, they became agitated, excited, and some seized the pen and jumped hastily at conclusions which would not bear investigation. Some were inconsistent and unreasonable. They did that which Satan is ever hurrying them to do, namely, acted out their own rebellious feelings.—[Ibid.](#)

James White's editorial was broad, covering many points in the relation that he suggested Seventh-day Adventists should take toward the issues and the government. But most readers focused attention on his opinion that in regard to the draft, it was the government, not the draftee, that was fully responsible for any violations of God's laws.

The *Review* of August 26 carried his appeal for "any well-written articles, calculated to shed light upon our duty as a people in reference to the present war." Mrs. T. M. Steward of Wisconsin had written to Ellen White inquiring on some points relating to the war, and the draft that seemed imminent. Ellen answered this August 19, 1862, just a week after the editorial had appeared. Without

special light on the matter, a fact that she clearly acknowledged, she advocated a moderate stance:

I am not fully settled in regard to taking up arms, but this looks consistent to me. I think it would please the enemy for us to obstinately refuse to obey the law of our country (when this law is not against our religious faith) and sacrifice our lives. It looks to me that Satan would exult to see us shot down so cheaply, for our influence could not have a salutary influence upon beholders, as the death of the martyrs. No, all would think we were served just right, because we would not come to the help of our imperiled country. Were our religious faith at stake, we should cheerfully lay down our lives and suffer for Christ.

[44]

Now is the time we are to be tested, and the genuineness of our faith proved. Those who have merely professed the faith, without an experience, will be brought into a trying place. Young and old should now seek for an experience in the things of God. A superficial work will not avail now. We must have the principles of truth wrought deep in the soul, and practice it in our life, and then we shall be girded with strength in the day of trouble and conflict before us. We must trust in God now. His arm will sustain us.—[Letter 7, 1862](#).

And God did sustain the believers, and He provided a way of escape when the crisis finally came months later.

The War and the Work of the Church

The perplexities incident to the war increased as the rate of bounty was raised, necessitating still heavier calls for means from Seventh-day Adventists. Workers in the field reported difficulties in connection with attempts in evangelism. William Ingraham reported the Illinois tent was laid up because it was useless to pitch the tent in new fields during the war excitement ([The Review and Herald, August 19, 1862](#)). In Iowa J. H. Waggoner and B. F. Snook were

arrested under martial law and detained till they secured a certificate from the county judge “setting forth their place of residence, their present occupation and calling.” The judge advised them to repair immediately to their homes, as they would be daily more and more liable to troubles and difficulties (*Ibid.*, August 26, 1862).

From Rochester, New York, M. E. Cornell reported:

The war excitement was so great we had to adjourn for two nights. Our tent was used for the war meetings. I never saw such an excitement as there is here in Rochester. The streets are blocked up with the tents of recruiting officers. The stores are all closed up 3:00 to 6:00 P.M., and all are trying to induce men to enlist. War meetings every night.—*Ibid.*

[45]

Yet the difficulties that attended the holding of public efforts created compensating conditions. The troubles and perplexities sobered the hearts of ministers and laity. They sought the Lord more earnestly, they were more zealous in missionary activity in the communities where they lived, and the Lord blessed them with the salvation of many souls.

Then in January, 1863, relief came to the ranks of Seventh-day Adventists in a comprehensive message penned by Ellen White in *Testimony* No. 9. The advertisement for the pamphlet appeared in the first issue of the *Review* published in the new year. It read:

Testimony for the Church, No. 9, will be ready in a few days. It will be sent by mail, postpaid, for 12 cents a copy. Subjects—The war, and our duty in relation to it—Duty of parents and children—Danger of our ministers, et cetera.—*Ibid.*, January 6, 1863

It was again advertised three issues later, as follows: “Subjects—The war—Our duty in relation to it—Spirits lead our army, et cetera, et cetera” (*Ibid.*, January 27, 1863). Believers had been reaching out for guidance. It was promised in this little forty-eight-page pamphlet.

The content of this intriguing Testimony will await discussion till the issues of the military draft are dealt with in chapter 4.

Slavery and War Issues

At this time a series of articles was running through the *Review* under the title “The Bible No Refuge for Slavery.” Wrote James White, “The subject of slavery naturally enough is being agitated more or less throughout the country. Believers in present truth are often met by opponents with the assertion that slavery is upheld by the Bible; and requests have been sent in that something be given on the subject through the *Review*.”—*Ibid.*, February 3, 1863. In accordance with the request, extracts from a book authored by Luther Lee were begun in the February 3 issue and were run as first-page articles for a period of three months.

[46] **Chapter 4—(1863) Meeting Two Major Problems**

The announcement on January 6, 1863, that in a few days there would be available to Seventh-day Adventists *Testimony* No. 9, with the lead article being on the war and Adventists' duty in relation to it, brought assurance to the hearts of many, especially men of draft age and their families. Whether the article was based on a single vision or on several, we do not know, but Ellen White's repeated reference to what she was shown or what she saw makes it clear that a vision or visions formed the immediate background. The visions at Parkville, Michigan, January 12, 1861; at Roosevelt, New York, August 3, 1861; and at Battle Creek, January 4, 1862, put Adventists in the unique position of knowing, first, of the coming war and its ferocity and long duration, and then, its philosophy, with the assurance that God had a controlling hand in the affairs of the nation. They had an inside view of victories and losses and the potential of its becoming an international conflict.

Now, a year later, there was further light for the church whose members regarded as binding the claims of the Ten Commandments, and who now faced the prospects of a national military draft. The counsel filled a good portion of the original *Testimony* pamphlet, and may be found in volume 1 of the current *Testimonies*, under the chapter title "The Rebellion," pages 355-368. True to its advance notice, it contained counsel as to how Seventh-day Adventists should relate to the war. There was as yet no national draft. The men in the Army had volunteered for military service, thus surrendering all claims they might have to positions of conscience. It was on this basis that Ellen White wrote as she did. *Conscription, although a real threat, was yet months away.*

[47]

Forecasts of the War's Outcome

Again Ellen White presents to the church insights given her as to the final outcome of the conflict, and one reason that it was so protracted.

God is punishing the North, that they have so long suffered the accursed sin of slavery to exist; for in the sight of heaven it is a sin of the darkest dye. God is not with the South, and He will punish them dreadfully in the end.—[Testimonies for the Church, 1:359](#).

In the heart of the article there is further assurance, given at a time when the outlook was particularly dark:

I saw that God would not give the Northern army wholly into the hands of a rebellious people, to be utterly destroyed by their enemies. I was referred to [Deuteronomy 32:26-30](#).—[Testimonies for the Church, 1:365](#).

She quoted the scripture referred to, which points out that were it not for the manner in which enemies would look upon God's just dealing with His wayward people, blaming God for an appropriate retribution for a rebellious course of action, He would rally to their deliverance. Ellen White's remarks closed with the repetition of the view of the outcome:

I saw that both the South and the North were being punished. In regard to the South, I was referred to [Deuteronomy 32:35-37](#): "To me belongeth vengeance, and recompence; their foot shall slide in due time: for the day of their calamity is at hand, and the things that shall come upon them make haste. For the Lord shall judge his people, and repent himself for his servants, when he seeth that their power is gone, and there is none shut up, or left. And he shall say, Where are their gods, their rock in whom they trusted?"—[Testimonies for the Church, 1:368](#).

Strange Factors at Work

[48] Separated from the full context of the chapter, the above statements concerning God's relation to those involved in the conflict may seem severe. However, her portrayal of conditions, no doubt based on both special insights and reports of what was going on, sets the stage. There were, among statesmen and generals, disloyalties, treachery, greed, and determination to use the war for personal advancement and supremacy. These elements removed from the Union forces the singleness of purpose necessary to reach a quick victory, and the crime of slavery prevented success to attend the South. In addition, Ellen White brings to view in this chapter another factor—that of the spiritualistic influence of evil angels guiding some of the generals in their decisions and strategies:

Very many men in authority, generals and officers, act in conformity with instructions communicated by spirits. The spirits of devils, professing to be dead warriors and skillful generals, communicate with men in authority and control many of their movements. One general has directions from these spirits to make special moves and is flattered with the hope of success. Another receives directions which differ widely from those given to the first. Sometimes those who follow the directions given obtain a victory, but more frequently they meet with defeat.—[Ibid.](#), 1:363, 364.

She contrasted the guidance God would give with that of the great adversary, Satan himself:

The great leading rebel general, Satan, is acquainted with the transactions of this war, and he directs his angels to assume the form of dead generals, to imitate their manners, and exhibit their peculiar traits of character. The leaders in the army really believe that the spirits of their friends and of dead warriors, the fathers of the Revolutionary War, are guiding them.

If they were not under the strongest fascinating deception, they would begin to think that the warriors

[supposedly] in heaven (?) did not manifest good and successful generalship, or had forgotten their famed earthly skill.

Instead of the leading men in this war trusting in the God of Israel, and directing their armies to trust in the only One who can deliver them from their enemies, the majority inquire of the prince of devils and trust in him. [Deuteronomy 32:16-22](#). Said the angel: “How can God prosper such a people? If they would look to and trust in Him; if they would only come where He could help them, according to His own glory, He would readily do it.”—[Testimonies for the Church, 1:364, 365](#).

[49]

Counsel to Seventh-day Adventists

Ellen White set forth principles that should guide Seventh-day Adventists in their relation to the war.

I was shown that God’s people, who are His peculiar treasure, cannot engage in this perplexing war, for it is opposed to every principle of their faith. *In the army they cannot obey the truth and at the same time obey the requirements of their officers.* There would be continual violation of conscience. Worldly men are governed by worldly principles.... But God’s people cannot be governed by these motives....

Those who love God’s commandments will conform to every good law of the land. But if the requirements of the rulers are such as conflict with the laws of God, the only question to be settled is: Shall we obey God, or man?—[Ibid., 1:361, 362](#). (Italics supplied.)

When this statement was published in January, 1863, there was not yet a draft. Military service in the Union forces was on an enlistment basis.

In connection with the attitude Seventh-day Adventists should take to the war, Ellen White wrote on what their relation should be to the government of the nation:

I saw that it is our duty in every case to obey the laws of our land, unless they conflict with the higher law which God spoke with an audible voice from Sinai, and afterward engraved on stone with His own finger. “I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people.”

[50] He who has God’s law written in the heart will obey God rather than man, and will sooner disobey all men than deviate in the least from the commandment of God. God’s people, taught by the inspiration of truth, and led by a good conscience to live by every word of God, will take His law, written in their hearts, as the only authority which they can acknowledge or consent to obey. The wisdom and authority of the divine law are supreme.—[Ibid., 1:361](#).

Instruction Concerning the Imminent Draft

During the months of civil war, Adventists had been counseled to take a low profile, to say as little as possible but make it clear they had no sympathy with slavery. As the possibility of a national military draft loomed, some in Iowa, in the ministry and among the laity of the church, rushed ahead in making bold and boastful statements. They even petitioned the State legislature for exemption. Wrote Ellen White:

In Iowa they carried things to quite a length, and ran into fanaticism. They mistook zeal and fanaticism for conscientiousness. Instead of being guided by reason and sound judgment, they allowed their feelings to take the lead. They were ready to become martyrs for their faith.—[Ibid., 1:356, 357](#).

Asking if this led them to God or greater humility, she answered herself, “Oh, no! Instead of making their petitions to the God of heaven and relying solely upon His power, they petitioned the legislature and were refused.” She pointed out that this served only to bring Sabbathkeepers into special unfavorable notice, adding:

I saw that those who have been forward to talk so decidedly about refusing to obey a draft do not understand what they are talking about. Should they really be drafted and, refusing to obey, be threatened with imprisonment, torture, or death, they would shrink and then find that they had not prepared themselves for such an emergency. They would not endure the trial of their faith. What they thought to be faith was only fanatical presumption.—[Ibid., 1:357](#).

Then she set forth the position that should be taken at that time, and later if there was a draft:

Those who would be best prepared to sacrifice even life, if required, rather than place themselves in a position where they could not obey God, would have the least to say. They would make no boast. They would feel deeply and meditate much, and their earnest prayers would go up to heaven for wisdom to act and grace to endure.

[51]

Those who feel that in the fear of God they cannot conscientiously engage in this war will be very quiet, and when interrogated will simply state what they are obliged to say in order to answer the inquirer, and then let it be understood that they have no sympathy with the Rebellion....

I was shown that as a people we cannot be too careful what influence we exert; we should watch every word. When we by word or act place ourselves upon the enemy's battleground, we drive holy angels from us, and encourage and attract evil angels in crowds around us.—[Ibid., 1:357-360](#).

The records available regarding the impact of the war on Seventh-day Adventists in the various Northern States are meager. [The work of the Church had not yet entered the southern states, hence the problems brought by the war were confined to the north.] It would seem that there was some diversity on how the States raised their

quota of men in answer to President Lincoln's call to supply the ranks. A very few Seventh-day Adventists were drafted quite early. [The Review and Herald, October 21, 1862](#), carries a letter from Martin Kittle, written from Camp Mansfield, Ohio. It opens:

Brother White: I have been drafted into the United States service. As far as I know, I am the only one in Ohio. I feel anxious to know if any other Sabbath-keepers have been drafted from any other place.—[Ibid., October 21, 1862](#)

Two weeks later, a letter to the editor contained this postscript:

Brethren S. Babcock and H. Burdick of Clymer, Pennsylvania, received notice of their being drafted last Sabbath, and left Tuesday for Wellsborough, and from there to Harrisburg.

[52]

Brother Babcock is anxious to have his *Review* continued, so that his wife may forward it to him as often as she can. He was in haste for the church in his place to be organized, but knew not why, but now rejoices that it was done in season for him to leave his companion and dear children under the watchcare of a body so constituted that when one member suffers, all suffer with it.—[Ibid., November 4, 1862](#)

On March 3, 1863, the Congress of the United States passed a law calling for the enrollment of all men between the ages of 20 and 45; this would form the basis of a national draft. It now looked as if one man in three would be called to military service. Certain provisions of this act brought a sigh of relief to Seventh-day Adventists:

That members of religious denominations, who shall by oath or affirmation declare that they are conscientiously opposed to the bearing of arms, and who are prohibited from doing so by the rules and articles of faith and practice of such religious denomination, shall, when drafted into the military service, be considered

noncombatants, and shall be assigned by the Secretary of War to duty in the hospitals, or to the care of freedmen, or shall pay the sum of \$300, to such person as the Secretary of War shall designate to receive it, to be applied to the benefit of the sick and wounded soldiers:

Provided, That no person shall be entitled to the benefit of the provisions of this section, unless his declaration of conscientious scruples against bearing arms shall be supported by satisfactory evidence that his deportment has been uniformly consistent with such declaration.—“The Views of Seventh-day Adventists Relative to Bearing Arms,” pp. 3, 4.

The Tide Begins to Turn

With President Lincoln’s Emancipation Proclamation, effective January 1, 1863, the tide in the war began to turn. When a national fast was appointed for April 30, 1863, Seventh-day Adventists felt they could join in its observance, for the government was lining up more in harmony with the testimony of [Isaiah 58](#). In early July a decisive battle was fought at Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, with the Union forces gaining the victory.

There were still many difficult days ahead, but the provision that by paying \$300 a drafted Seventh-day Adventist could gain freedom from military service brought relief till well into 1864. The newly organized church had a breathing spell. Yet such a payment was equivalent to somewhat more than the wages for a year of employment, and James White saw the provision, as beneficial as it was, a threat to denominational income. He warned in an editorial in the *Review*, November 24, 1863, that many good causes could be found for the use of the Systematic Benevolence funds being gathered by the churches for the support of the ministry, as providing for the worthy poor, the care of war orphans, et cetera. He added:

[53]

The advancement of the third message is the highest object on earth for which we can labor. Whatever suffering there may be elsewhere, this cause should be the last to suffer for want of means.

Should our brethren be drafted, they should if necessary mortgage their property to raise the \$300, rather than to accept means that should go into the Lord's treasury. We would say this even of our ministers. The draft will probably come closer and closer.

We pay into the S. B. fund annually \$40. Let that be used as designed. We have \$40 more to help drafted ministers if needed. We say then let the plan of systematic benevolence be carried out sacredly, and let it accomplish its designed object, namely, to send forth the last merciful message to the world.—[The Review and Herald, November 24, 1863.](#)

Moses Hull Yields to Spiritualism

The war, with its insatiable demand for men, was only one of the concerns of church leaders through much of 1863. The wavering and then the final apostasy of Moses Hull, a prominent evangelist who in the fall surrendered to the agents of Satan, was a difficult and sad experience. He preached an evangelistic sermon on the night of September 20, 1863, and then within a few weeks joined the forces of the Spiritualists.

[54] There are many lessons in the account of the experience of Moses Hull, especially when we have before us the insights given through vision to Ellen White. Hull began preaching for Seventh-day Adventists in 1858, and for five years was accounted among the ministry of the church. Through dedicated and effective service he worked himself into the respect and confidence of his fellow ministers. The harboring of doubts, selfish interest, covetousness, lack of management ability, and undue trust in self were weaknesses that Ellen White, through the last two years of his ministry, pointed out as being the foundation of his problems ([Testimonies for the Church, 1:441, 442](#); [Testimonies for the Church, 2:625](#); [Ibid., 3:212](#)). Added to this was a negative home influence, for his wife did not give him proper support.

The name Moses Hull appears occasionally in the *Review and Herald* in 1861 and 1862 as he reported on his work, attended conferences, and worked on committees. In the spring of 1862 the

Michigan Conference Committee recommended that Hull work with J. N. Loughborough with the Michigan tent. Of this Loughborough reported:

This we did, using our tent in three places—in Charlotte, June 5 to July 13; in Ionia, July 15 to August 12, and in Lowell from August 16 to September 7. Brother I. D. Van Horn was our tentmaster, it being his first experience with the tent. In each of these places some souls were won to the truth.

Moses Hull had a debate with a Methodist minister in the tent at Charlotte, on the immortality question, which aided in settling many minds on that question. At both Ionia and Lowell he had debates with Spiritualists.—[Pacific Union Recorder, June 6, 1912.](#)

Loughborough recognized that the Lord blessed Hull in these efforts for the truth:

The doctor with whom he debated in Ionia expected to meet someone who believed in the immortality of the soul. He was not prepared to meet the doctrine of the unconscious state of the dead. He stated publicly at the close of the debate that he was defeated, but said it was because the spirits left him and helped Hull.

The debate at Lowell was with S. P. Leland, a Spiritualist lecturer. This was a complete triumph for the truth, and resulted, shortly after, in Leland's renouncing Spiritualism and becoming a Christian. The Lord surely helped Hull in the debate. But afterward it seemed to "turn his head," and he thought he would be a match for the Spiritualists anywhere.—[Ibid.](#)

But there was another factor that contributed to Hull's apostasy. This was disclosed in vision to Ellen White—he had doubts as a result of seeds carelessly and unwittingly sown by some of his fellow ministers. While, as Ellen White declared, "he needed all the strength and help from his brethren he could get," some of the more

experienced brethren told some of “their difficulties and perplexities to him.”

It seemed they had no particular object, only to talk out what was on their minds—unbelief and darkness. They passed on, but Brother Hull was just in that weak condition where the words of his brethren whom he had confidence in could take root and spring up and bear fruit. Some few difficult passages of Scripture were thrown into his mind. He came to meeting and honestly told his feelings....

He gravely told James and the brethren he could not preach, for he did not believe the Bible anymore. They thought him merely under the influence of temptation and tried to turn his mind, but it was of no avail. In this state Brother Hull went some miles distant to discuss with a Spiritualist.—[Letter 11, 1862](#).

Loughborough reported of this discussion:

He engaged to debate with one Jamieson, at Paw Paw, Michigan, a strong Spiritualist center, where there was no interest in the truth, and not one of our people to stand by him. On the other hand, the Spiritualists got some of their strongest mediums and sat in a circle around the speakers.

Hull admitted to me afterward how he went into that debate. He said, “I thought: Let them bring on their devils. I am enough for the whole of them. But when I arose to make my second speech, my tongue was seemingly as thick as my hand, and what I had often used before as an argument seemed to me like nonsense. I was defeated.”

Jamieson, who has since renounced Spiritualism, and resides in Colorado, said of that debate, to Brother States: “Hull was mesmerized, and I told him so there; for before the first day of the debate was over he came to me and said, “I am all ready to go out and advocate Spiritualism.”—[Pacific Union Recorder, June 6, 1912](#).

Ellen White stated, “He came back charmed with the man and was as much fascinated as ever a bird was fascinated by a rattlesnake. He was a changed man. He looked so strange, talked so strange. He had got far ahead of us all—far beyond us, almost out of sight of us. We could not help him. Oh, no.”—[Letter 11, 1862](#). [56]

Loughborough picks up the account of this strange story that was taking place right before the eyes of the church in Battle Creek, for Paw Paw was only thirty-five miles away:

For two weeks after the Hull and Jamieson debate at Paw Paw, Michigan, Hull, in Battle Creek, seemed like a man half “off his base.” Finally he seemed to arouse to some sense of his condition. He got Brother and Sister White and Elder Cornell to come with him to my house in Battle Creek for a talk and a praying season for him. This was on November 5, 1862. In the praying season Sister White was given a vision on his case.—[Pacific Union Recorder, June 13, 1912](#).

Writing immediately after the event, Ellen White reported:

The object of our meeting Wednesday night [November 5, 1862] was to pray for Brother Hull, he being present. I had been very sick for above a week, threatened with fever, but I went to the meeting. In that meeting I was taken off in vision and shown many things. And the case of Brother Hull was shown me—that he had been mesmerized, charmed by a special agent of Satan.

Already had Satan, I saw, claimed him as his prey. Already had evil angels telegraphed to Satan’s agents upon earth that Brother Hull would soon leave the Seventh-day Adventists and join their ranks, and the Spiritualist medium with whom he discussed must be all gentleness, and charm him and fascinate him. He was almost continually in the company of this Spiritualist medium, and Satan exulted at the conquest he had made.

Then I saw how cruel, how dishonoring to God, to have ministers or private members talk out or lisp their

unbelief and infidel feelings to other minds, and by so doing have Satan use them as agents to transmit his fiery darts through them to others. I saw that there was much of this done, and Satan exults that he works unperceived in this way. Much more I saw which I cannot write; it would take so much time.—[Letter 11, 1862](#).

[57] She continued:

I related the vision to Brother Hull. He remained unmoved. I wrote it the next day and read it to him. He manifested some feeling while I was writing the testimony. All the females who had faith met to pray for Brother Hull. All worked with energy.

The Spiritualists flocked around him, and wanted to visit and talk with him. We tried to prevent an interview and did. Wednesday evening I took George Amadon, Martha, and Brother and Sister Myron Cornell, and I read distinctly and emphatically the testimony the Lord had given me. [See [Testimonies for the Church, 1:426-443](#).] He there promised me he would try to arouse and make an effort again. He had so given up to the powers of darkness that there was no collision of spirits. He was at perfect rest and peace.—[Ibid.](#)

After the vision was read, it was then and there decided that Hull should go with James and Ellen White to hold meetings with the churches in Michigan. Hull promised to go with them, and left that night for Monterey. Then the Amadons, the Cornells, and James and Ellen White, as described by Ellen White, “had a long and ...powerful prayer meeting for him.” She picks up the story:

Early the next morn we started for Monterey. Sabbath morn at family prayers the Lord led me out to pray for Brother Hull. I felt that I had got hold of the arm of God and I would not let go until the power of Satan had broken and His servant delivered. Prayer was heard and Brother Hull was set free and he labored with us

through the conference at Monterey. We dare not leave him yet. He will stay with us until he is free and rooted and grounded in the truth.

I saw that when ministers talked unbelief and doubts they attracted evil angels in crowds around them while the angels of God stood back in sorrow, and everywhere these ministers go they carry that darkness until they with fortitude resist the devil and he flees from them.—[Ibid.](#)

While laboring at Wright, Michigan, Ellen White continued the account. She reported that “Brother Hull has told me recently what the Spiritualist medium told him (also a lady medium), that the spirits had informed them that Brother Hull would soon leave the Adventists and become a Spiritualist, confirming what had been shown me in vision.”—[Ibid.](#) James and Ellen White were exerting every energy to prevent this; that is why they were where they were, and Hull with them. “The good work is being carried on here at Wright,” she wrote. [58]

Meetings will continue here for a day or two, then we shall go to Greenville. Brother Hull is quite free again, for which we feel very thankful. He will accompany us to Greenville, and then will return to Wright to give a course of lectures.—[Ibid.](#)

On November 5, 1862, Ellen White wrote on the background of Hull’s distressing experience:

Just as long as Brother Hull maintained a conflict, his mind was reined up, and there was a collision of spirits. He has now ceased the conflict, and the collision ceases. His mind is at rest, and Satan lets him have peace. Oh, how dangerous was the position in which he was shown me! His case is nearly hopeless, because he makes no effort to resist Satan and extricate himself from his dreadful snare.

Brother Hull has been dealt with faithfully. He has felt that he was too much restrained, that he could not

act out his nature. While the power of the truth, in all its force, influenced him, he was comparatively safe; but break the force and power of truth upon the mind, and there is no restraint, and the natural propensities take the lead, and there is no stopping place. He has become tired of the conflict, and has for some time wished that he could more freely act himself, and has felt hurt at the reproofs of his brethren.

He was presented to me as standing upon the brink of an awful gulf, ready to leap. If he takes the leap, it will be final; his eternal destiny will be fixed. He is doing work and making decisions for eternity... If he leaves the ranks of those who bear the bloodstained banner of Prince Immanuel, and joins the company who bear the black banner, it will be his own loss, his own eternal destruction.—[Ibid., 1:427](#).

Hull chose to take that leap into the ranks of the Spiritualists.

Chapter 5—(1863) The White Family Escapes to the East [59]

When the White family settled in the little cottage on Wood Street in Battle Creek in 1857, there was forest to the north and pasturelands to the west. This gave promise of a quiet retreat and a wholesome atmosphere for rearing the family. Soon, however, the Michigan Fair Association secured considerable acreage almost adjoining the White property and built a racetrack for trotting horses. As the war came on, this proved to be an excellent training ground for recruits in the Union Army. The activities on the fairgrounds came to be of special interest to the teenage boys. W.C. White later recalled.

The nearest neighbors to the south were the Jonah Lewis family, devout Adventists. While the White and Lewis families were noncombatants, the children took a lively interest in the war. The two younger Lewis boys, 16 and 18 years of age, and the two older White boys, 12 and 14, got hold of wartime songs and many a sunny afternoon sat on the fence and practiced, “Tramp, Tramp, Tramp, the Boys Are Marching” and “We Are Coming, Father Abraham.” They all had good voices, and I, about 7, was an admiring audience, and sat on the grass to listen.

My brothers went as far as they could in supplying themselves with warlike instruments. They built good bows and arrows with which they shot troublesome birds. They were good whistlers, but wanted a drum, so they bought two cheese boxes, knocking out the heads, putting the rims together, paper inside and out. They secured a sheepskin, took the wool off, and made rawhide heads. The drum was quite successful and could be heard all over the neighborhood, and when

[60]

the noncombatant neighbors became offended with the noise of the drum they complained to Elder White that it was unbecoming for his boys to manifest such a warlike spirit.

The drum was put away and almost forgotten, but one day the boys stumbled on it, brought it out, and were having a good time when they heard their father coming home. They dropped it in the woodshed and scurried to the kitchen. Elder White came in. He had heard the din and asked the cause of it. He went to the woodshed and the boys heard the big axe smash through it.—DF 780a, “Pioneer Days Are Recalled,” *Battle Creek Enquirer*, October 30, 1932.

In his account Willie White included developments over a period of time:

When soldiers were in training on the old fair-ground, ...Henry went to watch them and, boylike, was marching along with them, whistling in harmony with the fife. The captain gave the signal to the fifers to be silent, and the company of soldiers made their one-mile march keeping step to music of the drum and Henry’s whistle.

He wanted to enter the war as a drummer, but love for his mother and respect for her wishes led him to give up the cherished thought of being in the Army.— *Ibid.*

James and Ellen White were distressed as they watched Henry and Edson in 1862 and early 1863 becoming more and more fascinated with the war activities, and at the same time losing the consecration they had enjoyed at the time of their baptism at the turn of the year. It seemed to them that they must get the children clear away from Battle Creek. James was now free from administrative responsibilities. At the General Conference session in May, 1863, actions had been taken calling for the production of a new prophetic chart and a chart of the Ten Commandments. His position as president of the SDA Publishing Association would not hold him

continuously in Battle Creek. The development and production of the charts called for him to spend two or three months in the vicinity of Boston, Massachusetts. Why not take the family and stay, say, a year in the East, possibly living at the Howland Home in Topsham, Maine, just a few hours by train from Boston?

[61]

Learning that they would be welcome in the commodious and comfortable Howland home in Topsham, James and Ellen White decided that the whole family would go east. They would take with them Adelia Patten, the young woman who lived in the home and cared for the children when the parents were traveling. She was also beginning to give some assistance in copying the testimonies and other writings.

In addition to working on the charts, James White was eager to join Loughborough and Hull in evangelism in the Eastern cities. Ellen White wanted to put some time into writing *Spiritual Gifts*, Volume III, dealing with Old Testament history. Adelia would look after the children while the parents were engaged in the activities that pressed so hard upon them.

The Extended Eastern Tour in the Summer and Fall of 1863

James was now 42, and Ellen was 35. Henry was almost 16, Edson, 14, and Willie, nearly 9. Adelia Patten was 24. They all took the train at Battle Creek on Wednesday, August 19, bound for Boston, with two stopovers en route in New York State. In Boston, while James White was getting the work of making the charts under way, Henry Nichols and Ransom Lockwood took the three boys in hand and gave them a tour of the city. Adelia Patten mentions in her report that they visited places such as the public gardens, glassworks, Bunker Hill Monument, Prospect Hill, and the State House.

At Topsham, where the family would make their headquarters, they were joyfully welcomed by the Howlands. Henry was especially glad to see the Howlands, for he had spent some five of his infancy years with them. Noting Henry's interest in and love for music, Stockbridge Howland slipped out and purchased a brand-new organ. The "old mansion in which a dozen years before was heard the innocent, merry laugh of the beautiful prattling little Henry now resounded with the music of the instrument from his skillful touch,

[62] mingled with his own sweet voice.” So wrote Adelia Patten, who accompanied the family and reported the journey in her introduction to *Appeal to Youth* (p. 22). In this report Adelia found an opportunity to comment on the relationship of the White parents and children:

The affectionate parents have often felt grieved that their pilgrim life has obliged them to be absent from their children so much. And while at home it has ever been their aim to educate them for usefulness, and to bring them up in the fear of the Lord. When away, the children have received by letter numerous tokens of the anxiety of their parents for their welfare, urging them to adhere to correct principles, and instructing them how to form characters, not only for this life, but for the life to come....

The tender mother has found opportunities, though many of them very poor, while traveling, to write to her children.... They were written hastily for her children only, without a thought that they would be made public. This makes them still more worthy of publication, as in them is more clearly seen the real feelings and sentiments of a godly mother....

In their absence, the parents have always endeavored to leave with their children persons of the best moral and religious influence, who have enjoyed the love and respect of the children.—[An Appeal to the Youth, 18-20.](#)

It may be said that Adelia Patten was one who fitted this description very well, leading James and Ellen White, who had no daughter, to accept and treat her as one. She was one of the first to be drawn into service as a literary assistant to Ellen White, making copies of testimonies that were sent out.

While in the old home there in Topsham, where he and Ellen had first set up housekeeping when Henry was a newborn babe, James was taken back the sixteen years. He wrote:

Here we had our first impressions of duty to preach and publish the message. In this place we chopped

cordwood sixteen years since, to support our family, and get means to attend a conference in Connecticut, the first under the message. With this family we have ever found true friends and a hospitable home.—[The Review and Herald, September 29, 1863.](#)

Diversified Activities in New England

[63]

But James and Ellen White felt they must press on, so after a few days of relaxation in the comfortable Howland house, they left for Massachusetts. Adelia draws a word picture of their departure:

The children accompanied their parents to the depot, and before the family parted, Henry, Edson, and Willie, by request, sang “The Evergreen Shore,” much to the gratification of the crowd waiting for another train. The whistle was heard, the “good-by” and “farewell” were said, and away sped the train, bearing the parents on their mission of love, and leaving the children again without their watchcare.”—[An Appeal to the Youth, 22, 23.](#)

For the next three months Adelia and the children were at the Howland home. While James and Ellen White considered this their headquarters while in the East, their time was divided, Ellen with her writing and James working on the charts, with weekends at the churches. The first weekend, September 5 and 6, Ellen was with the little company in Boston, where James had been working on charts. He himself slipped away to be with Loughborough and Hull, who were holding a tent meeting in Manchester, New Hampshire. The next weekend the two of them were in Manchester. There, driven from the tent by a cold rain, meetings were held in a public hall; evening attendance was about one thousand. White reported:

After Brother Hull closed his sermon, we made a few remarks in relation to Seventh-day Adventists and their present operations, and introduced Mrs. W. to

the audience, who listened to her for about fifteen minutes with almost breathless silence.—[The Review and Herald, September 29, 1863](#).

The next weekend they were at Topsham with the family for the Sabbath. Ellen planned to remain at Topsham and write. In his report to the *Review*, published October 6, James stated:

The charts are both in the hands of the artist, and the work on them is progressing as fast as possible. We shall probably have some of them ready by the middle of October.

[64]

The prophetic chart will be much improved in arrangement from the one in use. The sanctuary and angels will be larger and bolder, so that all the figures upon the chart can be seen equally plain. From what we have already seen of the work, we judge that it will be a beautifully executed thing.—[Ibid., October 6, 1863](#)

He projected a price of \$2 on the prophetic chart and \$1.50 for the one of the law. He commented that if the chart had been done two years earlier the cost of production would have been less than half: the cotton cloth, “the principal item of expense, that could have been bought two years since for 10 cents, is now 30.”—[Ibid.](#)

A Changing Economy

The Civil War had changed the economy materially. This was vividly portrayed in a quotation from the (New York) *Independent*, which appeared in the *Review* of July 7, 1863:

Never, since the Pilgrims landed on these shores, was there such universal prosperity—in the loyal States—as at the present moment. Merchants have made more money during the past two years than ever before in twice that space of time.

Mechanics are, and have been, crowded with work, at high wages. Farmers and laboring men are investing large sums of money in government and other stocks,

or are piling it up in savings banks. Manufacturers, as a whole, are making semi-annual fortunes. Speculators are more numerous than our soldiers on the battlefield.

Almost every other businessman is dabbling more or less in stocks, or is in some way connected with a government contract; and as for Wall Street, never was there such a financial millennium, as since the present rebellion. Millionaires can be counted there by dozens. Princes are on every block, and bankers are “as thick as blackberries.”

Who, at the North, would ever think of war, if he had not a friend in the Army, or did not read the newspapers?—*Ibid.*, July 7, 1863

The same issue of the *Review* that carried James White’s report on the charts presented the financial statement of the Seventh-day Adventist Publishing Association rendered at its third annual meeting, October 2, 1863. It showed receipts for operations to be \$20,104.84 as against expense of \$18,956.36. Association assets of \$19,649.41 were offset by liabilities of only \$4,377.53, leaving a net worth of \$15,271.88. How different from a few years before. The agonizing war with its sacrifices and sorrow had strangely resulted in financial gain for many. [65]

Plans for the Immediate Future

James White expected that getting out the charts would take his time until the end of October. Then he and Ellen would be ready to fill appointments in New England. In fact, he was thinking of remaining in the East for some time. In a letter to the General Conference Committee in Battle Creek he referred to the slow Progress of the cause in the East. He stated:

The cause in the East has suffered under many embarrassments. While our most efficient laborers have been breaking and cultivating new ground in the West, the more feeble, and some of them of poor judgment, and tending to fanaticism, have occupied this field. And

while organization, spiritual gifts, and systematic benevolence have proved a perfect success in Michigan, a large portion of New England has dreadfully suffered for want of judicious men to hold these things before the people in a proper light.—[Ibid.](#), [October 6, 1863](#)

He reported that Loughborough felt that New England was his field of labor for the present. After commending him, James declared:

His firm and persevering efforts on organization, systematic benevolence, et cetera, added to his preaching talent, and the qualifications before mentioned, make him, with the blessing of God, the man to build up churches, and have the especial oversight of the work in the East.—[Ibid.](#)

White felt that another good man from the West should work with Loughborough; he suggested Moses Hull, who for a time had been Loughborough's associate evangelist—this, of course, was before Hull's final apostasy. Then White made a rather surprising suggestion:

[66] And, if it be your decision, we are ready to labor in the East (or wherever you may appoint) six months, one year, or until our work be done. Mrs. W. has been pleading for the East for more than six months, and now that we are here, with our children, we unitedly feel that this is our more especial field of labor at present.—[Ibid.](#)

He pointed out that to do so would be a considerable sacrifice on their part, but they were prepared to make such a sacrifice that the work might advance. The state of the cause would permit their staying in the East.

“Organization is a success,” he declared, and “the General Conference is a success; and the Publishing Association is a perfect success.” No doubt thinking of the numerous rumors calling in question his integrity, which had led to an official investigation, he stated:

It cures the jealous ones to see the leaders in the cause urging organization, so that the publishing department, and themselves also, are put into the hands of trustees and committees whom they can help elect annually. The stingy ones are either leaving, or getting cured of their malady. Speculation! The devil himself would be ashamed to repeat the word under the present circumstances.—[Ibid.](#)

In response, the General Conference Committee assigned M. E. Cornell to labor in the New England States and agreed that White and Loughborough should continue there “as long as they feel it duty to do so”([Ibid.](#)).

As October wore on, James made appointments for the twenty-fourth and twenty-fifth at Newport, New Hampshire, and October 31 and November 1 at West Enosburg, Vermont. This would be followed by attendance at the New York State annual conference at Adams Center November 7 and 8. The announcement stated that Ellen White would be with him. The notice suggested:

We shall have at all these meetings the new charts, and a good assortment of our publications. The brethren in Vermont and New York had better send for the charts, *Sabbath Readings*, and other books by the delegates.... We shall have every subscriber’s account for *Review* and *Instructor* with us, and hope to receive on old accounts, and payment in advance, from very many. James White.—[Ibid.](#), [October 13, 1863](#)

[67]

The Westward Swing

“Having obtained a large trunk full of finished charts,” wrote James White, “we left Maine, October 21, for the Newport, New Hampshire, meeting by way of Boston.”—[Ibid.](#), [November 10, 1863](#). Their itinerary took them by train, stages, and private conveyance to Enosburg, Vermont, close to the Canadian border. Here they found the Bourdeau brothers preparing for a conference to be held in the nearby school. At this conference they again met the stalwart

Stephen Pierce, who resided in Vermont. James White thought that with “his experience, sound judgment, and ability” Pierce was worth more than “ten young, inexperienced preachers.” He would work with Loughborough, now that Moses Hull had left the work. As to the Bourdeaus, James White declared, “We know where to find them every time.”—*Ibid.*

In good health and good spirits the Whites pressed on to Adams Center, New York, to attend the State conference called for November 7 and 8. They found quite a change in the atmosphere from what it had been when they were last in New York State. Observed James White:

The cause in northern New York, which has been well nigh shaken to pieces in consequence of mistaken notions, is evidently gaining strength.... The change that has taken place in our own feelings since we were here two years since, when nearly all the brethren in this State went against organization, language cannot describe. We did not expect to be restored to our former freedom and hope. Thank God for what He has done for the cause and for us.—*Ibid.*, November 24, 1863

Interesting things had been happening at Adams Center. As White reported: “Here nearly a whole Seventh Day Baptist church, meetinghouse and all, has been converted to the Seventh-day Adventists.”—*Ibid.* J. M. Aldrich, the conference secretary, reported of the conference:

[68]

The attendance was large, there being a good representation of brethren from all parts of the State. Preaching on Sabbath evening by Brother Fuller; Brother White preached twice on the Sabbath with good freedom. Brother Andrews preached twice on First-day.... Sister White had good liberty in bearing her testimony, which she improved several times to the edification and comfort of God’s people. Through her heaven-inspiring testimonies, prejudice had to yield; and *some* at least, and I doubt not, *many*, saw things pertaining to our

faith in a much more favorable light than before.—[Ibid.](#),
[December 1, 1863](#)

Ellen White's Ministry

Mary Maxson, a resident of Adams Center, wrote an account of the meeting. She described Ellen White's participation Sabbath morning, following James White's sermon:

Sister White gave her testimony, greatly to the edification and comfort of the believers. In the afternoon Brother White discoursed upon the subject of the seven seals, showing clearly that we are living in the last days. Sister White again bore her testimony, and oh, how the immortal inheritance was enhanced in our estimation as we listened to her words.—[Ibid.](#), [December 8, 1863](#)

After describing the Sunday discourses preached by J. N. Andrews, Mary gave her reaction to Ellen White's follow-up testimony:

In the afternoon Sister White again gave her testimony. Deep silence pervaded the assembly while she was speaking. Her words were enough to melt a heart of stone. Oh, how vividly were the sufferings of our dear Saviour, and the sacrifice which He has made for us, portrayed. We felt ashamed to think we had ever thought our trials and sacrifices great. Oh, how small our light afflictions, which are but for a moment, seemed when compared with the far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory that is soon to be ours.... May God bless Brother and Sister White, and all the rest of the dear brethren and sisters. It was hard to part with them; and as we stood, with sad hearts, watching the train that was bearing them from us, a brother remarked, "Well, when we start for the kingdom we shall all take the same train—all together."—[Ibid.](#)

[69]

As he reported of the Sunday afternoon meeting, James White added:

At Adams Center she wrote early and late, and between meetings. And First-day afternoon she wrote six pages of testimony while Brother Andrews was preaching, which she afterwards read with other matter before the State conference. She sat within four feet of the pulpit and used her Bible for a writing desk. When asked what she thought of Brother Andrews as a speaker, she replied that she could not say, as it had been so long since she had heard him. When the sermon was finished she arose and addressed the congregation twenty minutes.—[Ibid.](#)

Since they were so close to Michigan, James White planned to go on to Battle Creek. After a few days there, he would visit some of the leading Michigan churches. He was eager to introduce the new charts. But first he and Ellen wanted to spend a weekend at Brookfield, where the Abbeys lived. Opposition to organization had well-nigh wrecked the cause in that area, but J. N. Andrews had labored there, and now the work was looking up. One weekend did not seem to suffice, so they stayed another week, and God blessed their labors. While there they decided to turn back to Maine. One reason was the need for Ellen to have an opportunity to complete the third volume of *Spiritual Gifts*. Explained James White:

We decided to defer our proposed tour of that State [Michigan] two or three months, and return at once to Maine, where Mrs. W. can have a chance to complete her third volume. Her time when not in meeting or traveling since we left Michigan in August has been wholly occupied with local and personal testimonies.

Since we left Battle Creek she has written not less than five hundred pages. [Only one or two of these letters are in the White Estate files. Neither typewriters nor carbon paper was in use at the time; the E. G. White handwritten copy was sent to the person addressed, and often no copy was retained.] Her book was nearly written before we left home. She now decides to travel no more till she prepares the work for the press.... Our

address is Topsham, Maine.—[Ibid.](#), [November 24, 1863](#)

Another Reason for a Switch in Plans

But there was another reason for their switch in plans. Adelia Patten mentions this:

While in Brookfield, New York, Elder White received impressions from a dream, which led him to feel that all was not well with the children, and that they must return to Maine without delay. Each day they anxiously waited the arrival of the mail, but news from Topsham reported “all well.” This did not satisfy their minds, and in accordance with their convictions of duty, when they had filled their appointments, they immediately returned to their children.—[An Appeal to the Youth, 23.](#)

When on Friday, November 27, the parents reached Topsham, they found their three sons and Adelia waiting for them at the depot. They were all apparently in good health, except for Henry, who had a cold. But the next Tuesday, December 1, Henry was very ill with pneumonia. Years later Willie, his youngest brother, reconstructed the story:

During the absence of their parents, Henry and Edson, under the supervision of Brother Howland, were busily engaged in mounting the charts on cloth, ready for sale. They worked in a rented store building about a block from the Howland home. At length they had a respite for a few days while they were waiting for charts to be sent from Boston.... Returning from a long tramp by the river, he [Henry] thoughtlessly lay down and slept on a few damp cloths used in backing the paper charts. A chilly wind was blowing in from an open window. This indiscretion resulted in a severe cold.—WCW, “Sketches and Memories of James and Ellen White,” [The Review and Herald, December 10, 1936.](#)

The Cold Turned to Pneumonia

[71] As the cold turned to pneumonia, a kindly, experienced physician was summoned, and Henry was treated in the conventional manner, which called for the employment of poisonous drugs. The attending physician was ignorant of hydrotherapy, which was just then being pioneered by a very few practitioners. Early in the year, following Dr. James Jackson's guidance, two of the boys had been nursed back to health from diphtheria by an appropriate use of water, fresh air, and rest. But this disease now confronting them was pneumonia. In the health reform vision, Ellen White had been instructed that the rational use of water would be beneficial in the treatment of disease, but as yet she and her husband were not prepared to use hydrotherapy as a means of treating other illnesses.

Henry failed rapidly. The earnest prayers of the Whites and the Howlands for his healing were not answered. His parents did not hesitate to talk with him about death, and even to prepare him for it. Henry's faith in Jesus remained firm. He had an opportunity to meditate on his past life, and he deeply regretted his waning Christian fervor, in Battle Creek setting an example short of what it should have been. This he confessed to God, his parents, and brothers. As he confessed his waywardness and sins, he was drawn nearer and nearer to God and enjoyed peace of mind and the blessing of the Lord. His faith grew ever more firm and his confidence of eternal life bright and secure.

One morning while his mother was attending him, he said:

“Promise me, Mother, that if I die I may be taken to Battle Creek, and laid by the side of my little brother, John Herbert, that we may come up together in the morning of the resurrection.”—[An Appeal to the Youth](#), 26.

He was given the assurance that this would be. From day to day he grew weaker. Medical science of the time had little to offer in treating pneumonia, and it was now certain there would be no recovery. The record is:

On the fifth [day], burdened with grief, his father retired to a place of prayer, and after returned to the sickroom, feeling the assurance that God would do all things well, and thus expressed himself to his suffering son. At this his countenance seemed to light up with a heavenly smile, and he nodded his assent and whispered, “Yes, He will.”—[Ibid.](#), 27.

In one conversation, he said:

[72]

“Father, you are losing your son. You will miss me, but don’t mourn. It is better for me. I shall escape being drafted, and shall not witness the seven last plagues. To die so happy is a privilege.”—[Ibid.](#), 29.

On several occasions he dictated short messages of admonition and assurance to young friends in Battle Creek, but a deathbed scene not forgotten by the family was recorded by Adelia Patten:

He said to his mother, “Mother, I shall meet you in heaven in the morning of the resurrection, for I know you will be there.” He then beckoned to his brothers, parents, and friends, and gave them all a parting kiss, after which he pointed upward and whispered, “Heaven is sweet.” These were his last words.—[Ibid.](#), 31.

Funeral Services in Topsham and Battle Creek

During the three months Henry and his brothers had been in Topsham, he had made a number of acquaintances. At their request a funeral service was held in the Baptist church just across the street from the Howland home. M. E. Cornell, now working in Maine, was called to officiate. Then the family took Henry’s body, in a “metallic burial casket,” back to Battle Creek. There Uriah Smith presided at the funeral, attended by Henry’s and the parents’ many friends. His former schoolmates were there; in the closing exercises they sang a hymn and then accompanied the family and friends to the Oak Hill Cemetery. Looking back at the experience, Ellen White wrote:

When our noble Henry died, at the age of 16—when our sweet singer was borne to the grave, and we no more heard his early song—ours was a lonely home. Both parents and the two remaining sons felt the blow most keenly. But God comforted us in our bereavements, and with faith and courage we pressed forward in the work He had given us, in bright hope of meeting our children who had been torn from us by death, in that world where sickness and death will never come.—[3Life Sketches of Ellen G. White, 165, 166.](#)

Chapter 6—(1864) Learning to Practice Health Reform

[73]

In the vision of June 6, 1863, not only was there opened up to Ellen White the basic principles of healthful living but a solemn commission was given to her that would have a bearing on her work and that of her husband for many years to come. She and James were to be teachers of health reform. Taking up her pen after the vision, she wrote:

I saw that it was a sacred duty to attend to our health, *and arouse others to do their duty.... We have a duty to speak*, to come out against intemperance of every kind—intemperance in working, in eating, in drinking, in drugging—and then point them to God’s great medicine, water, pure soft water, for diseases, for health, for cleanliness, and for a luxury.... *I saw that we should not be silent upon the subject of health, but should wake up minds to the subject.*—[Manuscript 1, 1863](#). (Italics supplied.)

But before they could teach, they must know what to teach. They were adults, and parents; alert, but their knowledge in health lines was but little different from the average—and these were days of general ignorance. The *Review and Herald*, edited by James White and Uriah Smith, occasionally carried items on rest, fresh air, exercise, et cetera, selected from other journals or from the writings of a Dr. Dio Lewis. Quite often articles and admonitions discouraging the use of tobacco, tea, and coffee were included. But as we have seen in connection with the scourge of diphtheria in the winter of 1862 and 1863, although the obituary notices kept before its readers the death of many children, up to February, 1863, the *Review* had little to offer to terrified parents but the application of a poultice of “Spanish flies and turpentine.” Then there came to the

[74]

attention of James and Ellen White Dr. James C. Jackson's method of treatment of diphtheria, embodying simple, rational methods in the proper use of water, fresh air, and rest. Earnestly employed, these remedies saved two of the White boys when stricken, and also Moses Hull's boy, but upon the recovery of the children the experience was soon forgotten. Then in the vision of June 6, 1863, among a number of situations and matters opened up to Ellen White, health was an important one. Many of its features were to her so revolutionary that she was for a time bewildered.

The White Family Applies Health Reform Diet

First of all, light given in regard to proper diet, when put into effect, brought about quite radical changes in the food program of the White home and of the homes of a few neighbors and acquaintances who learned of the basic points. Among them was the Amadon family and the Andrews family. As Ellen White recounted the experience a few months later—in August, 1864—she wrote:

I have thought for years that I was dependent upon a meat diet for strength. I have eaten three meals a day until within a few months. It has been very difficult for me to go from one meal to another without suffering from faintness at the stomach, and dizziness of the head.... Eating meat removed for the time these faint feelings. I therefore decided that meat was indispensable in my case.

But since the Lord presented before me, in June, 1863, the subject of meat eating in relation to health, I have left the use of meat. For a while it was rather difficult to bring my appetite to bread, for which, formerly, I have had but little relish. But by persevering, I have been able to do this. I have lived for nearly one year without meat. For about six months most of the bread upon our table has been unleavened cakes [gems], [See appendix B for the recipe.] made of unbolted wheat meal and water, and a very little salt. We use fruits and vegetables liberally. I have lived for eight months upon

two meals a day. [See appendix C for a two-meal-a-day plan.] I have applied myself to writing the most of the time for above a year. For eight months have been confined closely to writing. My brain has been constantly taxed, and I have had but little exercise. Yet my health has never been better than for the past six months.—[Spiritual Gifts, 4a:153, 154](#). In an address given in Battle Creek on March 6, 1869, Ellen White further described her experience as a health reformer:

I suffered keen hunger. I was a great meat eater. But when faint, I placed my arms across my stomach and said: “I will not taste a morsel. I will eat simple food, or I will not eat at all.” Bread was distasteful to me. I could seldom eat a piece as large as a dollar. Some things in the reform I could get along with very well, but when I came to the bread I was especially set against it.

When I made these changes I had a special battle to fight. The first two or three meals, I could not eat. I said to my stomach: “You may wait until you can eat bread.” In a little while I could eat bread, and graham bread, too. This I could not eat before; but now it tastes good, and I have had no loss of appetite.—[Testimonies for the Church, 2:371, 372](#). [For a review of Ellen White’s experience as a health reformer, see CDF, pp. 481-494, appendix I. In this fifteen-page compilation will be found her own statements of her experience, with a delineation of how she related to a reform in diet under varying circumstances and at different times.]

She continued:

I left off these things [meat, butter, and three meals] from principle. I took my stand on health reform from principle. And since that time, brethren, you have not heard me advance an extreme view of health reform that I have had to take back. I have advanced nothing but what I stand to today. I recommend to you a healthful, nourishing diet.—[Ibid., 2:372](#).

She declared how she looked upon the change in her way of life:

I do not regard it a great privation to discontinue the use of those things which leave a bad smell in the breath and a bad taste in the mouth.

[76]

Is it self-denial to leave these things and get into a condition where everything is as sweet as honey; where no bad taste is left in the mouth and no feeling of gone-ness in the stomach? These I used to have much of the time. I have fainted away with my child in my arms again and again.

I have none of this now, and shall I call this a privation when I can stand before you as I do this day? There is not one woman in a hundred that could endure the amount of labor that I do. I moved out from principle, not from impulse. I moved because I believed Heaven would approve of the course I was taking to bring myself into the very best condition of health, that I might glorify God in my body and spirit, which are His.—[Ibid.](#)

Important Lessons to Learn in Treating Disease

Six months after the health reform vision, Henry, their oldest son, took sick with pneumonia, as already noted, and eight days later died. Why? Neither James White nor Ellen had yet had an opportunity to acquaint themselves with steps to take in combating disease through the use of rational methods. Some weeks before, James had sent for Dr. Jackson's books, but at the onset of Henry's severe illness the books were still in their wrappers ([The Review and Herald, October 8, 1867](#)). They had been traveling and had had little time to read. Although the experienced physician had administered drugs, their son died. What a jolt this gave them. They doubtless recalled successfully treating diphtheria ten months earlier through the rational use of water and the application of other simple remedies.

Then during the second week of February, 1864, Willie was stricken with pneumonia. Now James and Ellen White were confronted with a dilemma that could mean life or death to one of their two remaining children. Ellen White reported their daring decision.

We decided that we would not send for a physician, but do the best we could with him ourselves by the use of water, and entreat the Lord in behalf of the child. We called in a few who had faith to unite their prayers with ours. We had a sweet assurance of God's presence and blessing.—[Spiritual Gifts, 4a:151](#). Nor was there any delay in making a beginning:

The next day Willie was very sick. He was wandering. He did not seem to see or hear me when I spoke to him. His heart had no regular beat, but was in a constant agitated flutter. We continued to look to God in his behalf, and to use water freely upon his head, and a compress constantly upon his lungs, and soon he seemed rational as ever. He suffered severe pain in his right side, and could not lie upon it for a moment. This pain we subdued with cold water compresses, varying the temperature of the water according to the degree of the fever. We were very careful to keep his hands and feet warm.—[Ibid., 4a:151, 152](#).

[77]

Writing of the experience a few days later, February 22, 1864, Ellen White declared:

We have been so anxious and have been obliged to watch over him day and night until we are much worn, and my head aches nearly all the time.—[Letter 5, 1864](#).

At the same time James White wrote:

The key [to the prophetic chart] will be ready soon. We had set apart the last week to complete it; but that has been a sad week, watching our Willie, very sick with lung fever. Thank God, he is fast recovering.—[The Review and Herald, February 23, 1864](#).

From these words from mother and father, it is very clear that the application of hydrotherapy in such a case called for tireless effort. But it produced good results. Ellen White picks up the details of the story's final outcome:

We expected the crisis would come the seventh day. We had but little rest during his sickness, and were obliged to give him up into others' care the fourth and fifth nights. My husband and myself the fifth day felt very anxious. The child raised fresh blood, and coughed considerably. My husband spent much time in prayer.

We left our child in careful hands that night. Before retiring, my husband prayed long and earnestly. Suddenly his burden of prayer left him, and it seemed as though a voice spoke to him, and said, "Go lie down; I will take care of the child." I had retired sick, and could not sleep for anxiety for several hours. I felt pressed for breath. Although sleeping in a large chamber, I arose and opened the door into a large hall, and was at once relieved, and soon slept.

I dreamed that an experienced physician was standing by my child, watching every breath, with one hand over his heart, and with the other feeling his pulse. He turned to us and said, "The crisis has passed. He has seen his worst night. He will now come up speedily, for he has not the injurious influence of drugs [Obviously, reference to drugs here is to those poisonous substances commonly employed before even the discovery of the cause of most diseases. See [Selected Messages 2:279-285; 441-454.](#)] to recover from. Nature has nobly done her work to rid the system of impurities."

I related to him my worn-out condition, my pressure for breath, and the relief obtained by opening the door. Said he, "That which gave you relief will also relieve your child. He needs air. You have kept him too warm. The heated air coming from a stove is injurious, and were it not for the air coming in at the crevices of the windows, would be poisonous, and destroy life. Stove

[78]

heat destroys the vitality of the air, and weakens the lungs. The child's lungs have been weakened by the room being kept too warm. Sick persons are debilitated by disease, and need all the invigorating air that they can bear to strengthen the vital organs to resist disease. And yet in most cases air and light are excluded from the sickroom at the very time when most needed, as though dangerous enemies."—[Spiritual Gifts, 4a:152, 153](#).

What consolation this dream, and the assurance that came to her husband a few hours before, brought to them. She reports:

We found in the morning that our boy had passed a restless night. He seemed to be in a high fever until noon. Then the fever left him, and he appeared quite well, except weak.

He had eaten but one small cracker through his five days' sickness. He came up rapidly, and has had better health than he has had for several years before.—[Ibid., 4a:153](#).

She added the significant words "This experience is valuable to us." What contrasting, thought-provoking object lessons James and Ellen White had experienced in just eleven weeks! Now, more than ever, they knew that they must dig deep and learn how to combat disease, and about sound dietetic principles. They determined then and there that at the earliest possible time they must visit the medical institution operated by Dr. Jackson and his associates at Dansville, New York, and gain all they could in practical lines. But Ellen White still had ahead of her the finishing of *Spiritual Gifts*, Volume III, and James White had the burden of managing the interests of the Publishing Association and editing the *Review and Herald*. [79]

Spiritual Gifts, Volumes III and IV

The Whites were delayed in visiting Dansville until August, 1864, because of Ellen White's determination to finish what she spoke of as her third book, dealing with Old Testament history

and other materials, including a presentation on health principles. *Spiritual Gifts*, Volume I, published in 1858, dealt primarily with New Testament history and the great controversy story to the new earth—with emphasis on the ministry of Jesus. Volume II was an autobiographical work issued in 1860. On November 3, 1863, announcement was made in the *Review* concerning Volume III, then in the planning stage:

The work will be in two parts. The first part will contain matter of deep interest in relation to the race of man from the Creation to the end—the six days of Creation, the size and glory of the first pair, the Fall, the Flood, the dwindling of the race physically, morally, and mentally, lost arts, causes of diseases, the best food for man, laws of health.—*The Review and Herald, November 3, 1863.*

The proposed content of the book is particularly significant and timely in light of Darwin's research and the publication of his *Origin of Species* in 1859, advocating the evolutionary theory. Also, the health reform vision, received five months before, would be included.

The balance of the announcement presents further intentions:

The second part will contain practical portions of the *Testimonies for the Church*, Nos. 1-10. The local and personal portions will be omitted.—*Ibid.*

[80] But there were delays, as she explained later. As they left for their eastern tour, which began August 19, 1863, she intended to finish her book on the journey. But she wrote:

As we visited the churches, things which had been shown to me in relation to existing wrongs required nearly all my time out of meeting in writing out the matter for them. Before I returned home from the East I had written out about five hundred pages for individuals and churches.

After we returned from the East [and buried Henry], I commenced to write Volume III of [*Spiritual Gifts*,],

expecting to have a book of a size to bind in with the testimonies which [now] help compose Volume IV.

As I wrote, the matter opened before me and I saw it was impossible to get all I had to write in as few pages as I at first designed. The matter opened and Volume III was full. Then I commenced on Volume IV, but before I had my work finished, while preparing the health matter for the printers, I was called to go to Monterey. We went, and could not finish the work there as soon as we expected. I was obliged to return to finish the matter for the printers.—[Manuscript 7, 1867](#)

It was mid-August by the time her work was finished to the point where the two books could be published. An announcement of their availability appeared in the [Review] of August 2, 1864. Volume III, containing 304 pages, was advertised for 75 cents; Volume IV, with 320 pages, was promised to be ready in a month.

She had been working under heavy pressure to complete the task so that she and her husband could visit Dr. Jackson's health institution in Dansville, New York. Yet she was determined that before leaving, she would cover in the book the main points that had been shown to her in the health reform vision. She did not want it to be said that what she presented as shown to her in vision could have been influenced by Dr. Jackson or anyone else. In completing her statement on the matter, she noted:

I therefore crowded into Volume IV the most essential points in the vision in regard to health, intending to get out another testimony in which I could more freely speak upon the happiness and miseries of married life. With this consideration, I closed up Volume IV that it might be scattered among the people. I reserved some important matter in regard to health, which I had not strength or time to prepare for that volume, and get it out in season for our eastern [1864] journey.—[Ibid.](#)

[81]

She added an interesting statement of what she did *not* read before first writing out what the Lord had revealed to her:

That which I have written in regard to health was not taken from books or papers.... My view was clear, and I did not want to read anything until I had fully completed my books. My views were written independent of books or of the opinions of others.—[Ibid.](#)

The Relation of the Vision to Books on Health

The health reform vision had not only opened new vistas but embodied the commission to lead out in teaching along lines that were contrary to common understanding. The task would not be easy. Experience had taught Ellen White how careful she must be to prevent the public from assuming she had gained her knowledge from human sources. As for herself, she wrote: “I was astonished at the things shown me in vision. Many things came directly across my own ideas.”—[Ibid.](#) She added, “I talked it to all with whom I had opportunity to converse.”—[Ibid.](#) As she did so, interesting conversations ensued:

As I related to others the things which I had been shown, the question was asked, “Have you seen the paper *The Laws of Life* or *The Water Cure Journal*?” I told them no, I had not seen either of the papers. Said they, “What you have seen agrees very much with much of their teachings.”

I talked freely with Dr. Lay and many others upon the things shown me in reference to health. I had never seen a paper treating upon health.—[Ibid.](#)

The Books Obtained from Dansville, New York

Two or three months after the health reform vision, James White sent to Dansville for some books on the subject of health. Ellen [82] White wrote a statement of explanation about this in September, 1867:

I did not know that such works existed until September, 1863, when in Boston, Massachusetts, my husband saw them advertised in a periodical called the Voice

of the Prophets, published by Elder J. V. Himes. My husband ordered the works from Dansville and received them at Topsham, Maine. His business gave him no time to peruse them, and as I was determined not to read them until I had written out my views, the books remained in their wrappers.—[Ibid., October 8, 1867](#)

Except for Henry's death in Topsham in December, 1863, and Willie's bout with pneumonia in February following, this is where matters stood until Ellen White felt at liberty to visit Dr. Jackson's health institution at Dansville, New York.

[83] **Chapter 7—(1864) An Intensive Course in Methods of Reform**

James and Ellen White were ready to spend a few weeks in learning all they could about both health reform and new methods in the care of the sick. For weeks they had looked forward to visiting Dr. Jackson's "Our Home on the Hillside," at Dansville, New York. James White wrote regarding this health institution:

In the month of September, 1864, Mrs. White and self spent three weeks at the health institution at Dansville, Livingston County, New York, called "Our Home." Our object in this visit was not to take treatment, as we were enjoying better health than usual, but to see what we could see and hear what we could hear, so as to be able to give to many inquiring friends a somewhat definite report.—[Healthful Living](#), 12, No. 1.

The institution was well located, and the guest list ran at about three hundred. The physicians on the staff were listed as: James C. Jackson, M.D., physician-in-chief; F. Wilson Hurd, M.D.; Miss Harriet N. Austin, M.D.; Mrs. Mary H. York, M.D.; and Horatio S. Lay, M.D.

Dr. Lay was the Seventh-day Adventist physician of seventeen years' experience at Allegan, Michigan, with whom Ellen White had talked soon after the health reform vision. This visit had encouraged him to take his ill wife to the institution and to learn what he could of the so-called rational methods. At Dansville he was soon taken onto the staff, which gave him an excellent opportunity to study the practices and procedures employed there.

[84] Accompanying James and Ellen to Dansville were Edson and Willie, and also Adelia Patten. They were given the routine physical examination by Dr. Jackson. As to James and Ellen White's health report, no data is available. But they conversed freely with the doctor

and listened to his lectures, took treatments, observed the attire of the women there, and dined at the institution's tables. Both gave good reports on the general atmosphere, the dietary program, and the courses of treatments.

Writing to Mr. and Mrs. Lockwood, close friends residing at Battle Creek, Ellen White stated:

You may ask what we think of this institution. Some things are excellent. Some things are not good. Their views and teachings in regard to health are, I think, correct. But Dr. Jackson mixes up his theology too much with the health question, which theology to us is certainly objectionable....

Dr. Jackson carries out his principles in regard to diet to the letter. He places no butter or salt upon his table.... The food I call liberal and good. All the difficulty is that there is danger of eating too much. All our food is eaten with a keen relish. If anyone requires a little salt they have it supplied for the asking.—[Letter 6, 1864.](#)

Ellen then described the baths taken at 10:30 A.M. and the rest period from 12:00 noon to 1:45 P.M., when everything was quiet and “all undress and go to bed.” There were certain features—such as card playing and dancing—for the recreation of the patients of which she did not approve. At a later time she advised that those visiting such an institution should carry along with them “the gospel sieve and sift everything they hear, that they may choose the good and refuse the bad” ([Testimonies for the Church, 1:490](#)). But she seemed certain that the Lord's hand was in their coming to the place. She declared:

I do think we should have an institution in Michigan to which our Sabbathkeeping invalids can resort.—[Letter 6, 1864.](#)

James White's report stressed the treatments and the dietary provisions:

[85]

Baths given at “Our Home” are not as cold, neither given as frequently, as we expected to find them. They are tempered to the conditions and diseases of the patients so as generally to be regarded by them as a luxury instead of with feelings of dread. The most heroic treatment, which a score of years since caused much prejudice upon the public mind against water as a curative agent, [see [The Story of Our Health Message, 31-33.](#)] is abandoned by all well-informed hydropathic physicians. In our opinion no one, however low and sensitive to cold, need fear being injured by water at this institution.—[Healthful Living, 14](#), No. 1.

James White found the food program equally appealing and wrote of it in some detail:

The tables are spread with an abundance of plain and nourishing food, which becomes a daily luxury to the patients, as the natural and healthful condition of the taste is restored. The glutton, who gratifies his depraved appetite with swine’s flesh, grease, gravies, spices, et cetera, et cetera, on looking over Dr. Hurd’s tract on cookery, may in his ignorance regard this style of living as a system of starvation.

But a few weeks’ experience at “Our Home” would correct his appetite, so that he would eat plain, simple, and nutritious food with a far better relish than he now does that which is unnatural and hurtful. We never saw men and women gather around tables more cheerfully, and eat more heartily, than the patients at Dansville. The uniformity and sharpness of appetite was wonderful for a crowd of patients. It was the general leanness and lankness of these persons alone that could give the idea that they were sick.

Besides the usual rounds of excellently cooked wheat-meal mushes, wheat-meal biscuits, cakes, and pies, and occasionally other varieties, we found the tables bountifully loaded with the fruits of the season,

such as apples, peaches, and grapes. No one need fear of starving at “Our Home.” There is greater danger of eating too much.

The appetite of the feeble patient, who has been pinning with loss of appetite over fashionable food, becomes natural and sharp, so that simple food is eaten with all that keen relish with which healthy country schoolchildren devour plain food. The food being nutritious, and the appetite keen, the danger of that class of patients who have become feeble by self-indulgence is decidedly in the direction of eating too much.—[Ibid.](#), 14, 15.

[86]

James recognized that changing from the common meat-eating diet to one that was plain and healthful could, with some, call for time to accomplish. He warned against sudden, sweeping changes. Dr. Jackson made a deep impression upon him as a physician who was a “master of his business,” a “clear and impressive speaker,” and “decidedly thorough” in whatever he undertook. James closed his report on a positive note, recommending the institution to those suffering critically. As to others, he had this to say:

To those who are active yet suffering from failing health, we urgently recommend health publications, a good assortment of which we design to keep on hand. Friends, read up in time to successfully change your habits, and live in harmony with the laws of life.

And to those who call themselves well, we would say, As you value the blessings of health, and would honor the Author of your being, learn to live in obedience to those laws established in your being by High Heaven. A few dollars’ worth of books that will teach you how to live may save you heavy doctor bills, save you months of pain upon a sickbed, save you suffering and feebleness from the use of drugs, and perhaps from a premature grave.—[Ibid.](#), 18.

Dr. Lay and the Health Reform Movement

The Whites looked upon Dr. Lay, with whom they were well acquainted, as one who could be a real asset to the Adventist cause, in the newly developed interest in disease and its causes, and in health in general. In her letter written from Dansville, Ellen White stated:

[87]

Dr. Lay is doing well. He is in the very best place he could be in to learn. He is studying all his leisure moments and is coming out a thorough convert. His wife is doing well. She is gaining, walks well for her. She is 100 percent better than when she came here.

Dr. Lay is respected in this institution. He ranks among their physicians. I think they [would] be unwilling to have him leave them. Dr. Lay thinks some of going to New York City to Dr. Trall's college and attend lectures, obtain a diploma, and come out a regular M.D. [The medical education gained by Dr. Lay up to this time had been received in a short course taught in a second-class medical school.]—[Letter 6, 1864](#).

In a very brief report written for the *Review*, after speaking favorably of what they found at Dansville, James White added, “The three weeks were made still more happy by the society of brethren Dr. Lay and wife, King and daughter, Andrews, Edson, and Hall.”—[The Review and Herald, November 22, 1864](#). These fellow Adventists were all there because of impaired health, except Dr. Lay and J. N. Andrews, who was visiting his crippled son. On this point James White commented:

Some of the cures performed are marvelous. Charles Melville, the only little son of Elder J. N. Andrews, is a case of note. This boy became lame in one of his legs. His hip and leg seemed withering, and malformation appeared to be taking place in the ankle. To see this brilliant little fellow literally drag his leg after him was enough to touch a heart of stone.

He was placed under the care of the physicians at “Our Home,” and in the period of fifteen weeks was so far recovered as to be returned to his parents. And when we saw him, a few days later, he would run and skip about the yard, as nimbly as other boys. The size of his leg was increasing, and the cure promised full restoration. Any good father or mother would, if the world were theirs, and purest gold, cut it in two and give half of it for such a cure on such a son.—[Healthful Living](#), 18, No. 1.

Active Teachers of Health Reform

In the three weeks they spent at Dansville, James and Ellen White found what they were needing and seeking—a practical application of the principles of healthful living that would fit them for the position they were called to fill as teachers of health. Of course, there was yet much to learn, and with open minds they continued their search for what would be a help to them and to the believers generally. It is hard to know all that was going through their minds as they left Dansville to fill their appointments on their eastern tour. In projecting this tour, just before they left Battle Creek on August 24, James White had put this note in the *Review*. [88]

We now design to spend a few weeks at the health institution called “Our Home,” at Dansville, New York, then attend the New York State conference, October 2-4, then visit New England as the brethren may arrange it.—[The Review and Herald](#), September 6, 1864.

It is clear from the glowing report of this 1864 conference in New York State, furnished by Mary Maxson, a resident of Adams Center, where the meeting was held, that James and Ellen White were prepared to enthusiastically launch out in the role of teachers of health. She reported:

Sabbath morning we had a social meeting, and many glad testimonies were given in behalf of God and His precious truth.... After the conference meeting had

closed, Brother White gave a discourse upon the subject of sanctification. His remarks were founded upon [2 Peter 1:1, 2](#). He dwelt particularly upon the necessity of being temperate in all things, in order to be sanctified, and fit for our Master's use.

In the afternoon Brother Andrews occupied a few moments in speaking upon the same subject, and Sister White followed him with a very interesting and instructive testimony. She showed the importance of having a healthy body, if we would have a healthy, happy mind.—[The Review and Herald, October 25, 1864.](#)

Mary Maxson earnestly voiced her feelings:

May God help us to begin a thorough reformation immediately. Let us not look at these things afar off, and resolve that at some future time we will reform; but let us, in the strength of God, commence now, remembering that we must work fast in order to overcome all our sins, and be prepared to meet the Lord when He shall come. The injunction "Take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares" applies particularly to us, and may God help us to heed it.—[Ibid.](#)

[89]

With a ready pen and an effective use of words, this reporter continued her colorful description of the afternoon meetings on Sunday:

In the afternoon, Brother Andrews gave a deep and powerful discourse from [Hebrews 11:13](#). He showed the relation the Sabbath sustains to Creation, et cetera....

After the discourse, Sister White again gave her testimony, and oh, how exceedingly precious the Christian's hope looked to us as we listened to her words of heavenly comfort and cheer. She had great freedom in speaking, and the falling tear, the fervent "amen," and

“glory to God” told plainly that the Spirit of the Lord accompanied her words with power. I bless God that I was permitted to hear that exhortation.—[Ibid.](#)

How was this initial broad public presentation on health reform received by those attending the conference? An action taken before its close answers the question:

Resolved, That we highly appreciate the testimony of Brother and Sister White at this conference; and that we are grateful to God for the gift of prophecy which He has placed in the church.—[Ibid.](#)

From Adams Center James and Ellen White pushed on into New England, where they caught up with J. N. Loughborough. Together they visited a number of churches and met with the general public. When the Whites met seasoned believers, they dealt with the subject of disease and its causes, and reforms in habits of life. Their messages were well received.

Plans for Health Publications

On this journey, which continued to November 11, James and Ellen White considered how to get the health message across to Seventh-day Adventists generally. A plan emerged to issue five pamphlets (later increased to six) of sixty-four pages each, presenting some phase of what they saw before them along health lines that should be stressed. James White would do some writing, but the pamphlets would feature articles from physicians advocating reforms, and each would contain an article from Ellen White’s pen under the general title “Disease and Its Causes.” In early September he noted that “the health question is much agitated among our people.”—[The Review and Herald, September 6, 1864](#). Articles in the *Review* from Adventist writers J. N. Andrews, H. S. Gurney, and George Amadon, and selected materials from such physicians and other authors as Dr. Dio Lewis, L. B. Coles, and Horace Mann bore witness to this. The November 1, 1864, issue carried a pointed article from Martha Amadon entitled “How to Use Graham Flour.” Ellen White’s comprehensive thirty-two-page chapter titled “Health,” in

[90]

Spiritual Gifts, Volume IV, published in August, 1864, was her first published material in the wide range of basic health matters.

Ellen White's Appeal to Mothers

Before going into the subject of health in its many ramifications, Ellen White broke away from her writing on Old Testament history for *Spiritual Gifts*, to present a subject on which she had been given special light—masturbation. What she wrote was published in April, 1864, and filled the first thirty-four pages of a sixty-four-page pamphlet titled *An Appeal to Mothers. The Great Cause of the Physical, Mental, and Moral Ruin of Many of the Children of Our Time*. Her earnest message opens:

My sisters, my apology for addressing you on this subject is, I am a mother, and feel alarmed for those children and youth who by solitary vice are ruining themselves for this world, and for that which is to come. Let us closely inquire into this subject from the physical, mental, and moral points of view.—AM, p. 5.

During the next few years she wrote considerably on this topic, as may be found today in *Testimonies for the Church*, volume 2. *Child Guidance* draws on both the 1864 pamphlet and the *Testimony* articles. The Introduction to *Appeal to Mothers* was signed by the trustees of the SDA Publishing Association. In it they too made an appeal:

[91] And to the young we would say, As you value health, happiness, and life, a sound mind, an approving conscience, and a high moral sensibility, pass not over this subject lightly, nor forget the warning herein given you. To you there may seem to be no danger, but the danger is all the greater because so insidious; and being instructed yourselves, you may be able to raise the warning voice to others who are ignorantly sacrificing themselves upon the altar of this Moloch of passion.— Ibid.

Following the E. G. White article, the publishers inserted “Further Testimony” from medical writers, with this note of explanation:

We have thought proper to add to the foregoing the following testimonies from men of high standing and authority in the medical world, corroborative of the views presented in the preceding pages. And in justice to the writer of those pages, we would say that she had read no other works on this subject, previous to putting into our hands what she has written. She is not, therefore, a copyist, although she has stated important truths to which men who are entitled to our highest confidence have borne testimony.

An Expeditiously Timed Movement

Adventist historian J. N. Loughborough saw the movement toward reforms in diet and the care of the sick as expeditiously timed. He was there and lived through the challenging developments, and he made this significant observation:

While from the year 1863 to the spring of 1865 the terrible war in the United States interfered with any great success in our public efforts to advance the message, it seemed to be the Lord’s time for instruction in health reform—that which afterward should be “as the right arm and hand to the body” in the rapid advancement of the work.—[Pacific Union Recorder, August 22, 1912.](#)

Begun in 1863, the transforming of the way of life of a whole denomination ran through 1864, and was to continue through 1865 and many years to come. God richly blessed the work of James and Ellen White as teachers of health. But their impact would have been insignificant were it not for the understanding on the part of Adventists that God was calling for His people to respond and advance. [92]

On this point J. H. Waggoner, another contemporary, noted, in 1866, that the outstanding contribution of the instruction that came

through the *Testimonies* was that it is a part of one's religious duty to care for the body temple. He wrote:

We do not profess to be pioneers in the general principles of health reform. The facts on which this movement is based have been elaborated, in a great measure, by reformers, physicians, and writers on physiology and hygiene, and so may be found scattered through the land. But we do claim that by the method of God's choice it has been more clearly and powerfully unfolded, and is thereby producing an effect which we could not have looked for from any other means.

As mere physiological and hygienic truths, they might be studied by some at their leisure, and by others laid aside as of little consequence; but when placed on a level with the great truths of the third angel's message by the sanction and authority of God's Spirit, and so declared to be the means whereby a weak people may be made strong to overcome, and our diseased bodies cleansed and fitted for translation, then it comes to us as an essential part of *present truth*, to be received with the blessing of God, or rejected at our peril.—[The Review and Herald, August 7, 1866](#) (see also [The Story of Our Health Message, 79, 80](#)).

Life in the White Home

A few documents provide glimpses of family life in the White home during the war years. In 1863 they sold their cottage on Battle Creek's Wood Street and took possession of a home more adequate to their growing needs. While specific records are meager and unclear, the family was often swollen by orphans and others in need of help, particularly young people seeking an education. John O. Corliss wrote of this in 1923:

She [Ellen White] was most careful to carry out in her own course the things she taught to others. For instance, she frequently dwelt in her public talks upon

the duty of caring for widows and orphans, citing her hearers to [Isaiah 58:7-10](#); and she exemplified her exhortations by taking the needy to her own home for shelter, food, and raiment. I well remember her having at one time, as members of her family, a boy and girl and a widow and her two daughters. I have, moreover, known her to distribute to poor people hundreds of dollars' worth of new clothes, which she bought for that purpose.—[The Review and Herald, August 30, 1923](#).

[93]

Looking back in 1906 on her experience, she explained:

After my marriage I was instructed that I must show a special interest in motherless and fatherless children, taking some under my own charge for a time, and then finding homes for them. Thus I would be giving others an example of what they could do.

Although called to travel often, and having much writing to do, I have taken children of 3 and 5 years of age, and have cared for them, educated them, and trained them for responsible positions. I have taken into my home from time to time boys from 10 to 16 years of age, giving them motherly care, and a training for service.—[Ibid., July 26, 1906](#).

Nor was she alone in this benevolent work. The February, 1894, *Medical Missionary* had this to say of her husband:

Elder White was himself a very philanthropic man. He always lived in a large house, but there were no vacant rooms in it. Although his immediate family was small, his house was always filled with widows and their children, poor friends, poor brethren in the ministry, and those who needed a home. His heart and his pocketbook were always open, and he was ready to help those who needed help. He certainly set a most noble example to our denomination in his largeheartedness and liberality of spirit.

It was in this atmosphere that James and Ellen White took Lucia King into their newly acquired home to be a part of their family for a year or more. James White provided a word picture:

[94]

We were happy to hear her voice in prayer at the family altar, and her decided testimony in inquiring-meetings. She was one of the happy fifteen who were baptized Sabbath, January 3. We sent Lucia to our well-organized and disciplined school, and she seemed very happy in our family.—[Ibid.](#), May 12, 1863.

Lucia's stay in the White home was cut short by her illness and sudden death from pneumonia, which resulted from undue exposure while visiting friends and relatives in a nearby town.

It was shortly after this that Adelia Patten furnished a glimpse of the Sabbath in the White home, giving special attention to the children:

For a number of years past their mother has spent much time in reading to them on the Sabbath from her large amount of choice selections on moral and religious matter, a portion of which she has recently published in a work entitled *Sabbath Readings*. Reading to them before they could readily read themselves gave them a love for useful reading, and they have spent many leisure hours, especially the Sabbath hours, when not at Sabbath school and meeting, in perusing good books, with which they were well supplied.

It has been a source of satisfaction to the parents, and those connected with the family, to see the fruits of such labor manifested in the good deportment of the children.—[An Appeal to the Youth](#), 19.

Sabbath Readings, Compiled by Ellen G. White

Adelia Patten knew something about these *Sabbath Readings*. On June 9, 1863, James White advertised them, and in so doing provided a bit of history:

Mrs. White, assisted by Sister A. P. Patten, is publishing a series of tracts with the above title [*Sabbath Readings*], for youth and children. She has a vast amount of moral and religious reading which she has been collecting during the past fifteen years, from which she is selecting and compiling these tracts. They are coming from the press at the rate of about one hundred pages a week. These will be held for sale in three forms.—[The Review and Herald, June 9, 1863.](#)

The forms were sixteen-page tracts, six tracts bound together in a pamphlet, or twenty-four tracts in bound-book form. White added:

This Sabbath reading is designed for every family. All our friends must be liberal in supplying their families and their neighbors, or the enterprise will be a losing one.... We hope that all who look favorably on the enterprise of furnishing with good reading those homes which are destitute, and adding to their own libraries suitable Sabbath reading, will help sustain it.—[Ibid.](#)

[95]

In this enterprise is reflected Ellen White's concern not only for her own family but for Adventist families generally. The children must be led gently in a course that would build character for this life and the life to come.

Preparing People to Meet Jesus

This was the driving element in Ellen's writing so many messages of encouragement, counsel, and caution, as the Lord through the visions opened up to her the cases of individuals needing counsel. Note her burden and concern in a twelve-page message directed to a wife and mother in Michigan as she wrote of serious shortcomings in the woman's experience:

Unless this is overcome now, it never will be, and Sister---will have no part with God's people, no home in His heavenly kingdom. God cannot take you to heaven as you are. You would mar that peaceful, happy place.

What can be done for you? Do you design to wait until Jesus comes in the clouds of heaven? Will He make you all over new when He comes? Oh, no. This will not be done then. The fitting up must be done here; all the hewing and squaring must take place here upon earth, in the hours of probation. You must be fitted up here; the last blow must be given here.

When Jesus takes His place on the great white cloud, he that is holy will be holy still, and he that is filthy will be filthy still. His reward is with Him to give to every one according as his works shall be. Now is your time to get ready.—[Letter 3, 1863](#).

Testimony for the Church No. 10

[96] In spite of the pressure to push ahead with the writing of Old Testament history for *Spiritual Gifts*, Volume III, Ellen White felt that she must not lag in getting her messages before the church in the *Testimony* pamphlets. Number 10 was advertised in the *Review* of January 19, 1864. The subjects presented were practical: Dangers of the Young; Walk in the Light; The East; the Aged; the American Costume; Ministers, and Wives of Ministers; and Patent Rights. [This reference to patent rights does not pertain to the proper steps of an inventor to protect his claim to the fruitage of his genius mind and hands, but to a speculative custom of the time of selling in certain territories, the right to an income from the sale of a patented article, a practice that often left the investor on the losing end. See [Testimonies for the Church, 1:455, 551](#).] It contained eighty pages and sold for 15 cents.

Supplementary Income Aided White Family Finances

James and Ellen White were often involved in various financial enterprises for the advancement of the publishing of the message. It has also been noted how they opened their home to orphans, widows, and needy young people. This could not be accomplished on James White's very limited salary—\$12 per week in 1865. A modest income from his literary productions and those of Ellen White was

dedicated largely to these financial interests. Also, during the war James White discerned that paper prices would rapidly increase, and he invested in stationery, which he sold for a profit. In addition, he carried Bibles, concordances, and other useful reference works that he advertised occasionally in the *Review*.

In later years he mentioned his regrets that these interests had drawn on his strength and broken into his time, but he saw no alternative. This was before the days of Adventist Book Centers.

He wrote of this while at the Dansville institution, when he could look at some things from a distance and ponder the involvements. He was troubled with seeming indifference manifested by ministers and laymen, and chose to call attention to what had been accomplished by his diligence.

We wish here to state that our intense anxiety for the prompt accomplishment of enterprises, such as the association fund, and the relief of ministers in providing them homes, has induced us to lead off with donations far beyond our real ability. If it be inquired, How have you been able to do this? we answer, By loading our trunks, when out on preaching tours, with Bibles and books of various kinds, and becoming a traveling merchant, in connection with the duties of a minister, and the vast amount of office business, and in pursuing the same energetic course when at home.

[97]

It has been double and sometimes triple labor that has brought into our hands means by which we could set examples, to be so slowly and stintingly followed.

The sequel thus far is you are laying up treasures on earth, while we have been growing worn and old, two years in one.—[The Review and Herald, September 27, 1864.](#)

He reported, perhaps with a touch of egotism:

We are happy to state that our circumstances are very comfortable and respectable, for which we can thank God, and our own energetic business tact. We

would not appear ungrateful for the many kind favors from dear friends since we have been connected with the cause. But it is our privilege to here state that for every dollar we have received as a gift, we have given during this time \$10.—[Ibid.](#)

As he sat there writing at a table in their room at “Our Home on the Hillside,” he could in his mind separate himself from Battle Creek and the pressures of the cause and could project some good resolutions. He wrote:

We wish here to state, at the age of 43, we design to content ourselves with doing one man’s work. If the friends of the cause think our services of sufficient value to give us a support, in so doing, we shall, from choice, give up all separate interests in business, and do what we can for the interest of the association, and the cause generally.—[Ibid.](#)

He made it very clear:

For the future we design to pay tithes of all we possess, and labor proper hours, seek for the restoring influence of rest for ourselves and overworked family, and give ample chance for those who have a zeal for the Lord to lead off in the liberal enterprises of the cause. Only this one privilege we claim, of paying \$10 to each efficient minister who shall be drafted from among us, to help him pay the \$300.—[Ibid.](#)

[98]

Brave words, but how soon forgotten in the din of battle!

Satan’s Intent to Destroy James White

In a letter written to John Byington in 1864, Ellen White introduced a significant factor—Satan’s intent to destroy James White.

I was pointed back and saw that amid all the hatred and devices of Satan God had spared the life of James, although Satan has pressed him sore to take away his life. God has wrenched him from the enemy's power and raised him up to still act for Him, to walk out on his faith, to be a succorer to the needy and to strengthen and uphold His servants that He has called into the field.

I saw that God had stayed him on the right hand and on the left, that he should not go to extremes, and He has inspired confidence in the hearts of the remnant generally to confide in his integrity and judgment. This has not been the work of man, but the marks of God's hand are seen in it all. His work will go forward. God will choose simple instruments to carry forward this great work, but they only carry out the mind and will of the great Master at the head of the work.—[Letter 14, 1864.](#)

God had delivered James, for there was yet important work for him to perform. At the constituency meeting of the SDA Publishing Association, May 20, 1864, in an effort to unload responsibilities, James moved that Uriah Smith be elected in his place as editor of the *Review and Herald*. The motion carried. Smith was 32 years of age and had just the day before been ordained to the ministry. White continued as president of the Publishing Association. The recorded change in editors was more in form than in substance. True, Smith's name appeared on the masthead in place of that of James White, but White continued his editorials and articles. Communications sent for publication in the *Review* usually were addressed "Dear Brother White." For twelve years the two men had worked together in the closest and best of relationships, and they continued to do so.

[99]

Chapter 8—(1864-1865) The War and Its Unexpected Close

In mid-1864 problems related to the war accelerated. Under the draft law passed by Congress on March 3, 1863, there was provision that those conscientiously opposed to bearing arms could be assigned “to duty in the hospitals, or to the care of freedmen,” or could, by the payment of \$300, be excused from the draft (“The Views of Seventh-day Adventists Relative to Bearing Arms,” pp. 3,4). Under these liberal provisions, Seventh-day Adventists generally, if drafted, paid \$300 and were excused from serving. In the light of the counsel given by God through Ellen White, it seemed consistent to take this course and thus escape the many problems of military service. But the law was amended on July 4, 1864; the \$300 commutation provision, was revoked, but with Quakers seemingly in mind, the amendment declared:

“Nothing contained in this Act is to be construed to alter, or in any way affect the Law relative to those conscientiously opposed to bearing arms.”—[The Review and Herald, 4 July, 1864.](#)

This meant that the \$300 commutation provision now *applied only to those officially recognized as noncombatants*. Up to this point Seventh-day Adventists, although firmly of that persuasion, had not publicly declared this fact, nor was their position officially recognized. The church must act quickly to obtain official noncombatant status. Church leaders, working through proper channels, took immediate steps to achieve this. The first step was to gain the endorsement of the governor of Michigan, Austin Blair. Hence the following communication was taken to him August 3, 1864, by the three members of the General Conference Committee:

[100]

We the undersigned, Executive Committee of the
General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, respect-

fully beg leave to present for your consideration the following statements:

The denomination of Christians calling themselves Seventh-day Adventists, taking the Bible as their rule of faith and practice, are unanimous in their views that its teachings are contrary to the spirit and practice of war; hence, they have ever been conscientiously opposed to bearing arms. If there is any portion of the Bible which we, as a people, can point to more than another as our creed, it is the law of ten commandments, which we regard as the supreme law, and each precept of which we take in its most obvious and literal import.

The fourth of these commandments requires cessation from labor on the seventh day of the week, the sixth prohibits the taking of life, neither of which, in our view, could be observed while doing military duty. Our practice has uniformly been consistent with these principles. Hence our people have not felt free to enlist into the service....

We would further represent that Seventh-day Adventists are rigidly anti-slavery, loyal to the government, and in sympathy with it against the rebellion.

But not having had a long existence as a distinct people, and our organization having but recently been perfected, our sentiments are not yet extensively known. The change in the law renders it necessary that we take a more public stand in the matter. For this reason we now lay before your Excellency the sentiments of Seventh-day Adventists, as a body, relative to bearing arms, trusting that you will feel no hesitation in endorsing our claim that, as a people, we come under the intent of the late action of Congress concerning those who are conscientiously opposed to bearing arms, and are entitled to the benefits of said laws. John Byington General Conference J. N. Loughborough Executive Committee George W. Amadon of Seventh-day Adventists Battle Creek, August 2, 1864.

[101] This communication addressed to the governor was accompanied by letters of introduction and commendation from the mayor and the leading citizens of Battle Creek.

Governor Blair's Reply

The delegation carried back with them the governor's reply, brief and to the point, but adequate:

I am satisfied that the foregoing statement of principles and practices of the Seventh-day Adventists is correct, and that they are entitled to all the immunities secured by law to those who are conscientiously opposed to bearing arms, or engaging in war.

Austin Blair

Governor of Michigan

Dated, August 3, 1864.

The next step had to be taken in Washington. For this important mission, J. N. Andrews, armed with appropriate documents, was sent as the church's emissary. Reported James White in the *Review* of September 6, 1864:

Brother J. N. Andrews left for Washington, Monday [August 29], well endorsed from the highest military authority in this city. He will report through the *Review* as soon as possible. May it be favorable for those who have enlisted to serve under the Prince of Peace.

Two weeks later the *Review* carried Andrews' Washington, D.C., report, dated September 1:

Brother White: In obedience to the instructions of the General Conference Committee, I have visited the Provost Marshal General.... He ...stated that the exemption clause of the enrollment law was not construed by

him to mean Quakers merely, but to apply to any religious body who hold noncombatant views. He has issued orders to all deputy marshals in accordance with this construction of the exemption clause.

September 18, 1864.

After noting some details of the course that a drafted Adventist should follow, Andrews closed his report on the hopeful note: “I believe that this course of action, which is very plain and simple, will meet the case of all our brethren and will enable them to avail themselves of the provisions of the exemption clause.”—*Ibid.*

[102]

Andrews brought back with him from Washington a communication of major import:

Respectfully returned to Rev. J. N. Andrews: Members of religious denominations, who have been drawn in the draft, and who establish the fact before the Board of Enrollment that they are conscientiously opposed to the bearing of arms, and are prohibited from so doing by their rules and articles of faith, and that their department has been uniformly consistent with their professions, will be assigned to duty in hospitals, or to the care of freedmen, or shall be exempt on payment of \$300, to such persons as the Secretary of War may designate.

By Command of the Provost Marshal General, Theo. McMurtrie, Capt. & A.A.A.G.—*Ibid.*

Now Fully Recognized as Noncombatants

Seventh-day Adventists were now assured of the acceptance by the United States Government of their status as noncombatants. It would take some time to determine just how things would work out at local levels. In the meantime church leaders hastened to prepare documents that a drafted man could employ in demonstrating his eligibility for noncombatant status. This was done in two pamphlets, one of twenty-seven pages entitled “Compilation of Extracts, From

the Publications of Seventh-day Adventists Setting Forth Their View of the Sinfulness of War, Referred to in the Annexed Affidavits.” The other was a pamphlet of nineteen pages titled “The Views of Seventh-day Adventists Relative to Bearing Arms, as Brought Before the Governors of Several States and the Provost Marshal General With a Portion of the Enrollment Law.” Both came from the press very early in 1865.

[103] Armed with these documents, a draftee still had the choice of paying the \$300 commutation money or entering the service, with his conscientious scruples recognized and provided for. Two reports in the *Review* subsequently indicate that on the local level, recognition of the claims of Adventist men was difficult to secure. The machinery was just beginning to come into use when in April, 1865, the war was suddenly concluded.

Seventh-day Adventists, in harmony with an appeal from the General Conference Committee, observed Sabbath, August 27, 1864, as a day of fasting and prayer. Three points of concern were named in a brief article titled “Spare Thy People, Lord“:

1. The existing war, which threatens to very much retard the progress of the third angel’s message.
2. The condition of American slaves.
3. That God will direct His people to act wisely and humbly in reference to the draft, and overrule impending events to their good and His glory.—[Ibid., August 9, 1864](#)

On October 20 the President of the United States, Abraham Lincoln, proclaimed “the last Thursday in November next, as a day ...of thanksgiving and prayer to Almighty God, the beneficent Creator and Ruler of the universe.” It was a day for humility and pleading with God for “peace, union, and harmony throughout the land” ([Ibid., November 8, 1864](#)).

On January 24, 1865, there appeared in the *Review* a contributor’s note titled “The New Call for Men.” It opened with the words “The President of the United States has issued another call for 300,000 volunteers to fill up the ranks in our armies.” The writer pointed out that most of this need would probably be supplied by a

draft, and this would take not a few Seventh-day Adventists. James White wearily commented:

If this war continues, God only knows what it will do for even noncombatants. Unless Heaven interposes, they may not always be treated with that respect and mercy which they now receive.—[Ibid., January 24, 1865](#)

A Call to Importune God to Stop the War

The next week James White addressed the readers of the *Review*. After expressing gratitude for “the provision made by the government for the exemption of noncombatants from bearing carnal weapons,” he proposed to fellow Adventists:

Prayer and giving of thanks for those in authority constitute a proper portion of their Sabbath and other seasons of public worship, and also of family and private devotions. And besides this, we recommend that the second Sabbath in each month be especially set apart to fasting and prayer in view of the present terrible war, and the peculiar relations which noncombatants sustain to the government, that they may still enjoy liberty of conscience, and lead quiet and peaceable lives in all godliness and honesty.—[Ibid., January 31, 1865](#)

[104]

“Gratified with the article presented by Brother White,” the General Conference Committee endorsed the position he had taken and recommended “to all our brethren to observe Sabbath, February 11, as a day of fasting and prayer, for the objects specified in said article” ([Ibid.](#)).

By mid-February, 1865, it was clear to the committee that if the war did not come to an early close, and if there was to be a call for more men every five or six months, “we must inevitably lose means, or lose our own numbers, and lose those who would embrace the truth, and lose the attention of the people.”—[Ibid., February 21, 1865](#)

We are thus brought, as it plainly appears to us, to a place where if the war continues, we must stop. We repeat it, the war must stop, or our work in spreading the truth must stop. Which shall it be?

Relying upon God, and having confidence in the efficacy of prayer, and the indications of His prophetic word, we believe that the work of God must not be hindered. True Christians are the light of the world, and the salt of the earth. If ten righteous persons could have been found in Sodom, it would have been spared. God's work in these last days must not, will not, stop.— *Ibid.*

Then came a most unusual appeal:

We would recommend, nay more, earnestly request, all our churches and scattered brethren to set apart four days commencing Wednesday, March 1, and continuing till the close of the following Sabbath, as days of earnest and importunate prayer over this subject. Let business be suspended, and the churches meet at one o'clock on the afternoon of each of the weekdays, and twice on the Sabbath, to pour out their supplications before God.

[105]

These meetings should be free from anything like discussion, and be characterized by humiliation, confessions, prayers for light and truth, and efforts for a fresh and individual experience in the things of God....

During these days of prayer, we recommend on the part of all a very abstemious and simple diet.... Labor will be suspended at the *Review* office, and there will consequently be no paper next week....

We shall expect that all who have the interests of the message at heart will engage willingly and earnestly in this matter; and we pray that those who do not feel over our present times and prospects may be speedily aroused.—*Ibid.*

Seventh-day Adventists responded most heartily.

President Lincoln, in his second inaugural address, given on March 4, 1865, acknowledged the scourge of the war as a result of the crime of slavery. Here are his words:

Fondly do we hope, fervently do we pray, that this mighty scourge of war may speedily pass away. Yet, if God wills that it continue until all the wealth piled by the bondman's 250 years of unrequited toil shall be sunk, and until every drop of blood drawn with the lash shall be paid by another drawn with the sword, as was said three thousand years ago, so, still it must be said, that the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether.—[Ibid., March 21, 1865](#)

By this time the *Review and Herald* carried in almost every issue information concerning the draft situation and advice to draftees. The issue of March 14 had an editorial written by Uriah Smith, noting marked changes of men in key positions and attitudes that, it seemed, placed the nation in a position where God could favor the efforts of Union forces. The question was asked:

Is not the nation taking a position where God can favor it, and crown its efforts with success? Let the late Union victories, and the rebel disasters, answer. Let the crumbling power of the Confederacy answer. Let the fall of Savannah, Wilmington, and Charleston answer. Let the giant grip which Grant holds upon the demon of rebellion before Petersburg and Richmond, while Sherman, by his triumphant march through the heart of Georgia and South Carolina, deals death blows to its very vitals, answer....

What the course of events in the future may be, we cannot tell. We pray for the holding of the winds, the cessation of this strife....

Meanwhile strong in our trust that God will work in His own good way and time, we wait for the speedy holding of the winds, the last loud proclamation of the truth, and the not-far-distant consolation of Israel.—[Ibid., March 14, 1865](#)

The Devastating War Suddenly Ends

On April 9 General Lee surrendered at the Appomattox Court-house in Virginia. The war was virtually over. There were still some activities to be quelled farther south and to the west, which ran into May. But on April 11, two days after Lee's surrender, Editor Smith of the *Review and Herald*, recognizing the visible answer to prayer, wrote cautiously of the prospects of peace:

While the loyal North is rejoicing in the downfall of Richmond, the signal successes of the Union arms, and the apparent nearness of the complete overthrow of the rebellion, and the consequent peace, none have more reason to rejoice than the commandment-keeping people of God, and none can rejoice more understandingly than they.

They see in the prospect not only the immediate effects that others see, the cessation of slaughter and bloodshed, ...but they see in it a fulfillment of prophecy, an answer to prayer, a bright token that the great Shepherd of Israel is going before His flock. We therefore thank God for the visible manifestation of His hand in our national affairs.—[Ibid., April 11, 1865](#)

A week later Smith referred to the wide acclaim of God's providential hand in the affairs of the nation:

It is right and appropriate that God should be recognized in the national gratitude; for He it is who has given the victory. But to see so general an acknowledgment from the official under his seal of authority, to the humblest citizen, is more than could have been expected.—[Ibid., April 18, 1865](#)

[107]

He cited several supporting exhibits, among them the *Chicago Tribune*. It closed its announcement of Grant's victory with the exclamation "Glory to God." A prominent speaker in Detroit declared:

This is a day of delirious joy, and we do well to be glad. Richmond and Petersburg are ours, and Lee has

surrendered. How the heart leaps at the announcement, and with what grateful aspirations to ...God, who with us and on our side has at last guided our gallant hosts to the victory.—[Ibid.](#)

The recognition of God's providence in the speedy closing of the war was quite generally accepted. The readers of the *Review* were treated to a significant item in the *American Missionary* for April, calling attention to

the strong religious element in the rejoicing over our victories. The ascription of our great successes to God was all but universal. In the high places of the land and on the busiest marts of trade, as well as in churches and around the domestic altars of Christian families, the same pious recognition was manifest. The brilliant transparency on the Capitol at Washington, "It is the Lord's doing and it is marvelous in our eyes," and the uncovered multitude in Wall Street joining reverently in prayer and singing the *Christian Doxology* were rare but representative facts.—[Ibid., June 6, 1865](#)

And what was the significance of a recent act of Congress that directed that all new dies made at the United States Mint were to bear the motto "In God We Trust"?

The favorable trend led James White to appeal to the church:

The holding of the winds, in the suppression of the rebellion, outstripping even our faith in the suddenness of its execution, is opening a wide door before us. Let the thousands of Sabbathkeepers whose prayer ascended two months since for the speedy accomplishment of this work, now so signally answered, again ascend that the great Captain of the Lord's host will meet with His people.—[Ibid., May 9, 1865](#)

Adventist Position on Relation to War Established

Seventh-day Adventists, just moving into church organization, were, as the War Between the States opened, forced to find their way in a very difficult and sensitive area. They had no guidelines to follow. While the Ten Commandments prohibited the taking of life and the desecration of the seventh-day Sabbath, the history of God's people of old under the theocracy was not a paradigm. But God did not leave His remnant people to flounder. They prayed and studied, and when God gave counsel through His messenger Ellen White they listened. Yet the Lord did not, at the outset, make absolutely clear the path to follow. The last message of direction from Ellen's pen on record was given in January, 1863, before there was a draft. As time went on and situations worsened, the church found its way.

It may be thought that decisions could have been made without the guidance of Providence. But not so. For perhaps good reasons, better understood in the worldwide outreach of the church functioning in many lands, with governments of differing legal structures and political philosophies, no universal mandate was given through the voice or pen of Ellen G. White. One statement made twenty years later offers a satisfying assurance that the positions taken by church leaders in the early 1860s were in harmony with God's guidance and approval. This is found in a setting of another oppressive situation, in which the draft is named.

Writing to church leaders in 1886, Ellen White stated:

You inquire in regard to the course which should be pursued to secure the rights of our people to worship according to the dictates of our own conscience. This has been a burden of my soul for some time, whether it would be a denial of our faith and an evidence that our trust was not fully in God. But I call to mind many things God has shown me in the past in regard to things of a similar character, as the draft and other things. I can speak in the fear of God, it is right we should use every power we can to avert the pressure that is being brought to bear upon our people.—[Letter 55, 1886](#) (see also [Selected Messages 2:334, 335](#)).

The Civil War came to a close too soon to test well the provisions made by the government to bring relief to drafted Seventh-day Adventists. But in World War I and subsequent military situations, the steps taken in 1864 and 1865 paved the way for relief of Seventh-day Adventists in the armed services.

From Union Soldier to General Conference President

[Account based primarily on G. A. Irwin obituary, [The Review and Herald, June 5, 1913.](#)]

We pause to mention one young man from Ohio—not a Seventh-day Adventist—who at the outset of the conflict enlisted in the forces of the North, George A. Irwin. His mother died when he was 9, and after being shifted around among various relatives, at 17 he enlisted in the Union Army for three years. In 1864 he reenlisted and served until the end of the war.

In 1863, serving under General Grant, he participated in the siege of Vicksburg on the Mississippi River. Later, fighting under Sherman in his seventeenth engagement, Irwin was captured near Atlanta, Georgia. He was consigned to the prisoner-of-war stockade at Andersonville. Under unbelievable conditions, thirteen thousand Union soldiers died there during the war, but George survived. At Andersonville a fellow soldier gave him a book, Baxter's *Saints' Everlasting Rest*, which led to his conversion.

Freed at war's end after seven months of imprisonment, Irwin took up farming in Ohio. He married and joined the Congregational Church, and later the Methodist Church.

When his son, Charles (C. W.), was ready for school, George gave a corner of his farmland for a school; a little later, in this school building, he heard and accepted the third angel's message. He soon became a leader of the Adventists in his home district, and then treasurer of the Ohio Conference. Then, with a four-year Adventist background, Irwin was elected president of the Ohio Conference.

In 1895 he was called to take charge of the work of the church in the Southern States, and in 1897 was elected president of the General Conference, a position he filled for four years. On the reorganization of the General Conference in 1901, Irwin was followed

in the General Conference by A. G. Daniells. Through the next twelve years Irwin filled several important positions of leadership in Australia and North America. His son, Charles, in later years served as secretary of the General Conference Department of Education.

Chapter 9—(1865) Health—How to Keep It, How to Lose It [110]

To Seventh-day Adventists in 1864 and 1865, secondary only to the war and evangelism was the subject of health. James and Ellen White had been charged with the responsibility of leading their fellow church members—some four thousand men and women—in changing life practices. As 1865 dawned they were deeply involved in the selection, writing, and publication of such materials.

The Six How to Live Pamphlets

The readers of the [Ibid., January 24, 1865](#), were advised:

The first of the series of pamphlets entitled *Health; or How to Live* is now ready. We wish to call the attention of the brethren everywhere to these works, prepared with especial care, on the important subject of a reform in the manners of life, which is greatly needed, and as we view it, will surely be accomplished in whatever people find themselves at last prepared for translation. The series will consist of five pamphlets [later changed to six] of sixty-four pages each. Price \$1, post paid.—[Ibid., January 24, 1865](#)

The description of the contents of the first number was impressive:

No. 1 contains the following: 1. “The Ladder With Eight Rounds: or Bible Sanctification.” ...2. “‘Our Home’: or Three Weeks at Dansville, New York,” an account of the visit of Brother and Sister White to that place, with what they saw, heard, and thought. 3. “Flesh as Food for Man,” an extract from one of the best and ablest lectures of Dr. J. C. Jackson. 4. “Cookery“:

[111]

embracing twenty pages of recipes for preparing food, embracing Bread, leavened and unleavened, Mushes and Porridges, Pies and Puddings, Fruits, and Vegetables, containing in all one hundred and seven recipes....

Chapter 1, "Disease and Its Causes," by Sister White, with some miscellaneous items, fills out number 1.—[Ibid.](#)

A little later as James White advertised that six pamphlets were to be available in one bound volume, he explained the purpose of their publication as pamphlets:

Our object in issuing it in numbers was to get the subject of diet before our people at once, in the first number, that whatever changes they might see fit to make in diet they could make them best and safest in the more leisure season of winter.—[Ibid.](#), [March 14, 1865](#)

He could see that several months would be required in completing the six pamphlets, producing in all 384 pages. When completed, these were to be bound into one volume, to sell for \$1.50.

White went on to explain, "Health journals are doing a great work for the world. But you may have to read one of them for years to gather all the important facts necessary to right living."—[Ibid.](#), [June 6, 1865](#)

Ellen White's Writing and Reading

As mentioned in chapter 6, Ellen White carefully refrained from reading works on health or visiting Dr. Jackson's health institution at Dansville, until she had penned the basic thirty-one-page treatise on health published in *Spiritual Gifts, Volume IV*, in August, 1864. In 1867 she wrote more specifically of this, mentioning the pressure under which she had worked:

I therefore crowded into Volume IV the most essential points in the vision in regard to health, intending to get out another testimony in which I could more freely

speaking upon the happiness and miseries of married life. With this consideration, I closed up Volume IV that it might be scattered among the people. I reserved some important matter in regard to health, which I had not strength or time to prepare for that volume, and get it out in season for our [1864] eastern journey.—[Manuscript 7, 1867](#).

[112]

The family left for this three-month-long journey in mid-August. They spent three weeks at Dansville and then continued on to fill appointments, returning home November 11 “in excellent health and good spirits” ([Ibid., November 22, 1864](#)). The pressures under which they labored on this eleven-week trip maybe deduced from James White’s article titled “Home Again“:

Since we reached home we have been in a perfect whirl of business matters.... The health question is attracting great attention from our people, and the promised report of our visit to Dansville, New York, will appear as soon as we can get to it....

We also want time to read up, and give some lectures to our people, on the subject of health. Work increases upon our hands, and we design to be free from every unnecessary burden, so as to labor the most efficiently for the present, as well as the future good of our fellow-men.—[Ibid.](#)

After catching his breath, he wrote, in an editorial titled “Health Reform”, of the need of publications on the subject of health at prices “within the reach of the poorest.” Then he announced the plan to publish pamphlets on healthful living—*How to Live*—in each of which Mrs. White would furnish a liberal chapter. He declared:

We shall claim no skill as physicians to cure the sick; but shall draw from personal experience, from the Word of God, and from the writings of able and experienced health reformers, facts for the common people, which we ardently hope may teach them how to preserve vital

force, live healthfully, save doctors' bills, and be better qualified to bear with cheerfulness the ills of this mortal life.... We propose to furnish six pamphlets, each to contain not less than forty-eight pages, put up in paper covers.—[Ibid.](#), [December 13, 1864](#)

When they were completed and published, James White wrote of their preparation:

[113]

These books have been prepared with great care by Mrs. White, who has devoted the past six months almost exclusively to them. She has selected, from the ablest and best authors, those portions which relate to everyday life. She has also written a chapter for each one of the six pamphlets, entitled *Disease and Its Causes*.—[Ibid.](#), [June 6, 1865](#)

There has been some speculation in regard to the relation of her six articles and health materials she read in connection with compiling the *How to Live* pamphlets. The only answer of any definiteness to this question is found in her statement written for the *Review* two years later. She declared:

After I had written my six articles for How to Live, I then searched the various works on hygiene and was surprised to find them so nearly in harmony with what the Lord had revealed to me. And to show this harmony, and to set before my brethren and sisters the subject as brought out by able writers, I determined to publish How to Live, in which I largely extracted from the works referred to.—[Ibid.](#), [October 8, 1867](#). (Italics supplied.)

Thus Ellen White explained a procedure she was led to employ in carrying out the charge that she and James must be teachers in healthful living. She received the basic principles in vision. In teaching how to apply them, she drew on the experience and counsel of physicians working in rational lines.

Received Well in the Field

J. N. Andrews wrote from Norridgewock, Maine, of his reactions to the pamphlets:

I wish to speak in behalf of this series of excellent tracts now offered in one bound volume for \$1.25. The information here embodied is of more value than thousands of gold and silver...

Man, whose own being is the most wonderful mechanism, seems to suppose that he may, with impunity, disregard the laws of his being which the Creator has ordained as the conditions of life and health. And when sickness follows, as sooner or later it must, then man in his ignorance lays it all to God's mysterious providence, when his own bad habits of life have been the direct

[114]

cause.
Thank God that with us as a people, this is being changed. Light has begun to shine upon us. We begin to understand not only that temperance is a Christian virtue, but also that it is the real foundation of good health, and we are learning something of what it is.—
[Ibid., September 12, 1865](#)

Then he turned to the practical side of the matter, posing the question as to what the readers were going to do about it:

But how shall we conduct ourselves in order to render obedience to these vital laws? Where shall we obtain the needed instruction on this important subject?

I am happy to be able to point you to a single volume, moderate in size, unexceptionable in character, and full of the choicest information on this interesting topic. *How to Live* is precisely what its title imports. If my advice could have weight, I would have this volume in every family of our people; and I would have it read and reread till all the family from the eldest to the youngest understood its straightforward, common-sense teachings. The cost of the volume is such that

it is within the reach of all, and it will pay for itself many times over to those who will obey its words of wisdom.—[Ibid.](#)

During the previous year, Andrews had spent considerable time at “Our Home” and was familiar with the teachings of Dr. Jackson and others there. So he was qualified to write in appraisal of the *How to Live* pamphlets. A few Sabbathkeeping Adventists were beginning, seemingly, to ride the crest of a wave of good health, but as yet they had not fully grasped all the important facets of the subject. Loughborough wrote of the experience:

At that time both Brother White and I were reaping physical benefits from the adoption of the health reform, but perhaps had not taken sufficient lessons on the “rest question.” We were both laboring beyond what we ought to have done.—[Pacific Union Recorder, November 21, 1912.](#)

[115] They had found the changes, particularly in diet, so beneficial, giving them added strength and zest and feelings of well being, that they hastened to employ this euphoria toward increasing their working ability.

The Annual Meetings of 1865

The 1865 General Conference session, the Michigan State Conference, and the annual meeting of the SDA Publishing Association were called for Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday, May 17 to 19, at Battle Creek. John Byington was the chairman of the General Conference session. Significant resolutions were passed, relating to the recent war and assassination of the President:

Whereas, A terrible rebellion has for the past four years convulsed our land, and retarded the progress of the third angel’s message, and

Whereas, This rebellion has been suddenly brought to naught,

Resolved, That we acknowledge, with devout gratitude, the hand of the God in this event, as a direct answer to prayer, and that in view of the increased responsibilities laid upon us in again opening the way for the progress of the message, we solemnly consecrate ourselves anew to this great work to which God has called us....

Whereas, Abraham Lincoln, the noble-minded and upright chief magistrate of this nation, has fallen by the hand of an assassin,

Resolved: That we hereby record our deep distress at the loss of this “prince and great man” (2 Samuel 3:27, 28), who was stricken down by his enemies at the very moment when he was studying how to forgive them all, and that we recognize in this most atrocious crime the true character of the slaveholders’ rebellion.—[The Review and Herald, May 23, 1865](#).

Among the items of business a resolution was passed advising against religious discussions—debates. These were thought to be less fruitful in converting people than “preaching the Word.” With the war so recently over, there were resolutions touching several related points:

The act of voting, when exercised in behalf of justice, humanity, and right, is in itself blameless, and may be at some times highly proper.

That we recognize civil government as ordained of God, that order, justice, and quiet may be maintained in the land; and that the people of God may lead quiet and peaceable lives in all godliness and honesty.— [Ibid.](#)

[116]

At the same time, it was felt “we are compelled to decline all participation in acts of war and bloodshed,” and the Executive Committee of the General Conference was asked to prepare a statement “setting forth our view of the teaching of the Scriptures on the subject of war.”

Responsibility to freed slaves was addressed in the following resolution:

Resolved, That a field is now opened in the South for labor among the colored people and should be entered upon according to our ability.

Among other items of business was one that called for strong support in the matter of building a house of worship in Battle Creek of sufficient size to house the important general gatherings of the church.

The committee on nominations brought in a report recommending officers for the coming year: For president, James White; secretary, Uriah Smith; treasurer, I. D. Van Horn. They were elected, and a General Conference Committee was named, made up of James White, J. N. Andrews, and J. N. Loughborough (*Ibid.*).

With the General Conference session over, things moved toward normalcy. James and Ellen White made and filled appointments as they continued with their writing and other responsibilities. Uriah Smith, in a June 6 editorial, pictured a bright future. He observed:

There are no dissensions in our midst threatening to rend the body. The people of God are united as perhaps never before, in obedience to the injunction of the apostle to all be of the same mind, and joined together in the same judgment.—*Ibid.*, June 6, 1865

Rebellion in Iowa

[117] Little did Smith or others in Michigan know of trouble brewing in Iowa that was to develop into a rebellion within the church. As Loughborough was traveling in Wisconsin with James and Ellen White in late June, they got wind of the critical situation centering in Marion, Iowa. This led them to make sudden changes in their travel plans and go together to Pilot Grove for a hastily, specially called conference meeting. As the result of most earnest labor, the trouble seemingly was quelled, confessions were made and accepted, and the visiting workers were again on their way. But it took a very heavy toll on James White. Wrote Ellen White:

Our overtaxing labors in Iowa told upon the strength of my husband. His labors in meeting this rebellion were of such a nature as to arouse his zeal, and lead him beyond what a prudent consideration for his health would have allowed.—[Ibid., February 20, 1866](#)

James and Ellen had looked forward to a little period of rest on returning from Iowa, but were denied this as they were called upon to contend with criticism and falsehoods. Then they faced appointments made for them to meet with the church in Memphis, Michigan, across the State, just north of Detroit. A debt hung over the meeting-house, and the members were discouraged. James White's presence was urged. Ellen White described the journey:

When the time came to attend our appointment in Memphis, we needed rest of body and mind. A constant strain had been upon us for months.... Yet we urged up our exhausted energies, arose at midnight, walked about a mile to the depot, and stepped on board the train which was to take us to Detroit.... The meetings in Memphis were those of labor. My husband here performed the amount of labor which was sufficient for two men who possessed a good degree of strength. His vital energies were exceedingly depressed, yet his zeal in the cause of God urged him on presumptuously to exhaust, by overlabor, the little strength that remained.

Our meetings closed on Sunday evening after eleven o'clock. We retired after midnight, and arose at day-break to take the stage for the cars. The cars missed connection, and we did not arrive at our home till past midnight. My husband slept but little, and would not be prevailed upon to rest the next day. He thought his business required his presence at the office. Night found him exhausted. His sleep was broken and unrefreshing, yet we rose in the morning at five o'clock to take our usual walk before breakfast.—[Ibid., February 20, 1866](#)

Stricken with Paralysis

As they walked that early-morning hour, on Wednesday, August 16, they stopped for milk at Brother Lunt's home, and then stepped into the corn patch. Admiring the full ears, James plucked one and started to pull back the husk. Ellen, by his side, heard a strange noise. Looking up, she saw the face of her husband flushed, and then saw his right arm drop to his side, helpless. He attempted to raise his arm but could not, for the muscles refused to obey his will. He staggered, but did not fall. He was unable to speak. Ellen helped him into the Lunt home. Indistinctly James uttered the word, "Pray," and repeated it. Ellen described the scene:

We dropped to our knees and cried to God, who had ever been to us a present help in time of trouble. He soon uttered words of praise and gratitude to God, that he could use his arm. His hand was partially restored, but not fully.—*Ibid.*

Physicians were called, but they had little to offer, either as to what might be done for him or encouragement that he would survive.

Two days later, Friday, August 18, James White was carried on a couch to his own home. The next Tuesday, as the *Review and Herald* came from the press, it carried this notice:

We have to announce this week, what the brethren and sisters, everywhere, will learn with exceeding regret, a sudden and dangerous attack of sickness upon Brother White. Monday night the fourteenth inst., he returned from Memphis....

Wednesday morning he arose and proceeded, with Sister White, to take his accustomed morning walk. They were passing through the garden of a brother, and he was in the act of opening an ear of corn, when a sudden dizziness seized him, his right arm fell powerless at his side, and it was evident that a partial shock of paralysis had come upon him....

He can now move the fingers of the paralyzed hand, and use the hand to some extent; also his mind is free,

and the power of speech restored; and though [he was] greatly prostrated by the attack, we think that through the blessing of God, he is now in a fair way to recovery.—[Ibid., August 22, 1865](#)

Seeking Help at Dansville

For five weeks James was tenderly cared for by Ellen, joined by the Uriah Smiths, the George Amadons, and the M. J. Cornells ([Ibid., November 7, 1865](#)). Having during the past year spent a few weeks at “Our Home” in Dansville, New York, Ellen White was convinced of the value of the right use of water as one of God’s approved remedies, and having no confidence in the use of poisonous drugs, she turned to hydrotherapy. But this, in her worn-out condition, seemed more than she could undertake. There were none in Battle Creek who would dare to venture treating James with the little-known hydropathic remedies. This led her to consider taking him to Dansville. Dr. H. S. Lay, now in Battle Creek, having been sent for, it was soon decided that James should go back with him to “Our Home on the Hillside.” And as will be seen from the notice the acting editor placed in the *Review*, James White was not the only one to travel with the doctor to Dansville:

Journeyed, from this city, Thursday, the fourteenth inst., in quest of rest and health, a Seventh-day Adventist invalid party consisting of the following named persons: Elder James White and wife, Elder J. N. Loughborough, Sr., M. F. Maxson, and the editor of the *Adventist Review*.

They were accompanied by Dr. H. S. Lay, recently by request from Dansville, New York, to which place they now direct their course.... We hope also these overworked and overburdened servants of the Lord will share largely in the prayers of the faithful, while they are obeying that very important, but much-neglected, command of Christ, to “rest awhile.”—[Ibid., September 19, 1865](#)

Stopping over the Sabbath in Rochester, New York, the group proceeded the next week the forty miles south to Dansville. It was reported that James White stood the journey “remarkably well” (*Ibid.*, [September 26, 1865](#)). They, of course, were acquainted with [120] Dr. Jackson. Uriah Smith, who traveled with them, described their arrival and reception:

Brother and Sister White were cordially welcomed by Dr. Jackson, physician-in-chief of “Our Home.” Thursday, the day following our arrival, the doctor gave our party an examination, pronouncing upon our present condition and future prospects in respect to physical health and strength.

His judgment in the case of Brother White was that it was very fortunate for him that he was arrested in his course of toil and labor when he was; for if nature had held up even but a short time longer under the same pressure, it would have eventually given way, and in such a manner as to produce a complete wreck, for which there would have been no remedy.

As it is, under proper hygienic influences, he will fully recover, regaining more than his former health and strength; *but the causes which have led to this attack must for all time be avoided*, and to the work of recovery, quite a length of time, perhaps six or eight months, must be devoted.—*Ibid.*, [October 3, 1865](#). (Italics supplied.)

Uriah Smith felt there was no better place than the institution at Dansville, both from theoretical and practical standpoints, and he informed the *Review* readers that Ellen White would remain with her husband as long as he would be there. A cottage close to the institution was found where the Whites had upstairs rooms, and treatments were begun. Each day they walked in the open air. Smith and Loughborough remained for rest and treatment.

When the Whites went to Dansville for medical help, there were some among the believers who thought that they had given up their faith that God would raise James up to health in response to prayer. “Not so,” wrote Ellen White:

While we did not feel like despising the means God had placed in our reach for the recovery of health, we felt that God was above all, and He who had provided water as His agent would have us use it to assist abused Nature to recover her exhausted energies. We believed that God would bless the efforts we were making in the direction of health. We did not doubt that God could work a miracle, and in a moment restore to health and vigor. But should He do this, would we not be in danger of again transgressing—abusing our strength by prolonged, intemperate labor, and bringing upon ourselves even a worse condition of things?—[Ibid.](#), February 20, 1866

[121]

Looking at the situation philosophically, she noted certain principles as to cause and effect:

If we violate the laws of our being we must pay the penalty. Suffering, more or less, will follow every violation of Nature's laws. But when we repent of our transgressions, and commence earnestly the work of reform; when we do all that we can to redeem our errors, by placing ourselves in the best possible condition to regain the strength that we in our zeal lost; then we are in just that position where we can exercise faith in God, and ask Him to do that for us which we cannot do for ourselves.

We may rely upon God's promises, and believe that His power will repair even Nature's broken-down machinery, and we be placed where we can labor again in the cause of God more understandingly, wisely preserving the strength God has given us instead of crippling it by excessive labor.—[Ibid.](#)

Amusements and Diversions

While James and Ellen White had deep appreciation for the methods of treatment at "Our Home," they were disturbed by methods employed to keep the minds of the patients from their physical

woes—dancing, card playing, and theatergoing. They absented themselves from most of the morning lectures given by Dr. Jackson, first because the room was overheated, but primarily because of the mental conflicts created by the doctor's philosophy. Wrote Ellen White:

When he dwelt upon the subject of health, we were too deeply interested for the good of our wearied minds, for our minds would begin to travel, comparing Dr. Jackson's philosophy with facts established in our minds, which had been received from higher and unerring authority....

[122]

And again, when Dr. Jackson and other physicians advanced and sought to sustain ideas that we could not receive from our religious standpoint, especially in regard to amusements and pleasure, ...we could not see harmony between his religious teachings and the teachings of Christ recorded in the New Testament.—*Ibid.*

One day when Ellen White was taking treatment in the bathroom, she, with others, was solicited for an offering to pay the fiddler for a forthcoming dance. As she wrote of the incident she quoted a portion of her response:

I am a follower of Jesus.... This dancing is thought essential to keep up the spirits of the patients, but have you not marked that the very ones who engage in this exercise are languid for a day or two afterward, and some are unable to rise from their beds? ...

The ideas that are here advanced that we are too intensely religious, and that is the reason we are invalids, I will not, I cannot, admit. Do you ever see me gloomy, desponding, complaining? I have a faith that forbids this. It is a misconception of the true ideal of Christian character and Christian service that leads to these conclusions. It is the want of genuine religion that produces gloom, despondency, and sadness. Earnest Christians seek ever to imitate Jesus, for to be Christians is to be Christ-like....

A half service, loving the world, loving self, loving frivolous amusements, make a timid, cowardly servant. Such follow Christ a great way off. A hearty, willing service to Jesus produces a sunny religion. Those who follow Christ the most closely have not been gloomy.... We need more Christ and less worldliness; more Christ and less selfishness.—[Manuscript 1, 1867](#).

In time the Whites were able to secure a ground-floor apartment. There were good days for James, and there were bad days. When disturbed with the extreme nervousness that accompanied his illness, he seemed to lose courage. But the good days outnumbered the bad. On October 23 Dr. Lay sent to the *Review* a report of the progress he was making:

Though he has made marked progress toward recovery since coming to this place, yet he is far from being well; and in order for him to fully recover, it seems indispensably necessary that he should devote at least several months to that special object; and in order to do this successfully, he needs rest, simple diet, judicious bathing, a certain amount of exercise in the open air, with the most pleasant social surroundings; consequently his family should be here with him. He should also have a team at his command, that he may ride every day when the weather will permit.—[Ibid., October 31, 1865](#)

[123]

He wrote of the arduous labors of Ellen White in caring for her husband, and felt she should have some help and several months' treatment. He called for Adelia Patten, now Mrs. Van Horn, who had filled such an important place in the White family, to be sent to Dansville.

Dr. Lay's suggestions were taken seriously, for everyone was ready to do whatever was thought best to hasten James's recovery. On November 7, Adelia Van Horn and the children, Edson and Willie, left Battle Creek, and the next day there was a united White family at Dansville. Arrangements were also made for the use of a

carriage and a team of horses that would augment James's physical activities.

The total expense for the White family was now running at \$40 per week, and that of Loughborough about \$20. The denomination had no plan for aiding workers who were ill. Fellow Adventists sent generous gifts to Battle Creek to help carry the burden. In six weeks' time, Smith and Loughborough were fully recovered, but Loughborough stayed on to be a help to the Whites.

Morning, noon, and night, those of like faith met to pray for James White. He made very slow progress. In explanation, Ellen White wrote:

My husband could obtain but little rest or sleep nights. He suffered with the most extreme nervousness. I could not sew or knit in his room, or converse but very little, as he was easily agitated, and his brain confused almost beyond endurance. He required almost constant care, and the Lord gave me strength according to my need....

[124]

Many nights when my husband was suffering with pain, unable to rest or sleep, have I left my bed at midnight and bowed before God and earnestly prayed for Him to grant us this token of His love and care—that my husband might realize the soothing influence of His Holy Spirit, and find rest in sleep.... We had the evidence that God heard us pray, and my husband would drop into a quiet sleep.—*Ibid.*, [February 27, 1866](#)

With the coming of December, the family knew they would have to endure a winter in somewhat cramped quarters, and with the very slow recovery of James, there were days of discouragement, days James thought he might not live. In his condition such an attitude was not helpful. Wrote Ellen:

I felt intensely. I did not believe for a moment that my husband would die. But how was he to be inspired with faith to feel and say, "I shall not die, but live to declare the works of the Lord"? That night was the most

distressing I had experienced during his illness. I did not sleep, but pondered the matter in my mind in regard to our future course. Previous to this night, I had not thought of leaving Dansville. I saw that the courage, hope, and buoyancy of spirits which had sustained my husband were failing.

I had been remarkably sustained to endure anxiety, and the care of him during his sickness. He was considerate of my health and strength. Yet his case required constant care. I knew that no one at Dansville could take my place.... I did not consider this a task—it was to me a privilege. I have been nearly all my life an invalid, and tenderly and patiently has he sympathized with and watched over and taken care of me when I was suffering, and now my turn had come to repay in a small measure the attention and kind offices I had received.—*Ibid.*

She knew that she could not keep up the program as it was at Dansville through the whole winter that was upon them. Her thoughts turned to Battle Creek:

I thought of our large and convenient house at Battle Creek, with its high and airy rooms, and asked myself the question Would we not make more rapid progress toward health were we at our own home? I thought of the large reservoir of hot water upon our stove—ready for use at any time, and our immense cistern of soft water, and our filter in the cellar, our various bathing pans, and bath room fitted up with a stove.

[125]

But all these convenient things had but little weight in my mind compared with my anxiety to get my husband, while I could, among his tried brethren who knew him, and who had been benefited by his labors, and were acquainted with the perseverance and zeal with which he had toiled to do the work of God, that he might be found at his post. His faithful brethren could sympathize with and help him by their prayers and faith.—*Ibid.*

But she would not trust her judgment alone. She prayed that God would guide her and not allow her to take one wrong step. As she prayed, the conviction grew that she must take James where he could be among his brethren. She talked with Dr. Lay. He told her that she could not take him home, for he could not endure the journey. Then she talked with Dr. Jackson. He thought it would be well to try it, taking the journey in stages. She sought the counsel of Loughborough, who was surprised at first at such a sudden move, but saw light in it. James, overhearing her conversations, was soon enthusiastic to go. They packed that evening, finishing before nine o'clock.

The next morning drizzling rain did not deter them. After an early and hasty breakfast they were on their way to the depot at Wayland, seven miles distant, and caught the train for Rochester. There they stayed with the Bradley Lamson family, who lived three miles from the city (JNL, in [Pacific Union Recorder, November 21, 1912](#)). It was Wednesday, December 6.

But Ellen White could not leave Dansville without thoughts and words of appreciation. She wrote:

I shall ever remember with gratitude the kind attention and respect we received, not only from physicians at "Our Home," but also from the helpers. The attendants in the bath rooms and waiters at the table were as attentive to our wants as we could wish. They seemed desirous to make our stay with them as pleasant and happy as it was in their power to do.—[The Review and Herald, February 20, 1866](#).

[126] Soon James proposed calling in trusted friends to come to Rochester to engage in seasons of prayer—J. N. Andrews, who lived in Rochester but was laboring in Maine; the Lindsays from Olcott; and friends in Roosevelt "who had faith in God, and felt it their duty." "These friends," wrote Ellen White, "came in answer to his call."

For ten days we had special and earnest seasons of prayer. All who engaged in these seasons of prayer

were greatly blessed. They not only felt a burden of prayer for my husband, but in their own behalf.... I never enjoyed greater freedom in prayer. We had the assurance that our petitions were heard.... My husband was often especially blessed as he ventured to believe God and trust in His power to save.... It seemed to be a struggle with the powers of darkness. Sometimes the trembling faith of my husband would grasp the promises of God, and sweet and precious was the victory then enjoyed. Then again his mind seemed depressed, and to be too weak to hold the victory he had gained.... I felt the assurance that we should come forth from the furnace of affliction purified.—*Ibid.*, February 27, 1866.

The Important Vision of December 25

Mornings the group would meet in Andrews' home in Rochester, then afternoons go to the Lamson home, where they could be with James as they prayed. And so it went from day to day till December 25. Ellen White described what then took place:

Christmas evening as we were humbling ourselves before God, and earnestly pleading for deliverance, the light of heaven seemed to shine upon us, and I was wrapt in a vision of God's glory. It seemed that I was borne quickly from earth to heaven, where all was health, beauty, and glory. Strains of music fell upon my ear, melodious, perfect, and enchanting....

Then my attention was called to things transpiring here upon this earth, which I shall not attempt to relate here, but may give them at some future time. I had an encouraging view of the case of my husband, and the particulars of which will be presented hereafter.—*Ibid.*

Recounting the experience many years later, Loughborough recalled:

As she related the vision to us, she said: "Satan's purpose was to destroy my husband, and bring him

down to the grave. Through these earnest prayers, his power has been broken.

“I have been shown that Satan is angry with this company who have continued for three weeks praying earnestly in behalf of this servant of God, and he is now determined to make a powerful attack upon them. I was told to say to you, ‘Live very near to God that you may be prepared for what comes upon you.’”—[Pacific Union Recorder, November 21, 1912.](#)

Ellen White reported that shortly after the vision, with its encouragement to James, “my husband then proposed our returning to Battle Creek the next week on Monday [January 1, 1866], New Year’s evening.... I felt the evidence that the Lord would go with us on our journey, and bring us safely to our home again.”—[The Review and Herald, February 27, 1866.](#)

Chapter 10—(1866) The Agonizing Year of Captivity

[128]

At Rochester, New York, December 25, 1865,” wrote Ellen White, “I was shown many things concerning the people of God in connection with His work for these last days.”—[Testimonies for the Church, 1:533](#). This comprehensive vision formed the basis of many of her activities through 1866, and of her writing through 1867.

Some of the things she did and said in 1866 were comprehended by her associates in Battle Creek, but some were greatly misunderstood. It was a very difficult year, and God in His infinite wisdom prefaced the instruction and counsel of that Christmas Day by granting her a visit, by vision, to the realms above, where “all was health, beauty, and glory.” She heard the music of heaven, “melodious, perfect, and enchanting.” Writing of it for the readers of the *Review*, she declared:

I was permitted to enjoy this scene awhile before my attention was called to this dark world.—[The Review and Herald, February 27, 1866](#).

She had been caring for James White for more than four months, but neither she nor the others had witnessed the progress for which they had hoped and prayed. Why? And what did the future hold? The answers came in the vision: “I had an encouraging view of the case of my husband, the particulars of which will be presented hereafter.”—[Ibid.](#)

These particulars she wrote out the day after the vision, but they were not published until October, 1867, when *Testimony* No. 13 came from the press. This is now found in *Testimonies*, volume 1, pages 612-620. What she wrote is understood in the context of developments of those nearly two years. Here are a few excerpts:

[129]

I was shown that God had suffered this affliction to come upon us to teach us much that we could not

otherwise have learned in so short a time. It was His will that we should go to Dansville, for our experience could not have been thorough without it....

Their influence and teachings in regard to the service of God and a religious life are in direct opposition to the teachings of our Saviour and His disciples. By precept and example they lower the standard of piety....

I saw that, as far as disease and its treatment is concerned, "Our Home on the Hillside" is the best health institution in the United States. Yet the leaders there are but men, and their judgment is not always correct....

I saw that my husband and myself could not receive as much benefit there as could those of different experience and faith. Said the angel: "God has not designed that the mind of His servant, whom He has chosen for a special purpose, to do a special work, should be controlled by any living man, for that is His prerogative alone."

Angels of God kept us while we were at Dansville. They were round about us, sustaining us every hour. But the time came when we could not benefit nor be benefited, and then the cloud of light, which had rested with us there, moved away, and we could find rest only in leaving there and going among the brethren in Rochester, where the cloud of light rested.—[Testimonies for the Church, 1:614-616](#).

She was then shown two reasons why God wanted them to leave Dansville: 1. In his weakness, James must step out by faith and go among his brethren, who could help him bear his afflictions. 2. "Had He [God] been pleased to manifest His power in restoring my husband, the physicians there would have taken the glory which should be given to God."—[Ibid., 1:617](#).

The Promise of Full Restoration

In the vision the angel spoke:

[130]

"God will be glorified in the restoration of His ser-

vant to health. God has heard the prayers of His servants. His arms are beneath His afflicted servant. God has the case, and he must, although afflicted, dismiss his fears, his anxiety, his doubts and unbelief, and calmly trust in the great yet merciful God, who pities, loves, and cares for him.

He will have conflicts with the enemy, but should ever be comforted with the remembrance that a stronger than the enemy has charge of him, and he need not fear. By faith rely on the evidences which God has been pleased to give, and he will gloriously triumph in God.”—[Ibid., 1:617, 618](#).

Two important matters were called to her attention:

I saw that the Lord was giving us an experience which would be of the highest value to us in the future in connection with His work....

I saw that God was fitting up my husband to engage in the solemn, sacred work of reform which He designs shall progress among His people. It is important that instructions should be given by ministers in regard to living temperately. They should show the relation which eating, working, resting, and dressing sustain to health. All who believe the truth for these last days have something to do in this matter.—[Ibid., 1:618](#).

But active faith was required of James. If he failed to do his part, there was little hope for full restoration. She wrote:

I was shown that in some respects my husband’s case is similar to that of those waiting for the refreshing. If he should wait for the power of God to come upon his body, to feel that he was made whole before he made efforts in accordance with his faith, saying, When the Lord heals me I will believe and do this or that, he might continue to wait and would realize no change, for the fulfillment of God’s promise is only realized by those

who believe and then work in accordance with their faith.

[131]

I saw that he must believe God's Word, that His promises are for him to claim, and they will never, no, never, fail. He should walk out by faith, relying upon the evidences that God has been pleased to give, and work, as much as possible, to the point of becoming a well man. Said the angel: "God will sustain him. His faith must be made perfect by works, for faith alone is dead. It must be sustained by works. A living faith is always manifested by works."—*Ibid.*, 1:619, 620.

She was warned what her husband's reaction would be and of some of the problems ahead, and in the following months she experienced that of which she was warned:

I saw that my husband would be inclined to shrink from making efforts in accordance with his faith. Fear and anxiety in regard to his own case have made him timid. He looks at appearances, at disagreeable feelings of the body. Said the angel: "Feeling is not faith. Faith is simply to take God at His word."

I saw that in the name and strength of God my husband must resist disease and, by the power of his will, rise above his poor feelings. He must assert his liberty, in the name and strength of Israel's God. He must cease thinking and talking about himself as much as possible. He should be cheerful and happy.—*Ibid.*, 1:620.

Only in a full understanding of what Ellen White was shown in this vision of Christmas Day can there be a fair understanding of the course she pursued in the care of her husband through the year 1866 and into 1867.

All of this was written out in Rochester on December 26 and handed to James to read (*Ibid.*, 1:613). In the strength of this he took courage to continue the journey home to Battle Creek as he was able. New Year's Day was set for the trip. Andrews proposed that he accompany them to Battle Creek, but Ellen replied that she

wished them to go by themselves, trusting alone in God to sustain them. A number of their friends accompanied them to the railway station to see them off. Wrote Ellen White:

We felt that angels of God were all around us. We went comfortably and safely to the [Niagara] Falls, where we changed for a sleeping car.... I felt too much responsibility to sleep much. The words “Gentle angels round me glide, hopes of glory round me bide” were in my mind much of the time during the night. My husband arose in the morning feeling better than usual. He was cheerful and of good courage.—[The Review and Herald, February 27, 1866.](#)

[132]

At Battle Creek later in the day they were met by friends and escorted to their home, which had been comfortably prepared for them, and at five o’clock they sat down at their dining table, bountifully spread with good food that the women of the church had prepared. James rested well through the night and on the weekend engaged in the services at the church. Wrote Ellen:

Although feeble, he walked to the meetinghouse and spoke about three quarters of an hour. We also attended the communion season in the evening. The Lord strengthened him as he walked out upon his faith. We felt grateful to God that we were again in the midst of our dear people in Battle Creek. When my husband was first afflicted they felt that the stroke had fallen upon them. Our affliction they made their own. They stood faithfully by our side.—[Ibid.](#)

Every week a number of the believers met to engage in earnest prayer for his recovery. In her report of late February she stated:

My husband is improving. He is not troubled as much with nervousness, anxiety, and fears. He suffers but little pain, but we cannot see that he gains in flesh. His stomach is gaining in strength, and he takes care of

food better. He is now venturing out in diet slowly—eats some fruit. His appetite is good, and he enjoys his food. The weather has not been favorable for him to ride or walk out much. We improve every pleasant day, and take him out to ride several miles in the country. He rode one day eight miles to Bro. Godsmark's, took dinner, and returned the same day.—[Ibid.](#)

In triumphant words Ellen White brought her report to a close:

I believe, without a doubt, in the perfect and entire restoration of my husband to health. The Lord is for us, praise His holy name!

Although Satan has tried to press us sore, yet help has been laid upon One that is mightier than he, and in the name of Jesus, our great deliverer, shall we come off conquerors.—[Ibid.](#)

[133] The report solicited the prayers of the believers in behalf of James, and God's sustaining grace for herself.

In the lectures and other advice at Dansville, the physicians had dwelt much upon the importance of entire rest, both of body and mind, for those who had been prostrated by overwork. The theory was advanced that the minds of the patients should be occupied with recreation and amusements; little tolerance was given for the place of prayer in the recovery of health. In the months after returning to Battle Creek, James White found it hard to exchange this philosophy for what Ellen White, having received light in vision, held to be the correct methods.

The Call for the 1866 Annual Meetings

Of the workers in the cause, James White was not the only one incapacitated. The great adversary seemed intent on bringing the work of the church to a standstill. The surge forward that had been anticipated at the close of the Civil War had not materialized. A number of the key figures in the working force of the denomination had through illness been kept from the field of labor. It was without

optimism that church leaders on April 10 announced the appointments for the fourth session of the General Conference to convene May 16, the annual session of the Michigan State Conference on May 17, and the constituency meeting of the SDA Publishing Association on May 18. There would be services through Sabbath, May 19, to Monday, May 21. Uriah Smith, editor of the *Review*, added the following statement to the listing of dates:

The meetings appointed in this week's *Review*, to be held in Battle Creek, May 16-21, are not designed for large gatherings.... The circumstances of the Battle Creek church the present season are not favorable to the entertaining of a large gathering. It is therefore expected that the different meetings will be composed principally of delegates. Provision will be made for all who come in this capacity.—[Ibid., April 10, 1866](#)

The next week, the editorial page made the reasons plain. Under the title "God's Present Dealings With His People" the sad situation was probed:

Instead of a special rise in the message, the progress of the truth the past year has been no more than ordinary; and instead of an increase of laborers, many of the more efficient ones then in the field have been either entirely prostrated or afflicted in some way calculated to dishearten or cripple them. And as in times of prosperity it is proper to enumerate our blessings, so now in this time of adversity and humiliation let us enumerate our calamities.

[134]

Thirteen points, noting illnesses, deaths, and other misfortunes, were listed. It was declared:

All this has intervened since our last conference; and what is the meaning of it all? If God is by these things designing to teach us an important lesson, we should not be slow to learn it.—[Ibid., April 17, 1866](#)

Sensing the need of immediate help from God, the General Conference Committee appointed a four-day season of fasting and prayer, beginning Wednesday, May 9, and continuing to the close of the following Sabbath. Meetings were to be free from discussions, and characterized by humiliation, fasting, and prayer on the part of the church. Business was to be suspended; the members of each church would meet at one o'clock each weekday, and both morning and afternoon on Sabbath. The following counsel was given concerning the fast:

During these days of prayer we recommend on the part of all a very abstemious and simple diet, [Daniel 10:3](#); while some may more or less abstain from food as their health may permit, or their feelings prompt.—[Ibid.](#)

The hours were to be spent in meditation, heart searching, and prayer. The General Conference Committee made a special plea, urging:

Let us cry to the Lord to revive His cause, remove His rebuke from off His people, restore His servants, and lead on the message to its destined victory.... We have reached a crisis in which it seems that the Lord alone can save us; and may we not stand still and see of His salvation. We believe He will be inquired of at our hand, and once more make bare His arm in behalf of His people.—[Ibid.](#)

[135] The churches responded well. J. N. Loughborough reported of Battle Creek:

The praying seasons for the reviving of God's people, and the restoration of His servants, were especially refreshing, so much so that it seemed evident to all that the Lord by giving us freely of His Spirit said to us, "Yes, I accept you, and will work for you."

Brother White was in such feeble health that he could be with us but little in our meetings; yet he expressed confidence in the prayer of faith. The people

of God here who have witnessed his trials and burdens in the past felt called upon to make his case a special subject of their prayers. The Lord is working for His servant. He has been greatly blessed in answer to prayer; and we trust the power of the enemy is broken.—[The Review and Herald, May 15, 1866.](#)

The last phrase in the Loughborough report reflected the generally held feeling that Satan had attempted to destroy James White. Ellen White was unshaken in this opinion, for she had been shown just that fact ([Pacific Union Recorder, November 21, 1912](#)).

The 1866 General Conference Session

Wednesday morning, May 16, the fourth session of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists opened. The president, James White, could not be there, and in his absence John Byington was asked to preside. Loughborough, stationed in Battle Creek as president of the Michigan Conference, reported that this was a conference at which one third more business was done than at any conference before it. He added:

In the transaction of this amount of business not a jarring note was heard. The meetinghouse enterprise [a new church building for Battle Creek] and the Health Institute [the proposal that Seventh-day Adventists establish and operate a medical institution], et cetera, in addition to the yearly labor attending conference, made plenty of care and thought for ministers and committees. But we felt indeed the approving smile of God upon us as we came to the conclusions since made public in relation to these various enterprises, and we believe firmly that God is still leading out His people.—[The Review and Herald, July 10, 1866.](#)

The minutes reported only business meetings. The nominat- [136]
ing committee recommended officers for the General Conference: for president, James White; secretary, U. Smith; treasurer, I. D. Van Horn; plus an executive committee of White, Andrews, and

Loughborough. The resolutions called for the construction of a house of worship of appropriate size in Battle Creek—the third to be built there. Andrews was asked to prepare an article “setting forth the teachings of the Scriptures on the subject of war.” Of course, there was other business, particularly resolutions touching health and proper dress. The Battle Creek church had adopted an explicit statement on appropriate attire; the conference amended it somewhat and adopted it for recommendation to the churches.

The question of health reform was still much to the front. The *Review* had carried a number of articles on the subject, some substantial members had reported favorably as a result of adopting its principles, and Ellen White had addressed the conference on the subject. The conference resolution on this read:

Whereas, The subject of health is now attracting much attention among us as a people, and we are now learning the great truth that the proper way to avoid disease, or to recover from it, is to adopt correct habits of life, therefore

Resolved, That this conference request our brother Dr. H. S. Lay, whom we deem fully competent so to do, to furnish through the *Review* a series of articles on the health reform.

Resolved, That we acknowledge the health reform as set forth in the testimony of Sister White, as part of the work of God incumbent on us at this time; and that we pledge ourselves to live in accordance with these principles, and that we will use our best endeavors to impress their importance on others.—[Ibid., May 22, 1866](#)

For a year the church had had before it an outline of the basic health principles, in the six *How to Live* pamphlets. Selections from various health works had been published in the *Review*, and in some very affirmative articles laymen had reported their personal experiences. One such article, titled “Influence of Diet,” was written by Joseph Clarke, a rather prosperous and influential farmer. In this he stated:

In a late number of the *Review*, Brother E. Goodwin speaks of the importance of heeding the late testimony respecting our diet; he speaks as though this had much to do with gaining the victory. To all this we say, Amen. [137]

For about two years self and family have tried the two meal per day system, [see appendix C.] during which time we have not used meats of any kind; neither have we used tea or coffee, nor any highly seasoned food, and but a very small quantity of fish; we have used grains, fruits, and vegetables. The results of the system are evenness of temper, clearness of mind, steadiness of nerve, increased mental power, and a better subjection of the physical to the moral power.

I feel as if I were entering upon a new life, with new strength of hope and faith. Indeed, without the experience, I could hardly have believed it possible that the quality of our food, and the intervals between our meals, had so great an influence for good or evil.—[Ibid.](#), [March 27, 1866](#)

It seems that this rather frequent contributor to the *Review* could hardly contain himself as he described his experience and that of his family. He wrote of how he had tested it on the farm and could do more work with less fatigue, and do it better. He continued:

It is now nearly two years since we began to practice upon this system, in all kinds of weather, at all work, in the long days of harvest and haying, and the short days of winter: whether at the plough or the hoe, the axe or the spade. I find I am not as hungry for my meals as formerly, when eating three meals a day and lunches besides; neither do I crave more at a meal, if as much; neither do I feel half as much inconvenience from faintness when hungry, as formerly.

At first I was so much pleased with the good effects of this system, that I feared it was enthusiasm in part, and that a reaction would follow; but sober reality, from

[138]

two years' experience, has satisfied us that it is still better for us than our most enthusiastic dreams had pictured to our minds. Others in this vicinity have the same views of the matter, and will, I hope, bear testimony to the same.—[Ibid.](#)

He closed his lively statement by referring to the “work published at the *Review office*, entitled *How to Live*,” and added, “You cannot afford to do without it; send for it immediately, and don’t be offended with me for saying that tea and coffee, and hog’s lard and tobacco, should never be the diet of a Christian.”

It is obvious that the church was beginning to feel a rise in the tide toward the principles embodied in this new and encouraging way of life. But this was just a beginning.

The Report of John Matteson

John Matteson, who had come to Battle Creek for the first time to attend the annual meetings, called on James White. He reported:

When I saw him bowed down with disease and took his weak hand, I could not refrain from weeping. Like a mighty oak he had stood the storms of many winters, but a cruel tornado had broken the limbs, and even loosened the roots.—[Ibid.](#), [May 29, 1866](#)

From Matteson alone we get the picture of the next few days in Battle Creek:

On the following Sabbath [May 19], fasting and prayer was again appointed. Brother Bates led the meeting. The peace of God shone from his countenance. Ardent and united supplications went up to the throne of grace. We ceased not till Brother White came into our midst and testified that the Lord had untied his hands. Then joy and hopeful expectation shone from his eyes while he praised the Lord, and all united with him.... First-day afternoon he took part in and stayed during the

services, and Second-day he shared in the ministerial deliberations.—[Ibid.](#)

The issue of the *Review and Herald* published the next day, Tuesday, May 22, carried a cheering back page note from White himself, first reporting on some of his sufferings, including extreme nervousness since his paralytic stroke, and then the change he was currently experiencing:

For the past nine months we have not been able to obtain sleep without artificial heat in some form ...; and that for the last five months we have not had more than one hour's sleep out of the twenty-four, and that often disturbed by unhappy dreams.—[Ibid.](#), [May 22, 1866](#)

[139]

But he wrote near the close of his report:

For two nights past since the season of fasting and prayer, Sabbath, May 19, we have slept more than for the two weeks previous, and our feet were warm without the use of artificial heat, which has not been the case for the previous nine months.—[Ibid.](#)

He closed by saying, “By faith we claim the blessing of health, which faith we shall show by our works.”

Ellen White Calls for a Revival of Health Reform

That Sabbath, which marked a turning point in James White's experience, Ellen White spoke twice in the Michigan tent, which had been pitched on the west side of North Washington Street, about a half block from the publishing house. At the morning worship service her topic was health reform, and her address was a challenge to the church. Most likely reading from what she had written, she referred to the vision given in Rochester on December 25, 1865:

I was shown that our Sabbathkeeping people have been negligent in acting upon the light which God has given in regard to the health reform, that there is yet a

great work before us, and that as a people we have been too backward to follow in God's opening providence as He has chosen to lead us.

I was shown that the work of health reform has scarcely been entered upon yet. While some feel deeply and act out their faith in the work, others remain indifferent and have scarcely taken the first step in reform....

[140]

The health reform, I was shown, is a part of the third angel's message and is just as closely connected with it as are the arm and hand with the human body. I saw that we as a people must make an advance move in this great work. Ministers and people must act in concert. God's people are not prepared for the loud cry of the third angel. They have a work to do for themselves which they should not leave for God to do for them....

In order to be fitted for translation, the people of God must know themselves. They must understand in regard to their own physical frames that they may be able with the psalmist to exclaim: "I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made." They should ever have the appetite in subjection to the moral and intellectual organs. The body should be servant to the mind, and not the mind to the body.

I was shown that there is a much greater work before us than we as yet have any idea of, if we would ensure health by placing ourselves in the right relation to life.—[Testimonies for the Church, 1:485-487](#) (published in 1867).

The Challenging Call for a Health Institution

As she continued her appeals in behalf of the health reform, she declared, "Men and women must be instructed, and ministers and people should feel that the burden of the work rests upon them to agitate the subject and urge it home upon others. I was shown that we should provide a home for the afflicted and those who wish to learn how to take care of their bodies that they may prevent sickness."—[Ibid., 1:489](#). Doubtless some in the audience questioned in their

hearts how this small people with little resources could ever start a medical institution. But before she closed her address, she declared:

Our people should have an institution of their own, under their own control, for the benefit of the diseased and suffering among us who wish to have health and strength that they may glorify God in their bodies and spirits, which are His. Such an institution, rightly conducted, would be the means of bringing our views before many whom it would be impossible for us to reach by the common course of advocating the truth. As unbelievers shall resort to an institution devoted to the successful treatment of disease and conducted by Sabbathkeeping physicians, they will be brought directly under the influence of the truth....

As the health of invalids improves under judicious treatment, and they begin to enjoy life they have confidence in those who have been instrumental in their restoration to health.... Some who go away restored or greatly benefited will be the means of introducing our faith in new places and raising the standard of truth where it would have been impossible to gain access had not prejudice been first removed from minds by a tarry among our people for the object of gaining health. [This counsel on health reform and the need of a health institution quoted above and in what followed was not written out in full until later. It is assumed that what she then wrote was the essence of her presentation at the conference session, said by J. N. Loughborough to have been read.]—*Ibid.*, 1:492, 493.

[141]

The audience, including Loughborough, president of the Michigan Conference, was startled. As James White, the natural leader of the church, was ill, and others were incapacitated, Loughborough was the principal administrator in charge of affairs. He later reported:

When this testimony was read to our people, the question arose, “How can we, in our condition of limited

means, obtain and control a health institution?” Brother James White was at that time in a critical condition of health, and could not take upon himself the management of the enterprise; so the matter seemed to fall upon the Michigan Conference committee, of which I was at that time president.

The committee, with a few of the leading members in Battle Creek, counseled and prayed over the matter, and said, “We will pledge to the enterprise, venturing out on what is said in the testimony, though it looks to us like a heavy load for us to hold up.”—[Pacific Union Recorder, January 2, 1913](#).

Loughborough then drew up a subscription paper. He went first to J. P. Kellogg, a storeowner and one of the most prosperous businessmen among the Adventists in Battle Creek, and father of J. H. and W. K. Kellogg. Loughborough said to him:

[142]

Brother Kellogg, you heard the testimony that Sister White read to us in the tent. A few of us have decided to make an investment for the purpose presented to us in that testimony, “sink or swim.” We thought we would like to have your name at the head of the list, as you have more money than any of us.—[Ibid.](#)

Kellogg replied, “Let me take that paper.” In a bold hand he wrote, “J. P. Kellogg, \$500.” “There it is,” he said, ““sink or swim.”” Others were quick to follow with pledges: Ellen G. White, \$500; J. M. Aldrich, \$250; James White, \$100; J. N. Loughborough, \$50; et cetera. The committee followed the counsel of competent lawyers, and the emerging institution developed as a business enterprise on a dividend-paying share basis. Each share sold for \$25, with the promise of returns to the investor from the earnings. Before too long, however, on Ellen White’s counsel, this was turned around. While the capital was built up on the basis of the purchase of shares, which provided voting rights, profits from the investment were plowed back into the enterprise.

The New Health Institute

Within days after the call for such an institution, the residence of Judge Graves was purchased. This comprised nine acres of land, three short blocks north of the publishing house. A two-story structure for treatment rooms was added. Tanks were installed on the roof of the treatment rooms to hold water pumped by windmill from a nearby well. Loughborough reports:

On the fifth of September, 1866, the institution was formally opened for patients and boarders, having Drs. Lay and Byington as physicians, two helpers, and one patient.... We had room for twelve patients. Ere a month passed, the rooms were filled with patients, and we had to increase our help, and provide more room.—[Ibid.](#)

Denominational leaders were venturing into a new field that offered unique opportunities but was fraught with many perils. Ellen White shortly placed before them this caution:

The health reform is a branch of the special work of God for the benefit of His people. I saw that in an institution established among us the greatest danger would be of its managers' departing from the spirit of present truth and from that simplicity which should ever characterize the disciples of Christ. A warning was given me against lowering the standard of truth in any way in such an institution in order to help the feelings of unbelievers and thus secure their patronage. The great object of receiving unbelievers into the institution is to lead them to embrace the truth. If the standard be lowered, they will get the impression that the truth is of little importance, and they will go away in a state of mind harder of access than before.—[Testimonies for the Church, 1:560.](#)

[143]

The Health Reformer

At the General Conference session in mid-May, a resolution called for Dr. H. S. Lay to furnish a series of articles through the

Review on the subject of health reform. In the days following the conference, plans were quickly amplified to embody the publication of a monthly health journal, which Dr. Lay would edit. The *Review* of June 5, 1866, carried this notice:

Prospectus of the Health Reformer: The first number of a monthly periodical, with the above title, sixteen pages, magazine form, with cover, will be issued at the Western Health Reform Institute, Battle Creek, Michigan, August 1, 1866.

The nature of this journal is sufficiently indicated by its name. It is designated to aid in the great work of reforming, as far as possible, the false habits of life so prevalent at the present day.

It will aim to teach faithfully and energetically those rules of health by obedience to which people may secure the largest immunity from sickness and premature death.

It will advocate the cure of diseases by the use of nature's own remedies, air, light, heat, exercise, food, sleep, recreation, et cetera.... Price \$1.00 per volume of twelve numbers.—[The Review and Herald, June 5, 1866](#).

In his editorial in the first number, published in August, Dr. Lay restated the aims and objects of the *Health Reformer*. He added that “its contributors will be persons of experience, and of high mental and moral attainments. Its selections will be of the choicest kind.” This is demonstrated in the first issue, with articles from Dr. J. H. Ginley, M.D., Ellen G. White, J. N. Loughborough, D. T. Bourdeau, J. N. Andrews, R. F. Cottrell, J. H. Waggoner, et cetera.

[144] Shortly after the launching of the journal, Ellen White wrote:

The *Health Reformer* is the medium through which rays of light are to shine upon the people. It should be the very best health journal in our country. It must be adapted to the wants of the common people, ready to answer all proper questions and fully explain the first principles of the laws of life and how to obey them and

preserve health.—[Testimonies for the Church, 1:552, 553.](#)

Chapter 11—(1866) Rebellion in Iowa

Spurred by the light given in the vision of December 25, and encouraged by the upturn in James White's struggle with ill health that followed the Sabbath of fasting and prayer during the General Conference session, Ellen White determined to test the benefits of travel. The monthly meeting scheduled for June 2 and 3 at Monterey, where they had many friends, seemed to provide an appropriate opportunity to venture out. Wednesday, May 30, accompanied by Dr. Lay, James and Ellen made the two-day trip in their carriage. The weather was favorable, and James stood the trip well. Writing of the experience, he stated, "Were glad to meet Brethren Bates and Waggoner, and a large attendance of the brethren from the region round about."—[The Review and Herald, June 19, 1866](#). Joseph Bates reported that following Waggoner's Sabbath morning sermon:

Brother White followed, giving a brief statement of his recent severe affliction, and what the Lord had done and was doing for him in answer to prayer, and closed with an affectionate address to the congregation, especially the youth.—[Ibid.](#)

On Sabbath afternoon Ellen White gave her testimony on health reform. There was a full schedule of meetings Sunday, and in these, health reform figured prominently. The Whites remained over until the second Sabbath, when James White took the morning service. He closed his report of the trip to Monterey with these words:

We reached home, after having been absent nearly two weeks, June 11. We traveled with our team about 250 miles. In point of health, we sleep better, enjoy our food better, a better condition of the stomach and bowels is established, and we are gaining slowly in weight. Of our sufferings in the past none but God has known; but we trust they are mostly in the past. Brethren, pray for

us. To know that we have the prayers of those who pray in faith is our highest earthly joy.—[Ibid.](#)

Beyond this, the records are quite silent. The appendix statement in the 1888 edition of *Life Sketches* informs us that “the journey [to Monterey] proving beneficial to the invalid, many similar excursions were made during the summer.”—2[Life Sketches of Ellen G. White, 354.](#)

The Snook and Brinkerhoff Rebellion and Confession

Just before James White’s breakdown in mid-August, 1865, he and Ellen had attended a special session of the Iowa Conference to deal with the rebellion of its leading officers, B. F. Snook, president, and W. H. Brinkerhoff, secretary. Rejection of the visions and opposition to organization, as well as doctrinal differences, were at the heart of the rebellion. Patiently James and Ellen White answered questions and criticisms, and the two men freely acknowledged their mistakes and confessed their wrongs. The July 25, 1865, issue of the *Review and Herald* carried heartfelt confessions from each of the men, and seemingly the rebellion had been quelled. Explained Snook in his extended confession:

Brother White: Permit me, an unworthy worm of the dust, to address the brethren and sisters as follows:

I wish to relieve my mind before you, and my God, by confessing that I now feel that I have been led by the wicked one in my movements of late, especially in my opposition to the body. Apparent difficulties in relation to Sister White’s visions have been accumulating in my mind for some time. These were magnified by the enemy until doubts resulted in unbelief and rebellion.

In this distressed state of mind I attended the General Conference at Battle Creek last May. While there, my mind was impressed that the church there was fast becoming conformed to the world. Without unbosoming myself to the brethren there, and calling for an explanation, I kept these matters to myself till I had a good

opportunity to give vent to my feelings by publishing these matters which were a trial to me, to the brethren away from there.

I am now convinced that the church at Battle Creek fellowship none of the extravagant fashions that I saw there, and I am now led to believe that they are doing what they can to live out the truth and preserve the waymarks of our faith.

I wish to say to my good brethren and sisters of the Battle Creek church that I do most deeply deplore this wrong, and humbly beg them to forgive me. I also beg the pardon of Brother and Sister White for the influence that I have tried to exert against them on account of these things. I also entreat my brethren and sisters in Iowa to forgive me for talking these things to them and thereby inflaming them to wrong feelings. I do most sorrowfully repent of this grievous wrong and pray that God and my brethren may forgive me.—[The Review and Herald, July 25, 1865](#).

He then reviewed in some detail his experience in rebellion and related how, when the Whites were at the Pilot Grove meeting, he began to see his true position and, as he wrote, “began to restore me from my crazy opposition.” In his July confession he returned to one of the main reasons why he had taken the course he did—his attitude toward the visions.

There were the visions so full of imaginary wrongs and difficulties; how could I get right on them? I listened to the mighty testimonies of Brother and Sister White, driven home to my heart by the power of God. Hard as I had made my heart, it had to break, and well up with many tears that gushed from my eyes. Thought I, Can it be possible that these who speak with so much Spirit and power of God are deceivers, are impostors? No, no! Such a thing *cannot* be. God would not bless the devil’s servants with so much of His Spirit. I then felt the good Spirit of God upon my heart, and the more of

that Spirit I felt, the better the visions appeared; and the discrepancies and difficulties soon began to take wings and fly away.

I now believe firmly that the devil was working upon me for my overthrow and ruin. But I rejoice that God directed Brother and Sister White this way. They truly have been instrumental in my salvation from the devil's snare. I hereby entreat their pardon for the grievous trial and heart-rending anguish that I have so wickedly brought upon them. May all my brethren, and may God, forgive me.—*Ibid.*

[148]

Snook closed his confession with a reassertion of his confidence in the order and organization in the church. W. H. Brinkerhoff also confessed. In the heart of his rather extended statement, which was worded much like that of his conference president, B. F. Snook, he declared:

I am now fully satisfied that God is leading this people, and that the visit of Brother and Sister White, and Brother Loughborough, was not only timely, but blessed of God, and under His guidance; and that great good has already resulted therefrom. I went there without any confidence in the testimonies of Sister White, and also with doubts on our position in regard to the sanctuary. I would now say that my feet are taken out of the miry clay, and fixed upon the sure foundation of truth, the testimonies not excepted.—*Ibid.*

Brinkerhoff's confession was full and heartfelt, and in his closing paragraph he speaks of the lesson he had learned from the experience:

And let me here say that my experience, though a sad one, has taught me that to doubt this truth, and the instrumentalities used to bring it out by the Lord, is to speedily lead one into the enemy's dark dominions, where he can be taken captive at his will.—*Ibid.*

There was no hesitancy on the part of those injured, the Battle Creek church and James and Ellen White, to extend hands of forgiveness. Loughborough, who was with the Whites at the Pilot Grove meeting in late June and early July, stated that a day or two after the meeting he saw each of the men hand their written confessions, from which we have quoted, to James White, and they were soon published. It would be well if the story could close at this point, but it does not.

[149]

A Second Rebellion Worse than the First

Loughborough stayed close to Brinkerhoff for a time, joining him in evangelistic work in Iowa for a few weeks. Then he went on to other tasks. He later recounted:

After a few days, it seems that B. F. Snook's objections revived. He began to communicate with Brinkerhoff, who left his field, and went home to Lisbon. That soon ended their labors in our ranks, and they were again at work on their scheme of "independence of the churches." This did not, however, assume its final fighting form for several months.—[Pacific Union Recorder, November 21, 1912](#).

Continuing his account, Loughborough stated that "in the spring of 1866, the 'Snook and Brinkerhoff company,' as we called them in that day, had succeeded in drawing off with them forty-five of the sixty members of the Marion church." They obtained the handpress used by the *Hope of Israel* party and started a paper they called *The Advent and Sabbath Advocate*. They boasted, like the former owners of the press, that "when we get rid of the testimonies, the message will go."—[Ibid](#). This was clearly a case of bold rebellion, the type of opposition concerning which Ellen White in later years wrote, "I question whether genuine rebellion is ever curable."—[Manuscript 185, 1897](#) (see also [Selected Messages 2:393](#)).

Early in 1866 W. S. Ingraham visited Marion, Iowa, where Snook still resided. From there he reported in a letter to James White that he found "a bad state of things" ([The Review and Herald](#),

January 23, 1866). He noted the doctrinal disagreements with the church, and after referring to the experience of meeting Snook and Brinkerhoff in 1865 and the confession of the two men, stated, “We find them...in a second rebellion worse than the first.” Ingraham added, “Knowing the object of these men, my duty demands that I should raise a warning voice. Let the brethren beware of them.” The publication of his letter in the *Review* served notice to the church generally, and leading men in Battle Creek followed it with “Remarks,” pointing out that “many of the fundamental principles of present truth” had been abandoned by the dissident leaders in Iowa. The notice stated:

Their downward course commenced with opposition to the visions. Long weeks they spent framing and writing out objections, and blowing up to a white heat in their own hearts the fires of opposition against the cause of present truth and its leaders.—*Ibid.*

[150]

The loyal members in Iowa were urged to hold on, steadfast and unmovable. A layman, J. Dorcas, reported in the *Review* of February 13, 1866, what he had found at Marion:

The saints in that place are now again on their way, rejoicing in the truth. I have also visited other parts of the work, as Fairview, Anamosa, and Lisbon, and am happy to say that I have no doubt of the fixed purpose of the brethren and sisters generally to hold on to the old landmarks. I believe they realize the necessity of a deeper work of grace, which may the Lord grant, is my prayer.—*Ibid.*, February 13, 1866

As many of the churches in Iowa reported one by one through the *Review*, they declared their determination to hold on to the “old landmarks” in spite of the visits of the men in apostasy and the earnest work they did to unsettle the believers.

Administrative committees in the General Conference, as well as in Iowa, took action dismissing the leaders in the rebellion. Thirty-two-year-old George I. Butler, a layman, was called to the presi-

dency of the Iowa Conference ([Ibid.](#), May 22, 1866; [Ibid.](#), July 17, 1866).

What Happened to the Men and the Movement?

J. N. Loughborough, who was well acquainted with the men and the circumstances, told of the outcome:

The career of these two men among Sabbathkeeping opponents was quite limited. Their new departure in the “independence of the churches” did not “pan out” as they expected.... Before many months elapsed, both S. and B. dropped their interest in the *Advocate* [their paper], and gave up the keeping of the Sabbath. Brinkerhoff engaged in school-teaching, and the study of law. Snook engaged in preaching universalism, at a salary of \$1,000 a year.—[Pacific Union Recorder](#), January 9, 1913.

[151] They left little groups of disaffected Sabbathkeepers who in time were joined by others of like mind. Among such were two brothers, Abe and William Long, from Missouri. They moved the press to Stanberry, Missouri, and continued to publish the *Advocate*, with warnings against Ellen White’s testimonies their principal stock-in-trade. A third brother, Levi, remained loyal to the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Abe and William operated under the name Church of God (Adventist), with headquarters in Missouri. In 1933, there was a division; the new group took on the name Church of God (Seventh Day), with headquarters in Salem, West Virginia. The census reports of religious bodies in the United States in 1936 gave a combined membership of the two groups as 2,400.

W. H. Brinkerhoff and William Long had second thoughts. When G. B. Starr was baptized as a young man into the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Iowa, Brinkerhoff was present. As Starr came out of the water Brinkerhoff shook his hand and stated:

“I am glad to see you take your stand to go with this people. They have the truth, and I am sorry I ever left them. It is too late for me now to join them. I

have opposed them, and have trained my family in that opposition.” ...And then in sadness he said, “I am a lost man.”—*Ibid.*

J. S. Rouse, one-time president of the Missouri Conference, reported that in 1915 he was acquainted with William Long. When *Life Sketches* was published shortly after Ellen White’s death, he took a copy to Long. The latter promptly read it and, when finished, declared to Rouse, “We have been fighting a good woman and a good work.” Mrs. Long overheard the remark; she came into the room with tears in her eyes and said,

“Oh, the thousands of dollars we have put into this movement and it is lost. We have made a mistake. If we had only done as Brother and Sister White wanted us to. They were here and pleaded with us, but we would not listen to them. We were stubborn. Oh, the money we have wasted!”

He said, “Mother, don’t talk about the thousands of dollars. That is nothing. I care not for that. But when a man comes to my position, and my age, and realizes that he has wasted his life, thrown it away, that is what worries me.”—DF 503a, “Some History and Some Information Regarding the Church of God,” pp. 23, 24.

Uriah Smith Answers Objections to the Visions

[152]

The questions and criticisms regarding Ellen White and the Spirit of prophecy were quite widely disseminated by the dissident group. In the June 12, 1866, issue of the *Review*, on the front page, Uriah Smith began the publication of answers to the objections that had been raised. The back page carries his note of explanation:

We commence this week the publication of “Answers to Objections Against the Visions.” It may be proper here to state that this manuscript was prepared before our late conference [commencing May 16, 1866]; but its publication was withheld till it could be submitted

to the ministering brethren who might then assemble, for them to decide upon its merits, and the disposition that should be made of it. It was examined by them, and received their approval, with a decision that it should be published.—[The Review and Herald, June 12, 1866](#).

Smith informed the readers of the *Review*:

In preparing these answers we have had no consultation whatever with Sister White, nor received any suggestion or explanation from her on any point. We take the visions as they are published, and base our explanation of any apparent discrepancy, on the language as it stands.—[Ibid.](#)

The first of the Smith series of six extended articles opened:

Seventh-day Adventists believe in the gifts of the Spirit. They believe that the varied operations of the Spirit of God, having been once expressly set in the church, [1 Corinthians 12](#), [Ephesians 4](#), were designed to continue therein to the end.... To them, the doctrine of spiritual gifts, as set forth in the chapters referred to, is as much a special doctrine of revelation as is the Sabbath, the sanctuary, the state of the dead, or the Second Advent. Taking the Scriptures to be in deed and in truth the Word of God, they cannot reject it. They can as easily explain away the Sabbath, baptism, and the Lord's Supper, as the doctrine of spiritual gifts, and hence believe that to reject it is to be guilty of error, and that to receive it is essential to the unity of the faith.—[Ibid.](#)

[153]

He then took up these objections in numbered answers. Objection 1 was "The Bible and the Bible Alone." The series closed July 31, 1866, with Objection 39, the supposed suppression of the E. G. White writings. Two years later, in 1868, Smith added thirteen more points, and the material was issued in a widely

distributed pamphlet of 144 pages. This was titled *The Visions of Mrs. E. G. White, a Manifestation of Spiritual Gifts According to the Scriptures*.

The Slow Recovery of James White

With James White making a very gradual recovery, his wife's attention was given almost wholly to his care. She found there must be a constant perseverance to encourage him to manifest faith and exert himself in those activities that would keep his mind off his weakness and discomforts, and keep the way open for his restoration. Thus during the summer of 1866, following the successful visit to Monterey in mid-June, other trips were taken by carriage to nearby churches, with beneficial results. During this time James did no writing and carried no responsibilities. But communications from the field to the *Review* were addressed to "Brother White," in spite of the fact that the editor, Uriah Smith, carried the full burden of the paper.

The large enterprise calling for attention in Battle Creek was getting the Health Reform Institute into full swing. As noted, J. N. Loughborough was leading out in this. [For a detailed account of launching the medical institution in battle creek, and a portrayal of the vicissitudes in learning to finance and operate the western health reform institute, see [The Story of Our Health Message, 143-190](#).] In fact, as noted earlier, Loughborough was really the active administrator of both the Michigan Conference and the General Conference, being a member of both committees.

Ellen White was able to get in a little writing of personal testimonies. Most likely the article "Dress," published in *Testimonies*, volume 1, pages 456-466, was largely written at this time. Her husband's recovery was her prime interest.

The Autumn Journey East

It was to this end that the two launched on a journey east in the autumn of 1866. Ellen was on the lookout for situations that would challenge her husband's faith and strength. The announcement of the New York State meeting, to be held September 28 to October

1, caught her eye. This was to convene at Roosevelt, New York, a town not too far from the Lindsays in Olcott, and the Abbeyes at Brookfield. Both families were close friends of long standing—the Lindsays were among those James had called to Rochester to join in prayer for his healing. Then too, Ellen's father, living with the Beldens in Connecticut, was ill and apparently dying. He was urging her to come that he might see her once more. She decided to take her husband and Willie, and start out for Connecticut by way of Roosevelt, New York. The following announcement appeared on the back page of the *Review*.

Brother and Sister White left Battle Creek for the East, Tuesday, September 11. It was thought that the journey, and the change of associations and influences, might be of benefit to him, while she wishes to visit an aged father now residing in Connecticut, and other friends there. We trust the move will surpass the anticipations of all in its beneficial results.—[The Review and Herald, September 18, 1866.](#)

That not all had faith in the venture is evident from the tone of the closing sentence of the announcement.

From this point on, the readers of the *Review* were left in the dark as to the Whites' activities, and any progress James might be making healthwise, until January, 1867. Edson was left in Michigan—with whom, the records do not disclose. From Ellen's letters to him we gain some word on the journey.

Ellen took James to the Ira Abbey home, at Brookfield. To her disappointment, he was too ill to attempt to attend the meetings at Roosevelt. She could now see that James could not accompany her to visit her father in Connecticut. This trip would take her away from James for several weeks. She would leave him at the Abbey home.

The Visit to Father Harmon

Robert Harmon, now very feeble, was living with his daughter, Sarah Belden, and her family in Kensington, Connecticut. This was

not more than ten miles from Rocky Hill, where the first of the Sabbath Conferences was held in the Albert Belden home in 1848. Rapidly declining in health, Robert was eager to have Ellen make a visit so they could have a little time together. From the Abbey home she wrote to Edson on Sunday, October 7: [155]

I am preparing to go to Connecticut. Your father is still very feeble. Willie will remain with him. I think I never was more perplexed in my life to know what is my duty.

Your grandfather Harmon is very low and cannot live long. He feels that he cannot be denied seeing his Ellen once more. He talks of it by day and by night, and here is your father so sick. If I leave him I fear I shall not see him again. He is too sick to accompany me.

Your father feels that it is my duty to go to my father's dying call. I am worn with anxiety and want of sleep. Today while I was praying over the matter, duty seemed to demand I should go to your grandfather.—[Letter 5, 1866.](#)

She added a few words of a personal nature:

I have prepared you comfortable clothing for winter, which I send to you by Elder Loughborough. I hope they will give you as much pleasure in wearing them as I have taken pleasure in making them for you. I have sat up late and arisen early, before anyone was astir, to work upon them. Prayers that you may be clothed with Christ's righteousness are stitched into these garments.—[Ibid.](#)

By the weekend she was with her father and her sister Sarah and her family, and wrote of the five children, who were doing well. Finding her father at death's door, she sent for her twin sister Elizabeth and older sister Mary. Sabbath she met with the church for morning and afternoon meetings. Before returning to Brookfield and her husband, she made a brief tour that took her to several churches and down to New York City. Her father passed to his rest a few days after her visit.

It was “leaf season” in New England. “The scenery,” she declared, “was beautiful.” She added:

[156]

The trees with their varied hues, the beautiful evergreens interspersed among them, the green grass, the high and lofty mountains, the high bluffs of rocks—all are interesting to the eye. These things I could enjoy, but I am alone.

The strong, manly arm I have ever leaned upon is not now my support. Tears are my meat night and day. My spirit is constantly bowed down by grief. I cannot consent that your father shall go down into the grave. Oh, that God would pity and heal him!—[Letter 16, 1866](#).

Return to Battle Creek

In late November or early December, James and Ellen White returned to Battle Creek. There had been a turn for the better in his health. On December 8, writing to Edson, she reported:

Your father seems much improved. He is gaining victories in regard to his eating. We could not ask him to do better than he has been doing. He seems more like himself—interests himself in matters transpiring around him and is more social. I am greatly encouraged in his case. I have been out riding with him almost every day the past week. Have visited Richard [Godsmark], Brother Graves twice, Sister Sawyers, and Eliza Bovee. I shall stand by your father in his efforts to overcome. I know that he has a hard struggle and needs the help of God.—[Letter 6, 1866](#).

It seemed that at long last an appreciable change was coming in James White’s experience, and that the year of captivity was nearing its end.

Chapter 12—(1867) Liberated at Last—The Sweet and the Bitter [157]

Although there were setbacks in James White's health during the year 1866, there was a gradual improvement. In later years Ellen White occasionally looked back and recounted some of the steps in his recovery, but she did not pinpoint dates or places. As already noted, in the spring she determined to test the benefits of travel, journeying as her husband's strength would bear (2[Life Sketches of Ellen G. White](#), 354). It seems likely that what she related to a group of medical workers in 1902 was in connection with one of these short trips:

I always took my husband with me when I went out driving. And I took him with me when I went to preach at any place. I had a regular circuit of meetings. I could not persuade him to go into the desk while I preached. Finally, after many, many months, I said to him, "Now, my husband, you are going into the desk today." He did not want to go, but I would not yield. I took him up into the desk with me. That day he spoke to the people. Although the meetinghouse was filled with unbelievers, for half an hour I could not refrain from weeping. My heart was overflowing with joy and gratitude. I knew that the victory had been gained.—[Manuscript 50, 1902](#) (see also [Selected Messages 2:307, 308](#)).

But as the winter of 1866-1867 approached, James stayed at home more. Ellen wrote:

Having become fully satisfied that my husband would not recover from his protracted sickness while remaining inactive, and that the time had fully come for me to go forth and bear my testimony to the people, I

[158]

decided ...to venture a tour in northern Michigan, with my husband in his extremely feeble condition, in the severest cold of winter.—[Testimonies for the Church, 1:570.](#)

She added,

It required no small degree of moral courage and faith in God to bring my mind to the decision to risk so much, especially as I stood alone.... But I knew I had a work to do, and it seemed to me that Satan was determined to keep me from it. I had waited long for our captivity to be turned and feared that precious souls would be lost if I remained longer from the work. To remain longer from the field seemed to me worse than death, and should we move out we could but perish.—[Ibid.](#)

Although there had been temporary gains, James had remained an invalid in spite of her efforts. But remembering the assurances given her in the vision at Rochester, Ellen White could not dismiss the picture in her mind that she and her husband would work together in building up the cause. In recounting the experience some years later, she stated:

We had the assurance that God would raise him up, and we believed he would yet be able to work in the cause of God. I thought my husband should have some change, and we took our team, faithful Jack and Jim, and ventured a journey to Wright, Michigan.

In this matter I was obliged to move contrary to the judgment of my brethren and sisters in Battle Creek. They all felt that I was sacrificing my life in shouldering this burden; that for the sake of my children, for the cause of God, I should do all in my power to preserve my life.

His own father and mother remonstrated with me in tears. Physicians looked pityingly upon me and said,

“You will not realize your expectations. There was never known a case where one [so seriously] afflicted with paralysis of the brain recovered.” I answered them, “God will raise him up.”

In answer to the appeals of Father and Mother White that I had done all that was in my power and I must not attempt impossibilities, that my life was precious, that I had children who needed my care, I answered, “As long as life is left in him and me, I will make every exertion for him. That brain, that noble, masterly mind, shall not be left in ruins. God will care for him, for me, for my children. Satan shall not exult over us. You will yet see us standing side by side in the sacred desk, speaking the words of truth unto eternal life.”

[159]

I went alone [accompanied by a Brother Rogers], carrying with me the sympathies of many and losing the sympathies of many because I would follow my own judgment, not theirs.—[Manuscript 1, 1867](#).

“So,” reported Ellen White, “on the nineteenth of December, 1866, we left Battle Creek in a snowstorm for Wright, Ottawa County, Michigan. My husband stood the long and severe journey of ninety miles much better than I feared, and seemed quite as well when we reached our old home at Brother Root’s as when we left Battle Creek.”—[Ibid., 1:570](#). In the first of a series of reports dictated to his wife for the *Review*, James White described the journey:

December 19, we left home with our team, in company with Mrs. White and Brother Rogers, for northern Michigan, designing to make Wright, Ottawa County, the first point. The morning was stormy, yet we drove forty-six miles that day, and were obliged to put up at a noisy rum-tavern.... The next morning we arose at five o’clock, and drove to Brother Hardy’s, a distance of fifteen miles, against a keen north wind before taking our breakfast. Here we felt to thank God for an Advent home, and simple, healthful fare. We then drove twenty-

three miles to our old home at Brother Root's, where we have remained until this date [January 2], enjoying their sympathy and hospitality.

Sabbath morning, the twenty-second, the house of worship was filled with attentive hearers, although there had been no appointment publicly given. We opened the meeting and spoke twenty-five minutes from the words "Will a man rob God?" ... We were then followed by Mrs. White, who spoke more than one hour with freedom upon the subject of health from a religious standpoint.—[The Review and Herald, January 15, 1867.](#)

As Ellen White later told the story, she exclaimed exultantly:

[160]

Here commenced our first effective labors since the sickness of my husband. Here he commenced to labor as in former years, though in much weakness.—[Testimonies for the Church, 1:571.](#)

At long last they were turning a corner, with the promise of better days ahead. But the battle was not fully won. It took some persuasion on her part to get James to prepare reports for the *Review*. But this was a significant step in his recovery. He dictated the first two reports; to the third he appended a significant note to the editor:

Brother Smith, you see how large a report I have written at this time with mine own hand. I would say to the editor, the typesetter, and proofreader, Be patient with our imperfect scribbling. And to the reader we would say, May God bless our scattered thoughts, in these reports, and make them a blessing.—[The Review and Herald, January 29, 1866.](#)

Seven reports in all—portions of some were in almost diary form—kept *Review* readers informed as to what James and Ellen White were doing in northern Michigan through January, February, and early March. Wright, where they began their labors in late December, was off the beaten path; ministers seldom visited the church. Wrote Ellen White:

We found this church in a very low condition. With a large portion of its members the seeds of disunion and dissatisfaction with one another were taking deep root, and a worldly spirit was taking possession of them. And notwithstanding their low state they had enjoyed the labors of our preachers so seldom that they were hungry for spiritual food.—[Testimonies for the Church, 1:570, 571.](#)

The situation was just the challenge James White needed to draw him into active spiritual labor. Their first Sabbath at the church, as already noted, he spoke twenty-five minutes, and Ellen White followed for an hour. In the afternoon she spoke again, continuing on the same subject—health reform.

On Sunday morning the meetings continued, with James leading out for twenty minutes on the topic of diet and dress. Then Ellen followed for an hour and a half. That afternoon she spoke for an hour, continuing on the same subject, particularly as it related to dress, over which there had been some contention in the church.

[161]

Ellen White stated in her report, “We were listened to with the greatest attention.”—[Ibid.](#) She spoke again Tuesday evening and then again Friday evening, establishing a cycle that would continue for several weeks. As the meetings progressed, she reported:

I saw that my husband was growing stronger, clearer, and more connected in his subjects. And when on one occasion he spoke one hour with clearness and power, with the burden of the work upon him as when he used to speak, my feelings of gratitude were beyond expression. I arose in the congregation and for nearly half an hour tried with weeping to give utterance to them. The congregation felt deeply. I felt assured that this was the dawn of better days for us.—[Ibid.](#)

The Regular Exercise Program

The Roots, who so graciously took the Whites into their home, cared for them as tenderly “as Christian parents can care for invalid

children” ([Ibid.](#)). Ellen insisted on keeping up James’s exercise program. They took a long walk twice a day. Then came a snowstorm that left a heavy blanket on the ground, bringing a minor crisis. She later told of it:

I went to Brother Root and said, “Brother Root, have you a spare pair of boots?”

“Yes,” he answered.

“I should be glad to borrow them this morning,” I said. Putting on the boots and starting out, I tracked a quarter of a mile in the deep snow. On my return, I asked my husband to take a walk.

He said he could not go out in such weather.

“Oh, yes, you can,” I replied. “Surely you can step in my tracks.”

He was a man who had great respect for women; and when he saw my tracks, he thought that if a woman could walk in that snow, he could. That morning he took his usual walk.—[Manuscript 50, 1902](#) (see also [Selected Messages 2:307](#)).

Encouraged in Mental Activity

[162] She was concerned too that James should be drawn into using his mind. Individuals came with questions that troubled them. Ellen soon recognized that on such occasions James could be drawn out in mental activity. She wrote of this later:

Often brethren came to us for counsel. My husband wanted to see no one. He much preferred to go into another room when company came. But usually before he could realize that anyone had come, I brought the visitor before him, and would say, “Husband, here is a brother who has come to ask a question, and as you can answer it much better than I can, I have brought him to you.”

Of course he could not help himself then. He had to remain in the room to answer the question. In this way, and in many other ways, I made him exercise his mind. If he had not been made to use his mind, in a little while it would have completely failed.—[Ibid.](#)

With James on the gain, she could turn her attention to writing. The vision given to her a year before on Christmas evening in Rochester was very comprehensive, covering many subjects. At the General Conference session in May, she had presented orally the appeal for greater faithfulness in health reform and called for Seventh-day Adventists to operate a medical institution. But while caring for James, she had had neither time nor strength to put the appeal in writing. This had to be done. There were also many personal testimonies to write and certain lines of general counsel to put into the written record. Now she could give attention to this.

Testimonies for the Wright Church

Visions were given to her in Wright presenting lines of instruction, counsel, and reproof for a number of the members of that church. She had to communicate the light given her, to the members. She did this orally in some cases and wrote in others, with some of these writings to be read to the church later, when the circumstances were quite widely known. At times the fact that Ellen White had knowledge of life experiences of certain individuals was quite disturbing to some in this relatively new church.

A meeting was called for Monday afternoon, January 6, just for the members of the church. They assembled to listen to the fifty-one-page message she had written. It was the report of this meeting, sent to the editor in James White's own hand, that filled the four columns of the *Review*. Of this experience, new to many of the church in Wright, he wrote:

[163]

Those reprov'd were of course surprised to hear their condition described, and were thrown into great trial. Mrs. White spoke to the brethren Tuesday and Friday evenings following with much freedom.—[The Review and Herald, January 29, 1867.](#)

It was a critical time for a number in the church. They hardly knew how to relate to personal testimonies. It is not easy to receive and accept reproof. In the Sabbath morning service, January 12, James White saw an opportunity to help the church in a special way. He spoke on the testimony to the Laodiceans, drawing parallels and giving counsel. He pointed to the Saviour standing at the door, knocking, waiting, entreating. He reminded the audience:

It is those He loves that He rebukes and chastens, whether by the cutting testimony of the Word of God or by a corresponding testimony, pointing out their errors and spiritual blindness. Let those, then, thus reproved, rejoice, instead of being discouraged. It is the best of evidence that their salvation is possible.—*Ibid.*

White mentioned what it meant to receive and acknowledge the truthfulness of a personal testimony. The members had acknowledged that the testimonies were of God. Then he made several points:

First. Because the prophet of God declared that in the last days there should be visions.

Second. They are scriptural and true, because true prophets reprove and point out the sins of the people, while false prophets have ever cried peace.

Third. They are true, because they reprove sin and teach holiness. They exalt God and lead people to keep His commandments.

Fourth. While they correct the erring, and are a matter of trouble to sinners in Zion, they are a comfort to the desponding....

[164]

Fifth. They are the work of God, because of their harmony. For more than twenty years has the humble instrument stood the fiercest opposition from almost every quarter, yet has borne an unchanging testimony regardless of friend or foe.

The sixth point was on weighing the vision in the light of private judgment. James referred to the experience of two men in the Battle Creek church:

Some years since, these good brethren were re-proved. They could not at first receive the testimony, and the result was that the majority of the church sympathized with them, because they were men of good judgment and piety. That was the darkest hour we ever saw in that church....

These brethren at Battle Creek were acquainted with Mrs. White, had seen her in vision, had heard her talk with power, had been baptized with the same Spirit, and had said that the evidence was enough. We appealed to them to put it in one scale, and their private judgment in the other, and they would find one a ponderous weight, and the other but a feather. Overwhelming evidence of the voice of God in one, and the blinded judgment of a mortal in the other. Taking this view of the subject, the humble Christian soon sees his way clearing before him.—[Ibid.](#)

In reporting the experience of the church at Wright, James White observed, “The result of the foregoing positions in this church is most cheering. The work seems to be moving well. The testimony is fully received by every member.”—[Ibid.](#) In support of this optimistic report, White quoted a resolution the church voted that Sabbath morning:

Resolved, That we, the church in Wright, believe that the testimony Sister White has read to us is a faithful description of our true condition, and that we receive every part of it to us, as from the Lord; and, by His grace assisting, we will obey all that it requires of us.—[Ibid.](#)

This was a landmark week in the history of the Wright church, bringing strength and stability. It also was a milestone in James White’s finding his way back to active service. Ellen White was jubilant.

[165]

An Encouraging James White Dream

In his next report to the *Review* James White related a dream that he had at Wright. Four years earlier, while at Monterey, just before a special outreach for the youth (see *Ellen G. White: The Early Years*, chapter 32), he had dreamed of catching many small, plump fish. In the weeks that followed, many young persons were converted, first at Monterey, then at Wright, Greenville, Orleans, and finally at Battle Creek. He recounted that “for twenty-four years, we have probably dreamed of catching fish a hundred times, just before an ingathering of souls. The size of the persons, and their moral worth, is generally represented by the size and value of the fish.”—*Ibid.*, February 5, 1867. Of the dream at Wright, he wrote:

Mrs. White and self were fishing, and with much effort caught large fish. But four of the fish caused us much trouble. They were restless, and would get out of the boat into the water, when we would with difficulty pull them into the boat again. This was repeated several times, and we caught no more large fish. We saw no small fish, as they were kept away by the large ones. But when the large ones were all caught out of the way, the water was immediately alive with small fish, plump and beautiful, which we readily caught. I awoke, and behold, it was a dream.—*Ibid.*

Before leaving Wright, they witnessed the literal fulfillment of this dream. During the six weeks they were there, Ellen spoke twenty-five times, and James, twelve. As James was recovering from his long illness, she found that she must carry the heavy part of the burden, but she was careful to see that her husband led out. As they labored especially for the members of the church, Ellen found that her husband was a great help.

His long experience in this kind of work, as he had labored with me in the past, had qualified him for it. And now that he entered upon it again he seemed to manifest all that clearness of thought, good judgment, and faithfulness in dealing with the erring, of former

days. In fact, no other two of our ministers could have rendered me the assistance that he did.—[Testimonies for the Church, 1:571](#).

Just at this point a wealthy church member from the State of New York who had spent a few days in Battle Creek came up to Wright. He was full of criticisms he had picked up in Battle Creek, especially from those who had considered that Ellen White was moving unwisely when she took her husband's case in her own hands and made the trip east in the fall and then the trip to Wright in a snowstorm. At Wright this man did a lot of unwise talking and gossiping, especially among some of the more affluent members. Ellen White wrote: [166]

He chose to represent my husband, even before those for whom we had the greatest labor, as being partially insane and his testimony consequently as of no weight.—[Ibid., 1:572](#).

Root later told her that the work of this man had set the work with the Wright church back by two weeks. She wrote:

By two weeks more of the most wearing labor, with the blessing of God, we were able to remove this wrong influence and give that dear people full proof that God had sent us to them.—[Ibid.](#)

Ultimately nine baptisms resulted from their evangelistic thrust, and the church was greatly revived. As for the Root family, which had so generously taken them in at this time of their particular needs, she wrote:

Brother and Sister Root fully sympathized with me in my trials and labors, and watched with the tenderest care to supply all our wants. Our prayers were frequent that the Lord would bless them in basket and in store, in health as well as in grace and spiritual strength. And I felt that a special blessing would follow them. Though sickness has since come into their dwelling, yet I learn

by Brother Root that they now enjoy better health than before. And among the items of temporal prosperity he reports that his wheat fields have produced twenty-seven bushels to the acre, and some forty, while the average yield of his neighbors' fields has been only seven bushels per acre.—*Ibid.*, 1:574, 575.

The Six Weeks at Greenville

[167] “January 29, 1867,” wrote Ellen White, “we left Wright, and rode to Greenville, Montcalm County, a distance of forty miles.”—*Ibid.* She described the trip:

It was the most severely cold day of the winter, and we were glad to find a shelter from the cold and storm at Brother Maynard's. This dear family welcomed us to their hearts and to their home. We remained in this vicinity six weeks, laboring with the churches at Greenville and Orleans, and making Brother Maynard's hospitable home our headquarters.—*Ibid.*

The activities in the Greenville area were much the same as at Wright. Meetings were frequent, and both James and Ellen engaged in them. She noted the improvement in her husband's health:

His labors were received by the people, and he was a great help to me in the work.... The Lord sustained him in every effort which he put forth. As he ventured, trusting in God, regardless of his feebleness, he gained strength and improved with every effort.—*Ibid.*

With the prospects of the two laboring together among the people improving, Ellen's feeling of “gratitude was unbounded.” Subjects dealt with in depth were primarily Systematic Benevolence and health reform in its broad aspects. They found the word more readily received there than at Wright, prejudice breaking away as plain truth was spoken (*The Review and Herald, February 19, 1867*).

They were delighted with Greenville's surroundings. Of this James wrote:

One might suppose that Montcalm County was a very new, log-house country, it being seventy-five miles north of Calhoun County [and Battle Creek]. But this is the most beautiful portion of the State. The farmers are generally independent, many of them rich, with large, splendid houses, large, fertile farms, and beautiful orchards.

One traveling through this country passes a variety of scenery peculiar to Michigan, namely, rolling, oak openings, and plains covered with heavy maple and beech, and lofty pines. Then before he is aware of it, he comes upon a fine farm with buildings equal in size and style to the dwellings in our small cities.—[Ibid.](#)

“The sleighing has been excellent for the last two months,” he reported, “and the weather, generally, comparatively mild and fine.”—[Ibid.](#) With their team of horses, which were a great blessing, they drove from five to forty miles nearly every day. [Although Edson and Willie occasionally accompanied their parents, they generally stayed in Battle Creek or the vicinity, where they could attend school, living with relatives or close friends.] In his report written March 3, James informed the readers of the *Review*:

[168]

Since we left home [Battle Creek] on December 19, ...we have rode with our team one thousand miles, and have walked some each day, in all amounting to one hundred miles. This, with our preaching, writing, baths, and rest hours, has filled up our time.—[Ibid.](#), [March 12, 1867](#)

Other reports put his health at about one half recovered. He was still frail, but determined to move on by faith, looking forward to a full restoration. He closed his report of their work in the vicinity of Greenville:

We have taken our leave of this people for the present, who express a desire that we should settle

among them. And we feel the strongest desire, if the Lord will, to settle with this dear people where our testimony, as is most natural, is prized more than in those places where they are blessed with much ministerial labor, and the labors also of efficient local elders and experienced brethren.

When men come from ten to fifteen miles on foot, and aged and feeble come from three to twelve miles on foot, at this season of the year, depend upon it, they come to hear.—[Ibid.](#)

Disappointing Reception in Battle Creek

[169] With the spring thaws, the roads were getting bad, making weekly visits to the churches difficult. James was eager to see the church members in Battle Creek and to “rejoice with them in the work which God was doing for him” ([Testimonies for the Church, 1:577](#)), so they planned the trip south in such a way that they could spend a few days visiting believers en route. One night Ellen White was given a disquieting dream. It warned of a cold reception in Battle Creek ([Ibid., 1:578](#)). They had reason to expect that after an absence of three months, during which James White had definitely improved in health, they would be heartily welcomed.

But not so. False reports and criticism had done their work. Although James took services Sabbath morning and afternoon, March 16, speaking with clearness, and again Sunday morning, and Ellen White bore her testimony with freedom, they seemed to be held at a distance. Almost crushed, Ellen White opened her heart:

I came home to Battle Creek like a weary child who needed comforting words and encouragement. It is painful for me here to state that we were received with great coldness by our brethren, from whom, three months before, I had parted in perfect union, excepting on the point of our leaving home.—[Ibid., 1:579](#).

As to James, she wrote;

My husband was terribly disappointed at the cold reception which he met.... We decided that we could not bear our testimony to this church till they gave better evidence that they wished our services.—[Ibid.](#)

They decided that until the roads leading north were open they would spend the Sabbaths at nearby smaller churches. The first night in Battle Creek Ellen White had another significant dream:

I dreamed that I had been laboring very hard and had been traveling for the purpose of attending a large meeting, and that I was very weary. Sisters were arranging my hair and adjusting my dress, and I fell asleep. When I awoke I was astonished and indignant to find that my garments had been removed, and there had been placed upon me old rags, pieces of bedquilts knotted and sewed together.

Said I: “What have you done to me? Who has done this shameful work of removing my garments and replacing them with beggars’ rags?” I tore off the rags and threw them from me. I was grieved, and with anguish cried out: “Bring me back my garments which I have worn for twenty-three years and have not disgraced in a single instance. Unless you give me back my garments I shall appeal to the people, who will contribute and return me my own garments which I have worn these twenty-three years.”—[Ibid.](#), 1:579, 580.

[170]

Little by little they discovered the reason for the cool reception was the evil reports that for some time had been bandied about Battle Creek and written to those at a distance. Part of the problem rested in Ellen White’s refusal to take the counsel of friends and church leaders in Battle Creek that would have dissuaded her from taking her husband to Wright in December. Also, people had misunderstood the attempt of James and Ellen White to be financially independent of church members’ support. This desire had led them to sell some of their furniture, and pull up their rag carpets and sell them, to gain means to go on. For a year their brethren had urged money upon

them to meet their needs, but each time the Whites had replied that it was not needed, that if they were in need, they would let them know. That time finally came; when their only cow died, James suggested that if it could be replaced, it would be a great help to them. No help had been forthcoming, but the incident supported the wild story that James White had a craze for money.

Added to this was another report: Just before his stroke, in the protracted money-raising meeting at Memphis, Michigan, at a late hour when the going was hard, James offered \$10 and said Ellen would join him with another \$10. Now much in want, he suggested that the church in Memphis was in a position to return this amount. This fed the rumor mill.

While painful, such reports were now no great surprise to Ellen. While at Wright she had had a dream in which she seemed to be taken to a number of homes of church members in Battle Creek the Whites knew well. In her dream she had stood outside the homes and heard the conversation within—conversation in which James’s and Ellen’s names were often mentioned in a light and accusatory manner. At the time she could hardly believe it. Topping this off was the word that in certain of the churches in Michigan it was being reported “that the Battle Creek church had not the slightest confidence in Sister White’s testimony, that is, her oral testimonies, because her life contradicted them.”

[171] Finally she called together a number of experienced church members in an attempt to meet the reports circulating about her and her husband. Of this she wrote:

I met the charges against me.... The spirit manifested in this meeting distressed me greatly.... Those present made no effort to relieve me by acknowledging that they were convinced that they had misjudged me and that their suspicions and accusations against me were unjust. They could not condemn me, neither did they make any effort to relieve me.—*Ibid.*, 1:581, 582.

She called a second meeting a week or two later, which ended in much the same way. The coldness with which the Whites were received in Battle Creek is reflected in the fact that no word of wel-

come, not even a note that they had come, appeared in the columns of the *Review*. The only acknowledgment of their presence was written by James White himself as a back page note in the issue of March 26.

According to appointment, Brother White met with us Sabbath, the sixteenth, evidently much improved in health and strength since he left us. He spoke both forenoon and afternoon, and on Sunday morning. Sister White also gave a profitable and cheering testimony Sabbath afternoon. We ask our brethren still to remember us, as we trust they do, that the Lord will continue to work for us, and still prosper the important enterprises located here.—[The Review and Herald, March 26, 1867.](#)

In his report of their journey to Battle Creek from Greenville, which appeared in the preceding issue of the *Review*, his closing words were:

We acknowledge with gratitude the good hand of the Lord with us, and the care of His people [at Greenville] to us in their kind acts of sympathy and benevolence. And we look forward with no small degree of pleasure to the time when we shall be permanently settled in their midst.—[Ibid., March 19, 1867](#)

An unsigned editorial note on the back page stated:

We have received a request signed by sixty-eight brethren and sisters living in the counties of Montcalm and Ionia, in this State, for Brother and Sister White to locate in their midst. Brother White desires, as will be seen in his two last reports, to fix his residence near Greenville, Montcalm County. To this end he tenders his resignation of connection with the publishing department. The matter is deferred till conference.—[Ibid.](#)

[172]

The Move to Greenville

Under these circumstances James and Ellen White packed some of their goods, and on Thursday, April 25, left by wagon for Greenville. They arrived at the Maynard home Tuesday afternoon, April 30. "Home again," they sighed. From the Maynard yard they could see the framework of their new home, rising half a mile away, on farm acreage they had purchased before the trip to Battle Creek. "Before getting out of the carriage," wrote James White, they drove over to it "and viewed the premises." He added, "Today, May 2, we start the plow for garden. We hope, with the blessing of God, to prosper in our new home."—*Ibid.*, May 14, 1867

The General Conference Session of 1867

But their stay in Greenville was short, for the General Conference was to open in its fifth annual session in Battle Creek on Tuesday, May 14. Other annual meetings were to follow, and they intended to be there. They were. The editorial page of the *Review and Herald* dated May 28 carried reports of the meetings. In half a column James White gave somewhat of a report. It opened:

The General Conference just passed has been the very best we ever attended. The large house of worship was crowded to its utmost capacity during the Sabbath and First-day.

The conference met in the new church building, which had been hastened to completion to accommodate the conference. White's report continues:

As we had become weary in journeying to the place of meeting and getting ready to move, and had a house full of brethren, and many kindly calling upon us, we felt excused from preaching before those more able. But as the way was opened we spoke at nine both Sabbath and First-day, upon the coming of the Lord, and felt much as we used to feel on such occasions.... We also enjoyed a precious season of prayer at our dwelling with

Brethren Andrews, Bourdeau, and Pierce. This was the best day we had seen for twenty-one months. The room seemed filled with holy angels.—*Ibid.*, May 28, 1867

The statistical report of the conference session listed 28 ordained ministers, 10 licensed ministers, and a total membership of 4,320. J. N. Andrews was elected president of the General Conference; Uriah Smith, secretary; and I. D. Van Horn, treasurer. As for the SDA Publishing Association, which James White had headed from its inception, J. M. Aldrich was chosen president. Aside from routine business, the outstanding item was a resolution offered by J. N. Andrews on Friday afternoon and unanimously adopted. It read:

Whereas, The season of fasting and prayer that the war might be brought to a close was followed by a signal answer to that prayer; and

Whereas, Such answer to prayer called for the deepest humiliation before God, that we might discharge the great responsibilities that devolved upon us by this opening to give the warning voice of the third angel; and

Whereas, Instead of this, a spirit of self-laudation and vanity came over us that justly displeased the Lord,

Resolved, That we publicly acknowledge the hand of God in the great humiliations that have come upon us, and that we beseech the great God of heaven to grant us such a spirit of repentance and humiliation that He can properly remove His just displeasure from us.

Resolved, That we express our solemn convictions that in some places our brethren have been more anxious to impress upon the public that they were an upright worthy people, than to call their attention to the awful importance of the truths we cherish.—*Ibid.*

James White referred to this action in his brief report:

The resolution relative to our exaltation as a people in consequence of God's signal answer to our prayers

[174]

in relieving our country from the terrible war was an unspeakable relief to our feelings, as we felt we were the most guilty of the wrongs expressed in that resolution.

And as we bowed with the large audience to confess our sins and implore the removal of the afflicting hand of God, we all wept together, and felt that God did answer our united prayers.—*Ibid.*

Uriah Smith fills in the story:

The resolution in reference to the humiliation that now becomes us in view of our past self-glorying and vanity over God's gracious dealings with us was not passed merely by the General and Michigan Conferences in their business capacities; but on Sabbath morning while the house and gallery were crowded with a promiscuous assemblage of Sabbathkeepers, the resolution was read from the desk by Brother White, and after some feeling and pointed remarks by him on the subject, the whole congregation gave it a hearty adoption by a rising vote.

Then all bowed down and joined with him in a fervent prayer of penitence, confession, and supplication for God to forgive our wrongs, and remove His just displeasure from us. This was a point of most intense and thrilling interest and solemnity; and we trust the impression it produced will not soon fade from the minds of those who were present for the occasion.— *Ibid.*

Another General Conference action was stated in a few words but had far-reaching implications:

Resolved, That we recognize the hand of God in the successful establishment of the Health Institute, and that we invite the continued action of our people in order that this may be enlarged to meet the wants of its patients.— *Ibid.*

An appreciable beginning had already been made to bring about this enlargement, steps that James and Ellen White could see were very premature. This caused them deep concern, and in time the light that God gave called for rather radical action.

In a few days James and Ellen White would be making their way back to Greenville. The Battle Creek church had not yet truly disabused themselves of their indifferent attitudes toward the Whites, but there was an exchange of formal statements published in the *Review*: the Battle Creek church expressed sympathy, and James and Ellen White expressed love and confidence in the church at Battle Creek. They requested the prayers of the church and all who had faith (*Ibid.*). By the end of May they were back in Greenville.

[175]

[176] Chapter 13—(1867) Advancement in Health Reform

Health reform, as initiated among Seventh-day Adventists by the vision of June 6, 1863, had many facets. Some people grasped the various elements and rather promptly brought about changes in their way of life. This was so with farmer Joseph Clarke, a frequent contributor to the *Review*, whose experience was published in the issue of March 27, 1866. With many others, changes were made more slowly or not at all. The six *How to Live* pamphlets, each with an article from the pen of Ellen White, were widely distributed and were instrumental in advancing reform, particularly in diet.

Her article in Number 6 was devoted to women's dress. It set forth general principles that would aid in adopting a modest, healthful style of dress. It supported efforts to lead women away from tight-fitting garments, heavy, long skirts, and hoop skirts with features that flouted modesty.

At the 1866 General Conference session, strong resolutions favoring reform and calling for the establishing of a health institution were adopted. Shortly thereafter the Western Health Reform Institute was opened in Battle Creek, and steps were taken to produce a practical medical book that would instruct and guide along the lines of health principles. [The physicians at the institute assigned this task to J. N. Loughborough, who had led out in the establishment of the institution. The manuscript, prepared in counsel with the institute physicians, was more than a year in preparation and yielded a 205-page book, compiled largely from standard medical works. Titled *Handbook of Health; or a brief treatise on Physiology and Hygiene*, It was published in early 1868.] At the next General Conference session, 1867, several resolutions were adopted urging the acceptance of health reform as a part of the work of preparing for the judgment. Other resolutions called for simplicity in dress, and recommended the "reformed dress." One called for support of the Health Institute, "that this may be enlarged to meet the wants of its patients." The institute was asked to issue a book "on the struc-

[177]

ture, functions, and care of the human system.” Loughborough was already working on the manuscript for this.

As noted earlier, in December, 1866, James and Ellen White left Battle Creek and traveled to Wright, Michigan. At the church service on the first Sabbath they were pressed with questions on features of the health reform and especially the reform dress. The report of the meeting states:

Through wrong teaching and misunderstanding, some had become prejudiced and were ready to oppose almost anything that might be said on the subject. Their principal objections were on diet and dress; and instead of receiving what had been written upon these subjects, they were disposed to take the position that there was not full harmony in Mrs. White’s testimony, especially on dress; but as she was present to speak for herself, she was able to show a perfect harmony in her testimonies.—[Ibid., January 15, 1867](#)

Ellen White took more than an hour that Sabbath morning explaining and answering questions, and continued in the afternoon. Similar questions were asked in the meetings that followed on Tuesday and Friday evenings. James reported that “we enjoy their fullest sympathy, and while our mouth is opened anew to speak to them, their ears are opened to hear.”—[Ibid., January 22, 1867](#). In the weeks that followed, the believers in other places asked the same questions that were put to them at Wright.

The Reform Dress

As to the reasons for a need of reform in women’s dress at that time, the New York *Independent* in 1913 painted a vivid picture:

The chief points in the indictment of woman’s dress of former times were that the figure was dissected like a wasp’s, that the hips were overloaded with heavy skirts, and that the skirts dragged upon the ground and swept up the dirt.

[178]

Nowadays the weight of a woman’s clothing as a whole is only half or a third of what it used to be. Four

dresses can be packed in the space formerly filled by one. In the one-piece dresses now in vogue the weight is borne from the shoulders, and the hips are relieved by reducing the skirts in weight, length, and number. The skirt no longer trails upon the street....

The women who, for conscientious reasons, refused to squeeze their waists, and in consequence suffered the scorn of their sex, now find themselves on the fashionable side. A thirty-two-inch waist is regarded as permissible, where formerly a twenty-inch waist was thought proper. A fashionably gowned woman of the present day can stoop to pick up a pin at her feet.—*New York Independent*, October 23, 1913 (see also [The Story of Our Health Message](#), 118, 119).

When in the late summer of 1864 James and Ellen White first visited Dr. Jackson's "Home on the Hillside" at Dansville, New York, they found what was called the "American costume," worn by the lady physicians and many of the women patients. While it had many features that made it more acceptable than the prevailing styles, the Whites considered certain features objectionable. Writing to friends at Battle Creek, Ellen explained:

They have all styles of dress here. Some are very becoming, if not so short. We shall get patterns from this place, and I think we can get out a style of dress more healthful than we now wear, and yet not be bloomer or the "American costume." ...I am going to get up a style of dress on my own hook which will accord perfectly with *that which has been shown me*. Health demands it. Our feeble women must dispense with heavy skirts and tight waists if they value health....

We shall never imitate Miss Dr. Austin or Mrs. Dr. York. They dress very much like men. We shall imitate or follow no fashion we have ever yet seen. We shall institute a fashion which will be both economical and healthful.—[Letter 1a, 1864](#) (see also [The Story of Our Health Message](#), 128). (Italics supplied.)

Whether it was on June 6, 1863, or in a vision soon thereafter that is referred to here is not clear. Her counsel in *How to Live*, No. 6, published in June, 1865, deals with principles:

[179]

The female form should not be compressed in the least with corsets and whale bones. The dress should be perfectly easy that the lungs and heart may have healthy action. The dress should reach somewhat below the top of the boot; but should be short enough to clear the filth of the sidewalk and street, without being raised by the hand. A still shorter dress than this would be proper, convenient, and healthful for females, when doing their housework, and especially, for those women who are obliged to perform more or less out-of-door labor.

With this style of dress, one light skirt, or, at most two, are all that is necessary, and these should be buttoned on to a waist, or suspended with straps. The hips were not formed to bear heavy weights....

Whatever may be the length of the dress, females should clothe their limbs as thoroughly as the males. This may be done by wearing lined pants gathered into a band and fastened about the ankle, or made full and tapering at the bottom; and these should come down long enough to meet the shoe.

The limbs and ankles thus clothed are protected against a current of air. If the limbs and feet are kept comfortable with warm clothing, the circulation will be equalized, and the blood will remain healthy and pure, because it is not chilled or hindered in its natural passage through the system.—*How to Live*, No. 6, pp. 63, 64 (see also [Selected Messages 2:478, 479](#)).

Vital Principles of Inspiration Disclosed

Mention has been made of the questions pressed on Ellen White as she visited the churches in northern Michigan in early 1867. In October she answered a number of questions on dress and other health-related topics in the *Review and Herald*. Those answers

revealed some basic points related to inspiration-revelation. The specific question to which she addressed herself was

[180]

Does not the practice of the sisters in wearing their dresses nine inches from the floor contradict *Testimony* No. 11, which says they should reach somewhat below the top of a lady's gaiter boot? Does it not also counteract *Testimony* No. 10, which says they should clear the filth of the street an inch or two without being raised by the hand?—[The Review and Herald, October 8, 1867](#).

Ellen White described how the light came to her in regard to dress and discussed the basis of what she wrote:

The proper distance from the bottom of the dress to the floor was not given to me in inches. Neither was I shown ladies' gaiter boots; but three companies of females passed before me, with their dresses as follows with respect to length:

The first was of fashionable length, burdening the limbs, impeding the step, and sweeping the street and gathering its filth; the evil results of which I have fully stated. This class, who were slaves to fashion, appeared feeble and languid.

The dress of the second class which passed before me was in many respects as it should be. The limbs were well clad. They were free from the burdens which the tyrant Fashion had imposed upon the first class; but had gone to that extreme in the short dress as to disgust and prejudice good people, and destroy in a great measure their own influence. This is the style and influence of the "American costume," taught and worn by many at "Our Home," Dansville, New York. It does not reach to the knee. I need not say that this style of dress was shown me to be too short.

A third class passed before me with cheerful countenances, and free, elastic step. Their dress was the length I have described as proper, modest, and healthful. It cleared the filth of the street and sidewalk a few

inches under all circumstances, such as ascending and descending steps.—[Ibid.](#)

She informed her readers:

As I have before stated, the length was not given me in inches, and I was not shown a lady's boot. And here I would state that although I am as dependent upon the Spirit of the Lord in writing my views as I am in receiving them, yet the words I employ in describing what I have seen are my own, unless they be those spoken to me by an angel, which I always enclose in marks of quotation.

As I wrote upon the subject of dress, the view of those three companies revived in my mind as plain as when I was viewing them in vision; but I was left to describe the length of the proper dress in my own language the best I could, which I have done in stating that the bottom of the dress should reach near the top of a lady's boot, which would be necessary in order to clear the filth of the streets under the circumstances before named.—[Ibid.](#)

[181]

This descriptive statement is very illuminating, but no more should be read into it than the circumstances justify. She was describing the way that, at times, light came to her—not in words dictated, but in scenes, in this case contrasting scenes, leaving her to describe them in human language. She was not speaking of a practice sometimes employed in the next decade, in which she occasionally couched what she wanted to say in the words and phrases of other writers, particularly in historical description in the books presenting the great controversy story.

Ellen White Begins to Wear the Reform Dress

Only a few months after the issuance of *How to Live*, No. 6, in the summer of 1865, in which she dealt with dress, Mrs. White started wearing the type of dress she had described. This was while she was at Dansville with her sick husband. She wore it consistently

except when “in the crowded streets of villages and cities,” “at meetings,” and “when visiting distant relatives” (*Ibid.*) She explained:

The reasons for pursuing the course I have are as follows: 1. I put on the reformed dress for general use more than two years since, because I had seen that it was a convenient, modest, and healthful style, and would, in the providence of God, as health reform should lead the way, finally be adopted by our people.

2. It was my duty to avoid raising prejudice against the dress, which would cut off my testimony if I wore it, until I had fully set the matter before the people, and the time came, in the order of events, for it to be generally adopted.

3. The dress reform was among the minor things that were to make up the great reform in health, and never should have been urged as a testing truth necessary to salvation. It was the design of God that at the right time, on proper occasions, the proper persons should set forth its benefits as a blessing, and recommend uniformity, and union of action.—*Ibid.*

[182]

Then she explained the problems that arose in the sequence of events:

4. The issue came too soon. The defense of the dress was forced upon us by those who opposed it, who at the same time professed full confidence in my testimonies.

When the Health Institute was opened at Battle Creek, and the dress adopted by female patients, as directed by the physicians, then came the opposition, chiefly from brethren at Battle Creek. The physicians, having full confidence in my testimonies, stated to them that the style of dress they recommended for their patients was the same as I had seen would be adopted by our people.

Then came the general inquiry, and a strange spirit of blind and bitter opposition arose with some who professed to be among the firmest friends of the testimonies.

The general inquiry spread everywhere, and in the autumn and winter of 1866, letters came in from all directions inquiring in regard to what I had seen, asking for immediate answers. I therefore determined to hasten out [*Testimony*] No. 11.

All of this was taking place during the difficult year of James White's invalidism, when his care drew heavily on her time and energies. But seeing clearly the dire need of getting something in print on the subject, in December, 1866, she took her husband north to Wright, where they stayed in the Root home. She explained her course of action:

We visited the church at Wright, Michigan, December 21, 1866, and labored with them six weeks. I there wrote most of *Testimony* No. 11. The first two Sabbaths and First-days I spoke to the people in my long dress. But when I had fully set the matter before the people without raising their prejudice, I put on my present style of dress, which was immediately adopted by the numerous sisters of that church. I have worn it since that time.—*Ibid.*

She pointed out that as she spoke on the subject of health, she mentioned the dress reform as one of the items of least importance making up a great whole, and she reported that there were no unhappy conflicts with the women who attended her meetings. Setting an example, she presented sound reasons for adopting a reform in dress, and her testimony was received on the basis of principle. [183]

Arriving at Style and Length

Neither a particular style of dress nor the length of the skirt in inches was revealed to Ellen White. The vision of the three groups of women brought certain important principles to the forefront, and it was left to her and the church women generally to work out something that would come within the limits shown her. At the Health Institute in Battle Creek it was found that as the women employed their ingenuity, there was considerable variance in style and length

of skirt. At this point a little “dress show” was conducted. J. H. Waggoner was spending some time at the institute. At his request the physicians named a number of the women there whose dresses they considered the best, and they put on a little demonstration. The results were promptly reported in the *Health Reformer*:

He then measured the height of twelve, with the distance of their dresses from the floor. They varied in height from five feet to five feet seven inches, and the distance of the dresses from the floor was from eight to ten and one-half inches. The medium, nine inches, was decided to be the right distance and is adopted as the standard.—[The Health Reformer, March, 1868](#) (see also [The Story of Our Health Message, 167](#)).

With the Health Institute in the forefront and working in harmony with the counsel given by the messenger of the Lord, the style of costume adopted at the institution became the prevailing style adopted generally by Adventist women who chose to follow this phase of reform.

The Final Outcome

[184] Before leaving the question of the reform dress, we look ahead a few years. Considerable was written on the topic in the *Review and Herald* and the *Health Reformer* through a period of about four years. Many of the Adventist women cheerfully adopted the dress and were benefited, but its acceptance was not general; there was opposition and criticism. Some overlooked the statement that “none were compelled to adopt the reform dress.”—[Testimonies for the Church, 4:639](#). Among extremists this reform seemed to constitute the sum and substance of their religion. Consequently, “because that which was given as a blessing was turned into a curse, the burden of advocating the reform dress was removed.”—[Manuscript 167, 1897](#) (see also [The Story of Our Health Message, 168](#)). Seventh-day Adventist women were urged to “adopt a simple, unadorned dress of modest length.” The following suggestion was made:

A plain sack or loose-fitting basque, and skirt, the latter short enough to avoid the mud and filth of the streets.... The same attention should be given to the clothing of the limbs as with the short dress.—[Testimonies for the Church, 4:640](#).

When in 1897 some of the Adventist women thought that in their loyalty to the Spirit of Prophecy counsels they should adopt and advocate the reform dress of the 1860s, Ellen White advised against it, stating:

Some have supposed that the very pattern given was the pattern that all were to adopt. This is not so. But something as simple as this would be the best we could adopt under the circumstances. No one precise style has been given me as the exact rule to guide all in their dress.—[Letter 19, 1897](#) (see also [The Story of Our Health Message, 169](#)).

Prevailing styles were changing in favor of more healthful attire, and Ellen White did not favor introducing a subject that would divert the minds of Seventh-day Adventists from their mission and cause. She urged:

Let our sisters dress plainly, as many do, having the dress of good material, durable, modest, appropriate for this age, and let not the dress question fill the mind.—[Ibid.](#) [For a discussion of the reform dress in further depth, see [Ibid.](#), 112-130, 156-171, 441-445.]

Skills in Public Speaking Acquired by Ellen White

[185]

It was the invalidism of James White through 1866 and well into 1867 that drove Ellen into unabashed public speaking to the point where she could go into a church and address the audience at the worship service on a Sabbath morning. At the same time, with Ellen's encouragement James moved forward by faith in the lines of activity that opened before him, and his strength gradually returned. On the last day of 1867 the *Review and Herald* carried

a short article in which he reviewed somewhat the experience of the year just closing. The article was written from Portland, Maine, while the Whites were on a three-month itinerary in the Eastern States:

Just one year ago today, December 19, Mrs. White and self left home to resume our labors, from which we had been held by feebleness for nearly two years. We look back upon the past year with feelings of gratitude to God for His goodness, and His especial blessing upon our feeble labors.

During no year have the people of God received us so readily as in the past, and during no year has our testimony been so plain and pointed, and during no year have we seen so many backsliders reclaimed, and so many in bad habits, such as the use of tobacco, reclaimed, as during the past year.—*The Review and Herald, December 31, 1867.*

James White made a remarkable though gradual recovery from the point of such weakness that he felt he could carry neither purse nor watch, to an active, aggressive ministry. The days in their retirement in their new home on the little farm in Greenville, Michigan, marked the step-by-step recovery in physical and mental restoration to the point described years later by Ellen White:

After eighteen months of constant cooperation with God in the effort to restore my husband to health, I took him home again. Presenting him to his parents, I said, “Father, Mother, here is your son.”

“Ellen,” said his mother, “you have no one but God and yourself to thank for this wonderful restoration. Your energies have accomplished it.”

[186]

After his recovery, my husband lived for a number of years, during which time he did the best work of his life. Did not those added years of usefulness repay me manifold for the eighteen months of painstaking

care?—[Manuscript 50, 1902](#) (see also [Selected Messages 2:308](#)).

Farming in Greenville

It was a happy day for the Whites—James, Ellen, and Willie, now 12—when on Thursday, May 2, 1867, they could see the plow turn the rich soil on their little Greenville farm ([The Review and Herald, May 14, 1867](#)), to be followed quickly by the setting out of grapes, blackberries, raspberries, and strawberries, and incidentally starting the construction of their new home. At some point about this time Ellen devised a plan to encourage James to engage in physical activity. He had been warned by the physicians at Dansville that physical activity could lead to another stroke. Ellen had been shown that without both mental and physical activity he could not hope to recover fully. Here is her account:

In the spring there were fruit trees to be set out and garden to be made. “Willie,” I said, “please buy three hoes and three rakes. Be sure to buy three of each.” When he brought them to me, I told him to take one of the hoes, and Father another. Father objected, but took one. Taking one myself, we began to work; and although I blistered my hands, I led them in the hoeing. Father could not do much, but he went through the motions. It was by such methods as these that I tried to cooperate with God in restoring my husband to health.—[Manuscript 50, 1902](#) (see also [Selected Messages 2:307](#)).

Rather triumphantly James White reported on Tuesday, June 18, that he harnessed his horses and went to town on business and brought home materials for the builders ([The Review and Herald, June 25, 1867](#)). Sabbath, June 29, he and Ellen met with the church in Fairplains. He spoke in the morning for an hour and a half on baptism, and in the afternoon for an hour on [Galatians 6:6, 7](#), on reaping what one sows. Ellen followed, speaking for an hour. The next morning he led four candidates into the nearby lake and baptized

[187] them. Willie was one of the four. James took Brother King into the water with him in case he needed assistance, but he needed none. On the preceding Thursday and Friday he had engaged in the activities about the farm and the new home going up. He wrote:

Fifth- and Sixth-days I was able to prepare a farm wagon with wooden springs, go to town for lumber, to the woods for wood, and on Sixth-day P.M. was one of two to handle nearly three thousand feet of heavy lumber just from the river. I stood upon my feet handling this lumber more than two hours in the hot sun. I was just tired enough to sleep well all night and feel well the next morning. To God be the praise.

We shall soon go out prepared to hold meetings, Providence permitting, where the way opens. We find it quite easy speaking and singing.—[The Review and Herald, July 9, 1867.](#)

On Thursday, July 4, they drove over to Wright and took breakfast under the shade of two large oak trees in a beautiful grove. For their breakfast they had strawberries from their own plants set out only five weeks before.

Thoughts on Revelation

At this time they received from the express office fifty copies of Uriah Smith's *Thoughts on Revelation*, just published in Battle Creek. Of this precious addition to the literature of the church James wrote:

These thoughts are not the fruit of one brain.... William Miller saw much. Others since have seen more. And as this open book contains more which bears directly upon the present truth than any other book of the Bible, its clearest light is reserved for believers in the time of the third message.—[Ibid., July 16, 1867](#)

This book grew out of a series of *Review* articles started by James White in 1862 as he sat in Smith's Sabbath school class in Battle

Creek. By their choice the class was studying Revelation. At about midway, as White was called away, the work of writing was picked up by Smith. In the July article that mentioned the Smith book, the Review readers were informed:

Mrs. White's health is excellent, and I am still making up lost time in sleeping, which is relieving my head. With my present labor, mental and physical, in the heat of midsummer, and the loss of teeth and of blood when they were extracted, I think I fully hold my own. With God's blessing I hope to gain faster in the future. The field of usefulness is open before us and we hope to have strength to stand side by side in the good work.—[Ibid.](#)

[188]

Getting in the Hay

The work of recovery continued at a steady but slow pace. Thursday and Friday, July 18 and 19, were busy days for James White, for it was time to get in the hay. He arranged with the neighbors to cut the hay, and expected to invite them to help him get it in. But Ellen saw a good opportunity to draw her husband into further activity. While the hay was drying she slipped away and visited the neighbors. Through inquiry she learned that they were pressed with their own work but were planning to help James get his hay in. To each she said, "When he sends for you, tell him what you have just told me, that you are pressed with your own work and it is not convenient to leave your own work, as you will suffer loss if you do" (see [2Life Sketches of Ellen G. White, 357](#)). The neighbors were very reluctant to do this, but when she explained her plan to encourage James in activity, they agreed to cooperate. The story is told in several places, but here is the account as related in *Life Sketches of James and Ellen White*, published in 1888:

When the call was made for help, all the neighbors declared themselves too busy to respond. It was necessary that the hay be secured at once, and Elder White was sorely disappointed. But Mrs. White was not at all despondent; she resolutely said: "Let us show the neighbors that we can attend to the work ourselves. Willie

and I will rake the hay and pitch it on the wagon, if you will load it and drive the team." To this he consented; but how could they make the stack?

The farm was new, and they had no barn. Mrs. White volunteered to build the stack, if her husband would pitch up the hay, while Willie should be raking for another load.—[Ibid.](#)

[189] Some of the neighbors, as they passed by, were surprised to see Ellen White, the woman who spoke each week to a houseful of people, treading down the hay and building the stack. Reporting his activities for this week, James wrote: "I have worked from six to twelve hours each day, and have enjoyed blessed sleep from six to nine hours each night.... My work has been haying, plowing, grading about the house, hoeing, and putting down carpets."—[The Review and Herald, July 30, 1867.](#)

Meetings at Bushnell

That Friday afternoon, July 19, James and Ellen White left with their team for Bushnell to attend weekend meetings for which an appointment had been made through a notice on the back page of the *Review* published on Tuesday, July 16. Neither had ever been to Bushnell, but the elder of the Greenville church, A. W. Maynard, and the elder of the Orleans church, S. H. King, had suggested a grove meeting at Bushnell, where there was a struggling group of believers. The notice read in part:

Grove Meeting. Providence permitting, there will be a grove meeting at Bushnell, Michigan, at the usual hours of meeting on Sabbath and First-day, July 20 and 21. A general gathering is expected from those within a day's ride....

The best grove nearest to the water should be selected and well seated. As this young church is small, those coming must come nearly prepared to take care of themselves.—[Ibid., July 16, 1867](#)

As the dwindling company of discouraged Sabbathkeepers at Bushnell had met the previous Sabbath morning, July 13, only seven were present, and they had decided to hold no more meetings ([The Signs of the Times, August 29, 1878](#)). But the notice in the *Review* led them to get word around for at least one more meeting, the next Sabbath, and proper preparations were made in a suitable nearby grove. James and Ellen White, who drove over on Friday afternoon, were entertained at the Stephen Alchin home at Bushnell. Sabbath morning, as they drove to the grove, they found about sixty believers on the grounds, twenty of them from Bushnell. The others were from Greenville and Orleans.

While driving to the grove Sunday morning, James White remarked that likely he would preach to the trees and probably twenty-five persons. To their surprise, they found no less than 125 attentive listeners. The meeting was a great success. The Bushnell members, taking courage, asked James and Ellen White to return for meetings the next Sabbath and Sunday ([The Review and Herald, July 30, 1867](#)).

[190]

The Unforgettable Meeting the Next Sabbath

Accordingly, all the Sabbathkeepers were on the grounds Sabbath morning. After James White had spoken, Ellen, Bible in hand, began to speak from a text of Scripture and then paused. Laying her Bible aside, she began to address those who had accepted the Sabbath in that place. She was not acquainted with them and did not know their names, but she addressed a number of persons. James White described it:

She designated each brother and sister by his or her position as the one by that tree, or the one sitting by that brother or sister of the Greenville or Orleans church, with whom she was personally acquainted, and whom she called by name.

She described each peculiar case, stating that the Lord had shown her their cases two years previous [most likely in the vision at Rochester], and that, while she was just then speaking from the Bible, that view had

flashed over her mind, like sudden lightning in a dark night distinctly revealing every object around.—[The Signs of the Times, August 29, 1878.](#)

She spoke for about an hour, addressing different ones. When she had concluded, Brother Strong, who knew each member of the Bushnell company personally, arose and asked those addressed by Ellen White if the things she had spoken about to them were true. “Either these things were true or they were not; if they were not true he, and all present, wished to know it; and if they were true they also wished to know it, and from that day have a settled faith in the testimonies.”—[Ibid.](#) The report is that “the persons thus addressed accordingly arose one by one, and testified that their cases had been described better than they could have done it themselves.”—[Ibid.](#) Commented James White:

[191]

It was not enough for that intelligent company to know that the testimony given that day was correct in the majority of cases present, but it was necessary that it be proven correct in every particular of the case of each person, in order that their faith should be fully established. Had the testimony failed in a single instance, it would have destroyed the faith of all present. As it was, they had a settled faith from that hour, and all took their position on the third message.—[Ibid.](#)

Sunday morning there was a baptism, and the Bushnell church was organized and officers chosen. In the years that followed, several workers in the cause came from that church.

Each weekend James and Ellen White were at one of the churches within easy driving distance of Greenville. During the week they were on their little farm, James working outside, and Ellen engaged in writing.

Chapter 14—(1867) Battle Creek and the Health Institute

[192]

In response to the instruction given to Ellen White that the Seventh-day Adventist Church should own and operate a medical institution, the Western Health Reform Institute was brought into being, but rather precipitously. It would have been well if the health of James White had been such that he could exercise his cautious managerial experience, and Ellen could have been in a position to give closer attention to the project. In the absence of this, men in all sincerity but with limited experience moved ahead, sometimes inadvisably. This led to many unforeseen problems.

Ellen White did not have time to write out fully the instruction given to her in the vision of December 25, 1865, before she presented it publicly at the General Conference session in May, 1866. When the financial support initially called for, so essential to the development of the enterprise, lagged, the leading workers pleaded with her to write out the instruction that led to the institution's launching, hoping it would strengthen financial support. Yielding her better judgment, she sent for publication that portion of the instruction that called for such an institution before she could write out in full all that had been shown her regarding the enterprise. Her incomplete presentation appeared in *Testimony* No. 11.

The enthusiastic response from the general public led to premature plans for the rapid enlargement of the institution to accommodate all who applied for admission as patients.

“What shall be done?” queried Dr. Lay, medical superintendent, in an article in the *Review* in early 1867. The article opened:

Patients are coming to the Health Institute so rapidly that we are already being crowded for room. We do not dare to advertise the institution to any great extent, for fear we shall not have place for those that may wish to come. In addition to the three buildings which are

[193]

wholly devoted to the wants of the institution, every room of which is occupied, we are fitting up a cottage for lodging rooms, which, according to present prospects, will be filled with patients in a few weeks. And the question arises, What shall be done?—[The Review and Herald, January 8, 1867](#).

Dr. Lay called for \$25,000 to erect a new building. He wrote, “We can take care of at least one hundred more patients than we now have, just as well as not,” and added:

There is need of another building being commenced as soon as early in the spring.... What shall be done?—[Ibid.](#)

He asked the question:

Shall we continue to do business on as limited a scale as at present, and in a few months from now not be able to receive at the Health Institute but a very small portion of those that may wish to come?—[Ibid.](#)

James and Ellen White, in northern Michigan, watched the rapid developments with growing concern. It was clear to them that plans for expansion of the Health Institute were premature, and the way in which materials from Ellen White’s pen were being used brought particular distress, for the testimonies written to bring the institution into being were now being used to support the plans for immediate enlargement.

Plans were drawn, an excavation was made, a stone foundation was laid, and materials were purchased for proceeding with the proposed enlargement. James and Ellen White watched at long range through the letters, the *Review*, and reports that reached them, and were greatly distressed. They were convinced that the denomination was quite destitute of what would be needed in skill, experience, and finance.

Then, by vision, God gave direction. Of this Ellen later wrote:

I was shown a large building going up on the site on which the Battle Creek Sanitarium was afterward erected. The brethren were in great perplexity as to who should take charge of the work. I wept sorely. One of authority stood up among us, and said, "Not yet. You are not ready to invest means in that building, or to plan for its future management." At this time the foundation of the Sanitarium had been laid. But we needed to learn the lesson of waiting.—[Letter 135, 1903](#).

[194]

In distress she wrote: "The disposition manifested to crowd the matter of the institute so fast has been one of the heaviest trials I have ever borne."—[Testimonies for the Church, 1:563](#).

In the August 27, 1867, *Review*, there appeared an appeal for \$15,000. This was needed immediately to push forward with the enlargement of the Health Institute, to complete the work already begun on the new building. The author of the article, in an endeavor to loosen the purse strings of the believers, quoted at length from Ellen White's initial appeal for a health institution as published in *Testimony* No. 11.

Invited to a Four-Day September Convocation in Wisconsin

The church leaders in Wisconsin called for a convocation in September of several days' duration, which they invited James and Ellen White to attend ([The Review and Herald, August 13, 1867](#)). The Whites responded in the affirmative and planned a stop at Battle Creek en route. They would travel by carriage to Battle Creek and then go to Wisconsin by train. They dreaded what they saw before them in Battle Creek in dealing with the situation of the Health Institute; they knew they were already under considerable criticism there, although they did not know just why.

Preparing for the Confrontation

As the Whites drove from Greenville to Battle Creek, stopping at Wright and Monterey, Ellen worked diligently on a statement concerning the institute that could be published in the next *Testimony*

[195] pamphlet, Number 12. They had speaking appointments at the Monterey church for the weekend of September 7 and 8. Arriving on Tuesday, September 3, James and Ellen were entertained at the John Day home. Here they found a “retired room,” as James White described it, “for writing, and copying for *Testimony* No. 12” ([Ibid.](#), [September 17, 1867](#)).

Loughborough joined them in Monterey, and on Monday, September 9, they drove on to Battle Creek together, where they made headquarters at the Amadon home. Certain of the resistance they would have to meet, they were filled with trepidation. During the next week the type for *Testimony* No. 12 was set, and they read proof sheets, wrote letters, held interviews, and mailed books.

The Crucial Weekend at Battle Creek

They met with the Battle Creek church on Sabbath, September 14, and entered upon the work they dreaded, establishing restraints on the premature enlargement of the Health Institute. They had come to Battle Creek “with trembling” to bear their testimony, and this they did. Ellen White reviewed some of the high points in the call for, and the rapid development of, the institute. She may have read from proofs of *Testimony* No. 12 such statements as the following:

As to the extent of the accommodations of the Health Institute at Battle Creek, I was shown, as I have before stated, that we should have such an institution, small at its commencement, and cautiously increased, as good physicians and helpers could be procured and means raised, and as the wants of invalids should demand; and all should be conducted in strict accordance with the principles and humble spirit of the third angel’s message.

And as I have seen the large calculations hastily urged by those who have taken a leading part in the work, I have felt alarmed, and in my many private conversations and in letters I have warned these brethren to move cautiously. My reasons for this are that without the special blessing of God there are several ways in

which this enterprise might be hindered.—[Testimonies for the Church, 1:558](#).

She pointed out that physicians might fail, through sickness or death or by some other cause; money might not come in as needed to put up the larger buildings; and there might be a lack of patients, resulting in a lack of means to carry on. She had confidence that with proper efforts put forth in a “judicious manner, and with the blessing of God, the institution will prove a glorious success” ([Ibid.](#), [196] 1:559). She added:

Our people should furnish means to meet the wants of a growing Health Institute among us, as they are able to do without giving less for the other wants of the cause. Let the health reform and the Health Institute grow up among us as other worthy enterprises have grown, taking into the account our feeble strength in the past and our greater ability to do much in a short period of time now. Let the Health Institute grow, as other interests among us have grown, as fast as it can safely and not cripple other branches of the great work which are of equal or greater importance at this time.—[Ibid.](#), 1:559, 560.

The Wholesome Response

The evening after the Sabbath, September 14, James spoke in what he identified as “the first evening meeting I have attended in twenty months,” addressing the brethren for nearly an hour ([The Review and Herald, September 17, 1867](#)). He spoke again Sunday morning at a well-attended meeting in the church. He reported:

Our testimony was very pointed, yet well received. Many excellent testimonies were given by those at the head of the work, and by others. The melting, weeping spirit was all through the congregation. With trembling we came to the place to bear our testimony. But we find that plain preaching has the same good results in this church as in our younger churches.—[Ibid.](#)

[197]

Ellen White had presented her message indicating God's will in the matter of the institute. James had given his counsel as a careful church administrator. The few days spent in Battle Creek were difficult, crucial, and successful. Hammers, saws, and trowels were laid aside, and the church leaders determined to follow the counsel given. The stone foundation stood untouched until the next stockholders' meeting in mid-May, 1868. The financial report showed for the twelve-month period then ending that the institution had operated at a loss. There were no dividends for the stockholders. On the advice of James and Ellen White, the stockholders who could do so relinquished all claims on further anticipated returns and left their money as an investment in the cause. The very few unable to do so were properly compensated so they would not suffer. A few days after the stockholders' meeting in 1868, James announced:

The large building is given up for the present, and the material is being sold. Still a debt of several thousands will be resting upon the institute after this is done. Efforts will be made in the future to have everything connected with the institute managed on the most economical plan, and everything that can be done by the directors to overcome the present embarrassments will be done. And at this crisis none should excuse themselves who are able to share in this good work.—[Ibid.](#), [June 16, 1868](#)

Modest Plans Announced

James was put on the board of directors, which helped to establish confidence. To hold things on an even keel, he told of plans that would make it possible for the institute to continue its activities within its resources. He assured everyone that the business was sound and urged them to manifest a gracious attitude toward those responsible for the current problems.

Those who have moved rashly, and have committed errors in the past for want of experience, feel over the matter all they should, and it is not Christian-like to

murmur against them. No one will better his condition in any way by such a course. It is no time for the professed friends of the institute to settle back and cast an influence against it. The very worst time for a horse to balk is when the load draws hard.—[Ibid.](#)

The Wisconsin Convocation

James and Ellen White left Battle Creek by train for Wisconsin on Tuesday, September 17, 1867. The meeting was held at Johnstown Center. With the Whites were Uriah Smith, T. M. Steward, and Mr. and Mrs. Maynard. Reaching Johnstown Center on Wednesday, they found the large tent up, four small living tents, and believers coming in from all directions. Friday morning, September 20, Uriah Smith wrote a report for the *Review* giving this picture:

We are now upon the convocation campground, Johnstown Center, Wisconsin. How goodly are thy tents O Israel! The large Wisconsin tent is pitched for the purpose of the meeting. Twelve church and family tents are already on the ground around it. Elders Sanborn, Steward, Andrews, Blanchard, and Matteson, of the Wisconsin and Illinois Conference, are present. The tent is full of earnest, substantial commandment-keepers. This is estimated to be the largest gathering of the friends of the truth that have ever assembled in this State.—[Ibid.](#), [September 24, 1867](#)

[198]

Meetings had opened Thursday morning. James and Ellen White were the principal speakers of the day, but it was the evening meeting that Smith wanted to talk about. He wrote:

The meeting in the evening was one of unusual solemnity and power. Sister White bore her testimony with great freedom. Many were in tears, and the pent-up emotions of the people found audible utterance in various parts of the congregation. Not a few consider it the best meeting they ever attended.—[Ibid.](#)

Smith commented that he was pleased to hear the firm confidence expressed in the testimonies, and added:

Some full and free confessions were made, and some who had been wavering expressed their confidence restored. These referred with great feeling to the discourse of Brother White in the afternoon on the unpardonable sin, and expressed their great thankfulness that though they had gone far in their opposition to the work of the Holy Spirit, they had been kept from that great sin of attributing its operations to the agency of Satan.—*Ibid.*

The four-day convocation at Johnstown Center was considered a great success.

The Disclosure of Strange Criticism

[199] In Wisconsin James and Ellen White learned of some of the reports and rumors that, unbeknown to them, had been current even at the time of the General Conference in May. This criticism, they could now see, constituted a part of the basis for the coldness with which they were treated in Battle Creek. Ellen White gives one example:

It was said that my husband was so crazy for money that he had engaged in selling old bottles. The facts are these: When we were about to move, I asked my husband what we should do with a lot of old bottles on hand. Said he: “Throw them away.”

Just then our Willie [age 12] came in and offered to clean and sell them. I told him to do so, and he should have what he could get for them. And when my husband rode to the post office, he took Willie and the bottles into the carriage. He could do no less for his faithful little son. Willie sold the bottles and took the money.

On the way to the post office my husband took a brother connected with the *Review* office into the carriage, who conversed pleasantly with him as they rode to and from town, and because he saw Willie come out to the carriage and ask his father a question relative to

the value of the bottles, and then saw the druggist in conversation with my husband relative to that which so much interested Willie, this brother, without saying one word to my husband about the matter, immediately reported that Brother White had been downtown selling old bottles and therefore must be crazy. The first we heard about the bottles was ...five months later.—[Testimonies for the Church, 1:605, 606.](#)

“These things have been kept from us,” commented Ellen White, “so that we could not correct them, and have been carried, as on the wings of the wind, by our professed friends.”—[Ibid., 1:606.](#)

The four-day convocation in Johnstown and the similar meeting following in Iowa were forerunners of Seventh-day Adventist camp meetings, which were to find such an important place in the history of the church. The Johnstown meeting closed Sunday evening; the Iowa convocation was to open at Pilot Grove the next Thursday, September 26.

The Iowa Convocation

Like the meeting in Wisconsin, Smith reported that the one in Iowa was “a good and blessed season for those assembled.”

The attendance of brethren was not so large as in Wisconsin; but on First-day the attendance of those without was even greater, there being about fifteen hundred people on the ground.—[The Review and Herald, October 8, 1867.](#)

[200]

Smith told the readers of the *Review* that the brethren in the State considered the cause to be in a better condition than at any previous time. Apostasy had taken out a number of members not firmly grounded in the message. The outlook for Iowa was hopeful.

During this gathering, the conference president, 33-year-old George I. Butler, was ordained to the ministry. He had served well since his election to that office, taking the place of B. F. Snook, who had apostatized. While at Pilot Grove, Ellen White wrote the rather extensive article for the *Review* answering questions on the health reform vision, her writing on health, and what she had been shown

concerning the reform dress, et cetera. This was published in the *Review* of October 8, 1867.

Testimony No. 12, and Battle Creek

The day James and Ellen White left Battle Creek for the Wisconsin convocation, the *Review* and *Herald* announced:

Testimony for the Church No. 12 is now ready. It contains a hundred pages of most important matter for the people of God at the present time.—[Ibid.](#), [September 17, 1867](#)

Except for No. 11, published in January, with its three articles, “Dress,” “Our Ministers,” and “The Health Reform,” urging loyalty to health principles and presenting the call for a health institution, there had been no pamphlets of testimony counsels for three years. James White anticipated for Number 12 an immediate and wide circulation. Its sixteen articles, some long, some short, were divided between health-related topics and more general counsels. The first notice of publication listed as subjects:

Young Sabbathkeepers
Deceitfulness of Riches
Recreations for Christians
Personal [Testimony]
The Reform Dress
Life Insurance
Surmisings About Battle Creek
Advertise Publications
Shifting [Financial] Responsibilities
Knowledge [*The Health Reformer*]

[201]

Proper Observance of the Sabbath
The Health Reform [Institute] Political Sentiments
Extracts From Letters [to Usury Health Institute Leaders]

Significant Changes in Battle Creek

The earnest labors of James and Ellen White in Battle Creek for the few days in mid-September while on their way to Wisconsin, followed by the messages of *Testimony* No. 12, began to bring about changes in the attitudes of the church members toward the Whites. Even Loughborough had been tinged with the spirit of criticism and opposition in Battle Creek (see [Testimonies for the Church, 1:600](#)). He read one of the first copies of *Testimony* No. 12 as it came from the press, and wrote the same day, September 17. No doubt his experience typified that of not a few in Battle Creek:

About four hours since I had placed in my hands at the *Review* office a completed *Testimony* No. 12. Believing it to be light from the Lord, I at once eagerly, yet prayerfully, commenced its perusal. I have completed its reading without stopping to have the mind diverted with other matters. Often while reading, have I thought, how good is the Lord to instruct His people, giving us “line upon line,” “precept upon precept.”

This testimony is from the Lord. It breathes a spirit of humility and love, and such an evidence of the tenderness and care of our heavenly Father for the interests of His cause in its various departments, and for His people in particular, that I hasten to commend it to the consideration of all the brethren and sisters.

It reproves wrongs among us, both in the young and old, but what of that? If we ever expect the purifying work to be accomplished in our hearts, and ourselves got ready for the judgment, our wrongs must be brought to our knowledge, seen, confessed, and forsaken....

Brethren, immediately secure a copy of *Testimony* No. 12, read it carefully, pray over it, study it, and endeavor to exemplify its instructions in your lives, and may we all be enabled to reap the benefits which follow in the path of those who are “not disobedient unto the heavenly vision.”—[Ibid.](#)

On returning to Battle Creek early in October, James

[202]

White called a “council of brethren” that there might be an investigation and an opportunity for the Whites to meet the widely circulated false reports. A number of these reports had been kept from them but they had learned of them at the convocations in Wisconsin and Iowa. Ellen White declared:

We have been astonished to find, by investigation and by recent confessions from nearly all the members of this [Battle Creek] church, that some one or more of the false reports have been fully credited by nearly all and that those professed Christians have cherished feelings of censure, bitterness, and cruelty against us, especially against my feeble husband who is struggling for life and liberty. Some have had a wicked, crushing spirit and have represented him as wealthy yet grasping for money.—[Ibid.](#), 1:606.

In response to James’s call, brethren from several parts of Michigan came in to Battle Creek. Ellen White wrote:

My husband fearlessly called on all to bring what they could against him that he might meet it openly and thus put an end to this private slander. The wrongs which he had before confessed in the *Review* he now fully confessed in a public meeting and to individuals, and also explained many matters upon which false and foolish charges were based, and convinced all of the falsity of those charges.—[Ibid.](#)

Ellen detailed their personal financial situation:

And while looking up matters relative to the real value of our property, we found to his astonishment, and that of all present, that it amounted to only \$1,500, besides his horses and carriage, and remnants of editions of books and charts, the sale of which for the past year, as stated by the secretary, has not been equal to the interest on the money he owes to the Publishing Association.—[Ibid.](#)

She added:

The investigation was a thorough one and resulted in freeing us from the charges brought against us, and restoring feelings of perfect union. Hearty and heart-rending confessions of the cruel course pursued toward us here have been made, and the signal blessing of God has come upon us all.—[Ibid.](#), 1:608.

[203]

On October 22 Uriah Smith wrote of the “good work for the church in this place” during the past month:

We were gratified, as we saw the beneficial effects of the labors of Brother and Sister White here, September 14, that they proposed to hold further meetings with us on their return from the West, and we have had still more reason to be gratified as we have seen the progress of the meetings themselves.... We believe substantial progress has been made....

We rejoice in the plain and searching testimony, so necessary for these times.... That these meetings, involving an investigation of various matters over which misunderstandings and wrong feelings have existed, will result in a better understanding of the position we should occupy, and strong and impregnable union for the future, we fully believe.—[The Review and Herald](#), October 22, 1867.

“The Lord is restoring Brother White,” Smith wrote in closing his editorial, “and giving both him and Sister White a testimony for His people richer in experience and stronger in power than ever before.”—[Ibid.](#)

Appointments had been made for James and Ellen White to attend meetings in Roosevelt, New York ([Ibid.](#), October 15, 1867). But the rapidly unfolding developments led Ellen White to feel that she must issue, before they left, another testimony pamphlet, reviewing the experiences through which they had passed during the year 1867. This information would help many, and now that

situations had reached a favorable level she labored feverishly to fill out copy for *Testimony* No. 13. This was rushed through the press so that it could be finished before the Whites left Battle Creek and they could take copies with them. In fact, the October 22 issue of the *Review* was cut from the usual sixteen pages to eight, for part of the working force had been taken off the *Review* to work on Number 13, and also, so that all the *Review* employees could attend the important meetings being held.

[204] The shortened issue, dated October 22, two days before the Whites were to leave for the eastern tour, carried James White's back page note that "*Testimony* No. 13 is now ready."

"In This I Did Wrong"

Now let us go back to September, 1867, and *Testimony* No. 12, with its twelve-page article titled "The Health Institute." In this testimony Ellen White explained how, under pressure from the leaders in Battle Creek, she had prematurely released for publication *Testimony* No. 11, which called for a medical institution as an enterprise of the church, without the balancing counsels she should have put with it. Here is her statement, in later years sometimes misapplied:

I yielded my judgment to that of others and wrote what appeared in No. 11 in regard to the Health Institute, being unable then to give all I had seen. In this I did wrong. I must be allowed to know my own duty better than others can know it for me, especially concerning matters which God has revealed to me.

I shall be blamed by some for speaking as I now speak. Others will blame me for not speaking before. The disposition manifested to crowd the matter of the institute so fast has been one of the heaviest trials I have ever borne. If all who have used my testimony to move the brethren had been equally moved by it themselves, I should be better satisfied.... For the good of those at the head of the work, for the good of the cause and the

brethren, and to save myself great trials, I have freely spoken.—[Testimonies for the Church, 1:563, 564.](#)

Earlier in this statement she declared that “the relation which I sustain to this work demands of me an unfettered expression of my views. I speak freely and choose this medium [*Testimony* No. 12] to speak to all interested.”—[Ibid., 1:562, 563.](#)

[205] **Chapter 15—(1867-1868) Dreams, Testimony No. 13, and the Tour East**

When readers of *Testimony* No. 13 turned the cover to the introduction, they read:

Again I feel it my duty to speak to the Lord's people in great plainness. It is humiliating to me to point out the errors and rebellion of those who have long been acquainted with us and our work. I do it to correct wrong statements that have gone abroad concerning my husband and myself calculated to injure the cause, and as a warning to others. If we only were to suffer, I would be silent; but when the cause is in danger of reproach and suffering, I must speak, however humiliating.

Proud hypocrites will triumph over our brethren because they are humble enough to confess their sins. God loves His people who keep His commandments, and reproves them, not because they are the worst, but because they are the best people in the world. "As many as I love," says Jesus, "I rebuke and chasten."—*Ibid.*, 1:569.

[206] The entire pamphlet of eighty pages is an explanation and defense of the Whites' trying experience from December 19, 1866, the day Ellen White, against the judgment of her friends and brethren in Battle Creek, took her husband north to Wright, to the very day of its publication on Wednesday, October 23, 1867. It recounts ten sad months in the history of the church, as set forth in the preceding four chapters of this biographical account. Ellen saw these agonizing months as a time the great adversary was determined to seriously deter the work of God. In her one-page closing article, penned just before the pamphlet went to press, she declared:

It is the work of Satan to deceive God's people and lead them from the right course. He will leave no means

untried; he will come upon them where they are least guarded; hence the importance of fortifying every point.

The Battle Creek church did not mean to turn against us, they are as good a church as lives; but there is much at stake at Battle Creek, and Satan will bring all his artillery against them if by so doing he can hinder the work....

When my husband was inactive, and I was kept at home on his account, Satan was pleased, and no one was pressed by him to cast upon us such trials as are mentioned in the foregoing pages. But when we started out, December 19, 1866, he saw that there was a prospect of our doing something in the cause of Christ to the injury of his cause and that some of his deceptions upon the flock of God would be exposed.

He therefore felt called upon to do something to hinder us. And in no way could he so effectually do this as to lead our old friends at Battle Creek to withdraw their sympathy and cast burdens upon us. He took advantage of every unfavorable circumstance and drove matters as by steam power. But, thank God, he did not stop us nor fully crush us.—*Ibid.*, 1:628, 629.

Lessons Gained From Dreams

The narrative of their experience as published in *Testimonies*, volume 1, fills thirty-two of the sixty pages—comprising Number 13 in two major articles, “Sketch of Experience” and “Conflicts and Victory.” In the narrative, reference is made to several dreams, some experienced by Ellen White, others by J. N. Loughborough and John Matteson. These dreams proved helpful to Ellen as she endured the trying experiences through which she and her husband passed. Their inclusion in the text of *Testimony* No. 13 led her to present a short, helpful essay on dreams as a part of her introductory statement.

The multitude of dreams arise from the common things of life, with which the Spirit of God has nothing to do. There are also false dreams, as well as false

visions, which are inspired by the spirit of Satan. But dreams from the Lord are classed in the Word of God with visions and are as truly the fruits of the spirit of prophecy as visions. Such dreams, taking into the account the persons who have them and the circumstances under which they are given, contain their own proofs of their genuineness.—*Ibid.*, 1:569, 570 (see also *Testimonies for the Church*, 5:658).

While on their way to Battle Creek in mid-March, 1867, after an absence of three months and at a time when James White was eager to visit with the brethren and “rejoice with them in the work which God was doing for him” (*Testimonies for the Church*, 1:577)—as mentioned earlier—a dream of warning came to Ellen White.

Seemingly they were in their home in Battle Creek and looking out through the glass in the side door. She saw a company with stern faces “marching up to the house, two and two.” She recognized them and was about to receive them when the scene changed, taking on the appearance of a procession circling the house. The leader carried a cross and three times declared, “This house is proscribed. The goods must be confiscated. They have spoken against our holy order.” Ellen continued:

Terror seized me, and I ran through the house, out of the north door, and found myself in the midst of a company, some of whom I knew, but I dared not speak a word to them for fear of being betrayed. I tried to seek a retired spot where I might weep and pray without meeting eager, inquisitive eyes wherever I turned. I repeated frequently: “If I could only understand this! If they will tell me what I have said or what I have done!”

I wept and prayed much as I saw our goods confiscated. I tried to read sympathy or pity for me in the looks of those around me, and marked the countenances of several whom I thought would speak to me and comfort me if they did not fear that they would be observed by others. I made one attempt to escape from the crowd, but seeing that I was watched, I concealed my inten-

tions. I commenced weeping aloud, and saying: “If they would only tell me what I have done or what I have said!”—[Ibid., 1:578](#).

The first night they were back in Battle Creek she dreamed—as already noted [see page 169.]—of having her good clothes taken from her and rags substituted. When she saw the things taking place that were typified in these dreams, she was reminded of one scene in the vision of December 25, 1865. In this she was shown a cluster of trees standing near together, forming a circle: [208]

Running up over these trees was a vine which covered them at the top and rested upon them, forming an arbor. Soon I saw the trees swaying to and fro, as though moved by a powerful wind. One branch after another of the vine was shaken from its support until the vine was shaken loose from the trees except a few tendrils which were left clinging to the lower branches. A person then came up and severed the remaining clinging tendrils of the vine, and it lay prostrated upon the earth.—[Ibid., 1:583](#).

Her distress at seeing the vine prostrate on the ground was great. She was surprised that those who passed by offered no help to raise the vine up. In the vision she inquired why no one lifted the vine, replacing it in its original position. She continued the account of her vision:

Presently I saw an angel come to the apparently deserted vine. He spread out his arms and placed them beneath the vine and raised it so that it stood upright, saying: “Stand toward heaven, and let thy tendrils entwine about God. Thou art shaken from human support. Thou canst stand, in the strength of God, and flourish without it. Lean upon God alone, and thou shalt never lean in vain, or be shaken therefrom.” I felt inexpressible relief, amounting to joy, as I saw the neglected vine cared for. I turned to the angel and inquired what these things meant.

Said he: "Thou art this vine. All this thou wilt experience, and then, when these things occur, thou shalt fully understand the figure of the vine. God will be to thee a present help in time of trouble."

From this time I was settled as to my duty and never more free in bearing my testimony to the people.—*Ibid.*, 1:583, 584.

[209]

The Difficult Position of a Messenger for God

When in the critical situation in Battle Creek, with friends turning a cold shoulder, she moved ahead fearlessly, feeling the arm of the Lord sustaining her. In that strength she dealt with the evil reports and related what God had revealed to her regarding the dangers of some, and reproofing wrong courses of action. This placed her in an unenviable position. She made this explanation in *Testimony* No. 13:

When families and individuals were brought before me in vision, it was frequently the case that what was shown me in relation to them was of a private nature, reproofing secret sins. I have labored with some for months in regard to wrongs of which others knew nothing.

As my brethren see the persons sad, and hear them express doubts in regard to their acceptance with God, also feelings of despondency, they have cast censure upon me, as though I were to blame for their being in trial. Those who thus censured me were entirely ignorant of what they were talking about. I protested against persons' sitting as inquisitors upon my course of action. It has been the disagreeable work assigned me to reprove private sins.

Were I, in order to prevent suspicions and jealousy, to give a full explanation of my course, and make public that which should be kept private, I should sin against God and wrong the individuals. I have to keep private reproofs of private wrongs to myself, locked in my own breast. Let others judge as they may, I will never be-

tray the confidence reposed in me by the erring and repentant, or reveal to others that which should only be brought before the ones that are guilty.—[Ibid.](#), 1:584, 585.

Loughborough's Dream

At what proved to be near the close of the crisis, Loughborough was given a dream that, when related to the Whites on their way to Battle Creek on Monday, September 9, brought some courage to them. Here is his dream:

I dreamed that I, with a number of others, members of the Battle Creek church, was on board a train of cars. The cars were low—I could hardly stand erect in them. They were ill-ventilated, having an odor as though they had not been ventilated for months. The road over which they were passing was very rough, and the cars shook about at a furious rate, sometimes causing our baggage to fall off, and sometimes throwing off some of the passengers. We had to keep stopping to get on our passengers and baggage, or repair the track. We seemed to work some time to make little or no headway. We were indeed a sorry-looking set of travelers.

[210]

All at once we came to a turntable, large enough to take on the whole train. Brother and Sister White were standing there and, as I stepped off the train, they said: "This train is going all wrong. It must be turned square about." They both laid hold of cranks that moved the machinery turning the table and tugged with all their might.... I stood and watched till I saw the train beginning to turn, when I spoke out and said, "It moves," and laid hold to help them. I paid little attention to the train, we were so intent upon performing our labor of turning the table.

When we had accomplished this task, we looked up, and the whole train was transformed. Instead of the low, ill-ventilated cars on which we had been riding,

there were broad, high, well-ventilated cars, with large, clear windows, the whole trimmed and gilded in a most splendid manner, more elegant than any palace or hotel car I ever saw.

The track was level, smooth, and firm. The train was filling up with passengers whose countenances were cheerful and happy, yet wore an expression of assurance and solemnity. All seemed to express the greatest satisfaction at the change which had been wrought, and the greatest confidence in the successful passage of the train. Brother and Sister White were on board this time, their countenances lit up with holy joy.—[Ibid.](#), 1:601, 602.

The Glorious Fulfillment in Battle Creek

[211] Other dreams that helped to bring courage to the hearts of James and Ellen White are recorded in the same chapter, “Conflicts and Victory,” quoted above. What a thrilling experience to see the glorious fulfillment of these dreams! As explanations were made and sins fearlessly pointed out, changes came in the Battle Creek church. On Sabbath, October 19, 1867, twenty-seven young people responded to a call to give their hearts to Jesus. The scene as Uriah Smith described it was such as they had never before witnessed in Battle Creek ([The Review and Herald, October 22, 1867](#)). “It was good to be there,” he wrote.

On the following Monday morning forty-four more candidates and many church members gathered at the “baptizing place” in the Kalamazoo River, about two blocks from the church and *Review* office. James White baptized sixteen and Loughborough and Andrews baptized the other twenty-eight ([Ibid.](#), [October 29, 1867](#)). That evening, the members of the Battle Creek church assembled to give further consideration to the matter in the *Testimony* pamphlet, Number 13, then running through the press. They chose to make a public response as a church. It opened:

We esteem it a privilege as well as a duty to respond to the foregoing statements of Sister White. We have

been favored with an acquaintance of many years with the labors of these servants of the Lord. We have known something of their sacrifices in the past, and have been witness of the blessing of God that has attended their plain, searching, faithful testimony. We have long been convinced that the teachings of the Holy Spirit in these visions were indispensable to the welfare of the people who are preparing for translation into the kingdom of God.—[Testimonies for the Church, 1:609-610](#).

The lengthy statement mentioned the fruitage of positive and negative attitudes toward the visions. It referred to the affliction through which the Whites had passed, and then to the negative attitude of the church beginning with December, 1866:

We think that the action of Sister White in taking her sick husband on her northern tour, in December last, was dictated by the Spirit of God; and that we, in standing opposed to such action, did not move in the counsel of God. We lacked heavenly wisdom in this matter and thus erred from the right path.

We acknowledge ourselves to have been, at this time, lacking in that deep Christian sympathy that was called for by such great affliction, and that we have been too slow to see the hand of God in the recovery of Brother White. His labors and sufferings in our behalf entitled him to our warmest sympathy and support. But we have been blinded by Satan in respect to our own spiritual condition.—[Ibid., 1:610, 611](#).

[212]

Coming to the crux of the matter, the church confessed:

A spirit of prejudice respecting means came over us during the past winter, causing us to feel that Brother White was asking for means when he did not need it. We now ascertain that at this very time he was really in want, and we were wrong in that we did not inquire into the case as we should. We acknowledge that this

feeling was unfounded and cruel, though it was caused by misapprehension of the facts in the case.—[Ibid.](#), 1:611.

Accepting the reproof set forth in *Testimony* No. 13, the church members asked the forgiveness of God and His people. They acknowledged the special blessing of God during the past few days, declaring:

The labors of Brother and Sister White with us for a few days past have been attended with the signal blessing of God. Not only have deep and heartfelt confessions of backsliding and wrong been made, but solemn vows of repentance and of returning to God have accompanied them. The Spirit of God has set its seal to this work in such a manner that we cannot doubt.—[Ibid.](#)

The statement, drawn up by six of the most prominent men in the cause, was adopted unanimously by the church on Monday evening, October 21, 1867.

This experience of confession and revival in the Battle Creek church was climaxed with a communion service. James White officiated, with D. T. Bourdeau assisting on the one side and A. S. Hutchins on the other side. Smith reported that “the spirit of humility, union, and love, which these ordinances are calculated to promote, seemed to be present to a greater degree than we ever before witnessed on any like occasion.... It was a season of power, in which the Spirit of the Lord was copiously shed down upon us.”—[The Review and Herald, October 29, 1867.](#)

[213]

Off on the Eastern Tour

Wednesday, October 23, James and Ellen White, accompanied by D. T. Bourdeau, left for appointments with the churches in the East. Sabbath and Sunday they were at Roosevelt, New York, where J. N. Andrews joined them. It was soon seen at Roosevelt that much would be called for to get the work in full order, and the meetings were extended to be run through Monday. The Monday afternoon meeting, opening at two o'clock, continued till eight and turned

into a consecration meeting. James White wrote triumphantly yet wearily, “Nothing stands in the way of our testimony in this State.”

They found that copies of *Testimony* No. 13, which they had brought with them, explained matters “to the satisfaction of all and the relief of many who have suffered under false reports.” James commented:

As our real work is seen and better understood, and the condition of our worldly matters is known, there is no lack of sympathy on the part of the people. We fear they will do too much for us.... We choose to have no general action in our behalf. The idea generally entertained that we had considerable property has been in the way of our receiving that sympathy and help we sometimes needed. Now that this is removed, we shall lack neither.—[Ibid.](#), [November 5, 1867](#)

In another report, James White, who declared the Roosevelt meeting to have “closed gloriously,” triumphantly wrote:

The meeting held only three days. Could it have held a week a very much greater work might have been done. In the short time of three days, the very bottom of longstanding errors and wrongs was reached, confessions were made, sins were forgiven on earth, and we trust in Heaven, the brethren seemed resurrected to new life, backsliders were reclaimed, sinners were converted, and eight were baptized. Many more who attended the meeting from different parts of the State will go forward soon.—[Ibid.](#)

“The labors of Mrs. White and self,” he observed, “are too great in these meetings. This kind of work is the very hardest in all the gospel field.... We must have seasons of rest.” He called for such a breather between meetings—some of the dear believers had seen such periods as an opportune time to pour their woes into the ears of the Whites and seek advice on all kinds of questions. “We must have seasons of rest,” he urged, for “rest is a duty as much as labor, and we must be judges when to labor and when to rest.”—[Ibid.](#)

[214]

Labors in Maine

Their next appointments were in Maine. The first was for Norridgewock, some seventy-five miles north of Portland. There, delegates were being called together to organize the Maine Conference. J. N. Andrews, president of the General Conference, was with them. D. M. Canright had been doing good work there and at the time seemed to be the most prominent minister in that area. He reported the accomplishments of the meeting held from Friday through Sunday and emphasized the special value of the help given by both James and Ellen White:

Both of them fearlessly bore their testimony against wrongs, and against those who stood in the way of the work of God. It cut close and deep, and in some places where we did not look for it...

Never before did I so fully realize the great importance of the gifts in the church, and never did I have so strong faith in them as now. Many, nay, nearly all, felt the same. *Thank God for the testimonies.*—*Ibid.*, November 12, 1867

On Friday, November 1, the delegates set about to organize the Maine Conference. L. L. Howard was elected president. Actions were taken in regard to Systematic Benevolence, the Spirit of Prophecy, and health reform.

Through November and till mid-December James and Ellen White were in Maine, visiting the churches and, when possible, relatives and friends of former days.

J. N. Andrews and the Visions

Andrews, who had done considerable work in Maine, observed:

The labors of Brother and Sister White in Maine during the past two months have been productive of great good to many of the people of God. Plainness of speech, faithful reproof for wrongs, words of compassion and encouragement for the trembling souls who feel their

need of the Saviour, and for the erring who seek in humility to put away their faults—these are things that have entered largely into their labors.

The testimony of Sister White, reproving wrongs in the case of many individuals that she had seen in vision, has been borne with great faithfulness, and with the most excellent effect.—[Ibid., December 24, 1867](#)

Andrews described the experience of those who had not been acquainted with Ellen White and her special gift. He stated that “even those who have felt the greatest opposition to the reproofs they received have, with scarcely an exception, on calm and serious reflection, acknowledged that they were justly reproved,” and accepted her messages to them. Andrews observed thoughtfully:

I have had great opportunity to judge of the truthfulness of these testimonies by witnessing their faithful and exact delineations of character in a very large number of cases, presenting very widely dissimilar features. I have every reason to know that these things were almost entirely unknown to Sister White, and in some cases absolutely unknown, only as given her by the Spirit of God. Yet a most perfect and exact representation of the faults, as well as the virtues, of many persons has thus been given, so that even those who know them best have said they could not so well have described them.—[Ibid.](#)

It was this type of evidence that convinced many of the integrity of the visions given to Ellen White.

At Washington, New Hampshire, on the Homeward Journey

[The account of the visit to Washington, New Hampshire, is based on Ellen White’s report in [Testimonies for the Church, 1:655-661](#), the W. C. White account in *The Review and Herald*, February 11, 1937, and the Vesta J. Farnsworth account in her letter to Guy C. Jorgensen in DF 475. The latter was a presentation based on information given her by Eugene Farnsworth, her husband.]

[216] Through the *Review* of December 3, appointments were announced for the Whites and Andrews along their homeward journey. They would be at Topsham, Maine, December 14 and 15; at Washington, New Hampshire, December 21 and 22; and West Enosburg, Vermont, on December 28 and 29. Washington, New Hampshire, could be reached only by sleigh or carriage. To the *Review* announcement, Andrews appended an interesting note that pictures the circumstances to those not familiar with the region.

We expect that these will be large gatherings of the friends of the cause, especially of the old friends of Brother and Sister White; and it will be necessary for those who attend to come prepared to take care of themselves as far as possible. Especially will this be necessary at the Washington meeting, where those who can entertain are few.

Brethren, come with your provisions, your blankets, quilts, comfortables, buffalo robes, and your straw ticks to be filled at the place of meeting. Barn room can be provided for lodgings for healthy men. Rooms in dwelling houses can be procured of those who are not Sabbathkeepers for healthy women. Invalids who cannot enjoy such accommodations, and also small children, should remain at home and not burden these meetings, especially the one at Washington.—[Testimonies for the Church, 1, November 5, 1867.](#)

The traveling workers who signed the appointment reached Washington, and the C. K. Farnsworth home at the edge of the Millan pond, on Friday afternoon, close to the beginning of the Sabbath ([Ibid., 1:655](#)). Sabbath and Sunday meetings were held in the Christian Meetinghouse—soon to become Seventh-day Adventist property—tendered to the Sabbathkeeping Adventists for the occasion.

One member of the Washington church, W. H. Ball, was not in harmony with his brethren. He openly opposed Ellen White, the testimonies, and other points of faith ([Ibid.](#)). This had a blighting influence on the whole church, and had discouraged the young

people from seeking fellowship in the church. In fact, the Sabbath school had been discontinued. Andrews and James and Ellen White labored with Ball. She appealed to him, faithfully yet tenderly. Andrews showed Ball his great wrong, with weeping. Then a break came. As he saw he had been fighting against God, Ball began to confess, a work that continued until he was a fully changed man.

Continued Evidences

[217]

Monday, December 23, the meeting was held during the daylight hours in the William Farnsworth home. Farnsworth was the man who in 1844 had risen to his feet in the Washington, New Hampshire, church and declared that he was going to keep God's Sabbath. Others followed him in his decision. Now there was considerable backsliding among the company of believers in the Washington area. Farnsworth had secretly gone back to the use of tobacco. One of his sons, Eugene, in later years told the story of that Monday meeting in their home, which commenced in the morning and continued for five hours.

That morning Ellen White had the meeting, and she addressed personally one after another of those assembled in the room. Newell Mead and his wife were among the first. Both had suffered great affliction, and as Ellen White spoke to them she declared that they "had been passing through dark waters" until "the billows had nearly gone over their heads." She assured them that God loved them, and that if they would only trust their ways to Him, He would bring them forth from the furnace of affliction purified.

A young woman, "beloved of God, but held in servile bondage," was counseled that in her married life she must maintain her individuality and not yield her convictions to follow the will of an unconverted husband.

"She did run well for a season; what did hinder her?" was the message of the angel, given through Ellen to another young woman who had backslidden. Her condition was shown to be a result of her association with unconsecrated youth.

Tender words were addressed to a man who had been deemed by the church members as unworthy of fellowship with them. "God

who seeth hearts” had been better pleased with his deportment than with the lives of some who had held him outside, she declared.

[218] Sitting in the group was 19-year-old Eugene Farnsworth, one of William’s twenty-two children. As he heard Ellen White addressing one and then another with messages indicating that she had insights others did not have, an idea came to him. He said in his heart, I wish she would tackle my dad. He knew what most others did not know—that his father had slipped back to the use of tobacco. Their farm was quite isolated, and William did his chewing of tobacco on the sly, but Eugene had seen him spit tobacco juice into the snow and quickly scuff it out of sight with his boot. As these thoughts were forming in Eugene’s head Ellen White turned and addressed William:

I saw that this brother is a slave to tobacco. But the worst of the matter is that he is acting the part of a hypocrite, trying to deceive his brethren into thinking that he has discarded it, as he promised to do when he united with the church.

As Eugene saw these covered sins dealt with faithfully by Ellen White, he knew he was witnessing a manifestation of the prophetic gift. When she had finished with her messages to different ones in the room and there was an opportunity for a response, one after another stood and acknowledged the truthfulness of the message, and with repentance and confession yielded himself or herself anew to God. Then the parents made confessions to their children. This touched the hearts of the young people who had been watching and listening, and whose hearts were being moved by the messages and invitations not only of Ellen but of James White and Andrews.

On Wednesday morning, Christmas Day, a meeting was held, and thirteen children and young people expressed their determination to be Christians. One of those young people, Orville Farnsworth, later recounted the happenings of that day:

I went with some of my sisters to exchange Christmas gifts with our cousins Fred and Rose Mead. Because of the meetings the previous evening, we were

delayed one day in giving our humble presents to each other. Fred had been a rather wild boy, but he was present in the morning meeting, and he with his sister had taken their stand for Christ. Now they felt a burden for souls, and we were invited into Fred's room, where, after an earnest appeal, we knelt together by his bed, and I gave my heart to the Lord.

Four young people were not present Christmas morning, but in response to the appeals of their young friends they too gave their hearts to the Lord, making eighteen whose lives were changed during the five eventful days at Washington. Some of them wanted to be baptized without delay; a hole was sawed in the ice on nearby Millan Pond, and with joy they went forward with this rite. Others waited till spring and warmer weather. Nine of the eighteen became church workers in the cause of God, some filling prominent positions. Among them were Eugene, Elmer, and Orville Farnsworth, and their sister Loretta. The latter married A. T. Robinson and led out in developing the Bible instructor ministry. The two Mead children made their contribution, Rose in city mission work and Fred as a literature evangelist leader, and missionary to Africa.

[219]

On to Vermont and West

Thursday morning, December 26, James and Ellen White and John Andrews hastened on to northern Vermont, where a conference was to begin in West Enosburg Friday evening, in the church close to the A. C. and D. T. Bourdeau homes. Meetings continued through Monday, December 30. A. C. Bourdeau reported in the *Review* that in the evening after the Sabbath 150 participated in the "ordinances of the Lord's house." His report of the last meeting, held Monday afternoon, offers a vivid picture of evangelism in New England in midwinter. Wrote Bourdeau:

Monday morning the meeting commenced with a good interest. The good work progressed till two o'clock P.M., when by request of Brother White, six long seats near the pulpit were vacated, and then filled

with those who during these meetings had decided to make a new start for the kingdom. Then those who felt it their duty to be baptized were requested to arise upon their feet, and forty-two arose, twenty-seven of whom were not church members, but mostly individuals who at these meetings had become deeply convicted that they should make a full surrender of themselves to the Lord.

These were examined one by one, and received into the church by vote as candidates for baptism; and just before the setting of the sun, when the thermometer stood at 20 degrees below zero, we went down to the branch nearly one mile from the meetinghouse, where I stepped down from the ice into a clear stream of water, and baptized eleven, among whom were my aged and respected father and mother. This was a solemn yet a blessed scene to nearly all the beholders. It is expected that quite a number of the candidates will be baptized in this place next Sabbath.—[The Review and Herald, January 21, 1868.](#)

[220]

Back Home in Battle Creek

Back in Battle Creek on Sabbath, January 11, James White took the morning service and preached on the parable of the lost sheep. In the afternoon Andrews and Ellen White spoke. Sunday morning Ellen had the meeting. She gave “an account of absorbing interest of what she had seen relative to the view given to Moses of the land of Canaan, typical and antitypical” ([Ibid., January 14, 1868](#)). James White reported concerning their eastern tour:

We have, in this time [nearly three months], traveled by railroad 3,200 miles, and by private conveyance 600. Have held 140 meetings, and preached 60 times, and have spoken more or less in nearly all these meetings. Mrs. White has spoken from half an hour to two hours in more than 100 of these meetings. We have assisted in the ordination of four ministers, and the dedication of

one house of worship. Have presided in the examination of 150 candidates for baptism, and have baptized 18....

We have returned to this dear people, weary and worn, where we share their full sympathy, and where Mrs. White and self are heard as in former days.

We leave for our good home in Greenville the fifteenth, where we hope to hear from friends.—[Ibid.](#)

No question, James and Ellen White were back in the harness again. What a year it had been!

[221]

Chapter 16—(1868) Bearing Testimony by Voice and Pen

During the first half of 1868 James and Ellen White resided at their Greenville home, going out almost every weekend to the churches within a day's drive. Through the week Ellen's time was occupied in writing, and James's in both writing and working the farm. J. N. Andrews, General Conference president, who had been with them during November and December on the eastern tour, continued his ministry with them in northern Michigan until early March.

Then Dr. M. G. Kellogg, who had resided in California for eight years, made a visit. Just before coming to Greenville, he had received his diploma as a physician and surgeon from Dr. Trall's Medical School, at Florence Heights, New Jersey ([Ibid., April 28, 1868](#)). The roomy White home in Greenville was becoming a sort of mecca in northern Michigan. The visit was "most agreeable," wrote James White. "The harmony between what the Lord has revealed relative to this subject, and science, has been a theme of most interesting conversation, and mutual profit."—[Ibid.](#)

Having been reared in Maine, James and Ellen were not deterred by the cold of winter in their day-to-day activities, or in their travels by sleigh or carriage. To plow through heavy snowdrifts was considered routine. Of one such experience, more severe than most, Ellen wrote from Greenville to Edson, who was studying in Battle Creek, on March 9:

We are at home again. We are thankful for this. Thursday we rode sixty miles. The snow was very deep, in many places nearly as high as the houses.

[222]

While trying to get the sleigh over a fallen tree the reach [coupling pole] broke and we were down. We had to get out in the deep snow, unload the sleigh, and

lift the box off the runners. A man came along in the woods just then and helped us toggle up the sleigh. We lashed it together with straps and went on. We stood in the snow more than half an hour.

Previous to this, about ten o'clock, it commenced snowing, and snow continued to fall until twelve. Large flakes coming very fast! We never saw it on this wise before. Inches of snow were piled upon us and around us in the sleigh. To make it still more uncomfortable the rain began to come. But we rode on, every hour bringing us nearer home, and we were glad to lessen the distance.

When within four miles of home we were so unfortunate as to enter upon a road open for several miles but entirely blocked up and impassable at the other end. The horses went up to their backs in drifts. We feared their getting down. After passing through fields, we were told there was no possibility of getting through, and had to go back. As we passed over drifts we got out, lightened the sleigh, and again plowed through the snow, while it was steadily raining. After this we had no very special difficulties. We arrived home about dark.—[Letter 8, 1868.](#)

Not all trips in February and March were so unpleasant and hazardous, but neither were all the discomforts in travel. In those pioneering days, as the Whites were entertained in the homes of the believers they found straw mattresses on the beds—large cloth bags called “ticks” filled with straw of varying quality and quantity. The back page of the *Review* in early March carried a curious note titled “Straw Is Cheap,” signed by James White. It read, in part:

In farming communities straw is cheap, and all those who lodge the weary and worn laborers in the Lord’s vineyard can afford to furnish a suitable amount of the very best of straw to make their beds as comfortable as straw can make it.

[223]

But it is too often the case that the preacher is deprived of a full amount of good straw on which to rest his weary limbs. The bedstead is frequently of the sort with strips of boards across it, nearly one foot apart, upon which is placed a scanty straw tick, both in length and breadth, partly filled with straw that has been worn more or less for a year, until it is broken to chowder, and sinks down between the slats, so that the restless occupant can count the slats by the distinct pains he feels in his weary body.—[The Review and Herald, March 10, 1868.](#)

He called for bed ticks liberal in dimensions, filled with the proper amount of good, clean, sweet straw. He noted that “oat straw is better than wheat or rye.” After describing uncomfortable beds he had encountered, he appealed:

Brethren, straw is cheap. Let not the worn and weary pilgrims who visit you to labor for your good lack good rest for the want of a suitable amount of good clean straw.—[Ibid.](#)

When asked why they worked so diligently, often suffering hardship, they answered, “The love of Christ constraineth us.... Souls for whom Christ died seemed of such inexpressible worth that self was forgotten. Ease, pleasure, and health even, were made secondary.”—[Letter 3, 1869.](#)

The Almost Fatal Accident of Seneca King

The highly respected Adventist farmer Seneca King lived not far from the little White farm in Greenville. James White, through a note on the back page of the March 17 *Review*, informed the Battle Creek church of a tragic accident that almost cost King his life. The note opened:

Our dear Brother Seneca King, as I write, lies upon my lounge with a badly fractured skull and cut face. His

horses ran away with him.—[The Review and Herald](#),
[March 17, 1868](#).

Word of the accident had reached the White home a few hours before, as a neighbor hurried to call a physician to attend to the unconscious man, found lying by the roadside. Taking Brother and Sister Strong with him, White drove the team to the place where King lay. He describes the accident:

He had just become conscious where he was, and what the matter was. We wrapped his head in cloths, and his body in blankets, and brought him here.... To see the hole in his head, and know that the skull is pressed upon the brain, gives one the idea that he is fatally injured. But he is sensible, and quite comfortable. I will write tomorrow. Will you, as a church, remember him before the Lord?—[Ibid](#).

[224]

In her diary that day Ellen White went more into detail:
Wednesday, March 11, 1868.

Arose at half past four. Wrote eight pages, but have severe headache. Lay down to rest about eleven o'clock. Something woke me. My husband said, "I have bad news. Brother King has been thrown from his carriage and hurt badly." Dinner was ready. Brother Strong ran to the woods for our horses. A man brought us the news on his way for the doctor. We had no appetite to eat.

Took comfortables and blankets and rode as fast as we could to the place of the accident. We found Brother King in a terrible condition, covered with blood, his head terribly mangled. Could not determine the extent of the injuries until he was more thoroughly examined. He had just become conscious.

We proposed taking him to our house. We wished to move him before reaction took place. We bundled him up, put him in the sleigh, and Brother Strong supported him. We came as fast as we could. The physician had

not yet arrived. Brother Strong started carefully washing his wounds and cutting away the hair. There was a bad gash over the eye, but the most terrible wound was on the forepart of his head above the left eye. There the first skull was broken through. The wound was four inches long.

Physician Martin worked over him some time. Feared to touch the worst wound. Sent for an older doctor. His partner did not come till dark. Then a severe process of probing and picking out small pieces of broken bone commenced. Brother King frequently exclaimed, "It seems as though you would take my life."

This over, he was put to bed and seemed more comfortable. The doctor charged us to give him entire rest, to avoid all excitement. He is far from being out of danger. With care, he may recover from all this. His system is in a good condition to rally if the skull is not in a condition to depress the brain.—[Manuscript 14, 1868](#).

[225] The next morning she recorded in her diary that King rested well through the night, and James White added to his note to the *Review*:

Brother King seems to be doing well. Rested well last night. Surgeon thinks the inner layer of his skull not broken.—[Ibid., March 17, 1868](#)

During King's recovery, Thomas Wilson, living nearby, became dangerously ill with erysipelas. A telegraphic message sent to Battle Creek brought Dr. Lay to Greenville for the weekend. The time he was at the White home afforded an opportunity for a profitable and pleasant visit in which the interests of the Health Institute were discussed.

Mr. and Mrs. Strong were staying in the White home at this time, and Strong became King's nurse. Also in the home was the youthful John Corliss, whose help was highly esteemed. He was to become a strong worker in the cause of God. For nearly three weeks King was tenderly cared for, and then on March 29 he was able to

return to his home, family, and farm. Within a very few years he was an influential man in the cause, his counsel being much appreciated, especially by James White.

Ellen White's Continued Ministry as God's Messenger

Through all of this Ellen White continued her ministry, writing incessantly, and preaching on weekends. She could not allow the many interruptions to deter her in her writing. Insofar as they could arrange it, others assisted in caring for the home and cooking the meals, but many times this burden fell on her, in addition to writing. The story of one such day is told in her diary for Tuesday, January 28:

Brother Corliss helped me prepare breakfast. Everything we touched was frozen. All things in our cellar were frozen. We prepared frozen turnips and potatoes. After prayer, Brother Corliss went into the woods near Thomas Wilson's to get wood. James, accompanied by Brother Andrews, went to Orleans, expecting to return to dinner.

I baked eight pans of gems, swept rooms, washed dishes, helped Willie put snow in boiler, which requires many tubsful. We have no well water or cistern. Arranged my clothes press [closet]. Felt weary; rested a few minutes. Got dinner for Willie and me. Just as we got through, my husband and Brother Andrews drove up. Had had no dinner. I started cooking again. Soon got them something to eat. Nearly all day has thus been spent—not a line written. I feel sad about this. Am exceedingly weary. My head is tired.—[Manuscript 12, 1868](#).

[226]

But most days she was able to do some writing, and some days, a great deal. The comprehensive vision given to her in Rochester in 1865 had set before her the lives and experience of scores of individuals and families. She did not remember at any one time all that, or who, had been shown her. But as she visited churches on

the eastern tour in late 1867, and then in northern Michigan in the early months of 1868, and looked into the faces of those she met, their cases flashed clearly on her mind and were the basis for the messages she bore orally or in writing. Thus it was when she was at Bushnell in July, 1867, mentioned in chapter 13. She had written of this phenomenon earlier in her statement published in 1860:

After I come out of vision I do not at once remember all that I have seen, and the matter is not so clear before me until I write, then the scene rises before me as was presented in vision, and I can write with freedom.

Sometimes the things which I have seen are hid from me after I come out of vision, and I cannot call them to mind until I am brought before a company where the vision applies, then the things which I have seen come to my mind with force. I am just as dependent upon the Spirit of the Lord in relating or writing a vision, as in having the vision. It is impossible for me to call up things which have been shown me unless the Lord brings them before me at the time that He is pleased to have me relate or write them.—[Spiritual Gifts, 2:292, 293.](#)

Frequently, after Ellen had presented orally to individuals what had been shown to her, the ones addressed would request her to write out for them what she had been shown. They wished to be able to refer to it as they attempted to bring their lives into line with God's will. James White wrote of this a few weeks after their return to Greenville from the eastern tour.

[227]

We wished to say to those friends who have requested Mrs. White to write out personal testimonies, that in this branch of her labor she has about two months' work on hand.—[The Review and Herald, March 3, 1868.](#)

He added:

On our eastern tour she improved all her spare time in writing such testimonies. She even wrote many of them in meeting while others were preaching and speaking.—[Ibid.](#)

Now that they were back at their Greenville home, she kept very close to this writing. Her husband gave some interesting insights:

Since her return she has injured her health and strength in confining herself too closely to this work. She usually writes from twenty to forty pages each day. And yet she has two months' work of this kind before her. Our postage bill is about \$2.00 per week. Postage stamps are current [can be used] in Greenville, and we never feel hard when those who receive testimonies send a quantity.

As Mrs. White wishes to retain a copy of these testimonies, she has in many cases had the double task of making two copies. But for the future this double labor must be avoided, by the return of her first copy after those who receive it have taken one, or by employing some one or ones to make a second copy before the first one is sent off.—[Ibid.](#)

Mrs. Strong gave her some help in copying testimonies in Greenville, and J. N. Andrews and employees at the *Review* office also assisted. Concerning the Christmas Day vision in 1865, at Rochester, James White declared that she had written “several thousands of pages” based upon it ([Ibid., June 16, 1868](#)). As she and her husband were able to get into the field in 1867 and in early 1868, she met many for whom light had been given her in that vision. This was so in connection with the three-week-long trip they made in February, 1868, with Andrews, visiting communities as far east of Greenville as Tuscola ([Ibid., March 10, 1868](#)) and Tittabawassee ([Ibid., February 18, 1868](#)).

This was largely new territory for the proclamation of the third angel's message. Our people are all “young in the truth,” wrote Ellen White of them, “but wholehearted, noble, enterprising, interested

to hear” ([Letter 4, 1868](#)). They had much to gain in experience and much to learn. Her diary written on this trip contains numerous references to writing personal testimonies and to delivering such orally in personal contacts and in some of the meetings held. The entry reporting Sabbath, February 29, activities yields a typical picture.

Attended meeting at Tuscola. My husband spoke in the morning. Only in the Lord should believers marry. In the afternoon, I spoke upon the tongue being an unruly member. I spoke two hours, then stepped into Brother Palmer’s. Ate a graham biscuit and a couple of apples and hastened back to the meeting. [Knowing she was to speak in the afternoon, she had skipped dinner, choosing not to eat before an important speaking engagement.] A conference meeting was in session.

I arose and spoke one hour to individuals. I had testimony for reproofing individual wrongs. We had an interesting, exciting time. Brother Fisher was encouraged and comforted. He had been passing through a terrible struggle, giving up tobacco, intoxicating drinks, and hurtful indulgences. He was very poor and high, proud spirited. He had made a great effort to overcome.... Some felt exceedingly bad because I brought out these cases before others. I was sorry to see this spirit.—[Manuscript 13, 1868](#).

She wrote more in detail in a letter to Edson, noting that she spoke to several, relating testimony I had for them. Spoke one hour, comforting some, reproofing others, but the testimony was more especially to impress upon those particularly in fault through the sin of hasty speaking, jesting, joking, and laughing. All this was wrong and detrimental to their growth in grace.

Some felt exceedingly tried, especially Sister Doude. She came to see me in the morning, accompanied by her husband. She was crying and said to me, “You have killed me, you have killed me clean off. You have killed

me.” Said I, “That is just what I hoped the message I bore would do.”

I found their greatest difficulty was that the testimony was given before others and that if I had sent it to them alone, it would have been received all right. Pride was hurt, pride was wounded terribly. We talked a while, and they both cooled down wonderfully and said they felt differently.

[229]

Brother Doude accused me of violating Scripture by not telling the fault between them and me alone. We told him this scripture did not touch the case. There was no trespass here against me. That the case before us was one of them that had been mentioned by the apostles, those who sin, reprove before all that others may fear.—[Letter 6, 1868](#).

“We did not lighten the burden,” she noted in her diary, “for all this development only showed how much she needed the reproof.”—[Manuscript 13, 1868](#).

The *Testimony* pamphlets that every few months came from the press put into permanent form the counsel and instruction of a practical nature that would benefit the church. Such was the case with Number 14, advertised in the *Review and Herald* of April 7 ([Testimonies for the Church, 1:630-712](#)). Number 15 followed in less than two months. In the meantime the General Conference session was held in Battle Creek, beginning May 12.

The 1868 General Conference Session

James and Ellen White left Greenville for Battle Creek on Friday, April 24, traveling by way of Wright and Monterey. Both of them preached, and James baptized along the way. The conference session opened May 12. “The business sessions throughout,” reported J. H. Waggoner, “were largely attended, and characterized by a spirit of union and an earnest desire to advance the cause.” He added, “Perhaps we have never held a conference where more perfect harmony prevailed. In this we have a complete vindication of our organization” ([The Review and Herald, May 26, 1868](#)).

The ever-broadening business of the conference was attended to. Provision was authorized for some person to assist the Whites as an amanuensis. On Sabbath morning, when the Adventist community and the delegates were present, a resolution was passed expressing the feelings of the congregation:

[230]

Resolved, That we consider it a duty, as it is truly a pleasure, to express our heartfelt gratitude to our kind heavenly Father for restoring to us our beloved Brother and Sister White so good a degree of health and strength. We recognize their calling of God, to an important sphere of labor in the great work of the third angel's message, to instruct, to warn, and to reprove; and we hereby unitedly pledge to them our sympathies and our prayers in the discharge of their arduous duties.—[Ibid.](#)

Andrews was continued as General Conference president, and James White was put on the General Conference Committee of three.

In meetings held in Battle Creek immediately after the General Conference session, Dr. R. T. Trall, of Florence Heights, New Jersey, gave a series of lectures on health. In the main these were well received ([Pacific Union Recorder, June 19, 1913](#)).

The Decision to Publish Personal Testimonies

James and Ellen White stayed on in Battle Creek for several days following the session, during which time *Testimony* No. 15 was published. In his notice of the ninety-six-page booklet, James stated that “it contains matter of the deepest interest to the people of God everywhere.”—[Ibid., June 2, 1868](#). It represented a shift in the policies that up to this time had been followed in publishing the testimonies. Ellen White had explained this in her introduction to *Testimony* No. 14, published just two months earlier. She announced her decision to publish some testimonies addressed to individuals or families, and referred to her experience during the preceding five months, November, 1867, to March, 1868:

During this time I have written many personal testimonies, and for many persons whom I have met in our

field of labor during the past five months I have testimonies still to write as I find time and have strength, but just what my duty is in relation to these personal testimonies has long been a matter of no small anxiety to me. With a few exceptions I have sent them to the ones to whom they related and have left these persons to dispose of them as they chose. The results have been various:

Some have thankfully received the testimonies and have responded to them in a good spirit and have profited by them. These have been willing that their brethren should see the testimonies and have freely and fully confessed their faults.—[Testimonies for the Church, 1:630](#).

[231]

Others, she declared, had acknowledged the testimonies to them to be true, but then had laid them aside, making little change in the life. Of these messages she stated:

These testimonies related more or less to the churches to which these persons belonged, who could also have been benefited by them. But all this was lost in consequence of these testimonies' being held private.—[Ibid., 1:630, 631](#).

There was a third class who rebelled against the testimonies and had shown “bitterness, anger, and wrath.” On the other hand, there were those who, having seen some of the personal testimonies published, as was the case with Number 6 and a few elsewhere, felt she should publish all personal testimonies. “But on account of their number,” she wrote, “this would be hardly possible, and it would be improper from the fact that some of them relate to sins which need not, and should not, be made public.” Then she declared the course she intended to follow:

I have fully decided that many of these personal testimonies should be published, as they all contain more or less reproof and instruction which apply to hundreds or thousands of others in similar condition.

These should have the light which God has seen fit to give which meets their cases. It is a wrong to shut it away from them by sending it to one person or to one place, where it is kept as a light under a bushel.—[Ibid.](#), 1:631, 632.

Aiding her in making this far-reaching decision was a dream that she described:

A grove of evergreens was presented before me. Several, including myself, were laboring among them. I was bidden to closely inspect the trees and see if they were in a flourishing condition. I observed that some were being bent and deformed by the wind, and needed to be supported by stakes.

[232]

I was carefully removing the dirt from the feeble and dying trees to ascertain the cause of their condition. I discovered worms at the roots of some. Others had not been watered properly and were dying from drought. The roots of others had been crowded together to their injury.

My work was to explain to the workmen the different reasons why these trees did not prosper. This was necessary from the fact that trees in other grounds were liable to be affected as these had been, and the cause of their not flourishing and how they should be cultivated and treated must be made known.—[Ibid.](#), 1:632.

The Vision of June 12, 1868

Friday evening, June 12, the Whites attended the prayer meeting in Battle Creek. The Adventist community, anticipating that the Whites would speak, filled the meetinghouse. James wrote of it in his report for the *Review*:

Sabbath evening a large congregation assembled. Mrs. White spoke freely and very solemnly till near ten. She spoke to the young generally, and addressed several personally. And while [she was] speaking from

the platform in front of the pulpit, in the most solemn and impressive manner, the power of God came upon her, and in an instant she fell upon the carpet in vision. Many witnessed this manifestation for the first time, with astonishment and perfect satisfaction that it was the work of God. The vision lasted twenty minutes. No one was expecting it.—[The Review and Herald, June 16, 1868.](#)

Nellie Sisley Starr recounted [Reported stenographically by Arthur L. White and Frieda B. White, his wife, at the oakland, california, camp meeting, June 30, 1931. DF 496D.] at a camp meeting in California in 1931 what she saw and heard that Friday evening in Battle Creek. About the year 1864, she and her widowed mother and brothers and sisters had come from England and settled in Convis, Michigan, some thirteen miles from Battle Creek. She and her mother were present that Friday evening in 1868. She noted carefully what took place. When James and Ellen White came into the meetinghouse they took their places on the lower platform in front of the pulpit. James White opened the meeting, taking about ten minutes, and then he said, “I know that it is Mrs. White whom you want to hear, so we will turn the meeting over to her.”

Then she began to talk to us. We anticipated some reports of the meetings that had been held. Instead she said, “I am so impressed with the thought that we are not making the preparation for translation that we ought to be making.” ...She talked to us earnestly for over half an hour right along that line. She felt that we were allowing the world to come in a little. She warned us greatly about that. “Don’t let the world come in. We are pilgrims and strangers. We want to live for the future. Let us make the preparation necessary for heaven.”

[233]

She walked back and forth and talked to us, and as she walked, she fell right down. She fell down gently. She went down as if an angel’s hands were under her... We thought she had fainted, but Brother White said, “Cause yourselves no alarm. Wife has not fainted, but has fallen in vision.”

I wish I could describe the feeling that we all had. It was perfect quietness; even the children made no noise.... It seemed as though heaven was settling down upon us and closing us in.... Sister White lay perfectly quiet and unconscious. Oh, the feeling that was sensed in that building. Brother White said, "There may be some in the congregation that may have doubts in regard to my wife's inspiration. If there are any such we would be glad to have them come forward and try the physical tests given in the Bible. It may help some of you."

I knew my mother had some doubts. We had come over from England and she had come from the Church of England, and she could not quite understand it, so I said, "Mother, let us go right up and stand right by her head." In the meantime, Brother White had knelt down, and he raised Sister White's head and shoulders on his knees.

Others came up, and there were two unusually large men. They stood one on each side of her shoulders. "Now," Brother White said, "we all saw Sister White fall; we know she lost her natural strength. Now we will see if she has supernatural strength." She was lying with her hands gently folded over her chest. She was lying quietly and looking up in the corner of the building. Her eyes were open, with a pleasant expression on her face. Nothing unnatural or unusual.

[234]

Brother White said to these large men, "Take her hands apart. You have two hands to her one. Just pull her hands apart." So they tried. They pulled and pulled till some of us got anxious that they would hurt her. Brother White said, "Don't be anxious; she is safe in God's keeping, and you can pull until you are perfectly satisfied." They said, "We are satisfied now. We don't need to pull anymore."

He said, "Take up one finger at a time." That was impossible. They could not do so much as move a finger. It seemed like a block of granite. There was no change in appearance, but it just couldn't be moved. We

looked to see if her eyes were closed and see if she was breathing. Then she took her hands apart and waved her hands. We said, "We will see when she comes out of vision that she has been flying."

Brother White said to these men, "Now hold her." I think they thought they could. They grasped her by the wrists, but they could not retard the motion. It looked like any child could hold her, but she went on just the same.

Elder White said, "Now we are satisfied with that. Now we must see if her eyelids will close." There was a large Rochester [kerosene] lamp close by on the stand. He removed the shade and put this light right in front of her eyes. We thought she would move her eyes to protect them. She didn't. She was perfectly unconscious.

The expression of her countenance changed at times. Sometimes she looked pleased. At other times we could see that there was something distressing her, but the eyelids did not close.

"Now," Brother White said, "we must see if there is any breath in her body." There didn't seem to be any. Everything looked all right, only there was no breath. Brother White said, "Now we will send out and get a mirror, and we will test it." So someone went to the next door and got a mirror, and it was held close to her face, but no moisture gathered. So there was no breathing....

She spoke several sentences. I don't remember the words; in fact, I cannot give you the exact words for any part of it. I will express what she saw, but I must express it in my own language. It is all I have. When she came out of vision, Brother White said,

"The congregation have been so interested, I know they will want to know something of what you have seen."

[235]

She said, "I will gladly tell them."

Brother White helped her up; then she talked for about half an hour. She answered a few questions, but mostly made her own statements. When she was taken into vision she seemed to be taken down the stream of time. She spoke about the new earth. She saw the people of God saved in their everlasting home.

Then she said, "Oh, I wish I could describe it, tell even a little of it. I have no language to describe it. If you could have been there and have seen what I saw, you would never allow anything on earth to tempt you to live so that there would be danger of losing eternal life."

I suppose she saw the people of God, perhaps in their last struggles, passing through the closing scenes of this world's history and then down out of that into their peaceful home.

She told us when she came out of vision that the scene was so glorious, so bright, that when she came back to earth she could see nothing. I have never forgotten her words in regard to that.

"Now," she said, "you may not understand why I could not see. But," she said, "you turn your face toward the sun for a while and then turn away. Heaven is brighter than the sun." While her eyesight was not impaired permanently, yet for a long time she could not see clearly after coming out of vision. We were pleased to know that.

She tried to describe it... Oh, to be there, and what counsel she gave us in regard to preparation. "Now," she said, "there is another scene that passed before me that I would rather not tell, only that it may be a warning to you." She said, "I saw the great host of the lost. Oh, what a sight. The terror and agony of soul that was on those people. I looked upon them and I saw here and there all among them some of our own people, some of the Seventh-day Adventists scattered here and there."

I remember this, I remember that their agony was far greater than that of the others. They knew what they

had lost and what they might have had had they been faithful. I wish I could tell you what she told us, but I cannot describe it as I would like to because I haven't language to. But it made an impression on my mind that I have never lost.—DF 496d, "Camp Meeting Talks," 1931.

[236]

Impressions of Other Eyewitnesses

Uriah Smith was quick to report in the next Tuesday's *Review* the deep impression that Friday evening meeting made upon others:

The church in Battle Creek have again been graciously favored with the presence of the Lord. Brother and Sister White returned from Monterey, June 10, according to previous arrangement, to spend another Sabbath with this church. At the evening meeting commencing the Sabbath, a large congregation assembled at the house of worship. After some timely and close remarks by Brother White, Sister White arose to free her mind from a great burden resting upon it for this people.

Wrongs were faithfully pointed out and reproved. Two personal testimonies for persons in the congregation were read, followed by most stirring appeals and exhortations. And while Sister White was thus speaking, reaching a point in her remarks of most intense solemnity, instantly, and unexpectedly to all present, she was taken off in vision, and fell to the floor.

Judging from her appearance and occasional expressions, while in vision, scenes of a different character, some terrible to behold, and others of surpassing glory, passed before her. The scene was most impressive. Many were present who had never before had the privilege of witnessing a manifestation of this kind; and to these the privilege was given of coming forward and behold for themselves the various phenomena attending it.

Their testimony is that though they had before no occasion to doubt the visions, now they can look upon them as a reality. They see not how anyone, witnessing the manner in which they are given, can for a moment doubt them to be the work of the Holy Spirit.

People may talk of mesmerism, clairvoyants, and spirit mediums; but this has nothing in common with them. It is something else entirely, as different from anything of that kind, as the heavens are higher than the earth; and those who attribute the visions to any of those sources are only suffering the devil to deceive them.—[Ibid.](#), June 16, 1868

[237]

Smith wrote of the power of the Holy Spirit in such a manifest way as not to be mistaken. He added, “We doubt if there were many in the house who did not feel that the Lord had drawn near for the especial instruction of His people. It was good to be there.”—[Ibid.](#)

Ellen White Overwhelmed

The past few chapters have traced somewhat the tremendous load of work the Rochester Christmas Day vision placed on Ellen White. At a time when everything had to be sent out in handwritten communications, and when she hesitated putting personal testimonies into print, the task of conveying the testimony messages to the people seemed overwhelming. Now this new comprehensive vision was given to her. James White wrote of her reaction:

Mrs. White has said more than twenty times since the Rochester vision, December, 1865, upon which she has written several thousands of pages, that in view of the responsibilities of her work, if she could have her choice, to go into the grave or have another vision, she would choose the grave. And since Sabbath evening it has been with difficulty that she has been able to control her feelings of disappointment and sadness in view of her new responsibilities.—[Ibid.](#)

Up to the time of the vision of June 12, 1868, Ellen White had been in somewhat of a quandary as to how to handle the many testimonies to individuals and families. Now she was given Heaven's endorsement of easing her task and broadening her influence.

In this last vision I was shown that which fully justifies my course in publishing personal testimonies. When the Lord singles out individual cases and specifies their wrongs, others, who have not been shown in vision, frequently take it for granted that they are right, or nearly so.

If one is reproved for a special wrong, brethren and sisters should carefully examine themselves to see wherein they have failed and wherein they have been guilty of the same sin. They should possess the spirit of humble confession. If others think them right, it does not make them so. God looks at the heart. He is proving and testing souls in this manner.

[238]

In rebuking the wrongs of one, He designs to correct many. But if they fail to take the reproof to themselves, and flatter themselves that God passes over their errors because He does not especially single them out, they deceive their own souls and will be shut up in darkness and be left to their own ways to follow the imagination of their own hearts.—[Testimonies for the Church, 2:112, 113.](#)

The Broad Field Reached By Personal Testimonies

In this statement of the large field of usefulness of testimonies addressed to individuals presenting the light God had given for them, she sets forth a certain principle:

He makes plain the wrongs of some that others may thus be warned, and fear, and shun those errors.—[Ibid., 2:113.](#)

She pointed out that an examination of self may reveal to the readers that they are doing the same things that led God to reprove someone else. She concluded:

If they really desire to serve God, and fear to offend Him, they will not wait for their sins to be specified before they make confession and with humble repentance return unto the Lord. They will forsake the things which have displeased God, according to the light given to others.

If, on the contrary, those who are not right see that they are guilty of the very sins that have been reprov'd in others, yet continue in the same unconsecrated course because they have not been specially named, they endanger their own souls, and will be led captive by Satan at his will.—[Ibid.](#)

With the church rapidly growing, she could not address all personally. Therefore, the published testimonies issued in [Numbers 16](#) to 32, 1868 to 1885—current volumes 2, 3, 4, and 5—contain a great deal of important counsel in the setting of messages addressed first to individuals. These counsels will guard and guide the believer against the wiles of Satan, whoever or wherever the believer may be, and encourage him on his way to the kingdom.

Chapter 17—(1868) The First Annual Camp Meetings

[239]

At the General Conference session held in mid-May, 1868, two promising ventures were given official status and two new ventures were launched. These were the Tract and Book Fund, the annual Adventist camp meeting, the Seventh-day Adventist Benevolent Association, and the mission to California. Each was enthusiastically received and each contributed to the progress of the church.

The Tract and Book Fund, later known as the Book Fund, was born in Battle Creek, Sunday morning, January 12, 1868. James White declared that he and Ellen had discovered during their two months' tour in the Eastern States that many members and prospective members had little familiarity with the literature of the church. He mentioned that only one in four of the families of Sabbathkeepers in Maine had read such Spirit of Prophecy books as *Spiritual Gifts*, *Testimonies for the Church*, *How to Live*, *Appeal to Mothers*, and *Appeal to Youth*. He declared,

The work to be done, in which we appeal for help at this time, is to induce all Sabbathkeepers to read these works, and inform themselves as to the things taught in them.—[The Review and Herald, January 14, 1868.](#)

“It is much easier,” he stated, “to fortify persons against heresy and rebellion than to reclaim them after they have thus fallen.” He enlarged on the need:

The greatest cause of our spiritual feebleness as a people is the lack of real faith in spiritual gifts. If they all received this kind of testimony in full faith, they would put from them those things which displease God, and would everywhere stand in union and in strength. And three fourths of the ministerial labor now expended

[240]

to help the churches could then be spared to the work of raising up churches in new fields.— [Ibid.](#)

White proposed a program of several parts. Ministers would have on hand literature that they could encourage members to buy; they would receive credit for literature that they gave away judiciously. All members would contribute to a fund to supply free books and pamphlets as might be needed. Proper blanks would be supplied to enable the program to be handled in an orderly and economical fashion. James declared:

In our future labors we design to take with us a full supply of this kind of reading matter, and place in every family interested in our faith and hope full sets of *Spiritual Gifts*,, and *How to Live*, and in the hands of every Sabbath school scholar and youth, *Appeal to Mothers*, *Appeal to Youth*, and *Sabbath Readings*.— [Ibid.](#)

James White told the audience that “in past times we have had the pleasure of leading off in such enterprises. We can hardly be denied the privilege at this time.” He pledged \$40; Ellen joined him with \$30. This idea caught the imagination of the audience, and seventy others, in amounts of \$1 to \$25, quickly pledged \$425, making a total of \$495 ([Ibid.](#)). There was a like response from the field as word reached the readers of the *Review*.

An Annual Camp Meeting

Because of the success of the convocations held in Wisconsin and Iowa, there was some talk of holding a camp meeting whereby believers, leaving their farms and occupations, could come together to worship together for a few days, living in tents. The Methodists had done it successfully, and during the Advent Awakening in the early 1840s such meetings gave impetus to the heralding of the first angel’s message and helped solidify the work. As it was discussed at the General Conference session a resolution calling for “a general camp meeting annually” was passed, and the General Conference Committee was authorized to execute the plan ([Ibid.](#), [May 26, 1868](#)).

Seventh-day Adventist Benevolent Association

[241]

Battle Creek church members joined the delegates at the General Conference session on Wednesday evening, May 13, and were invited to participate in the deliberations. The subject before them was:

What we may do for the Lord in the persons of His worthy poor, and in this, not so much to learn what our duty is, as to devise means whereby it may be discharged in a manner acceptable to God.—[Ibid.](#)

This was a matter that had been of deep concern to Ellen White for several months, particularly after the distressing experience involving Hannah More. As an unmarried missionary in Africa, Hannah had been dropped from her supporting organization when she accepted the seventh-day Sabbath. She came to Battle Creek to gain the fellowship of those of like faith, but they overlooked her. She was forced by circumstances to join a family she knew, isolated in a northern region and deprived of the company of Seventh-day Adventists, and there she had died. [For more on the story, see [Testimonies for the Church, 1:666-680](#); [Testimonies for the Church, 2:140-145, 332](#); [Ibid., 3:407, 408.](#)]

“In the case of Sister Hannah More,” wrote Ellen White, “I was shown that the neglect of her was the neglect of Jesus in her person.”—[Ibid., 2:140.](#) A little later she noted:

Sister Hannah More is dead, and died a martyr to the selfishness of a people who profess to be seeking for glory, honor, immortality, and eternal life. Exiled from believers during the past cold winter, this self-sacrificing missionary died because no heart was bountiful enough to receive her. I blame no one. I am not judge.—[Ibid., 2:332.](#)

Hannah More was not the only one known to the believers to be in need, but her case brought the situation into focus. There was first a General Conference session action, followed by a definitive statement signed by the General Conference Committee, opening with the following words:

[242]

An association was formed during the session of the General Conference, having for its object the relief of widows and orphans, and of such other persons who may be worthy of assistance.... To raise ...means, it is decided to fix the payment of the sum of \$10 as a condition of membership, and besides this, to ask donations from all who approve the object of the society.—[The Review and Herald, May 26, 1868.](#)

One hundred and fifty persons pledged \$10 each; many paid their pledges at once, leading to the declaration that “the society is therefore already under way.”—[Ibid.](#) Further organization was quickly effected.

The Mission to California

Merritt G. Kellogg, elder son of Battle Creek businessman J.P. Kellogg, had in 1859, with his family, trekked to California by ox team. He worked in San Francisco for eight years as a carpenter. Then, as health reform was being promoted among Seventh-day Adventists, he returned to the East to take a medical course. He enrolled at Dr. Trall’s Medical College, at Florence Heights, New Jersey, where a few months later he was granted a diploma as a qualified physician and surgeon. [In succeeding years kellogg took more advanced training.] He lingered in Michigan following his graduation, and at the General Conference session in mid-May made an earnest appeal that the General Conference should send a missionary to California to help him in his work in raising up a company of believers in San Francisco. The brethren agreed that in time such might be done.

J. N. Loughborough had come to the conference with the deep impression that he should go to California, but he had revealed this to no one. In no less than twenty dreams he seemed to be working there! At the meeting the ministers were given an opportunity to express their preferences as to the fields in which they should labor during the coming year. After most had expressed themselves, James White asked, “Has no one had any impressions of duty with reference to the California field?” Up to this time Loughborough

had remained silent: now he stood and spoke of his impressions and offered his services for work in the West. Loughborough reported on what followed:

Brother White then remarked, “When the Lord sent forth His servants, He sent them two and two, and it seems as though two ministers should go to that distant field.” ...Then Elder [D. T.] Bourdeau arose and stated how his mind had been exercised, and that he had come to the meetings with his companion and all his earthly substance ready to go where the conference might say.— [Pacific Union Recorder, July 3, 1913.](#) [243]

White counseled, “Will Brethren Bourdeau and Loughborough pray over this together and separately until the day the *Review* goes to press, that they may be sure of the mind of the Lord in the matter?”— [Ibid.](#)

At the appropriate time, when White called for their word, the two brethren replied, “California, or nothing.” White then called for \$1,000 to buy a tent and start the mission. At this time the rails extended only to the Rocky Mountains; the journey had to be made by ship to the Isthmus of Panama and then by another ship to San Francisco. For the next year and beyond, readers of the *Review* were thrilled by the reports from the missionaries, first on the trip itself, and then on the tent meetings and the organization of churches in the valleys north of San Francisco.

Work on Life Incidents

James and Ellen White remained in Battle Creek for a few weeks following the General Conference session. After the notable vision of June 12, 1868, they returned to Greenville to continue in the program they had inaugurated there. This involved caring for the farm, writing, and visiting the churches. They took with them Uriah Smith, editor of the *Review*. From Greenville Smith soon reported:

June 15, Brother White took us into his carriage at Battle Creek, for a journey of seventy miles north, to his home in Greenville, Montcalm County. This journey has given us the opportunity of beholding some of the nice farming lands that lie between these points, as

evinced by the thrifty fruit trees, the luxuriant fields of grass and grain, and perhaps as much as anything, by the uncleared tracts of primitive forest, with their dense growth of lofty and massive trees.—[The Review and Herald, June 23, 1868.](#)

[244] This was Smith's first journey so far north, and he enjoyed both the brief release from the office and the opportunity to gain an acquaintance of the country. "The journey has been a good recreation. Fine weather, the cheerful and promising garb of nature, the sweet-scented fields, and conversation on the great themes of present truth, upon which none are better prepared to speak than Brother and Sister White." He added,

Here we are now at the spacious and hospitable home of Brother White, to spend a few weeks assisting him in the preparation of *Life Incidents* for the press, for the double object:

1. That this important work may, with as little delay as possible, be in the hands of the brethren; and
2. That Brother and Sister White may the sooner be at liberty to visit the churches which are everywhere waiting for their labors.—[Ibid.](#)

James White had already begun work on the proposed book in preparing a series of articles beginning in the February 11, 1868, *Review and Herald*. Ten had been published by May 5, when the project came to a standstill because of the General Conference session. James White had told the story of his life in connection with the Advent movement, up to the disappointment of October 22, 1844. Now with Uriah Smith's help, the work would be hurried to completion. They added a third more material, carrying the account through the second and third angels' messages, concluding sketchily with Seventh-day Adventists' "Present Position and Work." Copies would be ready for the proposed camp meeting, scheduled for late August.

Smith was pleased to go with the Whites from Greenville to Wright for meetings the weekend of July 4 and 5, and he was with them as plans were discussed for the camp meeting. There was a

strong leaning toward holding it right there in Wright ([Ibid., July 14, 1868](#)). When Smith returned to Battle Creek in mid-July, he carried with him the revised and amplified manuscript for *Life Incidents*.

In a back page note in the *Review* of August 4, James White explained:

Life Incidents. This book is nearly ready. It will contain 376 pages.... Do you want your friends to know why you are a Seventh-day Adventist? Let them have this book to read. Do you wish them impressed with the great fact that God has been in the great Advent movement? Let them have an opportunity of reading the book.

[245]

In this work I have connected experience with theory, showing that the position of Seventh-day Adventists is based upon the Word of God, and is also sustained by the deepest and most valuable Christian experience.—
[Ibid., August 4, 1868](#)

The book was to sell for \$1 per copy, “free to the poor,” in which case the book fund would be charged 60 cents. He expected that “thousands of copies will be given to those who have not sufficient interest in the subject to purchase, or money to pay for, the book.” The initial printing was 5,000 copies.

Ellen G. White Busy Writing

While Uriah Smith was staying at the White home in Greenville Ellen was busy writing. So much had been opened up to her in the vision of June 12. She wrote scores of personal testimonies. Some were soon included in *Testimony* Nos. 16 and 17. At this time Edson was with them in their Greenville home. On July 27 she wrote a birthday letter to him, who would be nineteen the next day. It opens: *My dear Son,*

I write this for your nineteenth birthday. It has been a pleasure to have you with us a few weeks in the past. You are about to leave us, yet our prayers shall follow you.

Another year of your life closes today. How can you look back upon it? Have you made advancement in the divine life? Have you increased in spirituality? Have you crucified self, with the affections and lusts? Have you an increased interest in the study of God's Word? ...As you enter upon a new year, let it be with an earnest resolve to have your course onward and upward.—[Letter 17, 1868](#) (see also [Testimonies for the Church, 2:261](#)).

The twelve-page handwritten letter closes with these observations and admonitions:

[246]

A new year of your life now commences. A new page is turned in the book of the recording angel. What will be the record upon its pages? Shall it be blotted with neglect of God, with unfulfilled duties? God forbid. Let the record be stamped there which you will not be ashamed to have revealed to the gaze of men and angels.—[Ibid.](#) (see also [Ibid., 2:268](#)).

She handed the carefully penned letter to Edson on his birthday, and as he left a few days later for Battle Creek, where he was continuing his education, he took it with him. Then, as she thought more of it, and how it might be a help to other young people, on August 11 she called for it back, that she might make a copy. She included it in *Testimony* No. 17, published in February, 1869.

The Camp Meeting at Wright, Michigan

When plans for an annual camp meeting were seriously considered in mid-July, the first thought was that there was not enough time to arrange for such a meeting that year. But then the leaders felt it could be done if they worked quickly. On the back page of the August 11 *Review*, under the heading "General Camp Meeting," readers were informed:

It is now decided to hold a general camp meeting in the town of Wright, Ottawa County, Michigan, August 26-31.

Other notices and instructions followed quickly. Because of the closeness of time, the meeting was deferred a week, to open Tuesday, September 1, and run to Monday, September 7. On the editorial page in the *Review* of August 18, the General Conference Committee informed prospective comers:

This meeting has not been appointed for the purpose of spending a few days in recreation and vanity. Nor has it been appointed as a novelty, for the purpose of calling out the idle and the curious who might not otherwise be reached. Nor do we by this means merely seek to gather a large concourse of people, that we may thereby make a display of our strength. We have a very different object in view.

We desire to call out as many of our brethren, both preachers and people, as we can, and also as many of our unconverted fellowmen as we may be able to interest in this meeting, that we may do them good. We want all who shall come to this meeting to come for the purpose of seeking God. We want our brethren to come for the purpose of seeking a new conversion. We want our preachers to set them in this an example worthy of imitation.

[247]

We desire also to see many of our fellowmen who have no interest in Christ, or at least no knowledge of the present truth, converted to the Lord, and rejoicing in the light of His truth.—[The Review and Herald, August 18, 1868.](#)

Directions were given on how to reach the campground, on the farm of E. H. Root, with the promise that “a beautiful grove will be prepared with seats for three thousand persons.” Two sixty-foot round tents would be pitched on the grounds, one of them new, and the hope was expressed that there would be many small living tents. James and Ellen White would have theirs, and the *Review* of August 18 carried instruction on the construction at home of simple tents to serve families and churches.

The Hasty Trip to Battle Creek, and a Dream

To be sure that all announcements and directions in the *Review* were just as they should be, James made a hasty trip to Battle Creek, taking Ellen with him ([Ibid.](#)). While there, she had what she spoke of as an impressive dream, in which it seemed that they, along with part of a large body of people, started out with heavily loaded wagons prepared for a journey. The road seemed to ascend; on one side there was a deep precipice, and on the other, a high, smooth wall. As they journeyed, the road narrowed, causing them to leave their wagons and then their horses. As the perilous path narrowed, they took off their shoes. However, along the way they found ropes, representing faith, let down; these increased in size as they progressed. Finally they reached a chasm, beyond which was a beautiful field of green grass. To get there, they had to rely wholly upon the ropes; by these they could swing to the other side. In whispers the travelers inquired, "To what is the cord attached?" Hesitating and distressed, they heard the words "God holds the cords. We need not fear." James first swung across the abyss and Ellen followed, and they were safely on the other side, praising God and perfectly happy ([Testimonies for the Church, 2:594-597](#)). "The dream needs no comment," she stated as she told it. She felt the scenes were such she could never forget.

[248]

The Camp Layout

After about a week in Battle Creek the Whites returned to Greenville to get ready for the camp meeting at Wright ([The Review and Herald, August 25, 1868](#)). As the people began to assemble for the meeting on Tuesday, September 1, they found the site to be in a beautiful grove on the Root farm. Meetings were to be held in a natural amphitheater, the ground gently sloping to the speaker's stand. Two sixty-foot tents had been erected, one well supplied with good clean straw with which to fill their bed ticks, and in which some of the men could sleep. Water came from a spring on the nearby crest of the incline, which furnished water for the livestock on the Root farm.

As the wagons drove up, family and church tents were unloaded and pitched in a circle about the speaker's stand—twenty-two in all.

Many of these were quite large—sleeping quarters were divided off by blankets or quilts, providing shelter for several families. Nineteen tents were from Michigan, one from New York State, and two from Wisconsin ([Ibid., September 15, 1868](#)). There would have been more had there been more time between the announcement and the opening of the meeting.

The first brief meeting was held Tuesday morning at 11:00 A.M., but it was limited to a season of prayer. The rest of the day was given to pitching tents and getting settled. Cooking was done on small open fires. The meeting area in front of the stand was seated with planks on logs. Close by was a bookstand well supplied with the products of the SDA Publishing House: *Spiritual Gifts*, Volumes I-IV; *Testimony* pamphlets; *Life Incidents*; *How to Live*; *Thoughts on Revelation*; and the newly issued Uriah Smith book—*The Visions of Mrs. E. G. White*, et cetera. There were also many, many, pamphlets. The youthful John Corliss tended the bookstand, with 14-year-old Willie White assisting.

Activities and Speakers

The camp meeting had its real beginning when at five o'clock in the afternoon those on the grounds assembled under the sugar maple trees facing the speaker's stand. Ellen White gave what we might call the keynote address. Uriah Smith reported:

Sister White spoke in reference to the wants of the churches, and the objects for which we had assembled in the tented grove. These were plainly set forth, and served to put the brethren upon the right train of thought at the very commencement. Those who before had not seen the need of such a gathering, if any such there were, must have seen it, when its objects were thus clearly set forth.—[Ibid., September 15, 1868](#)

[249]

Joseph Clarke (a layman engaged in farming), in writing of the camp meeting, focused on this opening meeting:

Sister White's testimony was such as to cause us to feel somewhat as the disciples did when they queried, "Lord, is it I?" It was full of warning. She stated that she never felt as fearful for this people as at this moment;

and at the opening of this meeting she exhorted us not to converse, at this time, of loss and gain, but to speak of heavenly things.—[Ibid., September 22, 1868](#)

We are not informed who spoke at the evening meeting, but most likely it was James White. At nine o'clock, as the people made their way to their tents, they found the grounds lighted by wood fires in mounted boxes of earth, providing, as it were, streetlights. As the people were retiring, J. N. Andrews made the round, pausing at each tent to inquire, "Are you all comfortable for the night?" (A. W. Spalding, *Origin and History of SDAs*, vol. 2, p. 12).

Wednesday morning the first service was a social meeting [Defined at one time by Uriah Smith as a meeting "characterized by spirited and soul-cheering testimonies, the beaming eye, the voice of praise, the earnest and stirring exhortation, and often the falling tear—scenes in which faith and love flame up anew" ([Ibid., May 23, 1865](#))] where believers recounted their experiences, praised the Lord, and in some cases confessed their wrongs. There were two or three such meetings each day. Through the week of meetings, sixteen discourses were given, six by James White, five by Ellen White, four by Andrews, and one by Nathan Fuller. Wrote Smith:

We doubt if a series of more stirring, earnest, vehement, and pointed discourses were ever consecutively given. They were all aglow with the fire of present truth. The Spirit of the Lord is evidently calling the minds of His servants to the special duties and dangers of the church at the present time.—[Ibid., September 15, 1868](#)

[250]

The weather was good, meetings were held under the trees through Sabbath. Three hundred people tented on the grounds. It was estimated that there were a thousand Sabbathkeepers there most of the time, many staying in the homes of church members in the Wright area. Some thought that on Sunday there might be as many as three thousand on the grounds as people from the surrounding country came in, but Sunday morning a hard rain fell, and there were only two thousand people in attendance. Meetings were held simultaneously in the two big tents. Sunday afternoon as

the sky was clearing, Ellen White spoke. Tracts were distributed freely to the crowd. Then in the evening, James White spoke from the stand on the law and the gospel. Meetings continued through Monday, the evening meeting bringing the camp meeting to a close. Smith reported of the week-long convocation that “best of order reigned throughout, and no disturbance was experienced from any quarter.”—*Ibid.* Clarke declared in his report:

The order and regularity observed at this meeting was unusual for a meeting of this kind. If all camp meetings could be conducted as this was, we should hear of glorious results.—*Ibid.*, [September 22, 1868](#)

Two More Camp Meetings Planned for 1868

So successful was the Wright camp meeting that before it closed, plans were laid for two more, one at Clyde, Illinois, September 23 to 30, for the Wisconsin Conference, and the other at Pilot Grove, Iowa, October 2 to 7. The Whites and Andrews were at both. Attendance was rather limited.

At these meetings, James White and his brethren worked in close common interest, and mutual confidence was restored. The Battle Creek brethren urged them to return and to reside in the city, that the work of the cause might be carried on more efficiently and that they might have the pleasure of closer association. This was tempting, and as they journeyed from Wright to the camp meeting in Clyde, Illinois, they stopped in Battle Creek, selected a building lot, and got plans under way for putting up a house. Also they announced through a back page *Review* note, signed by both James and Ellen White, that after the two camp meetings they would attend the annual conferences in Ohio and New York. En route to these meetings, they stopped again in Battle Creek. It is clear from the following report in the *Review* that James White was quickly becoming much involved with Battle Creek interests.

[251]

Involved Again in Important Interests at Battle Creek

Returning from the West, we reached Battle Creek, October 13, and spent one week with Brother Andrews

in matters of importance relative to the Health Institute, the Publishing Association, the Battle Creek School, religious meetings, besides our own personal interests in book matters, house building, and fitting up winter clothing. It was a busy week.

The Health Institute is prospering. God's blessing is there. The church is still settling into the work. And the prospect is very encouraging for the establishment of a good school at Battle Creek, where not only the sciences may be taught, but the principles and spirit of the religion of Jesus may be impressed upon the children and youth who may attend it.... We left Battle Creek in company with Brother Andrews, the twenty-first, for the New York State Conference.—[Ibid., November 17, 1868](#)

Just before leaving, Ellen White wrote to Mrs. Lockwood, apparently living in Greenville:

The work is ahead of anything that has ever yet been in Battle Creek. May the Lord pity and save His people. Our staying here or removing will depend upon the course the church takes here.—[Letter 22, 1868](#).

Then, anticipating the setting up of housekeeping on their return from the East, she noted:

Brother Sawyer will spend the winter in Greenville. He will go with a load of goods the last of this week and will bring a load back. Please see that all my forks and spoons and knives are brought. I would like those two large brown dishes; also all my bedding, my mattresses, all my clothing, especially the little trunk and contents. Put in some of the best dishes. The old plants and odds and ends might as well remain. Send one of the best bedsteads.—[Ibid.](#)

[252]

They left Battle Creek with a somewhat open schedule, intending after the State meeting in New York to spend several weeks visiting

the churches in that state. But as October was turning to November they received word of the rapidly failing health of Ellen's sister, Sarah Belden, in Connecticut, who was dying of "quick consumption" (tuberculosis). After two impressive dreams of being there, the Whites changed plans quickly. Appointments in New York were canceled, and on November 4 they were on the eastward-bound train. Letters indicated that Sarah's situation was critical ([Letter 28, 1868](#)), and now Ellen was on her way "to comfort her in the conflict she must have in giving up her children, five in number, the eldest, one year and a half younger than Willie." She added, "As she is reconciling herself to laying down her life's burdens, I may make the struggle less severe and soothe and heal the lacerated heart."—*Ibid.* One of the five children was Frank E. Belden, who later became a writer of scores of well-known Adventist hymns. Ellen spent a week with her sister, who died a few days after their visit.

An Eastern Tour

Once that far east, James and Ellen would capitalize on the situation. After the Sabbath meeting at Kensington, Connecticut, near her sister's home, they began to fill weekend appointments announced through the *Review*, at Norridgewock and Portland, Maine, then Rhode Island, and South Lancaster, Massachusetts.

Several weeks were spent in Maine, giving them an opportunity to do a good deal of visiting with Adventist families. As they journeyed from Norridgewock to Portland, they turned east to visit James White's birthplace and a number of points connected with his early ministry in 1843. Here and in Portland they visited for the first time in twenty-five years. Two of Ellen's sisters joined them in Portland for a few days. Here first-day Adventists opened their hall for her to speak to a large congregation ([The Review and Herald, December 15, 1868](#)).

They spent one night at the Howland home in Topsham, and in Boston "spent some time" in "looking for and purchasing good books," for James White wrote, "Our young people need good books."—*Ibid.*, [December 22, 1868](#). The balance of the year was spent on this tour, closing with the four-day Ohio State meeting held

at Bowling Green, December 25-28. This had been postponed until James and Ellen could attend (*Ibid.*, [December 15, 1868](#)).

In her letters to her children written on this trip, she several times mentioned the new home being constructed in Battle Creek. Their purpose, she wrote, was, after this tour, “to enter our new home at Battle Creek and get our dear children home, that our family again be united.”—[Letter 28, 1868](#). As the tour neared its close, on December 16 she wrote to them:

We are anxious to meet you again and enjoy the society of our children. We have not seen our new home but will be prepared to enjoy it with you when we shall return.—[Letter 26, 1868](#).

According to plan, they reached Battle Creek on Wednesday, December 30, and took up life in Battle Creek again. Of this, James wrote:

We found a convenient and pleasant house built at Battle Creek for us, and partly furnished with goods moved from our [Greenville] home in Montcalm County. This place seems like home. Here we find rest in several senses of the word. We had become tired of meetings, tired of traveling, tired of speaking, tired of visiting, and tired of the business cares incident to an absence from home, living, as it were, in our trunks nearly one third of the year. Here we find quiet for the present.—[The Review and Herald, January 12, 1869](#).

There were sixty letters awaiting them—to be opened and attended to.—[Ibid.](#)

Chapter 18—(1869) A Year to Regroup and Prepare to Advance [254] [255]

[256]

If the title of this chapter carries a battlefield overtone it is because the Seventh-day Adventist Church was suffering the buffeting of the adversary brought to view in [Revelation 12:17](#): [257]
[258]

And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ. [260]
[261]
[262]

The 1860s marked relentless conflict; Satan exercised his wrath in a number of ways. He attacked the lives of some involved in the advancement of the cause. He attempted to overwhelm prime leaders through whispering campaigns in which false reports were widely circulated by adversaries of Seventh-day Adventists and, at times, by church members themselves. During much of 1866, while James White was incapacitated and kept almost entirely from the field, the enemy did not have that forceful leader to combat, but as James and Ellen again took to the field, Satan renewed his attacks with even greater intensity. [263]
[264]
[265]
[266]

Churches without Pastors

At this time the Seventh-day Adventist Church was without pastors. The work was young, with 4,500 members; the needs of the 160 churches were cared for by local elders and deacons. The thirty-two ordained and nineteen licensed ministers were spread out over the seven conferences, carrying on the evangelistic thrust. The *Review and Herald*, with its weekly visits to the homes of those who subscribed, served an important pastoral role. This knowledge aids us in understanding the weakness and ease in backsliding of new and often inexperienced believers and officers that made up the churches, and the need of revival efforts put forth by James and Ellen White, [267]

J. N. Andrews, and a very few others. The successful camp meeting at Wright and the prospect of annual camp meetings in the several State conferences gave promise of building a stronger, cohesive, unified church. Wherever Ellen White ministered, it was seen that the Spirit of Prophecy messages calling for the turning from sin and development in experience and character brought stability and strength. The publishing of personal testimonies dealing with basic principles aided in this. Little wonder the great adversary pressed every means at his command to discourage and destroy, both from without and from within. At the beginning of this year, 1869, which was to mark somewhat of a turning point in the battle, it may be of interest to note the ages of some of the leading participants.

As the year dawned, James White was 47 and Ellen 41. Uriah Smith was 36, as were also George Amadon and J. N. Loughborough. J. H. Waggoner was older, 48, and Joseph Bates, now semiretired at Monterey, was 76.

Residing Again in Beloved Battle Creek

As James and Ellen took up residence again in Battle Creek, they felt much at home. Ellen later stated, “We were both happy and free in the Lord when we came home to Battle Creek.”—[Letter 3, 1869](#). But this contentment did not last long. Deep in the hearts of some in Battle Creek was a feeling of resentment, triggered by lingering memories of wild reports and rumors. Added to this were the steps, which were sometimes rather severe that James White had taken to pull the business interests of the Health Institute from the brink of financial disaster and to reverse the losses being sustained by the SDA Publishing Association. When because of his severe illness White could no longer head the association, J. M. Aldrich was called to the presidency. His name appeared on the masthead of the *Review* up to and including the issue of March 30, 1869, when without explanation it was dropped. In that issue Uriah Smith reported:

[268]

We have been having the past week a series of very important and solemn meetings. The plainest and most searching testimonies we ever heard have been borne by Brother and Sister White and Brother Andrews, giving us new views of the sacredness of the work,

the straitness of the way, the proximity of the judgment, and the exceeding carefulness with which we must prepare for its unerring decisions.—[The Review and Herald, March 30, 1869](#).

Through April and until the constituency meeting on May 20, George Amadon, the vice-president, was in charge. Significantly, in the same back page of the *Review* in which Smith reported the “very important and solemn meetings” in Battle Creek, James White inserted a note hinting an early return to Greenville. He wrote of the possible withdrawal of their Greenville farm and home from the market. He stated that “present indications strongly favor an immediate return to Montcalm County,” in which case, “we should not wish to sell at present.”—[Ibid.](#)

Something of the situation may be seen from Ellen’s letter written on April 23 to Uriah Smith and George Amadon:

My husband labored in that [the *Review*] office earnestly, unselfishly, to set things in order according to the mind of the Spirit of God, which was a most striking contrast to the course pursued by Brother Aldrich, yet he [James White] was looked upon with suspicion, jealousy, and doubt.—[Letter 3, 1869](#).

Attempts to reverse the deteriorating situation led workers and laity to take sides. Contentions and rebellious feelings reached into the families of key personnel. Of one of these families Ellen White wrote, “I have seen no less than four evil angels controlling members of the family.”—[Ibid.](#) She opened her heart:

We have labored and toiled and tugged. We have prayed and wept at home. We could not rest or sleep.... I wrote testimony after testimony at the expense of health, and I feared of life, hoping to arouse the consciences of the people at Battle Creek. We bore testimonies in meetings, and held private interviews out of meeting.... At length we saw that help must come from abroad if ever the frown of God would be removed from the church.—[Ibid.](#)

[269] Finally she became very ill. In fact, the strain was too much for both of them, and on Thursday, April 15, they started by carriage for their Greenville home, spending the weekend en route at Wright. Tuesday, April 20, they again began keeping house in Greenville. James White wrote that they were:

quite comfortable with the few remaining things not removed to Battle Creek, and some borrowed at Brother Maynard's. This seems like home. Mrs. White is very much improved in health, and we enjoy the light labor among the strawberries, blackberries, raspberries, and grapes.

Here the Lord has blessed us in our afflictions more than in any other place. Here we can accomplish more than in Battle Creek, especially in writing. When returning from a long, wearying tour, we could rest; but not in Battle Creek, until a great change takes place with the people.

We erred in complying with the request of the Battle Creek church to move our headquarters to that city. Things there were not ready for us. Great mistakes had been made in the management of matters pertaining to the interests of the cause there, in our absence, without our counsel, and, in some things, against our entreaties. When those who had made the mistakes should correct them, as far as possible, and when the church should get into a place to help *us in our labors*, then, and not till then, could it be our duty to settle in their midst.—[The Review and Herald, April 27, 1869](#).

But the General Conference session was to open in Battle Creek on May 18, and they must soon be there. James sent word that they designed to spend the Sabbath, May 8, with the brethren in Battle Creek ([Ibid., May 4, 1869](#)). He noted that they were “enjoying farming life very much.” The next week he reported:

We closed our farming the fifth, and the sixth and seventh journeyed on to meet our appointment at Battle Creek.—[Ibid., May 11, 1869](#)

The 1869 General Conference Session

The General Conference session of 1869 was a lackluster meeting, the business meetings running from Tuesday to Sabbath. James White had a devotional meeting each morning at five o'clock. Business was routine, with resolutions on dress reform, health reform, the California mission, the church's relation to the Seventh Day Baptists, et cetera. One forward-looking action, and probably the most important, pertained to camp meetings. It read: [270]

Resolved, That this conference recommend to the State conferences to make preparations for, and hold, camp meetings, procuring the best assistance in their power, and leave it to Brother and Sister White to attend such of them as the providence of God may direct.—
[Ibid.](#), May 25, 1869

In the light of conditions at Battle Creek, and the experience they had passed through, another resolution, related to spiritual gifts, was quite significant. It was most likely worded by outgoing President J. N. Andrews and read:

Resolved, That our faith and confidence in the gifts of the Spirit of God, so graciously vouchsafed to us in these last days, are not only unshaken by the attacks of the opposers of the truth, but greatly strengthened and increased by the warnings we have received in times of danger, the counsels and admonitions when we have erred, and the comfort in our afflictions; as well as by the purity of their teachings, and the respect and reverence they produce for the Word of God. And we earnestly recommend to all the scattered flock a more careful reading of, and more strict compliance with, the *Testimonies for the Church*.— [Ibid.](#)

The nominating committee brought in the following recommendations for officers and General Conference Committee:

For President, James White; Secretary, U. Smith; Treasurer, E. S. Walker; Executive Committee, James White, J. N. Andrews, J. H. Waggoner.— *Ibid.*

These were duly elected.

[271] At the constituency meeting of the SDA Publishing Association, James White was elected to serve as president and George Amadon as vice-president. At the meeting of the Health Reform Institute, seven directors were chosen, with James White's name at the head of the list (*Ibid.*). The financial report that was given of the Health Institute failed to bring cheer to the hearts of the stockholders. As they met in the afternoon J. N. Andrews introduced the following significant resolution:

Resolved, that we consider it due to Brother and Sister White, and to our brethren abroad, that we make a statement of the following points:

1. That they have acted a noble and generous part toward the Health Institute, and that the errors committed in its management are not to be in any wise laid to their charge, Brother White being unable at that time from sickness to have any part in the business. Those, therefore, who attribute blame to them concerning it act unjustly and without any ground for such censure.

On the contrary, they are entitled to the thanks of all our people for their efforts in sustaining the institute, and for counseling a course of sound wisdom in its management. Nothing therefore can well be more unjust and cruel than to hold them responsible for the errors of others.

2. We make the same statement respecting the Publishing Association. The errors committed in connection with the Publishing Department have not been caused by following their counsel, but by neglecting it. We consider it our duty to exonerate them from all blame, and to bear testimony to the fact that they are in these things worthy of the entire confidence and support of our people everywhere.

3. And finally, we express our hearty sympathy with them in their arduous labors, and we pledge ourselves to cooperate with them in their work, and to sustain them by our prayers, our moral support, and our means.—
[Ibid.](#)

This comprehensive resolution was voted. A good deal of unfortunate history relating to the SDA Publishing Association and the Health Institute is suggested in its wording. There is no record of the reaction of either James or Ellen White to these resolutions. Events of the ensuing months made it clear that it is easier to put such matters on paper than to carry them out. At the annual meeting of the Publishing Association, Uriah Smith, who had been connected with the *Review* for sixteen years, was released from his editorial responsibilities, and he turned his attention to evangelism. J. N. Andrews, who had served for two years as president of the General Conference, was chosen to edit the *Review*. James and Ellen White returned to their Greenville home. For a few days in mid-June they joined Smith and W. H. Littlejohn in a tent meeting at Orange, Ionia County, in northern Michigan. [272]

A Trying Time for Ellen White

Sunday afternoon, June 20, at the Orange meeting, Ellen addressed a tent filled with “those who listened with the utmost attention and apparent candor” ([Ibid.](#), [June 29, 1869](#)). Such an effort was particularly difficult at this time, for she was passing through menopause. She mentioned it in a letter to Edson:

I have told you a period I had entered in my life untried by me which would determine in a short period the chances of life or death with me. I have more indications of going down into the grave than of rallying. My vitality is at a low ebb. Your aunt Sarah died passing through this critical time.

My lungs are affected. Dr. Trall said I would probably go with consumption in this time. Dr. Jackson said I should probably fail in this time. Nature would be

severely taxed, and the only question would be, were there vital forces remaining to sustain the change of nature.... How I shall come out I cannot tell. I suffer much pain.—[Letter 6, 1869](#).

Camp Meetings Take Hold in Earnest

Now that most of the crops would soon be in, the seven State conferences laid plans for their camp meetings, in harmony with the action taken at the General Conference session. These would run from August 10 to October 19 in Ohio, Michigan, New England, New York, Wisconsin, Minnesota, and Iowa. In his report for the *Review* James White sets forth the atmosphere for the Ohio meeting, the first of the 1869 convocations:

[273]

I find myself seated on the minister's stand, in a beautiful grove, about one mile from the depot, in the flourishing village of Clyde, Ohio. Elder J. N. Andrews is this moment addressing a very attentive audience before us. Around the stand, and the congregation, are nine large, neat-looking tents, which are the temporary residences of our brethren and sisters who have come from different parts of the State up to this place of worship.

Our people in Ohio are not numerous, hence the tents are comparatively few, and congregations not large. But as I look out upon this beautiful and well-prepared ground, these splendid tents, and the congregation, I take pleasure in saying that our people in Ohio, in their first camp meeting, have made a noble strike.—[The Review and Herald, August 24, 1869](#).

Gaining strength from day to day, Ellen White traveled with her husband through the full round of the next five camp meetings—two in the East: New England, at South Lancaster, and then New York State; then three in the West: Wisconsin, Minnesota, and Iowa. At each of these the Whites were given a hearty reception.

“A Delightful Kind of Labor”

The first regular camp meeting season among Seventh-day Adventists came to a close in mid-October. As James White concluded his reports he triumphantly declared:

And now, as we look back upon the camp meeting season, it is with pleasure that we recount the many precious interviews we have enjoyed with dear friends, the many kindnesses we have received at their hands, and the many seasons of freedom we have enjoyed in preaching the Word, and in social worship with the dear people of the Lord.

God has wonderfully blessed His people in their efforts in this direction. We will praise Him.—*Ibid.*, October 26, 1869

He suggested plans that might take them to the West Coast:

By the grace of God, we design to labor on in other departments of the work till another camp meeting season shall open in June, 1870, when we hope, in the strength of God, to resume this delightful kind of labor, continue it in the West and in the East, in Ohio and Michigan, and, if the Lord will, close with a camp meeting in California.—*Ibid.*

Europe Looms as an Important Field of Labor

[274]

In his reports of the camp meeting, James White several times mentioned James Ertzenberger, who was with them at some of these meetings. Ertzenberger was a young man who had come from Switzerland, arriving at Battle Creek on June 15. On arrival in the United States he knew no English, but he carried an envelope bearing the words “Review and Herald, Battle Creek, Michigan.” This brought him to the place and people he was seeking.

Ertzenberger was one of a group of fifty European Sabbath-keepers, most of whom were in Switzerland. They were led to acknowledge the major Seventh-day Adventist doctrines by M. B.

Czechowski. [See Ellen G. White: *The early years*, pp. 378, 379.] An impetuous man, he had urged Seventh-day Adventist leaders to send him to Europe with the message, but found that they were unprepared to do this. He appealed to the first-day Adventists, who agreed to send him, not comprehending his Sabbathkeeping convictions. J. N. Andrews traced the story in the [Ibid.](#), [November 30, 1869](#):

About two years ago these brethren [Czechowski's converts] opened communication with us by letter. The last spring we invited Brother Albert Vuilleumier, elder of the church, to attend our General Conference, pledging ourselves to meet the expense. As he could not come, the Swiss brethren made choice of Brother James Ertzenberger to come in his stead. He arrived at Battle Creek June 15.

He was able to converse fluently in German and French, but wholly unable to speak English. We have become deeply interested in this dear brother. He has given the best evidence that he is a man of God.—[Ibid.](#), [November 30, 1869](#)

[275] Ertzenberger studied English diligently and for some time resided in the White home in Greenville, where 15-year-old Willie was assigned the task of keeping him in conversation. He progressed well. Partly from the knowledge Ertzenberger brought and partly by correspondence, they learned that Czechowski had started a little office of publication in Switzerland. He did this almost entirely on borrowed money, repayment of which was due December 31, 1869. Foreclosure seemed inevitable. There seemed no hope of saving the property unless Seventh-day Adventists in America should come to its rescue. The building, on land near Lake Neuchatel, housed not only the printing office but a chapel and living quarters for the Czechowski family. At the time, Czechowski was laboring in Hungary.

When Andrews explained the situation, there was an immediate response. A pledge list was started in the *Review* of December 28. A

keen interest was sparked in an overseas outreach that was to grow in the months and years to come.

When Czechowski was finally contacted, he rejected the help proposed. It was planned that Ertzenberger would remain in the United States long enough to master the English language and thus prepare himself to translate tracts and books into German and French. Wrote Andrews:

We regard the circumstances of this case as a wonderful call to us from the providence of God to send the present truth to Europe. We cannot refrain from acknowledging our backwardness in this work. But it is in our power to redeem the past, by discharging our duty for time to come.—[Ibid.](#)

Testimonies Published in 1869

Two *Testimony* pamphlets were published in 1869, No. 17 in mid-February with 192 pages, and No. 18 in mid-December, filling 208 pages. These, like the preceding two, consisted largely of personal testimonies: twenty out of twenty-three in No. 17 and thirteen out of eighteen in No. 18. Now that she was free to publish testimonies addressed to individuals, Ellen found it possible to extend her ministry throughout the land to all churches, setting before them important lines of general counsel. These messages first published in 1869 are found in [Testimonies for the Church, 2:200-497](#).

The Continued Buffetings of Satan

The available records show that the year 1869, which should have been a time of notable advance, was one in which Satan multiplied his attacks. Criticism of James and Ellen White continued, even though from time to time both refuted slanderous reports and rumors, and in spite of Ellen White's continuing successful ministry in Seventh-day Adventist circles and before the public. God Himself also had provided evidences of the genuineness of Ellen White's call. He had raised her up again and again from weakness and sickness to strength, that she might present her messages, and He had given

[276]

her a vision on June 12, 1868, in Battle Creek, accompanied by marked physical phenomena that eyewitnesses could test to their full satisfaction. Nevertheless, prejudice lingered. The messages of reproof and the memories of false and malicious reports continued to confront the Whites and hamper their influence. In addition, because of their position on the seventh-day Sabbath, there was the sustained and critical opposition of the religious world in general.

Writing at her Greenville home in September, after the camp meetings were over, often Ellen could look back. She stated:

The lies of sheer malice and enmity, the pure fabrications of iniquity uttered and circulated to defeat the proclamation of truth, were powerless to affect the minds of those who were really desirous to know what is truth. I did not doubt for a moment but the Lord had sent me that the honest souls who had been deceived might have an opportunity to see and hear for themselves what manner of spirit the woman possessed who had been presented to the public in such a false light in order to make the truth of God of none effect.—[Letter 12, 1869](#).

In this setting she penned a striking statement of faith and evidence:

None are compelled to believe. God gives sufficient evidence that all may decide upon the weight of evidence, but He never has nor never will remove all chance [opportunity] for doubt, never will force faith. [See [The Great Controversy, 527](#); [Testimonies for the Church, 5:675, 676](#).]—*Ibid.*

Acquaintance With Ellen White Allayed Prejudice

[277] In most cases such evidence was furnished simply by the ministry of Ellen White herself. J. H. Waggoner, who lingered for a few days following the New York camp meeting in Kirkville, New York, wrote of the influence of the meeting on the community, with its

quietness, order, and freedom from fanatical excitement. As to Ellen White, he stated:

Many who had never seen her had heard the foolish falsehoods circulated against her, and came with the full effect of them on their minds; but when they heard the plain, practical truths of the Bible, the pure principles of Christianity presented in the earnest and powerful manner in which she was aided by the Lord to speak them there, all these feelings were swept away.—[The Review and Herald, November 9, 1869.](#)

G. I. Butler, in his report of the Iowa camp meeting, alluded to opposition and trial:

We were all strengthened by seeing the courage of the servants of the Lord who have labored so long and faithfully in this cause. If they can go forward with courage through the opposition and trial to which they have been so long exposed, feeling an increasing zeal and interest, certainly those of us who have not borne a tithe of their burdens ought not to be cast down.—[Ibid.](#)

In Defense of James and Ellen White

James White, as well as Ellen, was the object of attack and criticism. In October, 1869, a committee consisting of J. N. Andrews, G. H. Bell, and Uriah Smith was set up in Battle Creek to conduct a thorough investigation. Their assignment was either to justify the damaging criticism or put it to rest.

In announcing plans for the investigation and calling for a full response from the field, the committee recognized some significant points:

We have some sense of the importance of the position occupied in this work [that is, of the cause] by Brother and Sister White. But our enemies have, in some respects, a more perfect conception of it than we, as a people, have possessed.... By the word enemies,

[278]

we mean those who have made it their chief business to attack the character and work of Brother and Sister White as the most effectual method of warring against this cause.—[Ibid.](#), [October 26, 1869](#)

As the investigation got under way James White commented:

The position and work of Mrs. White and myself, for more than twenty years, have exposed us to the jealousies of the jealous, the rage of the passionate, and the slanders of the slanderer. Having consciences void of offense toward God and toward men, we have kept at our work. But from our almost utter silence in the line of defense, accusers have grown impudent and bold, so that it has been thought best, for the good of the cause with which we hold so intimate connections, to meet their slanders with a plain statement of facts, which will probably appear in pamphlet form for very extensive circulation.—[Ibid.](#), [January 11, 1870](#)

James wrote further of the purpose of this investigation, declaring that he and Ellen had no personal feelings to be gratified, no lack of public confidence or friends, and that what was proposed was for the general good of the cause:

To put into the hands of our people a means of self-defense from miserable slanders repeated by those who are in sympathy with the dragon in his general warfare upon those who keep the commandments of God, and have the faith of Jesus Christ.—[Ibid.](#)

How did Ellen White relate to all of this? A back page note in the first issue of the *Review* in the new year under the title “Personal” declared:

The friends of Sister White will be happy to learn that her courage and cheerfulness were never greater than during the present winter. The bitter words and wicked slanders so freely used against her have been

powerless to disturb her peace of mind.—[Ibid.](#), [January 4, 1870](#)

[279]

Chapter 19—(1870) At Last the Tide Turns

On the back page of the *Review* of January 11, 1870, James White requested, “Will those who know of things in the general course of Mrs. White and myself, during the period of our public labors, worthy of exposure, or unworthy of Christians, and teachers of the people, be so kind as to make them known to the office immediately.” A few weeks earlier, as already noted, a request of similar character had been placed in the *Review* by the specially appointed committee in Battle Creek, J. N. Andrews, G. H. Bell, and Uriah Smith. Their statement read, in part:

Justice to Elder White, and sacred regard for the truth and for right, demand that we speak in his defense against the unjust attacks of his enemies. We do not do this merely as an act of personal justice to Elder White, but mainly because what is said against him is used by our enemies as their best weapon with which to assail the cause of present truth.

We fully believe that God has called him to occupy a leading position in the work of the third angel’s message. We also believe that God has given to Sister White what the New Testament calls the gift of prophecy. The importance of her position in this work is, therefore, very great. If our work is of God, and if the doctrines which we cherish are the truths of the third angel’s message, then, surely, ours is a most important and responsible business. And those who stand in the forefront of the work have responsibilities upon them which cannot be estimated....

[280]

It becomes necessary at the present time to make a direct appeal to the readers of the *Review* relative to the course of Elder White in financial matters. It is due to

him, and he asks it as an act of justice, that every person who knows any act of dishonesty, or overreaching, or fraud, or covetousness, or grasping of means in any unbecoming manner, should make a statement of the fact in writing, and send it to this office. We design to place before the public a full statement of the financial matters of Elder White, as the most fitting reply to the attacks which are now being made upon him.—[Ibid.](#), [October 26, 1869](#)

The appeal continued:

We ask ...that those who have been witnesses of, or sharers in, his acts of benevolence shall also give us statements of the facts touching this part of the subject. We request an immediate response from all concerned.—[Ibid.](#)

A Full Financial Disclosure Promised

To provide information to those with questions regarding some of the financial transactions in which James White had participated with church members, or in his business dealings generally, and to provide church members with an effective tool with which to meet criticism from the world, the committee declared:

We design to place before the public a full statement of the financial matters of Elder White.—[Ibid.](#)

It took considerable time to assemble the data called for. On April 26 the committee announced that the report was ready, in a pamphlet that might be secured from the *Review* office for 15 cents. The notice indicates the anticipated field of usefulness:

The Defense of Elder James White and Wife. This work which was promised some time since is now ready for circulation. It has been prepared with much labor and care, and will be found satisfactory as an answer to the many wicked slanders uttered against these servants

of Christ. It should be circulated in those sections where the tongue of the false accuser has been busy. We commend the work to the friends of this cause, especially to those who have to meet the calumnies of wicked men.

[281]

Our laboring brethren have often complained that their way is hedged up by wicked reports, whereby they lose much time and labor, and souls are turned away from the truth to perish in error. In such places no work can be more important than this, and we expect the friends of the cause at large will cheerfully meet the expense of its publication.—[Ibid., April 26, 1870](#)

The first pages were given to a statement of James White's connection with the work of the church from its beginnings, and especially its publishing interests. It reviewed the transfer of business matters when an organization was formed that could take hold of them. The rate of his pay was given in detail, paralleling the Civil War years with their inflationary trend.

June 3, 1861, to April 24, 1863, \$7 per week
 April 24, 1863, to October 30, 1863, \$8 per week
 October 30, 1863, to April 14, 1865, \$9 per week
 April 14, 1865, to August 15, 1865, \$10 per week

On the last-named day he was stricken with paralysis, and pay stopped ([In Memoriam: A Sketch of the Last Sickness and Death of Elder James White, 9](#)).

The report continued:

During all this time, Sister White received nothing for her services. She labored efficiently with her husband from place to place and with the church at Battle Creek, and did a great amount of important writing in the form of epistles to individuals and to churches throughout the entire field. No preacher among us labored more ardently and efficiently than Sister White.

In consequence of their house being a home for visiting brethren, she had to keep two hired girls—one

in the kitchen, and one to do general housework and sewing; yet no provision was made for the expense of hired help in the family, and the extra wear and tear of clothing in traveling. And, to say nothing of these expenses, Brother White's limited wages met only in part his general expenses, and the expenses of so large a family.—*Ibid.*, 9, 10.

The question naturally arises, How could James White, a man with such limited salary income, handle such a situation? The answer [282] followed in the pamphlet:

In this state of things, Brother White resorted to the sale of Bibles, concordances, Bible dictionaries, Bible atlases, and works of this kind, as a means of support. He sent these books out by mail and express to all parts of the country. He took them with him, east and west, and his sales were very large, so that the profits were probably more in a year than his entire wages. This enabled him to meet his large expenses, and give for benevolent and charitable purposes. In this he wronged himself. In connection with his other arduous labors, this extra effort was very taxing. But there was a wrong back of this. It was the neglect on the part of our people to pay Sister White for her valuable services.—*Ibid.*, 10.

James White's Real Estate Transactions

The report spelled out the transactions relating to their homes in Battle Creek, with incomes accelerated by the financial surge accompanying the Civil War. After living some months in a rented house, by the aid of their friends they secured an acre and a half of land on which a modest home costing some \$500 was built. With improvements and the increase in values he was able to sell it in 1863 for \$1,500. He then secured a home nearer the publishing house, costing \$1,300. Improvements and the development of an orchard and other features costing \$1,200, and the rise in property value,

brought this to a value of \$4,500 when it was sold. He purchased a piece of land on which there was a house, a little way out of the city, investing \$5,000 (*Ibid.*, 12). It was stated:

A very large part of his entire property is thus seen to be made up of the rise of the real estate which he owned at different times during this period.—*Ibid.*, 13.

The Sale of Writing Paper and Envelopes

Another source of supplementary income was also explained:

At the commencement of the war he purchased, upon his own responsibility, \$1,200 worth of writing paper and envelopes, which in a short time doubled in value on his hands.—*Ibid.*

[283] The matter was summed up:

These are the means by which Brother White has obtained property. As we have shown, his profits in honorably conducting a laudable business were \$2,000; rise on stationery, \$1,200; and rise of three different places in Battle Creek, \$4,000; in all amounting to \$7,200. But his property had never been regarded at any time worth more than \$6,000, which during his severe and protracted sickness was much diminished.—*Ibid.*

In a general statement the committee declared:

The life of Brother White has been filled with acts of disinterested benevolence. Were it not that those who hate his close preaching and his faithful reproofs have so often represented him as a grasping, selfish man, it would be well to let these remain to the revelation of the great day, known only to Him who beholds every act, and to those who have been the sharers of these acts of mercy. But the circumstances of the case demand that we speak freely, though it is quite impossible to give

more than a very small part of the many deeds of noble and unselfish devotion to the good of others.—[Ibid.](#), 53.

The Many Responses

The responses were prompt and numerous, and every one favorable. Joseph Bates, living in nearby Monterey, was the first to send in his testimony, dated November 1:

I have been acquainted with Brother and Sister White since the autumn of the year 1845, during which time I have traveled and been associated with them in holding religious meetings in many states of the Union, and met with them at about every General Conference during the last twenty years. Therefore I have had opportunity to fully understand his management of financial matters the most of the time since the publication of the *Review*.

It gives me pleasure to say that I have entire confidence in his honesty and uprightness. He is still, and ever has been, the man of my choice, called of God (as I firmly believe) to the place he has so long and faithfully filled.

I would further say that he has not only made the interest of the cause his own, but also the interest of those laboring to advance the cause. He has most generously donated from his own means to help sustain me in this work. As one instance, I will mention the fact that at one time he furnished me with a house for my family for fourteen months, for which he refused to receive rent.—[Ibid.](#), 58, 59.

[284]

Many other individuals and churches joined Joseph Bates. There was nothing but commendation; not one response was negative.

Wild Rumors Concerning Ellen White

The committee also looked into some of the reports instigated to defame Ellen White, such as her giving birth to two children before

she was married. On this point, several who were acquainted with her since 1844 furnished an affidavit:

Whereas, evil-disposed persons have spread abroad the statement that Sister White was the mother of one or more children before she became a wife, this is to certify that we have been intimately acquainted with her since the fall of 1844; that is, from the seventeenth year of her age; and that we declare this statement a most wanton and malicious falsehood, having no foundation in truth, and having no excuse whatever for its existence. We have the utmost confidence in the integrity, virtue, and purity of character, of Sister E. G. White.

J. N. Andrews

A. S. Andrews

H. N. Smith

—[Ibid.](#), 144, 145.

Non-Adventist acquaintances in Portland, Maine, gave most positive statements regarding Ellen and her family. The pamphlet was circulated widely and did an effective work.

James and Ellen White in Battle Creek

[285] The year 1870 opened with James and Ellen White living and working in Battle Creek. A number of factors united to make the situation for them much more comfortable than it had been for some months. J. N. Andrews was editing the *Review*. He had traveled and lived with James and Ellen for months at a time when he was serving as General Conference president. He had closely observed the fruitage of Ellen's work, her powerful influence in the churches. His testimony now in Battle Creek was positive. Through the columns of the *Review*, he and James were able to bring about a change in some basic understandings and attitudes. Before 1869 closed, substantial James White articles entitled "Our Faith and Hope, or Reasons Why We Believe as We Do" appeared weekly in the *Review*. The twenty-five first-page presentations ran well into 1870. Then on the editorial pages for January 25 and February

1 there were James White articles titled “The Spirit of Prophecy,” presenting the Biblical basis for the expectation of the gift in the church.

The back page of the issue of February 8 carried an announcement of the *Testimonies* in permanent, hardbound form:

Testimonies 17 and 18.—For the convenience of our friends we have caused a quantity of these two numbers to be bound together in a neat, substantial volume of 399 pages. This presents much important matter in convenient and desirable form. We need only state to our friends that these works are to be obtained in this form, to insure an extensive demand for this bound volume. Price 80 cents postage paid.

Apparently the author of the note was not the only one who felt this way. The same *Review* page quoted from a letter by a layman, J. H. Rogers, giving his opinion that “*Testimony No. 18* should be in the house of every believer in the message of present truth. It should be a book at hand for all who are desirous of overcoming this world and the evils therein.” He added,

Dear brethren and sisters, there is reproof, correction, and instruction for all in this *Testimony*. I acknowledge many things apply to myself, to which I mean to try to take heed and overcome, for only the pure and holy will be able to enter the pearly gates.

J. N. Andrews on the Visions

The next week J. N. Andrews came in with an editorial, “Our Use of the Visions of Sister White.” It opened:

It is quite generally understood that the Seventh-day Adventists are believers in the perpetuity of spiritual gifts. It is also understood that we regard the visions of Sister White as given by the Spirit of God. But the use which we make of the doctrine of spiritual gifts, and particularly the visions of Sister White, is very generally misunderstood.—[The Review and Herald, February 15, 1870.](#)

[286]

In twenty numbered propositions he set forth clear-cut positions on the work of the Holy Spirit. After referring to Paul's words in [Ephesians 4:11-13](#), he declared:

14. The object of spiritual gifts is to maintain the living work of God in the church. They enable the Spirit of God to speak in the correction of wrongs, and in the exposure of iniquity. They are the means whereby God teaches His people when they are in danger of taking wrong steps. They are the means by which the Spirit of God sheds light upon church difficulties, when otherwise their adjustment would be impossible. They also constitute the means whereby God preserves His people from confusion by pointing out errors, by correcting false interpretations of the Scriptures, and causing light to shine out upon that which is in danger of being wrongly understood, and therefore of being the cause of evil and division to the people of God.

In short, their work is to unite the people of God in the same mind and in the same judgment upon the meaning of the Scriptures. Mere human judgment, with no direct instruction from Heaven, can never search out hidden iniquity, nor adjust dark and complicated church difficulties, nor prevent different and conflicting interpretations of the Scriptures. It would be sad indeed if God could not still converse with His people.—[Ibid.](#)

He pointed out that the gifts of the Spirit are primarily for the church; members do not test others by these gifts. But he stated clearly:

There is such a thing ...as men having in the providence of God an opportunity to become acquainted with the special work of the Spirit of God, so that they shall acknowledge that their light is clear, convincing, and satisfactory. To such persons, we consider the gifts of the Spirit are clearly a test.—[Ibid.](#)

The Searching Messages of Testimony No. 18

[287]

Solemn indeed were the messages set forth in *Testimony* No. 18. One chapter filled seventy-one pages and was reprinted in [Testimonies for the Church, 2:439-489](#). It was titled “An Appeal to the Church,” and was a stirring message. It discussed a number of matters relating to the spiritual condition of many. Then Ellen White introduced the case of Nathan Fuller, a minister in New York State who had become involved in a licentious course with some of the female members in his congregation. At a recent General Conference session Fuller had been a delegate from his conference ([The Review and Herald, May 28, 1867](#)). He was one of the four main speakers at the Wright camp meeting. But he had failed to keep himself clear of moral corruption. Ellen wrote:

Elder Fuller has been warned. The warnings given to others condemned him. The sins reprov'd in others reprov'd him and gave him sufficient light to see how God regarded crimes of such a character as he was committing, yet he would not turn from his evil course. He continued to pursue his fearful, impious work, corrupting the bodies and souls of his flock. Satan had strengthened the lustful passions which this man did not subdue, and engaged them in his cause to lead souls to death.

While he professed to keep the law of God, he was, in a most wanton manner, violating its plain precepts. He has given himself up to the gratification of sensual pleasure. He has sold himself to work wickedness. What will be the wages of such a man? The indignation and wrath of God will punish him for sin. The vengeance of God will be aroused against all those whose lustful passions have been concealed under a ministerial cloak.—[Testimonies for the Church, 2:454](#).

In the setting of this outstanding case of moral corruption Ellen White sounded warnings against the indulgence of all lustful passions. Shortly after the publication of these counsels a volume of 272 pages, compiled and edited by James White and titled *A Solemn*

Appeal Relative to Solitary Vice, and Abuses and Excesses of the Marriage Relation, came from the presses of the *Review*. Included in it was a reprint of Ellen White pamphlet *Appeal to Mothers*, published in 1864, and presentations from medical men ([The Review and Herald, February 15, 1870](#)).

[288] **Preparation for the 1870 General Conference Session**

Omens of a turn in the tide in Battle Creek creep out here and there in the records, as indicated in the word from James White in early February. He was writing of the upturn in affairs at the Health Institute:

We trust, also, that the church in Battle Creek is really correcting its own wrongs, and renewing its covenant with God, so that it may be a blessing to the institute.—[Ibid., February 8, 1870](#)

Instead of the annual meetings being held in May, as they had been for several years, the General Conference Committee saw advantages of an earlier date, and the 1870 session was set for mid-March ([Ibid., February 15, 1870](#)). Anticipating meetings “of more than usual importance,” believers were urged to make them a special subject of prayer, a request repeated in the *Review* of March 8, with the hope expressed that those attending would “come in the spirit of the work.” The notice continued:

We trust our meetings this spring will mark a new era in the prosperity of the cause of present truth. We hope that all who shall attend will first prepare their hearts to seek God. And we earnestly request all who have an interest at the throne of grace to pray that God’s blessing may be especially granted at this conference.—[Ibid., March 8, 1870](#)

At the heart of the work itself something was happening. The General Conference Committee set the pace by leading in a “special season of seeking God, and in putting away the sins and faults that

have grieved the Spirit of God at Battle Creek.” The result was reported the next week:

The Battle Creek church has taken hold in earnest to return fully to the Lord. We think there was never so good a prospect of raising the standard of piety as it should be in this place, as there is at the present time.... We have good reason to hope that these meetings will mark a new era in the experience of the Battle Creek church.—[Ibid., March 15, 1870](#)

Thus the foundation was laid for a harmonious and fruitful General Conference session and profitable annual meetings of the SDA Publishing Association and the Health Institute. The actions passed by the Conference session were mostly of a nature to get the cause of God back onto solid track, and there was a general feeling that better days lay ahead. Workers went forth from this meeting with James White serving as president, Uriah Smith as secretary, and G. H. Bell as treasurer. The General Conference Committee consisted of James White, J. N. Andrews, and J. H. Waggoner ([Ibid., March 22, 1870](#)).

[289]

Uriah Smith was brought back as editor of the *Review and Herald*. As to the church in Battle Creek, which had passed through many dark days, J. H. Waggoner reported in [Ibid., April 26, 1870](#):

The church in Battle Creek is now in working order. Union prevails, and the Lord blesses their efforts. Sabbath the twenty-third [of April] Brother and Sister White both spoke with great force and power at the morning meeting.—[Ibid., April 26, 1870](#)

James and Ellen White Entrenched Anew in Battle Creek

Through the late spring and early summer James and Ellen White continued their labors in Battle Creek under pleasant circumstances. He carried the leadership of the church along with the management of the business affairs of the institutions and writing for the *Review*. She was occupied with her writing. From time to time her addresses,

stenographically reported by Smith, appeared as articles in the *Review*. One of these was given in June, 1869, and published under the title “Practical Remarks” (*Ibid.*, April 12, 1870).

On Sunday, May 22, Ellen and her husband took the day off to join employees of the publishing house and members of the Battle Creek church for a day of rest and recreation at nearby Goguac Lake. Smith reported that that day “the majority of Sabbathkeepers in Battle Creek found themselves on the shore of the beautiful lake,” “each family furnished with a basket of hygienic provisions for dinner, and all in a state of body and mind to appreciate, and enjoy a day of Christian recreation.”—*Ibid.*, May 31, 1870

[290] Two camp meeting tents were pitched for use in case of rain. The object of the day was to enjoy a day away from the usual scenes and occupations and participate in activities conducive to physical and spiritual refreshment. The grove was pleasant and the day lovely, and there was evidence of “cheerful associations,” leaving many pleasant memories. During the morning there was discussion of health reform, recounting experiences and giving instruction. After the noon repast and songs of praise, Ellen White gave an address titled “Christian Recreation,” which was published in the *Review* nine days later. It found its way into the *Testimonies*, available today in volume 2, pages 585-594. In her remarks she stated:

It is right that we should choose such places as this grove for seasons of relaxation and recreation. But while we are here, it is not to devote our attention to ourselves merely, and fritter away precious time, and engage in amusements which will encourage a disrelish for sacred things. We have not come here to indulge in jesting and joking, in the senseless laugh and foolish talking. We here behold the beauties of nature....As you behold these works of nature, let your mind be carried up higher to nature’s God.—*Ibid.*

Camp Meeting Again

For the year 1870 four camp meetings were scheduled in the West in early summer, and ten in the Eastern States in the late

summer and fall. The first would be at Marion, Iowa, opening June 9. James and Ellen White had, at the turn of the year, purchased a modest home in Washington, Iowa, as a hideout where they could get away to relax and pursue their writing. They would spend a week there on their way to the Iowa camp meeting.

The few days there brought a welcome change, of which Ellen wrote to her prospective daughter-in-law, Emma McDearmon, who was engaged to Edson.

We spent a very pleasant week in Washington. I wrote more in one week than I have written in six weeks at Battle Creek. We had no interruptions. Although I have not spent all the time in writing, I walked in the beautiful garden. Worked in the field weeding out strawberries until I became so lame I could not move without much pain.

Sunday we had two meetings in a meetinghouse in Washington. The people invited my husband to speak. We had a good congregation and good interest to hear. We had freedom in speaking to them.—[Letter 9, 1870](#).

[291]

Ellen devoted the next day to her writing. As evening came on, she and James packed, preparing for the two-day trek by carriage to Marion, the first camp meeting of the season. Other carriages would join theirs as they traveled.

Camp Meeting Travel Vignettes

Much of the program in attending camp meetings one after another, although strenuous, became somewhat routine. In the 1870 season there were a few happenings of special interest that we will mention as vignettes, without concern for time and place.

The Carriage Journey to Marion

We were awake at four. We were ...on our journey at five o'clock. We halted for breakfast, five double wagons well loaded, at seven. Out on the open prairie,

James and self walked about one mile and half. We were willing to ride when the wagons came up. At noon we halted in a beautiful grove. We then overtook the teams from Pilot Grove. There were then thirteen wagons well filled with men and women and children. There were about one hundred in all.

At night we tarried in a grove. Tents were pitched and we then held a meeting in the large [family] tent. The neighbors flocked in. My husband spoke and I followed him. We had an interesting meeting, singing, talking, and praying. We retired to rest, but I was too weary to sleep, until about midnight.

We arose at half past three and were on our way at four. We found all had the tents down and packed. Ours was soon ready and again our caravan started. Order was observed by all. At half past six, we halted on the prairie and built a large fire, and all came together for a season of prayer. We then ate our humble fare and were soon on our way again.

[292] At one o'clock we were on the campground and were faint and weary. We felt refreshed by eating a warm dinner. Our tent was pitched in the afternoon and we made our beds. Had a good straw bed to lie on and we slept sweetly.—*Ibid.*

The next vignette comes from a James White report of traveling on a riverboat up the Mississippi.

Riverboat Activities

We have, on our upward trip, met many, and very large, rafts of lumber drifting down the river. On them are erected board shanties in which the men cook and sleep. We observed, as we passed a large raft, in which there were probably forty men, one man swimming toward the steamer, while others were swinging their hats, and crying, "Papers!" These were immediately thrown overboard, and gathered up by the swimmer and

taken to the raft. In a few moments these could be dried, ready to be read.

This gave Willie a new idea. He immediately went to my traveling bag for present-truth books and cord, and to the fireman for stone coal. Between two pamphlets he would tie a piece of coal, and as we passed within throwing distance, we would land the books quite on the rafts. They were eagerly seized by the sturdy lumbermen. God bless the truth thus distributed.—[The Review and Herald, July 5, 1870.](#)

The White family were not the only Seventh-day Adventists on the river going to camp meeting. This gave an opportunity for an unwitting outreach in song, reported by James White:

A Shipboard Song Service

As the sun sank behind the bluffs on the Iowa side, the air grew cooler, and the evening was delightful. Our company was seated together in front of the clerk's office, on the bow of the boat, when we struck up the good tune and hymn "Resting By and By." This we did for our own diversion and devotion, not expecting to attract attention. But as soon as we had finished two verses, and paused, hands were clapped and feet were tapped all around us, and as we looked around, our fellow passengers were all gathered forward standing just over our shoulders calling out, "Give us some more!" "Try that again!"

We made an apology for disturbing them with our poor singing.... But as they continued to call for more, we gave them two verses of the "Celestial Army," and begged to be excused.—[Ibid.](#)

[293]

James White wrote that somewhat fewer than a hundred passengers were on the riverboat. One young man approached him, addressed him as Elder White, and told him that he heard him preach at Johnstown, Wisconsin, in the fall of 1868. He must have men-

tioned this to other passengers, among them a man from Ohio, who was on his way to Minnesota to improve his health.

An Impromptu Evening Shipboard Meeting

The feeble gentleman from Ohio ...said to us, "It is rumored about this boat, Mr. White, that your wife is a public speaker, and every passenger will unite in a request for her to speak in the ladies' cabin, if she will consent."

After a moment's consultation as to the propriety of the thing, and the right subject, we returned an affirmative answer. Soon the seats were arranged, a short prayer offered, and Mrs. White seized upon the great idea that God—His wisdom, love, and even His love of the beautiful—could be seen through the beauties of nature. The subject was made more interesting by reference to the grand and beautiful scenery of the day's trip up the old Mississippi.

A more attentive audience we never saw. Nine in the evening came, and a dozen black-faced fellows were standing ready to prepare extra beds in the very room we were using as a chapel, so we closed, and sought rest for the night.—*Ibid.*

At times when James and Ellen White had planned some trip in their ministry, illness on her part seemed to make it entirely out of the question, but taking God's providence into account in their plans, they would start out by faith and God sustained them. On the day they were to attend one camp meeting, Ellen was very ill. She had been in bed for two days, but she thought she must at least attempt to go. She wrote of it to Willie:

"Make Way for a Sick Woman"

I was not dressed Wednesday and but a short time Thursday in the morning, until I dressed to start on the cars.... When we arrived at Jackson, it was State fair, and such a crowd I never saw before. They were

determined to crowd upon the platform.

Your father rushed out with me on his arm. He put his shoulder against men and women, crying out, "Make way for a sick woman. Clear the track for a sick woman." He rushed through the crowd, took me to one side, and found me a seat. Adelia Van Horn was by my side. He went for Brother Palmer's team.—[Letter 13, 1870.](#)

Their travels took them into newly settled country where the roads were sometimes very difficult to negotiate. On one occasion in Missouri, this left them in a distressing but somewhat comical situation described in a letter to Edson and Willie:

Stranded in a Sea of Mud

I spoke five times in Hamilton. We started to visit an afflicted family who had lost a child 14 years old. Father preached the funeral sermon in the Methodist meetinghouse. We were provided a double wagon and horses by Brother McColleston.

We rode finely for two miles when we tried to cross a mud slough. When in the center of rods of mud, the horses were stuck (stalled is the Western phrase). The mud was up to the horses' bellies. They could go no farther. They were struggling until they lay flat in the mud.

We were puzzled to know what to do. Father walked out on the pole [tongue] of the wagon and separated them from each other [and the wagon] and then used the whip and they, after making a terrible effort, struggled to terra firma, leaving us in the wagon in a sea of mud.

Father decided to venture out on the pole and ran lightly over the stiffest part of the mud. The stiff mud bore him up. He tried to get a board for me to walk on over the mud. I had no rubbers. The board refused to come off the oak posts.

I decided to follow your father's example. I ran out on the pole and his hand met mine and I got safe on

terra firma. We left the wagon [in the mud] and horses [tied to the fence] and walked back to Hamilton, two miles.—[Letter 18, 1870](#).

We told the donor of the team where his horses were and with strong ropes he has gone to see if he can get them home.—[Letter 17, 1870](#).

[295]

James and Ellen spent eight weeks attending six eastern camp meetings, first at Oneida, New York, followed by South Lancaster, Massachusetts; Bordeauville, Vermont; Skowhegan, Maine; Clyde, Ohio; and one close at hand in Charlotte, Michigan. Wearily James took his pen and wrote:

Our labors have been too great for us; and we decide that we should not hold more than two camp meetings a month, especially if we are to commence in May and continue into October.—[The Review and Herald, October 4, 1870](#).

On to the Kansas Camp Meeting

Brave words of good intentions, but soon forgotten. After they had caught their breath at the Ohio meeting, they were ready to go on. Wrote White:

On the Ohio campground, the burden rolled upon us, and we have decided to hold camp meetings in Indiana and Kansas in the month of October. See appointments.

We make the sacrifice in our much worn condition to hold these meetings for the good of perishing souls. Who wish to share with us? Such are invited to assist with their prayers and their means.—[Ibid., September 27, 1870](#)

With renewed spirits they journeyed to Indiana and then Kansas, and entered wholeheartedly into the meetings. As the Kansas meeting, held near Fort Scott, seventy-five miles south of Kansas City, neared its close, James White, on Sunday, October 16, described the circumstances:

Here are ten family tents, several covered wagons in which families live, a provision stand, and the Iowa large tent, of inestimable value to us during the heavy storm. A coal stove has been set up in the big tent, which has added much to our comfort during the storm. In fact, nearly all the tents are furnished with stoves. As far as we can learn, our people have been quite comfortable, even in the midst of the storm. All are cheerful, and enjoy the meeting very much.—[Ibid., November 8, 1870](#)

He added, “Mrs. White has spoken on the health question in a manner to give entire satisfaction.” Of this more will be said.

[296]

Instead of returning home to Battle Creek promptly as they had first planned, they felt sufficiently rejuvenated to hold a few meetings in Missouri. This swing to the south and west added five weeks to their 1870 camp meeting work. They reached home, Monday, November 7 ([Ibid., November 15, 1870](#)).

[297]

Chapter 20—(1870-1871) Further Steps Toward Health Reform

The year 1870 had opened on the upbeat with progress in the production of books and pamphlets, and this was to continue through the year. In mid-February *A Solemn Appeal*, compiled by James White, had appeared ([Ibid., February 15, 1870](#)). Two months later, April 26, the *Defense of Elder James White and Wife* was released. On May 17 Ellen White wrote to Edson that she had completed her work on the preparation of *The Spirit of Prophecy*, volume 1, and was beginning on volume 2 ([Letter 8, 1870](#)). Volume 1, however, was not through the press until November 29. Its publication was an important step in the production of Ellen G. White books, as it was the first of the set of four books on the full great controversy story—the forerunner of *Patriarchs and Prophets*. Actually, it was a revision and enlargement of *Spiritual Gifts*, Volumes III and IV ([The Review and Herald, November 29, 1870](#)).

On August 2 another *Testimony* pamphlet came from the press. The notice of its publication read:

Testimony for the Church, No. 19, is now ready. It contains a lengthy address to ministers, read at our last General Conference, a valuable article upon air and exercise, an earnest appeal relative to convocations, and several epistles.—[Ibid., August 2, 1870](#)

The twenty-page chapter “Exercise and Air” (seventeen pages in *Testimonies*, volume 2) signaled that Ellen White was now, after her husband’s long illness, again aggressively advocating the principles of health reform.

[298]

Problems in Adopting the Vegetarian Diet

James White was trying to help those interested in reforming their dietetic program, encouraging them to raise small fruits to fill

out a diet from which flesh had been discarded. It may be well to pause for a moment to consider what was involved in 1870 and earlier, in changes in diet. There were no prepared cereal foods, such as corn flakes and shredded wheat, except perhaps oatmeal, which was bought at a drugstore by the ounce for those who were ill. There were no skillfully prepared vegetable-protein foods (today called meat substitutes), not even peanut butter. There were no frozen foods. The selection of what to eat was limited to meat, legumes, grains, and vegetables and fruits in season. Some kinds of nuts could be had, but they were seldom mentioned.

In 1899 J. N. Loughborough recalled the diet on which he grew up as an orphan on his grandfather's farm in New York State. Every autumn four large, fat hogs and one cow were slaughtered as winter provisions for the family. Nearly all parts of the hogs were eaten "except the bristles and the hoofs." He wrote:

I was a great lover of animal flesh as food. I wanted fat pork fried for breakfast, boiled meat for dinner, cold slices of ham or beef for supper. One of my sweetest morsels was bread well soaked in pork gravy.—*The Gospel of Health, October, 1899* (see also *The Story of Our Health Message, 24*).

If in the spring of the year we felt languor (really the result of consuming so much fat and flesh meats during the winter), we resorted to sharp pickles, horseradish, mustard, pepper, and the like, to "sharpen the appetite" and tone up the system. We naturally expected a "poor spell" in the spring before we could get newly grown vegetables.—*The Medical Missionary, December, 1899* (see also *The Story of Our Health Message, 24*).

Without the abundant supply of a great variety of foods known so well today, the shift in diet for those pursuing health reform in the 1860s and 1870s was not simple or easy. *How to Live, No. 1*, with its twenty pages entitled "Cookery," was helpful, furnishing thirteen recipes on unleavened bread, wheat, and corn; four breads made with yeast; eleven mushes and porridges; twenty pies and puddings, many of them with an apple content; twenty-five fruit

recipes (counting tomatoes as a fruit); and thirty-four recipes for vegetables. That was all.

A Pamphlet on Raising and Canning Small Fruits

James White, after growing strawberries, raspberries, blackberries, and grapes on the little farm in Greenville, saw that these items, fresh or preserved, could well augment the rather limited vegetarian regimen. In January, 1871, he got out a thirty-two-page pamphlet, *Small Fruits—How to Cultivate and How to Can*. He introduced this by stating:

Fruit is the most natural and healthful food for man. It was God's plan that he should subsist largely upon fruit. See [Genesis 1](#).

With the discarding of flesh meats as food by health reformers has come a need of something to take its place. We know of nothing so eminently adapted to supply this need as fruit. With the extended call for small fruits in the past few years has arisen a demand for practical information upon the manner of their growth.

The object of this little work is not to go into the subject for the benefit of the greenhouse, or the professional cultivator, but to meet the wants of every family. Everyone who owns a rod of ground, whether in city or country, should know how to cultivate small fruits. Hence we have ventured to give practical hints in regard to the cultivation of the strawberry, raspberry, blackberry, and grape, studiously avoiding intricacies, or anything that would not be beneficial for the people to carry out.

That our efforts may be appreciated, and that they may result in a more thorough introduction and better understanding of the cultivation of small fruits by health reformers, is the wish of the writer.—*Small Fruits*, p. 3 (see also *White Estate in Pamphlet 24, Administrative*, James White).

In the first advertisement for this pamphlet in the January, 1871, *Health Reformer*, White stated that it contained “valuable information, gleaned from larger books, and from personal experience on this subject.” The pamphlet contained advice on cultivating and selecting the best varieties of plants. Five pages were devoted to canning fruit. As the pamphlet is read today, it must be kept in mind that it was published only a few years after Louis Pasteur, in France, had discovered that fermentation in wine was caused by bacteria. White made the following application:

[300]

The strawberry, the raspberry, the blackberry, the blueberry, the cherry, and the grape may be safely canned by a similar process. We recommend the glass, self-sealing can. We have used the Mason, the Dexter, and the Hero with success.—*Small Fruits*, p. 23.

Paragraph 4 of the instructions included this interesting counsel:

When the cans are cool, set them in a dark, dry, cool place. They should be examined daily for several weeks to see if they are keeping well. If the fruit shows signs of fermentation, it should be scalded again, and carefully secured in the can.—*Ibid.*, 24.

Meeting Problems in the Midwest

In a practical way James and Ellen White were moving into the field again, promoting health reform in its broad aspects. At the camp meeting in Pleasantville, Kansas, they found believers in the Midwest, where fruit was scarce, deeply discouraged in the matter of trying to adopt the principles of health reform. This discouragement was intensified by the extreme positions taken in the *Health Reformer* regarding milk, sugar, and salt. In this situation James White penned for publication in the *Review* an article in which he reviewed the consistent steps taken by Seventh-day Adventists in adopting health reform. He stated:

It was twenty-two years ago the present autumn that our minds were called to the injurious effects of

[301]

tobacco, tea, and coffee, through the testimony of Mrs. White. God has wonderfully blessed the effort to put these things away from us.... When we had gained a good victory over these things, and when the Lord saw that we were able to bear it, light was given relative to food and dress. And the cause of health reform among our people moved steadily forward, and great changes were made.—[The Review and Herald, November 8, 1870](#) (see also CDF, pp. 495, 496).

The basic principles involved had been set forth carefully in 1864, in the comprehensive chapter “Health” in *Spiritual Gifts*, Volume IVa, and the next year in the six *How to Live* pamphlets. James and Ellen White, having adopted health reform in their home and in their personal lives, greatly benefited and were enthusiastically teaching it. Some were quick to respond; others held back, for it was not easy to alter long-established habits of living, especially eating. Then on August 16, 1865, James White, through overwork, was stricken with paralysis. On this point he wrote in 1870:

In consequence of our sickness, Mrs. White ceased to speak and write upon the subject of health reform. From that point may be dated the commencement of our misfortunes and mistakes as a people relative to this subject.—[Ibid.](#)

Failure to Promote Health Reform Devastating

Because of his illness, James White, the leader of the church, was not able to continue to give effective support to health reform, and Ellen, in caring for him for eighteen months, was cut off from active ministry. Also, in the light of his illness, they were reticent to press health teachings. The cause of health reform was left to flounder as those who had led out in teaching it looked on almost helplessly. While making a comeback in March, 1868, James White observed:

People generally are slow to move, and hardly move at all. A few move cautiously and well, while others go

too fast. The work of reform is not brought about in a single day. The people must be helped where they are. They can be helped better by one standing on the line of truth nearest them, than on the side the greatest distance from them.

It is best for them to be taught on all points of truth and duty by persons of judgment and caution, and as fast as God in His providence unfolds them to His people. He who is but partly reformed himself, and teaches the people, will do some good. He who sees the duty of reform, and is full strict enough in any case, and allows of no exceptions, and drives matters, is sure to drive the reform into the ground, hurt his own soul, and injure others. Such do not help Mrs. White, but greatly burden her in her arduous work....

[302]

She works to this disadvantage, namely: she makes strong appeals to the people, which a few feel deeply, and take strong positions, and go to extremes. Then to save the cause from ruin in consequence of these extremes, she is obliged to come out with reproofs for extremists in a public manner.

This is better than to have things go to pieces; but the influence of both the extremes and the reproofs are terrible on the cause, and brings upon Mrs. White a threefold burden. Here is the difficulty: What she may say to urge the tardy is taken by the prompt to urge them over the mark. And what she may say to caution the prompt, zealous, incautious ones is taken by the tardy as an excuse to remain too far behind.—*Ibid.*, [March 17, 1868](#)

He suggested that those who wish to help Ellen White in her difficult task will find her, not with a few extremists, but “back with the people, tugging away at the wheel of reform.” He pointed out that some persons are quickly converted; others take much longer, even as much as two years, to make a thorough reform. He warned against getting health reform out of its place, for it is not the third angel’s message, but “a work designed to follow in its wake,” and

urged that the work go on, "not a piece at a time, lest it go all to pieces; but let it move on as a complete whole."

While James White's illness retarded aggressive work on his and Ellen's part for two years or more, they lived in harmony with health reform principles. They were ever ready to answer questions and take an affirmative stance, as they did in dealing with the issues of dress reform and of a healthful dietary program. Note Ellen's answer to one sister, in a letter written April 3, 1870:

The Dietary Program in the White Home

Dear Sister,

[303]

I am ...too weak to write more than a few brief words. From the light God has been pleased to give me, butter is not the most healthful article of food. It taxes the digestive organs more severely than meat. We place no butter upon our table. Our vegetables are generally cooked with milk or cream and made very palatable. We have a generous diet which consists in the preparation of apples, vegetables, and grains in a skillful manner. We have but little pie upon our table and cake is seldom seen there; no luxuries or dainties.

Everything is plain yet wholesome because it is not merely thrown together in a haphazard manner. We have no sugar on our table. Our sauce which is our dependence is apples, baked or stewed into sauce, sweetened as required before being put upon the table. We use milk in small quantities. Sugar and milk used at the same time is hard for the digestive organs, clogs the machinery.

I know no reason why you cannot set just as good a table as we do. We have nothing but the simplest articles prepared in a variety of ways, all strictly hygienic. We have cracked wheat; for a change, cracked corn. We then take sorghum molasses, put water with it and boil it thoroughly, stir in a little thickening of flour, and this

we eat on our puddings, graham or cracked wheat, or cracked corn.

Why health reformers complain of poor diet is they don't know how to cook, and should learn. We think a moderate amount of milk from a healthy cow not objectionable. We seldom prepare our food with butter. When we cannot obtain milk, we use a very trifle in some articles of vegetables. We make a milk gravy thickened with flour for our potatoes, not a particle of butter in the gravy. We have no meat on our table. I live extremely plain myself. My wants are easily satisfied.

We have but one cow. She gives but a very little milk. We have made this little do the cooking and table use for a company of from twelve to twenty which have sat at our table all winter and spring. Nearly all the time we average sixteen. We cannot obtain cream to use, but we should use more of it could we get it to use. I greatly object to an impoverished diet.

If you can get apples you are in a good condition, as far as fruit is concerned, if you have nothing else. We have beans at every meal, well cooked with a little salt and a tablespoonful of sugar, which makes them more palatable.—[Letter 5, 1870](#).

After Ellen mentioned by name the wife of one of the ministers who was not adhering to health reform in cooking and advised others not to look to her as an example, she entered into a further discussion of eggs and dairy products: [304]

If you have eggs, use them as your judgment shall dictate, yet I would say for children of strong animal passions they are positively injurious. The same may be said of adults. I do not think such large varieties of fruit are essential, yet they should be carefully gathered and preserved in their season for use when there are no apples to be had. I use but little fruit beside baked apples, although we have other kinds.

I would not advise you to set aside milk or a moderate use of eggs, moderate use of sugar. Meat I am decided does us no good, but only harm, except a person who is robbed of vitality may need a little meat to stimulate a few times. I again say, more depends upon thoughtfulness and skill in the preparation of the articles you have than of the variety or quality. Apples are superior to any fruit for a standby that grows.—[Ibid.](#)

She was writing from Battle Creek, where for much of the year there was available a much broader choice of food than in the newer Midwestern States.

Extremes Taught in the Health Reformer Bring Crisis

The publishing of extreme views in the *Health Reformer* in the summer of 1870 brought on a crisis, and at the camp meeting in Pleasanton, Kansas, in October the situation was more than ever clearly seen. In his report of that meeting James White wrote of the unfortunate results of Ellen White's virtual silence on the subject of health because of his prolonged illness. The believers in the Midwest, having read the extreme positions being advocated in the *Reformer*, which would ban the use of milk, sugar, and salt, were asking:

How do the friends of health reform live at Battle Creek? Do they dispense with salt entirely? If so, we cannot adopt the health reform. We can get but little fruit, and we have left off the use of meat, tea, coffee, and tobacco; but we must have something to sustain life.—[Testimonies for the Church, 3:20.](#)

[305] James and Ellen White made it clear they could not stand by the extreme positions taken in the *Health Reformer*, especially by the non-Adventist contributing editor, Dr. R. T. Trall, and the editor, William C. Gage, a layman who did not in his own home carry out what he advocated in the journal. As to Ellen's attitudes, her husband stated as he wrote in the Midwest:

Since we have become active again, Mrs. White oftener feels called upon to speak upon the subject of health reform because of existing extremes of health reformers, than from any other reason. The fact that all, or nearly all, of the existing extremes upon health reform among our people are supposed to receive her unqualified sanction is the reason why she feels called upon to speak her real sentiments.—[The Review and Herald, November 8, 1870.](#)

Ellen White's Moderate Positions

James White explained the moderate positions they held. He embodied this in his report from the Kansas camp meeting, published November 8:

In reference to the use of tobacco, tea, coffee, flesh meats, also of dress, there is a general agreement. But at present she is not prepared to take the extreme position relative to salt, sugar, and milk. If there were no other reasons for moving carefully in reference to these things of so common and abundant use, there is a sufficient one in the fact that the minds of many are not prepared even to receive the facts relative to these things....

It may be well here to state, however, that while she does not regard milk, taken in large quantities, as customarily eaten with bread the best article of food, *her mind, as yet, has only been called* to the importance of the best and most healthy condition possible of the cow ...whose milk is used as an article of food. She cannot unite in circulating publications broadcast which take an extreme position of the important question of milk, with *her present light upon the subject.*—*Ibid.* (Italics supplied.)

Turning particularly to sugar and salt, he set forth her middle-of-the-road stance:

[306]

Mrs. White thinks that a change from the simplest kinds of flesh meats to an abundant use of sugar is going from “bad to worse.” She would recommend a very sparing use of both sugar and salt. The appetite can, and should, be brought to a very moderate use of both.—[Ibid.](#)

Then he sounded warnings in another line, that of making abrupt changes:

While tobacco, tea, and coffee may be left at once (one at a time, however, by those who are so unfortunate as to be slaves to all), changes in diet should be made carefully, one at a time. And while she would say this to those who are in danger of making changes too rapidly, she would also say to the tardy, Be sure and not forget to change.—[Ibid.](#)

Back in Battle Creek for the Winter

After writing this, James and Ellen returned after an absence of five weeks to Battle Creek to find themselves in very interesting and challenging circumstances. The editor of the *Review*, Uriah Smith, was ill in Rochester, New York, and had been gone for some time. The editor of the *Health Reformer*, William Gage, was ill in Battle Creek with bilious fever, unable to function. Because of extreme positions advocated in its columns, the Whites found that “the *Reformer* was about dead.”—[Testimonies for the Church, 3:19](#). Of this Ellen wrote:

Many of our people had lost their interest in the *Reformer*, and letters were daily received with this discouraging request: “Please discontinue my *Reformer*.”

...

We had spent some time in the West, and knew the scarcity of fruit, and we sympathized with our brethren who were conscientiously seeking to be in harmony with the body of Sabbathkeeping Adventists.... We could not

raise an interest anywhere in the West to obtain subscribers for the *Health Reformer*. We saw that the writers in the *Reformer* were going away from the people and leaving them behind.—[Ibid.](#), 3:20.

In this situation she counseled, “We must go no faster than we can take those with us whose consciences and intellects are convinced of the truths we advocate. We must meet the people where they are.”—[Ibid.](#)

She pointed out that it had taken considerable time for some to reach the position they were, and that they should allow others no less time to get their feet firmly established on the health reform platform. She declared:

[307]

In reforms we would better come one step short of the mark than to go one step beyond it. And if there is error at all, let it be on the side next to the people.—[Ibid.](#), 3:21.

Lifesaving Therapy for the Health Reformer

Going to the *Review* office, James White found unoccupied, both the *Review* editor’s room and that of the editor of the *Health Reformer*. The latter was ill at home. “Our hands are full of business that has been waiting our return,” James wrote, “and editing our periodicals.”—[The Review and Herald, November 15, 1870](#). Warren Bacheller, connected with the *Review* office since a teenager, with some assistance from traveling James White, was keeping the *Review* going, but as for the poor *Health Reformer*, it stood, not only waiting, but seemingly dying. James White, never reticent to step in in time of special need, took the paper under his wing. He saw that if it was to survive, changes must be made, quickly. Without time for any formalities, he took over, pulling things together for the already late November issue. He furnished an editorial for this and succeeding issues, and Ellen White stepped in to help in the emergency by furnishing an article for each of four monthly issues. These articles followed his editorials.

James had three objectives in view for the magazine:

First, to raise the interest of the journal; second, to increase its circulation; third, to establish a strict pay-in-advance system.—*The Health Reformer*, April 1871.

[308] White's editorials took the form of depicting the rise and progress of health reform among Seventh-day Adventists. He made it plain that the journal was nonsectarian, but that it had its roots in the experience and convictions of Seventh-day Adventists. Ellen White's articles, keyed to experiences and observations in traveling, developed certain lines of practical counsel under such titles as "Creatures of Circumstance" in the November, 1870, issue, followed in succeeding issues by "Convenient Food," "Willpower," and "Mothers and Their Daughters." The journal was enlarged from twenty pages to thirty-two.

Mrs. White's Department

At the General Conference session held in February, 1871, James White was elected editor of the *Health Reformer*. In his reorganization of the journal he would continue "Dr. Trall's Special Department" and introduce a new one, "Mrs. White's Department." "Having observed the efficacy of her work with the general public at camp meetings, he persuaded her to take hold with him in attempts to save the paper.

Ellen White's consent to take on this task committed her to the work of a columnist, responsible for furnishing copy sufficient to fill from four to six pages of the *Health Reformer* each month. This meant that each month, six weeks before publication date, she must have, at the office of publication, materials aggregating from 3,200 to 4,800 words (eight hundred words per *Reformer* page).

Struggling with Copy Preparation

As she moved into this work, adding it to her already heavy program of travel, speaking, and writing, Ellen at first seemed to flounder. The secular public had been promised that the journal would be free of denominational bias, and this was quite limiting

to Ellen White. The March, 1871, issue was the first to carry Mrs. White's Department. Following a two-verse selected poem, "Sowing and Reaping," her opening article is titled "Spring Has Come." She wrote:

Spring has come again. The earth has thrown off her white shroud, and nature is waking to life. The birds are returning to cheer us again with their happy songs in the glorious sunshine.

All, both young and old, should be in the open air as much as possible....

Every family should have a plot of ground for cultivation and for beauty. Parents, a flower garden will be a blessing to your children.... Your children need active exercise in order to be healthy and happy. Parents, it will pay to expend a small sum yearly in purchasing flower seeds and shrubs. We have purchased these of James Vick, Rochester, New York, and have ever felt more than satisfied with the means we thus invested.—[The Health Reformer, March 1, 1871.](#)

[309]

The two-column article is editorially signed "E.G.W." It is followed with a selected item, "Make Home Pleasant," and then an E.G.W. paragraph, "Tobacco Spitters in Cars." Her department in this issue closed with a two-column selected article, "The Perils of Travel."

The Journal Revived

The changes James White instituted in behalf of the *Reformer* soon began to bear fruit. His editorials and articles added interest. He was able to persuade Dr. R. T. Trall to modify his stances, which were tending to extremes. Mrs. White's Department was well received. He solicited articles from Adventist ministers who had adopted the health reform program, and by May he had twelve, which he included. The writers were S. N. Haskell, J. N. Loughborough, R. F. Cottrell, I. D. Van Horn, J. N. Andrews, W. H. Littlejohn, D. T. Bourdeau, A. S. Hutchins, A. C. Bourdeau, D.

M. Canright, George I. Butler, and Joseph Clarke. The experiences related and admonitions given in these contributions added new life to the journal. From month to month more material from their pens was included. The letters to the editor, grouped under the antique heading "Our Letter Budget," carried this from Clarke, a well-to-do Ohio farmer:

The *Reformer* is improving. The editor gets the right hold of a matter every time. May God bless him. The reform is gaining ground here. We hope to send in more names from time to time.—*Ibid.*, May, 1871.

But the best barometer was in the increased circulation—three hundred new subscriptions were received in twenty-five days. As the journal improved, the subscription list increased steadily. By December it had almost doubled, at five thousand. James White took pride in the fact that it was generally conceded to be the best health journal in America.—*The Review and Herald*, December 12, 1871.

[310]

A Marriage in the White Family

While James and Ellen were in Battle Creek between camp meeting appointments in 1870, they helped celebrate a wedding in the family. James presided at the ceremony in which Edson White and Emma McDearmon were joined in holy wedlock. The newlyweds, both 21, would live in Wright. James and Ellen were soon off to the camp meeting in Clyde, Ohio. From the campground Ellen wrote to the couple and gave invaluable counsel, for it touched on points easily and frequently overlooked:

You, my children, have given your hearts to one another unitedly; give them wholly, unreservedly, to God. In your married life, seek to elevate one another, not to come down to common, cheap talk and actions. Show the high and elevating principles of your holy faith in your everyday conversations and in the most private walks of life.

Be careful ever, and tender of the feelings of one another. Do not allow either of you, for even the first

time, a playful bantering, joking, censuring of one another. These things are dangerous. They wound.... The wound may be concealed; nevertheless the wound exists and peace is being sacrificed, and happiness endangered when it could be easily preserved.

Edson, my son, guard yourself and in no case manifest the least disposition savoring of a dictatorial, overbearing spirit. It will pay to watch your words before speaking. This is easier than to take them back or efface their impression afterward....

Ever speak kindly; do not throw into the tones of your voice that which will be taken by others as irritability. Modulate even the tones of your voice. Let only love, gentleness, and mildness be expressed in your countenance and in your voice. Make it a business to shed rays of sunlight, but never leave a cloud.

Emma will be all to you you can desire if you are watchful and give her no occasion to feel distressed and troubled and doubt the genuineness of your love. Yourselves can make your happiness, or lose it. You can, by seeking to conform your life to the Word of God, be true, noble, elevated, and smooth the pathway of life for each other.—[Letter 24, 1870](#).

Then, directing her words particularly to Edson, she closed:

God help you, my much loved son, to see the force of my advice and counsel to you. Be careful every day of your words and acts. Yield to each other. Yield your judgment sometimes, Edson; do not be persistent even if your course appears just right to yourself. You must be yielding, forbearing, kind, tender hearted, pitiful, courteous, ever keeping fresh the little courtesies of life, the tender acts, the tender, cheerful, encouraging words. And may the best of heaven's blessings rest upon you both, my dear children, is the prayer of your mother.—[Ibid.](#)

[311]

[312]

Chapter 21—(1871) Restructuring for a Sound Future—1

During James White's illness the responsibilities of the SDA Publishing Association and the Health Institute passed to the hands of men lacking in proper business experience. The result was mismanagement and heavy losses. As James made his way back to health he again took hold of these and other responsibilities in a firm, dedicated manner, and in time these institutions prospered. Everyone rejoiced. But he soon discovered that he did not have the physical resources to maintain the pace of the rapidly growing interests of the cause as a whole, and these institutions in particular. As he labored during the year 1871 some moves seem to be erratic, but in them all we see James trying desperately to find his way in building a structure that would carry on successfully without his immediate leadership.

Status and Working Force of the Cause

To gain a proper perspective of this crucial transition period, one that was to extend over several years, it may be well to step back a bit and view the resources and involvements of a growing denomination.

Doctrine. Soundly founded on the Word of God; major positions confirmed by messages from heaven through the Spirit of Prophecy in their midst.

Organization. A well-developed structure built on the principles of representative government.

[313]

Working Forces. Made up of dedicated but largely self-made men, some with greater abilities and more education than others, but with James White definitely in the lead by the choice of fellow workers and the ranks.

Finances. Without endowments and with few men of wealth, the work sustained by a plan of Systematic Benevolence, spreading the burden over the total membership.

Institutions. Operating two major institutions—the well-established SDA Publishing Association, and the newer Health Reform Institute, still struggling but making progress.

Growth. Membership steadily climbing, at this point about five thousand. A ministerial staff of thirty-five ordained men and forty-eight with licenses, in the main devoting their energies to evangelism, leaving the oversight of 185 churches to local elders and deacons.

Stability of the Cause. “Encouraging,” James White wrote in late 1871:

There is nothing so encouraging to those who have given their lives for the advancement of the cause as the stability of our people.—[The Review and Herald, October 24, 1871.](#)

The members assembled at the annual Michigan camp meeting represented the largest State conference. That field had shared its ministerial forces to the point that there had not been “left in the State sufficient strength to man one [evangelistic] tent half of the time” (*Ibid.*). Many churches could be visited by a minister only about once in six months, yet James White could report:

There they were on the Charlotte campground with ears and hearts open to the work of God, and ready with their means to advance the general interests of the cause.—*Ibid.*

The One Disturbing Weakness

Perhaps James saw more clearly than did others the one disturbing weakness, one that kept him awake at nights. By way of management, what did the future hold? He had come in at the outset, a young man with less than two years of formal schooling and limited ministerial experience, poverty stricken but dedicated to advance the three angels’ messages and all that they embodied. With one overruling purpose, to serve the cause of God, he grew

[314] and developed in writing, editorial skills, and publishing experience. He led in the development of a publishing house, and built on the strictest financial policies. All of this led him and his wife, Ellen, to avoid debt. They operated on a pay-as-you-go basis, and from this base encouraged fellow believers to share liberally of their resources and their earnings to advance the work. This brought prosperity to the publishing interests, which in time were properly organized into a church-owned publishing association, with gradually mounting resources. In these experiences James White developed into a respected and astute businessman.

The Health Reform Institute, launched during White's severe illness, was not so fortunate. When he recovered sufficiently to carry responsibilities, he became involved in its resuscitation, for it was floundering badly.

Greatly to his distress, he discovered on his recovery that the Publishing Association, which had been managed by men with limited business experience, was in a serious decline. He described the situation when in 1869 he again took hold of it:

The stock of publications was very low. There was not \$500 worth of stock on hand, we had no deposits at the bank, and we were paying 10 percent interest on \$6,000.—[Ibid., October 17, 1871](#)

But in October, 1871, two years later, he could report:

By the blessing of God we have paid all interest-bearing notes, we have \$6,000 worth of stock, we have added to our publications not less than \$9,000 worth, have cash on hand to pay all bills, and have the new office building nearly ready for use, which, with the usual liberality of our people will be paid for by New Year's. In short, the Seventh-day Adventist Publishing Association has fully recovered the results of bad management during our absence from it on account of sickness, and never was as prosperous as at the present time.—[Ibid.](#)

But this and the problems of the Health Institute took something out of James White—he discovered that he had but half the

strength he had enjoyed in earlier years. With the burgeoning work outstripping his strength, what did the future hold? The distressing years of his illness had made it plain that the ministers were not in a position to manage the business affairs of the church. He had persuaded the General Conference Committee to call the 1871 session some two months early to try to discover a remedy for the situation. The session opened on Tuesday, February 7, with meetings of the SDA Publishing Association, Health Institute, and the Michigan Conference also coming in day by day. [315]

To Bring in “Picked” Businessmen

The conference promptly addressed itself to choosing qualified men to give the help needed. In the second business meeting, after passing resolutions of appreciation for the faithful and abundant labors of James White and reaffirming abiding confidence in the testimonies of Ellen White, Resolution No. 8 was presented and adopted. It read:

Whereas, God has shown that there should be picked men at the heart of the work, and,

Whereas, Heretofore the cause has suffered for the lack of such men who would help to bear burdens, and,

Whereas, We think there are those among us who would please God and relieve His overtasked servants by coming and helping in such things as they could do, therefore,

Resolved, That a committee of three be appointed to select such men to remove to Battle Creek, as they shall think duty calls to this place.—[Ibid.](#), February 14, 1871

In a later meeting of the session, this resolution was implemented as follows:

Brethren E. H. Root, S. H. King, and J. F. Carman were authorized to act with the General Conference Committee to induce such persons to remove to Battle

Creek as can be a help in the work, and effect the removal from the place of such persons as can be of no help here.—[Ibid.](#)

[316] James White came to this session hoping to be relieved of some of the load he was carrying, but instead it was increased. The nominating committee called for him to continue as president of the General Conference, with Uriah Smith as secretary and Mrs. Adelia P. Van Horn as treasurer. J. N. Andrews and W. H. Littlejohn would join White as a General Conference Committee. Then he was reelected president of the Publishing Association and editor of the *Review and Herald*. To this was added the responsibility of editor of the *Health Reformer*. The chief benefit of calling the General Conference session early was in the long-range planning it provided. The actions taken promised a remedy.

Ira Abbey, of Brookfield, New York, was the first to respond, and soon came to Battle Creek to manage the Health Institute. In the meantime some families not needed in Battle Creek were encouraged by the General Conference Committee to move to other locations. But it took time to change residences and, in some instances, occupations. The time involved was frustrating to James White. Through much of the year 1871 he studied ways to relate to the changes that must take place. He and Ellen sensed that plans must be devised that would result in a strong, continuing business administrative force heading the growing work of the church. And there was the question of how he should relate to these changes. Various plans were considered; some of them quickly changed, but all focused on providing a situation in which both could do the writing they felt they must do.

One step was seen in the announcement that they would attend the four camp meetings in the West:

We shall have nothing to do with the sale of books, or in taking subscriptions for our periodicals. We shall furnish to each camp meeting a complete list of subscribers for *Review*, *Reformer*, and *Instructor*, and shall invite each camp meeting to appoint proper persons to attend to this kind of work.—[Ibid.](#), May 23, 1871

Another carefully considered question was whether they should continue to reside in Battle Creek, or move, say, to their home in Washington, Iowa. At first they opted for selling their Battle Creek home and moving away. Then, seeing that for the sake of the cause they must not be too far away from Battle Creek, they thought of securing a home close to the railroad, where they could easily slip into town when needed (*Ibid.*, November 14, 1871).

Eventually they decided to keep their home in Battle Creek but separate their interests as far as possible from the day-to-day operations, with James still at the head of the publishing interests but not managing the routine operations.

[317]

An Impressive Dream

Through it all, Ellen White worked as she was able, writing *The Spirit of Prophecy*, volume 2, dealing with the life and ministry of Christ. Much of the time through February, March, and April she was not at all well, having not yet passed that critical period in her life of which she had written to Edson some weeks before. She related her experience:

On the night of April 30, 1871, I retired to rest much depressed in spirits. For three months I had been in a state of great discouragement. I had frequently prayed in anguish of spirit for relief. I had implored help and strength from God, that I might rise above the heavy discouragements that were paralyzing my faith and hope, and unfitting me for usefulness. That night I had a dream which made a very happy impression upon my mind.

I dreamed that I was attending an important meeting, at which a large company were assembled. Many were bowed before God in earnest prayer, and they seemed to be burdened. They were importuning the Lord for special light.... Our most prominent brethren were engaged in this most impressive scene....

I dreamed that the Spirit of the Lord came upon me, and I arose amid cries and prayers, and said: The

[318]

Spirit of the Lord God is upon me. I feel urged to say to you that you must commence to work individually for yourselves. You are looking to God and desiring Him to do the work for you which He has left for you to do. If you will do the work for yourselves which you know that you ought to do, then God will help you when you need help. You have left undone the very things which God has left for you to do. You have been calling upon God to do your work. Had you followed the light which He had given you, then He would cause more light to shine upon you; but while you neglect the counsels, warnings, and reproofs that have been given, how can you expect God to give you more light and blessings to neglect and despise? God is not as man; He will not be trifled with.”—[Testimonies for the Church, 2:604, 605](#).

It was a dramatic presentation, in which she seemingly participated. She continued the account:

I took the precious Bible and surrounded it with the several *Testimonies for the Church*, given for the people of God. Here, said I, the cases of nearly all are met. The sins they are to shun are pointed out. The counsel that they desire can be found here, given for other cases situated similarly to themselves.

God has been pleased to give you line upon line and precept upon precept. But there are not many of you that really know what is contained in the *Testimonies*. You are not familiar with the Scriptures. If you had made God’s Word your study, with a desire to reach the Bible standard and attain to Christian perfection, you would not have needed the *Testimonies*.

It is because you have neglected to acquaint yourselves with God’s inspired Book that He has sought to reach you by simple, direct testimonies, calling your attention to the words of inspiration which you had neglected to obey, and urging you to fashion your lives in

accordance with its pure and elevated teachings.—[Ibid.](#), 2:605.

As she, in her dream, continued to address the crowd, she spoke more of the purpose of the *Testimonies* and their relation to God's Word. As she held her Bible, with *Testimony* pamphlets, it seemed to her that she declared:

As the Word of God is walled in with these books and pamphlets, so has God walled you in with reproofs, counsel, warnings, and encouragements.... The Lord has walled you about with light; but you have not appreciated the light; you have trampled upon it. While some have despised the light, others have neglected it, or followed it but indifferently. A few have set their hearts to obey the light which God has been pleased to give them.”—[Ibid.](#), 2:606.

Perhaps this dream led her to draw together a number of important messages she had recently given, orally or in writing, and publish them in *Testimony* No. 20, which came from the press in late May. It was a paperbound volume of some two hundred pages, selling for 25 cents. James White noted concerning it: “No preceding number of the series of pamphlets, bearing the above title, has been of greater importance to the church.”—[The Review and Herald](#), May 23, 1871. (See [Testimonies for the Church](#), 2:577-712.) [319]

The Testimonies in Bound Sets

In August, two black cloth-bound volumes, a reprinting of the early *Testimony* pamphlets came from the press. Beginning with 1855, when the first *Testimony* pamphlet was published, they had been issued in rather small printings, for the church was small. By 1864 ten such pamphlets had been published, but not all were still available at the *Review* office. Then these counsels were made available again by being reprinted and included as the last section of Volume IV of *Spiritual Gifts*,. But not in their entirety. Ellen White explained in her introductory remarks:

During the last nine years, from 1855 to 1864, I have written ten small pamphlets, entitled *Testimony for the Church*, which have been published and circulated among Seventh-day Adventists. The first edition of most of these pamphlets being exhausted, and there being an increasing demand for them, it has been thought best to reprint them, as given in the following pages, omitting local and personal matters, and giving those portions only which are of practical and general interest and importance. Most of *Testimony* No. 4 may be found in the second volume of *Spiritual Gifts*; hence, it is omitted in this volume.

What was selected for republication filled 160 pages, or about one third of the content of the ten pamphlets. But this did not satisfy the desires of the believers, who declared they wanted all of the testimonies, regardless of the relevancy of some of them. In the summer of 1871 the demands for all of the *Testimonies* were met, as [Numbers 1](#) to 19 were reprinted in their entirety. The volume was prefaced by James White:

[320]

During the period of sixteen years Mrs. White has published her *Testimonies for the Church* in a series of pamphlets, which at this date number twenty. But as the editions of the first Numbers were small, and have long since been exhausted, we are not able to furnish the series complete to the numerous friends who subsequently embraced the views of Seventh-day Adventists. The call for these *Testimonies* being large, we republish and offer them in this form.

And we are happy to do this, inasmuch as the testimonies, given under the trying and ever-changing circumstances of the past sixteen years, ever breathing the same high-toned spirit of scriptural piety, contain in themselves the best evidences of their being what they profess to be.

There are in them matters of a local and personal character, which do not have a direct bearing upon our

time. But as many have desired it, we give them complete.

The 1871 Western Camp Meetings

Camp meetings in the Western States were to be held in Missouri, Iowa, Illinois, Wisconsin, and Minnesota, beginning in late May and running to early July. James White announced that he and Ellen planned to attend some of them ([The Review and Herald, May 23, 1871](#)). They began their work with the Iowa meeting at Knoxville. Attendance was good, but they there learned from Canright and Littlejohn of the divisive attitudes of a number who attended the Missouri meeting. As the result of the deceptive work of Mr. Goodenough and Mr. Carver, quite a group opposed Ellen White and the visions. James White, as he wrote of the situation, pointed out that Seventh-day Adventists “believe that the Spirit of Prophecy has rested on Mrs. White, and that she is called to do a special work at this time among this people.” He pointed out:

They do not, however, make a belief in this work a test of Christian fellowship. But after men and women have had evidence that the work is of God, and then join hands with those who fight against it, our people claim the right to separate from such, that they may enjoy their sentiments in peace and quiet.—[Ibid., June 13, 1871](#)

After a week’s rest at their Washington, Iowa, home, James and Ellen attended the camp meetings in Wisconsin and Minnesota. On receiving word that James’s father was nearing death, they hurried home to Battle Creek. On their arrival Thursday evening, July 6, they learned that Deacon John White had died just the day before. In Battle Creek for the funeral was John W. White, an older brother and presiding elder of the Methodist Episcopal church in Columbus, Ohio, and his son, Prof. John White, of Willoughby College. The funeral of the 86-year-old patriarch was held on Sabbath, July 8. James’s mother, Betsey White, had died on January 9, so now both of his parents were resting in Oak Hill Cemetery.

[321]

Midsummer in Battle Creek

Efforts to bring in “picked” men to Battle Creek to add strength to the business interests of the cause were just beginning to bear fruit. On June 20 White reported to the readers of the *Review*:

Already the fort at Battle Creek is being reinforced by veteran soldiers. And the scheme which constitutes a firm basis of hope for the future success of the Publishing Association and our Health Institute is the removal of a liberal selection of best families from several States to headquarters. Their moral and religious influence is needed at this fort.—[Ibid., June 20, 1871](#)

On July 18 there was a buoyancy in James White’s report of the camp meetings in the West that he had attended. And he noted:

We are happy to find on our return that prosperity attends the work at the publishing house, and at the Health Institute. And by the grace of God, we can report improvement in health and spirits. Mrs. White is in excellent spirits, and designs to complete her second volume of *The Spirit of Prophecy* before the eastern camp meetings. This she will do in Battle Creek, if friends will not interrupt her with their personal matters. If they do, she will go to Greenville where she can be retired.—[Ibid., July 18, 1871](#)

[322] He rejoiced particularly over the achievements of the Health Institute. It was finally on a sound financial basis, under good management, and with four physicians on the staff. Enlargement of the main building was about finished, and the cottages had been refurbished; it seemed that there should be a rededication of the facilities. This would offer an opportunity to acquaint the city and surrounding community with the institution. A committee was formed to foster such a program, and the back page of the *Review* carried an announcement of a health convention to be held Thursday, July 27, with plans for a banquet. James White, as chairman of the committee on arrangements, signed the notice ([Ibid.](#)). It was a grand success, as we will report in the next chapter.

Planning for the Eastern Camp Meetings

The eastern camp meetings were scheduled to open in New York State on Thursday, August 10, and run from week to week through Vermont, New England, and Maine, closing on September 4. James White announced:

We design to attend the eastern camp meetings, if the way is opened for us.... It is in our hearts to accept the kind invitation of brethren in California to visit them this autumn, and spend the winter with them. This we can do, after attending camp meetings in New York, New Hampshire, Vermont, Maine, Michigan, Ohio, and Indiana, if the brethren will not load us down with cares and labors which do not belong to us.

But if fellow laborers dodge responsibilities, neglect our periodicals, and leave work for us to do which they should do themselves, we shall submit to remain in Battle Creek, and do the best we can. Brethren, we are at your service.—[Ibid.](#)

Two weeks later it was announced that W. H. Littlejohn would travel with the Whites to the eastern meetings, and J. H. Waggoner would remain in Battle Creek in charge of publishing operations ([Ibid., August 1, 1871](#)). While James had every intention of attending the eastern meetings, he was still much troubled about the future. He confided to readers of the *Review*:

We have appealed for help, and have spoken pointedly in reference to the necessity of reliable working men moving to Battle Creek. The case has been clearly stated. We are still struggling on with two or three men's work, and hope not to fail before help comes. But we are grieved with the knowledge of the fact that we cannot endure one half the work we could one year since.— [Ibid.](#)

[323]

Omens that Did not Augur Well

James White was experiencing symptoms that warned of the approach of another stroke, and he was terrified. He wrote of what he had experienced early in the year when he hoped to divest himself of some of the responsibilities he was carrying:

In January last we appealed to our people for six months' rest from perpetual labors and cares. General Conference was called a month in advance, that the necessary arrangements might be made for our much-needed rest. And in the face of our appeals for entire rest for a season, fourfold burdens were coolly put upon us, then a resolution was passed voting us rest! We have not, however, found an hour's rest.— [Ibid.](#)

He referred then to the kind of help he hoped to see come to Battle Creek. Not ministers, who were few in number—he did not want to see them burdened with matters of finance as he had been so long, but businessmen. He named some he would like to see there: H. W. Kellogg, of Vermont; H. B. Stratton, of Boston; Ira Abbey, of New York; King, Fargo, Root, McPherson, and Palmer, of Michigan ([Ibid.](#)).

He clarified his concept of the relation they might take to the work, making Battle Creek or its vicinity their place of residence. He saw such men who had made a success of life, who would settle nearby, acting as “counselors and helpers in all matters pertaining to the advancement of the cause.” If this could be, and if twenty or twenty-five of the very best families could come and do the work that the ministers should not be asked to do, he would be willing to remain in Battle Creek.

But the kind of sweeping changes he was calling for could not come about overnight. In his editorial in the next issue of the *Review* he continued his pleas. He closed his editorial thus:

In view of these facts, sensible Christians will justify our efforts, in our worn condition, at the age of 50, to either call around us suitable help, and those who will have a good influence, or to leave the work at Battle

Creek to fresher and more able hands.—[Ibid.](#), August 8, 1871

On August 22, almost in desperation he inserted a back page *Review* note, filling half a column and titled “Men Wanted.” He explained that the men who should come need not at the outset feel that they were prepared to fill positions they were not qualified for. But he explained:

[324]

We want our most reliable men and their families at headquarters—

1. To add to the spiritual interests of our religious meetings, and to give a better tone of spirituality at the office of publication and the institute.

2. To serve as counselors, trustees, and directors, and hold up the hands of those who have long borne double burdens and responsibilities in the cause.

3. As fast and as far as possible, those who are competent to do it, to work their way into the business and mechanical branches of the work, so as to release as soon as possible from “serving tables” some who should be giving themselves wholly to the Word of God, and to prayer....

Men are wanted at headquarters to give character to the work, that our people everywhere may have undoubted confidence in the management of our institutions. Then they will open the hand wide in charitable donations to sustain the work of God.—[Ibid.](#), August 22, 1871

[325] **Chapter 22—(1871-1872) Restructuring for a Sound
Future—2**

There has never been a time,” proclaimed James White in his editorial in the *Review and Herald* of September 12, “when the friends of the cause of Bible truth, and pure religion, have so much to encourage them as at the present. The cause, in all its branches, is being placed upon a footing that is truly gratifying.” Ellen returned from the east with a good report of the camp meetings she had attended. James White had rather quickly passed through dark days that had led him to submit himself to the care of the physicians at the Health Institute. He and Ellen, in serious examination of their own souls, had rededicated themselves to the cause they loved. The outlook for both of them was encouraging and bright.

Two years before, it had not been so. He wrote that the Health Institute had then been seeing its darkest time:

Heavy debts were upon it. And in consequence of shaken confidence in its management, patrons were very few. At first we saw no other way than to sell out, and refund what was left to those who had taken stock. But on second thought faith revived, and by the grace of God we were able to declare that God would vindicate every appeal to His people in the several *Testimonies for the Church* respecting health reform and the Health Institute. We have worked in accordance with our faith, and with the blessing of God, and the cooperation of faithful friends at the institute, and also abroad, it has been gradually rising, and is now enjoying a full tide of prosperity.—*Ibid.*, [September 12, 1871](#)

[326] **The “Hygienic Festival” of July 27, 1871**

With the upturn of the affairs of the institute in the spring, it became necessary to make an addition to the main building and

improve and refit the cottages. To James White and some others this had seemed to be a new beginning, appropriately calling for the rededication of the institution and its staff, climaxed by a meal together. What better opportunity could there be to acquaint the leading families in Battle Creek with the enterprise and for what it stood? The committee chosen to foster the event, chaired by James White, sent out printed invitations to the principal families in the city and community to participate in a “hygienic festival” on the grounds of the institution. The response was excellent. The *Health Reformer* reported:

The preparations for the occasion, made by the joint action of those directly connected with the Health Institute, and a large number of practical health reformers in the city and vicinity, were ample and in many respects truly beautiful and grand.—[The Health Reformer, August, 1871](#) (see also [The Review and Herald, August 22, 1871](#)).

The dinner was an outstanding success. One of the guests, the Honorable George Willard, editor of the *Battle Creek Journal*, reported the proceedings:

On Thursday, July 27, on the spacious and beautiful grounds of the Health Institute in this city, there was held a Health Reform Convention or Hygienic Festival, which was attended by about eight hundred persons, chiefly assembled from Battle Creek and the towns in the vicinity. The day was one of the finest of the season, and as the people began arriving about eleven o’clock in the forenoon, they found the amplest preparations made for their reception.

On the south side of the grounds were five tables—each 128 feet in length, the total length being 640 feet—all set in the neatest style and appropriately decorated with vases of flowers, while on the north side a large platform had been fitted up for a speaker’s stand, with seats arranged in front of it for the accommodation of the guests during the speaking....

[327] Before the guests sat down at the tables, there were some speeches, of which Editor Willard reported:

There were addresses on health and dress reform by the Rev. James White, and also by Mrs. White. They were both listened to with close attention, as they with remarkable force and clearness set forth the new principles of hygiene, and presented the reasons for their adoption.

Willard noted that “she proceeded to discuss the topics which would naturally possess a special interest on the part of the ladies of her audience.” He added:

The duties of the family and home circle were enforced with a practical eloquence, which must have convinced her hearers that many if not all of her admonitions and suggestions were worthy of serious attention, and that the world would be much better if they were carried out in actual practice in all the homes of the land.

When she had concluded her address, dinner was announced, and the crowd surged toward the five tables. Six hundred and seventy-five persons were served with a tempting meal. There were vegetables, of course, tastily prepared:

New ripe potatoes, green beans, green corn, beets, squash, green peas, baked beans.

There were breads and cakes:

Gems, raised bread, hard biscuit, buns, fruit cake (graham), sponge cake (graham), apple pie (graham), oatmeal pudding, manioca pudding with fruit, rice pudding with fruit.

As to fruit there were peaches; dried prunes, figs, and dates; apples; whortleberries [huckleberries]; and blackberries. The editor stated:

It is to be noticed that butter, grease of all kinds, tea, coffee, spice, pepper, ginger, and nutmeg were wholly discarded in the cookery and were not in use on the tables. Salt was provided for those who desired it.

Going considerably into detail, the editor stated:

After the invocation of the divine blessing, the dinner was served in a most capital manner, and was relished and universally commended by the vast company of guests, most of whom for the first time sat at a public dinner got up on the hygienic plan.—[Ibid.](#)

[328]

Then there was a visit to the facilities of the institute, and the crowd gathered again to listen further to James and Ellen White. Willard concluded his report, stating, “The institute, it is needless to add, has gained greatly by this convention, in having its aims and objects, as well as its actual condition and prospects, brought more fully before the public at large.”

This is precisely what the directors of the institute and the Adventist community had hoped for.

The New Review and Herald Building

Adding to the excitement of the summer, a new building was under construction to house the growing demands upon the *Review and Herald*. In early May the lot just east of the plant had been purchased, and a building, an exact duplicate of the one then in use, was erected. Wrote James White on August 22:

A second office building is nearly completed for the use of the Seventh-day Adventist Publishing Association, the size and form of the one now occupied. The brick are laid, and the roof is on. It will probably be ready for use by the first of October. The cost of the site and building properly furnished will be a little less than \$10,000. This sum we propose to raise before January, 1872, in stock shares of \$10.—[Ibid.](#), [August 22, 1871](#)

Special Healing Blessings Signal God's Power

In early September, when Ellen White returned to Battle Creek after her tour of camp meetings in the East, and James and Ellen had joined in soul searching and reconsecration to the cause of God, heaven had signaled a response in a special manner. James stated, regarding his personal experience:

[329]

We finally came to the point to decide that we would not fully leave the work at Battle Creek without the clearest providential proofs of duty so to do; but stand by the work there at all hazards till God shall raise up, and qualify, others to take the oversight of it. Since this decision has been made, we have enjoyed unusual freedom, and mental and physical embarrassments are rapidly disappearing.—[Ibid., November 14, 1871](#)

Ellen had been relieved from what had been a little-known but distressing situation, one that clearly evidenced the providence of God. In addition to the menopause through which she was passing, she suffered much from a painful growth thought to be cancer ([Letter 28, 1872](#)). For four days they sought God's healing. James wrote:

And Mrs. White, also, is sharing very largely the divine blessing. For two years past she has, most of the time, suffered from painful and discouraging evidence of a growing cancer in the breast. About the time we decided to never leave the work at Battle Creek, until the Lord and His people gave us unmistakable evidence that we were released, Mrs. White gave herself to the Lord anew in a covenant to trust in His power fully.

We bowed before God together in solemn covenant to be wholly His, and to labor on, trusting His providential hand to uphold, to direct, and to save. And the Lord has been very gracious to us. Mrs. White is free and happy, and has the best of evidence that the growing cancerous swelling, which had become large, and was very painful, is entirely removed. As we pen these lines, she is by our side, earnestly preparing her second

volume of *The Spirit of Prophecy* for the press.—[The Review and Herald, November 14, 1871.](#)

Whether or not the diagnosis of the cause of her distress was accurate, healing brought both relief and courage.

The September Michigan Camp Meeting

The September 5 issue of the *Review* had carried, on the back page, the note from the physicians at the Health Institute endorsing the wisdom of James’s proposed resignation from publishing responsibilities. It was anticipated that a replacement would be chosen on September 18 at the time of the Michigan camp meeting. To the surprise of everyone, the September 12 issue of the *Review* carried his enthusiastic editorial “The Cause” and its bright outlook, with no mention of his dropping out of the picture ([Ibid., September 12, 1871](#)).

[330]

So when the time came for the Michigan camp meeting at Charlotte and the special meeting of the SDA Publishing Association to select White’s successor as president of the association, that matter was postponed until the next regular meeting. James White had not only made a very speedy recovery, but was one of the speakers at the camp. At this well-attended gathering he spoke five times and his wife three.

Uriah Smith, in describing the camp meeting setting, reported that there were, on the grounds,

fifty-seven tents, including the two large tents, arranged in one grand circle about thirty rods in diameter, [that] furnished temporary homes for nearly eight hundred Sabbathkeepers.... The preaching was with great freedom and power. This was the case with all the speakers. Brother White dwelt with much freedom on the subject of the Second Advent, and the work of reform in its bearing upon the preparation we are to make for that event, and our being overcomers at last.—[Ibid., September 19, 1871](#)

At the constituency meeting actions were passed that brought relief and courage to James White. Steps were taken to bring in much-needed help.

Voted, That Brethren H. W. Kellogg and Charles Russell move to Battle Creek to help sustain Brother White in the work.— [Ibid.](#)

Further, the three laymen, Ira Abbey, J. F. Carman, and S. H. King, appointed earlier at the General Conference session, were named again to work with the General Conference Committee in arranging for families who could strengthen the work to move to Battle Creek ([Ibid.](#)).

The Tour Through New England

[331] In August, when it was time for James and Ellen White to leave for the New England camp meetings, he had been greatly disappointed to find himself confined to Battle Creek as an invalid, taking treatments in the Health Institute. Now steps were being taken to ease his load. This, with his remarkable recovery in health, caused him to turn his eyes again to New England. He made an appointment to commence work there, meeting with the South Lancaster church November 4, and in Boston November 11 and 12 ([Ibid.](#), [October 31, 1871](#)). This tour took them into Maine, Rhode Island, and Vermont. His first report, written from the Haskell home in South Lancaster, had a buoyant tone:

It is not alone the bracing air of New England that has driven away our gloom and made us free and hopeful. The exhilarating influence of change, of meeting friends, old and new, of seeing many new faces, has done us much good. And the hope of better health, freedom from double care, and the prospect of being able to fill calls to different parts of the wide field, where we can now and then stop and find retirement to write for a few weeks, makes us feel that we are almost in a new world.—[Ibid.](#), [November 21, 1871](#)

They continued on to eastern Maine, where James's ministry had begun. With renewed enthusiasm he announced that it was their design to spend much of 1872 in Maine:

Our proposition to spend much time in Maine the next year, where we can be free from the cares at Battle Creek, that we may write several books, and speak to the brethren in different places on the Sabbath, meets their hearty approval. We design to give appointments for Maine soon.—[Ibid., December 12, 1871](#)

As to Ellen White, he could rejoice in reporting:

Mrs. White is in the enjoyment of excellent health, and is in good spirits, and is making considerable progress on her second volume. This will be far the most interesting and important book she has written. We are having a jubilee. Our greatest embarrassment is our inability to comply with the many calls in different parts of New England, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, et cetera.

But they had to be on their way back to Battle Creek to attend the tenth annual session of the General Conference in late December, and the dedication of the new *Review and Herald* building the following week. En route they met with the Bordoville, Vermont, church on Sabbath and Sunday, December 9 and 10. [332]

Vision at Bordoville, Vermont

The Bourdeau brothers, A. C. and D. T., reported the happenings of Ellen White's visit there. James, on account of a severe cold contracted in an uncomfortable visit to the Washington, New Hampshire, church, could not attend. Here is the report:

There were eight meetings held in Bordoville. Three of them were preaching meetings and five were social. Sister White labored especially for the church. One

interesting feature of the meetings was that though Sabbath afternoon nearly one hundred persons came forward to the anxious seats for prayers, yet the evening following, at a meeting held to continue the same work, we came to a halt where neither preachers nor people could cause the work to progress; at which point special testimonies were given to individuals present; and as these were endorsed, light and freedom broke in.—[Ibid.](#), [December 26, 1871](#)

As Ellen was about to leave late Sunday afternoon, two young men who had grown careless but who had attended the meetings came to bid her Goodbye. The Bourdeau report continues:

At this point, Sister White felt the real burden of their cases, and a special yearning after them for their salvation, and gave them rich instructions. She then kneeled down with them, and prayed for them with great earnestness, faith, and tenacity, that they might return unto the Lord. They yielded and prayed, promising to serve the Lord.

The Spirit of the Lord drew nearer and nearer. Sister White was free, and soon, unexpectedly to all, she was in vision. She remained in this condition fifteen minutes. The news spread, and soon the house (A. C. Bourdeau's) was crowded. Sinners trembled, believers wept, and backsliders returned to God.—[Ibid.](#)

[333] There was an unusual and very interesting corollary. The experience in the Bourdeau home was simultaneously being shared by some others in their own homes. The report continues:

The work was not confined to those present as we have since learned. Some who had remained at home were powerfully convicted. They saw themselves as they have never done before. The angel of God was shaking the place. The shortness of time, the terrors and nearness of coming judgments and the time of trouble,

the worldly-mindedness of the church, their lack of brotherly love, and their state of unreadiness to meet the Lord were strongly impressed upon the minds of all. A reform is started; hearty confessions are being made; brethren are coming together.— [Ibid.](#)

The Tenth Annual Session of the General Conference

The tenth annual session of the General Conference opened in Battle Creek, Friday morning, December 29, 1871. It was a meeting that to a degree would see the fruition of James White's determination to strengthen the base of the work to ensure its future and give him needed relief. It was a meeting of encouraging reports and the laying of long-range plans. The Publishing Association was prospering, having increased its assets by nearly \$11,000 during the past ten months and erected a new building that was to be dedicated in a few days. The Health Institute was doing well; it was managed by Ira Abbey, the first of the "picked men" to join the business forces in Battle Creek. But James and Ellen White were spent; it was clear that they must get away from the burdens that inevitably rolled upon them when they were in Battle Creek.

Fourteen delegates attended the first meeting. Those from out of the city were entertained at the Health Institute in its recently enlarged building and renovated cottages. Some were there for a week, and some for two weeks. "It seemed," wrote James White at a later time, "to be the highest pleasure of the physicians and helpers to make all feel at home, and to make the occasion a happy one." He commented:

The opportunity for the interchange of thought by those who had intelligently and conscientiously adopted the principles of the great health reformation was excellent, and each seemed to be delighted with the important facts in each other's experience.—[Ibid.](#), [August 20, 1872](#)

[334]

Nor was the contribution made by James White to the financial stability and improved situation of the institute overlooked. Early in the session an action was taken recognizing this:

Resolved, That we express our gratification with the prosperity and future prospects of the Health Institute, in respect to its financial management, its excellent order, its success in the treatment of disease, and its moral and religious influence. That we consider that this favorable state of the institute is, under the blessing of God, owing to the interest taken in its behalf by Brother White, to the care and labor of the trustees, and to the faithfulness of the physicians and helpers.—[Ibid.](#), January 2, 1872

Another resolution recognized also James White's untiring efforts in behalf of the Publishing Association. This was followed by one that called for him to be relieved of the burdens entailed in its interests, but that his strength be cherished "as a counselor and minister." Before the conference was over, the following interesting action was passed:

Resolved, That the time has now come when it is clearly the duty of the association to perform an act of justice in paying Brother White the full value of what he freely gave into the hands of the association in transferring the *Review* to that body.—[Ibid.](#)

However, in his report of the session Uriah Smith noted that White declined to accept reimbursement.—[Ibid.](#), January 16, 1872

Young Men Called to the Ministry

A need frequently mentioned prior to the conference session was that of recruits to the ministry. Resolution No. 10 read:

That we cordially invite our young men who have the cause of God at heart, and who are constrained by the love of Christ so to do, to present themselves as candidates for the ministry.—[Ibid.](#)

[335] This laid the foundation for perhaps the most important development in the year 1872—the call for, and opening of, a denominational school in Battle Creek.

Another far-reaching action called for the formation of Tract and Missionary societies, the forerunners of the Home Missionary departments (later variously called Lay Activities and Personal Ministries) and the Adventist Book Centers of local conferences. S. N. Haskell had pioneered this type of activity in the New England Conference. He was the delegate from that field, and he was asked to work with a committee of five.—[Ibid.](#)

George I. Butler Replaces James White

When the nominating committee brought in its report, no one was surprised that the name of George I. Butler, of Mount Pleasant, Iowa, president of the Iowa Conference, stood at the head of the panel. It was imperative that White surrender the burden of the presidency of the General Conference if he were to survive. Uriah Smith would continue as secretary and Adelia Patten Van Horn as treasurer. James White did accept reelection to the position of president of the Publishing Association. That was his cherished child. In this position he would receive \$12 a week, the same as did Uriah Smith, the resident editor (managing editor) of the *Review*.

Seventh Day Baptist Delegate

As Uriah Smith reported the conference session he mentioned, “This year as last, a pleasant feature of the occasion was the visit of the S. D. Baptist delegate.” Immediately following the seating of the regular delegates on Friday morning, December 29, J. H. Waggoner announced that Nathan Wardner, a representative of the Seventh Day Baptists, was present, on the invitation of church leaders, and he was seated as a delegate to the session. At this point and others he spoke of the interest held in common on the vital truth of the seventh-day Sabbath. In the conference resolution welcoming Wardner it was stated, “We rejoice that there is even one religious body in our land that we are able to meet on common ground on the important subject of the Sabbath of the Lord our God.”—[Ibid.](#) On Wardner’s invitation, James White was appointed as a delegate to represent Seventh-day Adventists at the next conference of the Seventh Day Baptists. Waggoner was named as an alternate.

[336]

The Dedication of the New Review Building

The dedication of the new *Review and Herald* office building was an important item on the agenda for the session. This took place on January 1, 1872. Smith described this occasion of special interest:

The central room on the second floor, occupying the entire body of the main building, was closely seated and filled to its utmost capacity. The exercises were opened with singing and prayer. Brother White gave a brief sketch of the rise of the publishing department of this work from its commencement in feebleness and obscurity, to its present extended and prosperous condition. Interesting remarks were also made by Elders Andrews, Wardner, and Waggoner. With a closing hymn and prayer, the exercises concluded.

Thus another building is dedicated to the work of sending forth the light of truth among the people. The office is finished in a neat and substantial manner. The workmen have done their duty faithfully and conscientiously. It elicits the unqualified praise of all who behold it.—[Ibid., January 16, 1872](#)

The Seventh-day Adventist School

In January, 1869, James White had proposed through the *Review* the starting of a school in Battle Creek, and he called for pledges for such an enterprise ([Ibid., January 12, 1869](#)). But the idea did not catch fire. Then he proposed a lecture series to follow the General Conference session in 1870, and made a similar attempt the next year, without significant response. The need of qualified men in the ministry led to the action taken at the General Conference session at the turn of the year, 1872, calling for young men to present themselves for the ministry. Finally, in early April, 1872, James and Ellen White called the Battle Creek church together to give serious study to establishing a school there. Among the questions asked were:

Shall we take hold, as a people, of the subject of education, and form an Educational Society?

Shall we have a denominational school.... to qualify young men and women to act some part, more or less public, in the cause of God?

Shall there be some place provided where our young people can go to learn such branches of the sciences as they can put into immediate and practical use, and at the same time be instructed on the great themes of prophetic and other Bible truth?—[Ibid., April 16, 1872](#)

[337]

It was proposed that with shares costing \$10 each, the church form a society “to raise funds for the purpose of renting, purchasing, or erecting school buildings, and procuring school apparatus.” Steps were taken to determine what the interest was and what support could be expected. A standing committee consisting of Uriah Smith and E. W. Whitney was formed to foster the interest. With James White joining this committee, the following definite and significant steps were taken:

“*Resolved*, That we invite the General Conference Committee to employ suitable teachers for the contemplated school, to take such steps as they may deem proper to raise the necessary means for the support till it becomes self-sustaining, and to take the general oversight of this enterprise.”

This being a movement in behalf of the cause at large, the General Conference Committee are the proper persons to act in the premises. In accordance with the foregoing resolution, its management will hereafter be in their hands.

It is now decided to commence the school on Monday, the third of June next. A place is provided, and teacher engaged. The first term will continue twelve weeks, to August 26. Tuition from \$3 to \$6, according to studies taken.

The chief object has been stated to aid those who contemplate becoming public laborers in the cause of

truth. Of course, those who have no such object in view, but who wish merely to acquire an education under the advantages and in the society here offered, are at perfect liberty to attend. Let all come who can, in season to be here at the commencement, and others as soon thereafter as possible.—[Ibid., May 14, 1872](#)

The above appeared as an unsigned note on the back page of the *Review*. As James White was editor, it is assumed that it was his announcement.

[338] Two weeks later readers of the *Review* were informed that, judging from letters received, there was a good degree of interest in the proposed school ([Ibid., May 28, 1872](#)). Meanwhile, Butler, the new president of the General Conference, quickly joined in support of the school idea. On May 22 he wrote:

From recent references in the *Review* the readers of the paper have become acquainted with the fact that a school was to be started June 3 in Battle Creek having some connection with our denomination, the General Conference Committee having the supervision of it. As one of that committee, I wish to say a word in reference to this subject so that all may know my feelings concerning the matter.

I fully believe it is in the order of God that we should have a school started in connection with the other institutions which are growing up there. And I expect to see this comparatively small beginning which is now being made amount to something very important before the message shall close. I believe this because it is something that is necessary to meet a want that exists among us.—[Ibid., June 4, 1872](#)

Butler addressed himself to the great need of a school and the type of school it should be, in the light of many of the institutions of learning in the land. He stated clearly:

We want a school to be controlled by our people where influences of a moral character may be thrown

around the pupils which will tend to preserve them from those influences which are so common and injurious in the majority of the schools of the present day; and in this school we want a department in which those who would labor in the ministry, or in other public positions of usefulness, may receive the instruction which will qualify them for the duties of those positions.—[Ibid.](#)

Announcement of the opening was made the next week in the June 11 issue, under the heading “The S.D.A. School.” The announcement opened with the words:

This school commenced in Battle Creek at the time appointed, June 3, with twelve scholars, Brother G. H. Bell, teacher. Two have since joined. This is a better beginning than we had ventured to anticipate, in view of the brief time taken to commence the enterprise, and the short notice that was necessarily given.—[Ibid.](#), [June 11, 1872](#)

[339]

Those who might feel that this was a small beginning were reminded of the parable of the mustard seed.

George I. Butler came in quickly with a second article, titled “Mental Culture and the Pulpit,” in which he emphasized the importance of those who stand in the highest and noblest work God has committed to man, being prepared by a proper education to do the greatest amount of good possible for him to do.

At midterm there were twenty-five regular students, but the grammar class, which was held in the evenings so *Review* employees could attend, numbered between forty and fifty. The school was well on its way ([Ibid.](#), [July 16, 1872](#)).

Eyes to the West

The first camp meeting of the 1872 season was to open at Aledo, Illinois, on May 31. James and Ellen White were to be there. In mid-May they had left Battle Creek to have a period of rest at their Washington, Iowa, home. They there remained through the early

summer, getting away to attend only two camp meetings—the Illinois meeting and the Iowa meeting, which opened June 6. While they were in Washington, *Testimony* No. 21, a paperbound volume of two hundred pages, came from the press, priced at 25 cents (*Ibid.*, [June 18, 1872](#)).

On May 20, 1872, Ellen White wrote to Willie in Battle Creek about their Washington home.

We are very pleasantly situated here and I am very well persuaded that this place in Washington should be our headquarters. Father works in the garden much of his time and rests well nights. He has been writing quite a lengthy piece for the *Reformer*. There are many things to interest and take his mind—the trimming of trees, improvements to be made....

I think this is just the place for Father. We are trying to rest up for camp meetings.... This is a beautiful place. I shall feel at home here.... I have not been very well. Hope to improve and be ready for camp meeting.—[Letter 6, 1872](#).

[340] Writing to Edson and Emma four weeks later, in mid-June, Ellen mentioned the flowers in blossom around the home.

We are in the midst of flowers of almost every description, but the most beautiful of all is to be surrounded with roses on every hand, of every color and so fragrant. The prairie queen is just opening, also the Baltimore bell. Peonies have been very lovely and fragrant, but now they are fast going to decay. We have had strawberries for several days.—[Letter 5, 1872](#).

In the same letter, she penned a few lines concerning the wives of ministers who are called from home in their ministry.

An Encouraging Word for Wives Whose Husbands Must Travel

Asceneth [Smith Kilgore] came here yesterday with her sewing machine and her baby to help us prepare for

our journey. Her babe is one of the sweetest and best-natured children I ever saw. It seems like a sunbeam wherever she is....

Asceneth acts a noble, self-denying part. She lives alone some distance from any house and takes care of her two prairie flowers and gives up Robert [her husband], a noble fellow, to go out and labor for the salvation of souls.

These companions who deny self for the truth and sake of Christ will not lose their reward. God will tenderly care for them, and when the Chief Shepherd shall reward the undershepherds for their unselfish labor, these self-sacrificing women who yield up their husbands to labor in the vineyard of the Lord will be rewarded with the crown of glory and the blessed commendation Well done, good and faithful servants, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.

How encouraging to know that every good work will be rewarded. Our kind heavenly Father faithfully cherishes every kind act prompted by pure, unselfish motives. Not one deed of goodness and self-denial is forgotten. All is written in the book and will receive its just recompense.—[Ibid.](#)

[341]

Chapter 23—(1872) A Surprise Vacation in the Rocky Mountains

Early Sunday morning, June 23, 1872, Ellen White wrote from her hideaway home in Washington, Iowa, to her longstanding friend in Greenville, Michigan, Mrs. Maynard: “We leave today for California. My husband and myself need rest.... Next Sabbath we expect, if the Lord prospers us, to be in Santa Rosa.”—[Letter 1, 1872](#). The Whites did not reach California, however, until Friday afternoon, September 27, fourteen weeks later.

They had planned to attend most of the western camp meetings (Iowa, Illinois, Wisconsin, and Minnesota), and then join J.N. Loughborough in California for a camp meeting to be held in late September. But when the Iowa meeting closed, they saw that to carry out their plan in their state of health, the strain would be greater than they could bear. After a few days’ rest, they decided to go at once, thinking to arrive in California in late June. They had to have some rest.

With travel plans flexible, they started out, taking with them 17-year-old Willie, who had now joined them in Iowa, and Mrs. Lucinda Hall. Lucinda, 33 years of age and the daughter of Ira Abbey, was a widow; she had been Ellen’s closest friend for twenty years. They stopped briefly at Civil Bend, Missouri, where the church needed help, and there decided to make another stop at Ottawa, Kansas, where Ellen White’s oldest sister, Caroline Clough, lived. They arrived at the Clough home Tuesday, July 2, thinking to remain for two days. It had been twenty-five years since the two sisters had been together, and the reunion was a happy one. In a letter to Edson, Ellen described her sister, fifteen years her senior:

She is an understanding, intelligent woman, living, I think up to the best light she has had. She is a powerful singer. This is as much her talent as speaking is mine.

I think I never heard a voice that would thrill the soul like hers.—[Letter 10, 1872](#).

The home is described as a small, comfortable dwelling on a large prairie, some six miles from Ottawa. The Cloughs insisted that they stay for a few days, and the pleasant visit stretched through two weeks less one day ([The Review and Herald, September 3, 1872](#)). When Caroline was assured that their stay would extend over the second weekend, she mounted her horse and rode eighteen miles, visiting three communities, each in a different direction, and invited people to hear Ellen speak. Three times on Sunday—once in the morning and twice in the afternoon, Ellen spoke in grove meetings. Before they left Ottawa, James White stated that

Brother and Sister Clough informed us that they had four children in Colorado Territory, and expressed a strong desire that we should visit them. We decided to stop at Denver and spend a day or two with their daughter, Mrs. Walling.—[Ibid](#).

When the party arrived in Denver a city of twelve thousand, (WCW, in [The Youth's Instructor, December, 1872](#)), Willie was sent out to find the Walling home. He soon returned to the station in a carriage with Mr. Walling. At the Walling home, the White party met two of Ellen's nieces, Mrs. Walling and Miss Mary L. Clough. She described Mr. Walling as "very free and kind," and engaged in a large profitable, lumbering business. Being quite well-to-do ([Letter 25, 1872](#)), he spared no expense to please and entertain them. His lumber mills were some forty miles west, at the edge of the Rocky Mountains, but he had his home in Denver so that the children might have the benefit of a school. Instead of staying a couple of days, the Whites accepted an invitation to remain for a while. Ellen had an opportunity to get to her writing. In a letter to Edson penned July 23, she mentioned a point of particular interest:

Yesterday I wrote all day trying to get off the matter in reference to schools. I am going to write in regard to the Health Institute as soon as I can have clearness of head to write.—[Letter 30, 1872](#).

When they left Michigan, a denominational school had been started in Battle Creek, a project in which James and Ellen White were deeply interested. During the past few weeks they had conversed a good deal about the new enterprise. They had read reports and George Butler's articles in the *Review* about the school.

At this time Ellen wrote the familiar sentence "It is the nicest work ever assumed by men and women to deal with youthful minds." These were the opening words of the chapter "Proper Education," now found in *Testimonies*, volume 3, page 131. Needing material for her department in the *Health Reformer*, she wrote and submitted what is now found in *Testimonies*, volume 3, pages 131-138, for publication in the September, 1872, issue. There are slight verbal differences in the *Reformer* article, written for the general public, and the *Testimony* chapter, prepared especially for the church.

She followed this in the *Health Reformer* with six installments of modest size, appearing in December, 1872, and in the issues of April, May, June, July, and September, 1873. She wrote these with the general public clearly in mind, at times quoting material, properly credited, from other journals. As she filled out the article "Proper Education" for *Testimonies*, volume 3, pages 138-160, she set forth counsel directed particularly to the church and urged:

Time is too short now to accomplish that which might have been done in past generations; but we can do much, even in these last days, to correct the existing evils in the education of youth. And because time is short, we should be in earnest and work zealously to give the young that education which is consistent with our faith.—[Testimonies for the Church, 3:158, 159.](#)

Two Months in the Rocky Mountains

In her letter to Edson, written July 23, Ellen White announced their immediate plans:

We expect to leave Denver for the mountains tomorrow. We shall range about amongst the mountains and try the mountain air. Father does not improve as we

would be glad to see. One day he is feeling well, the next not as well. When he tries to write he is all used up. Still he is hopeful and of good courage, cheerful and free in the Lord. When we get into the mountains, will write to you in regard to the scenery.... Write to our address, Black Hawk, Colorado, care of W. B. Walling.—[Letter 30, 1872.](#)

At Central City, close to Black Hawk, lived Ellen's niece Addie Clough Fair, and her husband. This was mining country; gold and silver had been found deep in the mountains. The houses were crowded together in a narrow ravine. Writing at the Fair home in Central City, Ellen White provides a description:

Here I am ...looking out and upward upon mountains of perpendicular rocks estimated at five hundred feet high. From the foot of these mountains to the top, upon ledges of solid rocks, slight excavations have been made and houses built in every spot that could be made available by stone foundations. Directly in front of me are several tiers of houses, rising one above another. Never did I behold such a scene as this. There is scarcely a sign of vegetation, no trees, but abrupt, barren rocks.

Some of these houses are very nice and expensive. Just before me is a large, fine house, built high on the top of the mountain. A wall of masonry several feet high bears up the front of the house, while the back of the house rests upon the solid ledge drilled and chiseled out for the builders. A very nicely finished barn is built in the same manner. Out of the house, there is not a level place for the feet to stand upon unless [it is] built up like a platform.—[Letter 12, 1872.](#)

As is often the case, the first impressions of the situation were deeply engraved in Ellen White's mind. She continued:

There are but a very few natural yards, and these are lower down the mountain and are only one or two feet

[345]

in width. They build up a yard several feet high, draw dirt and place upon the top of the stone and then have but a few feet to just step out of the doorway. It is only the most wealthy who can afford this extravagance. The [homes of the] poorer class and even some very nice houses have not one foot of level land around them. The banker's wife's mother stepped out in one of these high, made yards to hang out clothes. She was 60 years old. She made a misstep, fell from the wall, and broke her neck.—[Ibid.](#)

Walling's Mills

She mentioned in this letter that Black Hawk and Central City, both incorporated cities, and another nearby, Nevada, had a combined population of eight thousand. Compare this with all of Denver's twelve thousand.

It was Mr. Walling's business to furnish lumber for the houses and timbers for the mines in this region and in others. One sawmill was located near Black Hawk, and another some thirty miles north, near the city of Boulder. He employed quite a number of men to operate these mills. James and Ellen White traveled back and forth several times between the two locations. In their travels they met a large number of people who had come to Colorado hoping for an improvement in health.

Enjoying the Mountains

Walling's Mills, near Black Hawk, was not in the steep ravine but in an expansive area above. Here there was a cottage that he made available to the White party, and here they lived, read, wrote, and took their walks. The first two days, Thursday and Friday, July 25 and 26, Ellen suffered severe headaches, as is often the case in the higher altitudes. But it was quite different on Sabbath, which she described in her diary:

We arose this beautiful morning with some sense of the goodness and mercy of God to us. This is our first

Sabbath among the mountains. James, Sister Hall, and myself took a blanket and walked out to the shelter of the fragrant evergreens, rolled up stones for seats, and I read a portion of my manuscript to my husband.

In the afternoon our niece, Mary Clough, Willie, and myself walked out and sat beneath poplar trees. We read about sixty pages of *Great Controversy, or Spiritual Gifts* [volume 1]. Mary was deeply interested. We were happily disappointed [A term employed to indicate “happy surprise.”] in the earnest manner in which she listened. We see no prejudice with her. We hope she will yet see and receive the truth. She is a pure, simple-hearted, yet intellectual girl. We closed the Sabbath of the Lord with prayer. Mary united with us in prayer. Wrote letters upon religious subjects to Louise Walling and Elder Loughborough.—[Manuscript 4, 1872.](#)

[346]

The next day she spent part of the day writing, then she sat under the spruce trees and read some of her manuscript to James, correcting it for the printer. Afterward the four of them walked out to see a “gigantic rock towering up hundreds of feet.” Willie climbed to the top of it; others were not so ambitious. The activities of the next day are described in her diary:

Monday, July 29, 1872:

We arose feeling quite bright. We enjoy the mountain air very much. My husband and myself walked out in the grove and had a good and very precious season of prayer. We felt that the Lord was very near. I had some conversation with Mary.

Mr. Walling returned from Central with letters and papers. We were thankful to hear from friends and children again. Spent considerable of the day in writing.

In the evening we talked with Mr. Walling in reference to our anticipated trip over the mountains [to Middle Park on the west slope]. We hardly knew what to do. James, Lucinda, and I made our way up, up,

up into a high mountain, where we could have a good view of the surrounding mountains. We knelt among the trees and prayed for heavenly guidance. The Lord met with us and we had the assurance He would answer our prayer.—[Ibid.](#)

But a little more than a month passed before the trip materialized.

Mr. Walling was eager that his wife's Uncle James and Aunt Ellen should see all they could while they were in the mountains. On Tuesday, July 30, he took them sightseeing. Of this she wrote:

[347]

Mr. Walling took us up, up, up the mountains. We feared sometimes we should never reach the top. We had a commanding view of the country. We could look down upon Black Hawk and Central, and see all there was of both cities. It looked fearful so high, and below was a fearful precipice of rocks. If the horses had stepped over to one side we should have fallen hundreds of feet.

We had a commanding view of the mountains. They were on every side of us. We could distinctly see the high mountains covered with large patches of snow. These banks of snow are estimated to be from fifteen to fifty feet deep. Some of them are perpetual. Frequently the air coming from these snowbanks was so chilly that although the sun was shining very warm in the valley, we were obliged to put on extra garments in the mountains.

Black Hawk and Central are a rough, seamed, scarred country. Heaps of rocks and dirt that have been cast out from the mining mills and from which the precious ore has been taken were lying everywhere....

The view upon the top of the mountain was most interesting, but words cannot present the picture before your mind in its reality. The mountain scenery of Colorado can never be described so that the imagination can gather distinct and correct ideas of this country. It is wonderful! It is marvelous!

The scenery of the grand old mountains, some bald and others covered with trees! Instinctively the mind is awed and deep feelings of reverence bow the soul in humiliation as the imagination gathers a sense of the power of the Infinite. I would not be deprived of the privilege of seeing what I have of the mountain scenery of Colorado for considerable.—[Letter 12, 1872](#).

Writing to Edson and Emma of their activities of that day, she reported:

I walked miles yesterday up the steep mountains and I did not get to rest until past eleven o'clock. But this morning I am up at five, bright and active. This trip among the mountains is doing much for my health. None of you were aware of my miserable state of health. I knew it would not make home better to complain when I left Battle Creek.

Father is better, we are sure; but he has times of shortness of breath and faintness and giddiness. He is careful of his diet. One drawback here in Colorado is that there is no fruit in this country, only that which is imported. This is seldom fresh, and sells at very high prices. The pure air and freedom from care are advantages we gain.—[Ibid.](#)

[348]

The Proposed Camping Trip

When the Whites went from Denver into the mountains, they had no definite plan as to how long they would stay, but thought in terms of about two weeks. Walling was anxious to have them see points of interest over the mountains to the west. Ellen wrote of this to Edson and Emma. "Mr. Walling is very earnest that we should go with him across the Snowy Mountain Range to what is called the Park, on the other side of the Snowy Range." She described the involvements:

We should have to ride on ponies over the mountains. Our provisions for three or four weeks would be

taken in a wagon. All of us would have to ride ponies over the mountains while two horses would draw the provisions and blankets for lodging. When there, over the mountains, we are away from all settlements and must carry everything along that we need.

Willie is perfectly enchanted with the idea, but we fear some it may be too hard for your father. Again, would the Lord be pleased for us to spend our time thus? These questions we carefully and prayerfully considered.—*Ibid.*

She added, in closing her letter, “Your father is perfectly cheerful and happy. We had precious seasons of prayer before God in the groves and mountains in behalf of ourselves and you and the cause and work of God in Battle Creek.”—*Ibid.* Through the entire month of August the Whites vacationed. They hiked; picked raspberries as they ripened; visited interesting places, such as the stamping mills in which the ore was broken up and then processed; gathered samples of minerals for an exhibit they proposed to set up; and, of course, wrote. They learned of three or four Adventist women in the area; these they visited and held some meetings with them, distributing literature. They also held meetings with Mr. Walling’s mill hands. On some occasions they pitched their tent and camped.

On August 22, Ellen wrote to Edson and Emma:

[349] Last night Father and I rode six miles on the Indian ponies, that we might get accustomed to riding. We have decided it would be better for Father to go up the mountains over the Snowy Range and be benefited with the exercise he would obtain in so doing than to go to California just now. We have applied ourselves closely to get off as much matter as we have, and now we both need a period of rest.

Father was at first quite feeble. He was troubled about breathing, but this no more affects him. We knew that his difficulties arose from the lightness of the air. We have lived out of doors nearly all the time. We go up in the pine forest and sit under the trees and write and read and do not go to the house until sent for to go

to dinner. We feel much encouraged in regard to Father, but we dare not yet go to California.—[Letter 13a, 1872](#).

She saw in the proposed trip over the Snowy Range the needed incentive and opportunity for James to “be at liberty to enjoy the scenery, get tired, camp and rest, and become hardened for California.” She added, “We are getting used to a hard bed. We lie on a bed about as hard as the floor. We enjoy it, too.”—[Ibid](#). Finally, on Monday, September 2, they were ready for the big venture. James White wrote of it in two articles published in the *Health Reformer* under the title “The Summer in the Rocky Mountains.” Willie White wrote quite in detail about the trip in a series of nine articles for the *Youth’s Instructor*, titled “Trip to California.” Ellen White wrote of it in her diary and in her letters. The following preview is from Willie’s lead article:

After pleasantly spending a month with Mr. Walling at the Mills, it was proposed by him that we take a pleasure trip to Middle Park, and camp awhile at Sulphur Springs. The parks in Colorado are great basins or depressions with surface and soil more or less similar to that of the plains, but entirely surrounded by lofty mountains. There are four of these parks, the North, Middle, South, and San Luis.

Their elevation is from seven to eight thousand feet above the sea. They are well watered and abundantly timbered, have delightful climate throughout most of the year, and are exceptionally healthful. All abound in mineral springs and minerals of great variety. Owing to the great altitude, they are adapted to the culture of the hardier agricultural products only.—[The Youth’s Instructor, January, 1873](#).

[350]

The Caravan Starts Out

James White describes the start of the long-anticipated trip.

It was on Monday, 11:00 A.M., September 2, 1872, when we mounted our horses and ponies for the trip over

the Snowy Range, into Middle Park.... Our course lay along through Rollinsville, Boulder Park, up the mountains through Boulder Pass.—*The Health Reformer*, January, 1873.

By midafternoon a heavy storm came up and they took refuge in an empty log shanty, where they built a fire in a big stone fireplace. By the time the storm was over, night had almost fallen; as they had brought all their gear in with them, they decided to spend the night there. Bearing in mind that many of the readers of the *Reformer* lived in the New England States and New York, James described the traveling party:

We wish to state that our guide and benefactor, W. B. Walling, is a Vermonter, Mrs. White, Mrs. Walling, and her sister, Miss M. L. Clough, and the writer were born in Maine, and Mrs. L. M. Abbey Hall and Willie C. White are Yorkers.

The four ladies were on ponies. Mr. Walling had the principal part of the baggage in a wagon drawn by two powerful horses, while Willie and his father were each on a good horse, ready to help in packing baggage up the sharpest ascents, or to assist the ladies in the most dangerous places.

But the babe was an object of curiosity with most we met on the route. Some pitied the little traveler, which we shall here call Peregrine, as up to the time of that pilgrimage he had no name, because his parents, brothers, and sisters could not find one good enough.... Rover, one of the largest, bravest, most intelligent, and most beautiful Newfoundlanders, who shall hereafter be called Lion ...[was] as happy as a dog could be and live.—*Ibid.*

[351] Tuesday was a beautiful day. As their path was along a narrow, twisting road by a rapid creek, they traveled “Indian file,” allowing a little distance between one another. Of the baby, White wrote:

Miss Mary had her little nephew, Peregrine, in her arms, and as she galloped away on Bronco, we decided that it was well that the child was not cream, for in that case, he would turn to butter and buttermilk before noon. But he seemed to enjoy the “movements” as well as any of us.—*Ibid.*

Passing through Boulder Park, with its beauties in wildflowers, carpet of green, and towering, guarding mountains, such exclamations were repeated as, “Delightful! Magnificent! Sublime! Glorious!”—*Ibid.*

The Pony Throws Ellen White

Soon after starting the ascent again, Ellen White was involved in a bad accident. She had her pony well under control when the strap holding her bedding roll gave way. In a letter to Edson and Emma she described what followed:

As I was in the best of spirits, enjoying the scenery very much, my pack behind me became unloosened and dangled against the horse’s heels. Your father had tarried behind to arrange his pack more securely. I was between two companies—three of our company ahead and five behind me. I saw the situation of things, slipped my feet from the stirrup, and was just ready to slip from the saddle to the ground and in one moment should have been safe. But the pony was frightened and threw me over his back. I struck my back and my head. I knew I was badly hurt, but felt assured no bones were broken. I could scarcely breathe or talk for some time, but finally improved a little. I was in great pain through my head, neck, shoulders and back, and bowels.—[Letter 14, 1872.](#)

James White picks up the story: “We soon became satisfied that bones were not broken. Neither could we discover external injuries of any kind; but as breathing and speaking were so very difficult, we

feared internal injuries.” With towels that Mrs. Hall brought, and water, hydrotherapy was applied. James reported:

[352]

Patient improved, and was soon able to take the writer’s arm, and walk a few rods from the company, where we asked the following questions: 1. Shall we pitch our tents here, and go into camp, let Mr. Walling return to his business, and we remain till we see how your case shall turn? 2. Or shall we apply to the Great Physician, and, by faith in the efficacy of prayer, move on our journey?

Mrs. White decided, as she frequently has done under circumstances alike trying, to go forward. As we bowed in prayer, evidences of Divine Presence caused us to weep for joy. And in a few moments we were in our saddles, moving joyfully, and yet solemnly, along, resolving that we would not leave camp another morning without first thanking God for mercies past, and imploring His care and protection for time to come.—

The Health Reformer, January, 1873.

Ellen’s injuries were more extensive than at first fully sensed, and she suffered for many years. In 1907 she made reference to her left leg, which had troubled her long after the accident: “The ligaments were torn from the ankle.” When she sought medical help, some time after the accident, the word was “You will never be able to use your foot, for it has been so long without close investigation that nothing can relieve the difficulty and unite the ligaments torn from the ankle bone.”—*Manuscript 156, 1907.*

With the decision to continue the trip, the party was soon faced with a very steep climb, the steepest of the journey. The wagon was lightened of its supplies and equipment and with difficulty the horses pulled it up the ascent, leaving tents, equipment, and supplies to be taken up piecemeal by James and Willie with their horses. At noontime they stopped by an old log shanty in a forest of pines. Here Ellen White took a warm bath and seemed to be improving. Just before reaching the timberline, they found a good camping spot for the night.

Crossing the Continental Divide

Pressing on early the next morning, they found it a steady climb to the eleven-thousand-foot mark. Here, wrote James White,

the air was so light that the climbing horses breathed and panted as though they would lose their breath; and their riders were frequently disposed to take a long breath, which did not seem to hit the spot, nor satisfy the usual demands of the breathing apparatus. This gave an excellent opportunity to expand the lungs and chest....

[353]

We hastened on, and up the sharp ascent, to the summit of the range, which we reached at 11:00 a.m.... From this grand range, the backbone of the continent, waters rise from springs, within a gunshot of each other, which flow, one to the Atlantic, and the other to the Pacific. We had now reached an altitude too cold for trees of any kind to exist.—*Ibid.*, March, 1873.

At the top of the range the terrain was rather level but rough and “untrodden, rocky, mountain way.” Then they must descend. Ellen White elected to ride in the wagon with Mr. Walling, but soon she found the jerking wagon seat so uncomfortable she chose to ride with the baggage, sprawled over and clinging to the big bundle of tents. Willie described the descent:

As we descend, the cold winds and snowbanks are left behind, but the roads are fearful. They go down so steep you are in danger of slipping over your horse’s head, then through little marshes which are numerous near the top of the range, and where you must work sharp to keep your horse above ground, and the rest of the way over loose rocks and boulders, through creeks and over logs, up and down, but mostly down till we reach the park [Middle Park].

Lame and weary, we were glad to stop and camp in the edge of a thick forest surrounding a little meadow through which wound a crooked mountain brook, clear and cold, and full of speckled trout. As usual, we tied

the horses where there was good grass, pitched the tents, cut spruce boughs for our beds, and then, building a big fire in front of the tents, retired to rest, and slept well till sunrise.—*The Youth's Instructor*, January, 1873.

A Week at Hot Sulphur Springs

[354] Now it was an easy trip across the valley to Hot Sulphur Springs, their destination. They picked wild strawberries as they traveled, adding to their dinner rations. An old hunter, Mr. Byers, known as “Buckskin,” had leased the hot springs. He helped the newcomers find a good camping place, lent them a sheet iron cookstove, and left them much to themselves. But not his Newfoundland dog, who soon challenged Lion, Mr. Walling’s Newfoundlander. Lion won the contest and was put in charge of guarding camp for the week they were there. They found twenty or thirty people camped near the hot springs, and people coming and going. In addition to the sulphur springs, people were attracted by the beautiful scenery and fishing and/or hunting possibilities. In his *Youth's Instructor* series, Willie described Hot Sulphur Springs in detail:

On the hillside, a few rods back from Grand River, stands a long log cabin, and at the left stands a strange-looking affair built of logs on three sides, and leaning against the perpendicular side of a huge rock for the other. Its roof is made of bark laid on poles. Through a large hole in the roof, a column of steam is constantly rising, showing this to be the location of the famous Sulphur Springs.

There are three or four of these springs close together. Their waters bubble up through the rocks at almost scalding heat, and, uniting in one little stream, fall over the ledge that forms one side of the bathhouse, into a natural basin in the rock over which the bathhouse is built.

The basin and fall afford a fine chance for hot sitz ... baths. The water is so hot that at first you can hardly bear your hand in it, being 110 degrees F., and a sud-

den plunge into it could not be borne; but by entering gradually you soon come to enjoy the heat, and can stand directly under the stream as it dashes over the rock. Then you have a bath as is nowhere else to be found.

Wonderful stories are told of the healing properties of these springs. The Indians used to bathe in them, put their sick papooses into them, and sometimes try their healing powers on lame horses. They were loath to give up control of them to the whites.—*Ibid.*, February, 1873.

As to the wildlife in the area, Willie listed grouse, sage hens, deer, antelope, and elk, with now and then puma or a grizzly bear. Just before the Walling-White party's arrival, a grizzly bear and a cinnamon bear had been killed. Streams were full of trout. The Indians inhabiting the park were said to be friendly, but they had gone over to Denver to trade and to receive their usual allowance of provisions from the government. [355]

Considering the time of year they were in the park, they experienced no problem in securing good food. Wrote James in his *Reformer* article:

We found no difficulty in securing the most healthful food. And here the health reformer has the decided advantage in packing his supplies, as his meal, flour, rice, dried fruit, and the like are much lighter than those commonly used. These, well cooked, with the wild fruit, which is abundant in August and September, are enjoyed with a keen relish by those who have a clean, hygienic appetite.

The sweetest cake we ever ate was one made of corn meal, mixed with pure water from a Colorado creek, and baked before a campfire, upon a tin plate, supported by a stone at the back.—*The Health Reformer*, March, 1873.

Calls from California Cut Short the Vacation

The Whites hoped they might remain at Hot Sulphur Springs for three or four weeks, but on Thursday afternoon, September 12, after they had been there just a week, Mr. Walling came, bringing mail and the word that the California camp meeting, which had been postponed that the Whites might be present, would open on Thursday, October 3. They must be there. So Friday morning they broke camp and started back to Black Hawk. Hardened to fatigue by camp life, they were able to make the return trip, which had taken four days in coming, in two traveling days. They spent the Sabbath en route, resting.

On Friday, September 20, they journeyed the 110 miles from Denver to Cheyenne, where they caught the Union and Central Pacific train bound for San Francisco, California. They were amazed at the railroad trestles spanning rivers and gorges, and the tunnels and snowsheds as they crossed the Sierras, then on to the broad Sacramento Valley. At last they had reached California.

Chapter 24—(1872-1873) James and Ellen White Discover California

[356]

James and Ellen received a most hearty reception when they arrived in California on Wednesday evening, September 25, 1872. At the end of the rail line in Oakland they were met by brethren Conkrite and Stockton, who ushered them to the San Francisco Ferry and on to the Rowland home. Mrs. Rowland was a well-to-do Scottish woman on the verge of taking her stand for the Adventist message. It was midnight when they reached this home. Ellen White wrote, “We met and were introduced to twenty brethren and sisters who greeted us as cordially as we were ever greeted in our lives. These friends had waited at the house of Sister Rowland until twelve o’clock at night to receive us. We did not get to rest until a still later hour.”—[Letter 16, 1872](#). Declared Ellen White in a letter to Edson and Emma:

We rested on the first easy bed we had seen for months. We enjoyed it much. Sister Rowland has welcomed us to her house for one year if we will accept it. She has a good home, well furnished.—[Ibid.](#)

In the morning their hostess took them out onto the streets of San Francisco to see the gardens. It seemed to them as if it were midsummer.

Flowers of every type and hue grew in luxuriance and abundance everywhere. Fuchsias grow in open grounds, out of doors, summer and winter; roses of every variety were trailing above trees or latticework in a natural, homelike manner. Many flowers I could not name, having never seen them before.—[Ibid.](#)

[357]

James and Ellen White had their eyes on Santa Rosa and looked forward to meeting J. N. Loughborough and his wife, who resided

there, and to attend the camp meeting. They made the thirty-seven-mile ferry trip across the bay and up the Petaluma River to the city of Petaluma, then a fifteen-mile train trip to Santa Rosa. This was a route they would often travel as they moved about in northern California. They were cordially received at the Loughborough home in Santa Rosa, and attended the Sabbath morning service in the house of worship. James spoke on the reasons of Adventist faith, and Ellen followed for another fifteen minutes. Then nearly all the congregation crowded onto the platform to shake hands with them ([Letter 17, 1872](#)). Arrangements had been made for them to stay in the Loughborough home. Ellen describes it and the family:

We are in Brother Loughborough's large house. It is very convenient; has large bedrooms and good chambers for a story-and-a-half house. We are heartily welcome here. Brother Loughborough says the house is ours. We may do what we please with it.

Their two children are, it appears to me, the best children, the most quiet and peaceable, I ever saw. The mother controls them in a quiet way, without noise, severity, or bluster.

The two [John and Mary, his second wife] seem very happy together. We think we shall enjoy our visit to California, but it is like July here now, and the change is so great from the mountain air that we hardly know what to do with ourselves.—[Ibid.](#)

In the market they found fruit of every variety, “fresh figs in abundance, apricots, grapes, pears, peaches, and tomatoes. Sweet potatoes are the same price as Irish. They say strawberries are in market, and green peas and string beans. Muskmelons are large as great pumpkins.”—[Ibid.](#) Her conclusion was that they would enjoy the country very much.

The camp meeting was to be held in a grove at Windsor, a town ten miles south, situated between Santa Rosa and Petaluma. James and Ellen White, together with Lucinda Hall and Willie, were on the grounds for the opening meetings, Thursday, October 3. James wrote:

We are now writing in a tent upon the California campground, near Windsor, Sonoma County, fifth-day, October 3, at the close of the afternoon service. The location is good, and the weather is fine. It is as warm as August in Michigan, very much warmer than at any point since we crossed the plains the first of July.

Notwithstanding the brief notice of this meeting, there are, at this early stage of the meeting, thirty-three tents upon the ground, besides the large congregation tent, and the provision stand.

Three tents are marked, San Francisco; two, Green Valley; one, Sebastopol; four, Bloomfield; one, Mendocino County; three, Windsor; six, Healdsburg; nine, Santa Rosa; two, Petaluma; two, Woodland.... We spoke in the morning upon the subject of the waiting, watching time, in answer to the question, Where are we? ...Mrs. White spoke in the afternoon, and Elder Cornell spoke in the evening. More next week.—[The Review and Herald, October 15, 1872.](#)

The next week he reported that the camp meeting closed well; those who attended were well pleased and encouraged. Twice as many persons had camped on the ground as were expected. James added:

Elder Loughborough is an able manager. The order was excellent, and much admired, and complimented, by those who visited the ground.—[Ibid., October 22, 1872](#)

As to ministerial labor, James reported: “Elder Cornell preached twice, Elder Loughborough once, Mrs. White five times, but with difficulty in consequence of a severe cold, and we gave ten discourses, beside speaking to many points in social meetings.” Exuberantly, he added:

Our company, Mrs. White, Willie, Sister Hall, and the writer have been glad every moment since we met

a cordial reception at the end of our long journey to San Francisco, that we were in California. The camp meeting has not by any means changed our feelings upon the subject. And nothing but stern duty will ever call us from this country.

[359]

We like the people of California, and the country, and think it will be favorable to our health.... We now have strong hopes of recovering health, strength, and courage in the Lord, such as enjoyed two years since.—
[Ibid.](#)

White hastened to inform the readers of the *Review* that his “general interest in the cause” was increasing, and he hoped soon to be able to complete a couple of books, *Bible Adventism* and *Bible Hygiene*.

After the camp meeting Loughborough and Cornell had to get the large tent back to Woodland, some fifty or sixty miles east of Santa Rosa as the crow would fly over the mountains, but more than twice that far by surface transportation. James and Ellen White were eager to spend some time in San Francisco, having merely passed through the city. So they all went to San Francisco together by train and by ferry on Thursday morning, October 10. On Friday Loughborough and Cornell took the tent by train to Woodland.

In San Francisco

The Whites were again cordially received in the home of Mrs. Rowland. Spending the afternoon there, Ellen had an opportunity to write a report to Edson and Emma of her impressions of the camp meeting and of California:

Our camp meeting was a success. We have not a doubt but that the Lord has directed our course to this coast, and we believe the cause of God will be advanced by our labors, which seem to be very necessary. Your father labored very hard during the meeting. He seemed to be full of matter and he could not restrain his labors. The people hung upon his words with intense interest.

I think I never saw a company together all so intelligent, so sincere, so unexceptional in every way, as the company we met upon the campground. Twenty homes have been offered us already and such urgent, hearty invitations that we desire to gratify them all.—[Letter 18, 1872](#).

She wrote of a committee of five who had waited upon them at the camp meeting, urging them to make their headquarters in San Francisco; they also offered to hire a five-room house, furnish it, and turn it over to them for their home. Further, they would furnish all they needed to live on, and even provide domestic help. [360]

Ellen reported: “We declined. We should not be prescribed in our liberty at all. We should go among the brethren just when we choose and stay one, two, or three weeks.” A schoolteacher, one of three sisters in San Francisco, proposed:

“If Sister White could be divided into ten pieces and they could each have a little piece of her, they would feel greatly blessed.” I remarked, Sisters, there is none too much of Sister White to keep her together, but I have wished I could be in several places at the same time. I see so great a work to be done.—[Ibid.](#)

“God has truly blessed your father,” she wrote to the children in Michigan. “He had great freedom of speech and labored far beyond anything I expected. Brother Cornell had the ague [malaria] and could speak only twice. Brother Loughborough spoke only once. He had the care of the meeting on him. Besides the three discourses I have mentioned, your father and mother did all the preaching.... I have coughed very hard, yet when I have attempted to speak, have not coughed at all.”—[Ibid.](#)

Continuing her report of the camp meeting, she wrote perceptively:

Brother Loughborough has done nobly in bearing the burdens he has had to bear and in keeping things together. God has worked with him and sustained him.

Brother [M. G.] Kellogg has done what he could.... He has an excellent spirit. No one has a word of fault to find with him.

He is cautious, very timid, unselfish, conscientious, and devoted to the work, but becomes discouraged if the labors he puts forth do not seem to result in immediate good. He was ordained at the camp meeting and this will be a courage and strength to him. His wife is a thoroughly converted woman. She has upon her countenance an expression of contentment and peace.—*Ibid.*

[361] Turning to the immediate surroundings, she observed, as a newcomer, that San Francisco in late September was like June and July in Michigan:

Flower gardens look very beautiful. Fuchsias are growing in open ground, trailed above trees and flowers in rich profusion. Roses are in bloom, of all varieties. There are the most beautiful evergreens I ever looked upon.

We have fruit here of every kind. Pears as large as a pint bowl, very delicious to the taste; figs in their natural state; large white and pink grapes—one is all you wish to put in your mouth at once. Our friends brought us clusters of grapes at camp meeting weighing from one to two pounds. At Woodland we shall have free access to grape and fig gardens. All we have to do is simply dry them, then box them, and we have figs such as we see in market and buy. No sugar is required in the drying. There are apples in abundance, sweet potatoes in great plenty. We do not eat much but fruit.—*Ibid.*

Catching herself, she declared,

“We shall not neglect the work of God to view the wonderful things of nature, but we shall make these things all secondary. Let them come along in the course of events. We must make the work of God our first and

primary business. The salvation of souls is of the highest importance. Everything else is inferior to this.”—*Ibid.*

Sabbath, October 12, James and Ellen White attended the morning worship service in San Francisco at eleven, and another in late afternoon, both speaking at each of the meetings. “We had good liberty,” wrote Ellen White, “and the people seemed much encouraged.”—*Manuscript 5, 1872*. At a meeting Sunday morning she preached from *John 1*. In the afternoon James spoke on the “reasons of our faith” and Ellen on “God in nature.” Thus their work began in San Francisco.

Monday, October 14, was an interesting day to them, of which she wrote in her diary:

We visited Sister Moore, who lives with her daughter. Her daughter married the ex-governor of California. We were received very cordially by the daughter. We had a very interesting visit with Sister Moore. Before we left, Mr. Holden came home and we had an interesting interview with His Honor.—*Ibid.*

[362]

Making their home with Mrs. Rowland, they shopped some, did some writing, and from day to day visited the believers in the city—Diggins, Healey, and others. They had a glimpse into the situation of the Sabbathkeepers in San Francisco.

The Beginnings of the Work in California

It will be well to review the history of how the Adventist work began in California. At the General Conference session held in Battle Creek in May, 1868, in response to earnest pleas brought by M. G. Kellogg from the few Sabbathkeepers in California, J. N. Loughborough and D. T. Bourdeau were sent as missionaries to the West Coast. They began their work in Petaluma and from there worked northward. Soon they had established churches in Santa Rosa, Healdsburg, Bloomfield, and other places. Loughborough reported:

Shortly after our arrival in California we received a letter from Mrs. White, in which she related a vision given her in Battle Creek on Friday evening of June 12—a day that we had spent in Lancaster, New York, before starting for California. She had never been in California, and had no personal knowledge of the habits of the people. In fact, at that time she had never been west of the Missouri River. Any knowledge she possessed concerning things there was derived from what the Lord was pleased to reveal to her.

In the instruction in her letter, she delineated the liberal ways of the people of California, and what would be the effect of labor among them on a close, “penny-wise” plan. In preaching to the people in California, they must be approached in something of the liberal spirit in which they work, and yet not in a spendthrift manner.—GSAM, p. 385.

Looking back years later, Loughborough testified:

[363]

As I witness the results of following the instruction given, I can say that our cause advanced more in three months than it would have done in one year had we not been helped “in the work of the ministry” by the instruction received through the gift of prophecy. Up to the spring of 1871, as the result of the efforts in Sonoma County, five churches of Sabbathkeepers had been raised up.—Ibid., 386.

First Tent Meeting in San Francisco

In June, 1871, with M. E. Cornell to assist (Bourdeau had returned to the East), Loughborough pitched the tent in San Francisco on Market Street, and began evangelistic meetings. Later the meetings were transferred to a hall. More than fifty accepted the message and joined the church. As the meetings proceeded, Cornell, whose wife was still back in the East—grew careless in his conduct, especially in the manner and with whom he was seen. He had enemies in

the city, who watched every move. Loughborough could see that it was necessary, as the apostle admonished, to shun every appearance of evil.

When approached on the matter, Cornell took a bold and defiant attitude, declaring that he had a right to do as he pleased. On January 23, Loughborough went back to Sonoma County for a few days to oversee the work, leaving the new church in San Francisco in the care of Cornell. By this time, enemies were beginning to make more of his conduct and his carelessness in the company he kept. He took the position that it was none of their business, and he would show them that “he had a mind of his own, and could walk the streets as he pleased, and *with whom* he pleased, without being subject to their remarks.”— *Ibid.*, 387.

Returning to San Francisco, Loughborough reported:

I tried, by private labor, to show him that such a course of action would not answer, and that such an independent spirit would end in evil.

He had his friends, who strongly sympathized with him, some of whom began to take a position which would subject him to still greater censure. A large portion of the church saw the evil of his waywardness, and were ready to second the efforts I was making to save the cause from dishonor.— *Ibid.*

The situation worsened rapidly. On Sabbath, January 27, 1872, the church gave some consideration to the matter. They decided that there would have to be an investigation and some decisive action taken to save the reputation of the church. The time was set for the next morning at nine o'clock. Loughborough reports on what took place:

[364]

On the morning of the twenty-eighth, as I started for the meeting, I met the fellow-laborer on the sidewalk, near my boarding place, weeping. Said he, “Brother Loughborough, I am not going to the meeting today.”

“Not going to the meeting?” said I; “the meeting relates to your case.”

“I know that,” said he, “but I am all wrong. You are right in the position you have taken in reference to me. Here is a letter of confession I have written to the church; you take it and read it to them. It will be better for you, and better for those who might be inclined to sympathize with me, if I am not there.”

“What has occasioned this great change in you since yesterday?” I inquired.

He replied, “I went to the post office last night, after the Sabbath, and received a letter from Sister White, from Battle Creek, Michigan. It is a testimony she has written out for me.” Handing it to me, he said, “Read that, and you will see how the Lord sees my case.”—*Ibid.*, 387, 388.

Here was Ellen White’s message:

Battle Creek, Michigan, December 27, 1871. Dear Brother Cornell, You will see before this reaches you that the Lord has again visited His people by giving me a testimony. In this view I was shown that you were not standing in the clear light and you are in danger of bringing a reproach upon the cause of God by moving as you happen to feel. It is Satan’s intent to destroy you....

I was shown that you now should be very circumspect in your deportment and in your words. You are watched by enemies. You have great weaknesses for a man that is as strong as you are to move the crowd.... If you are not cautious, you will bring a reproach upon the cause of God which could not soon be wiped away.—[Letter 23, 1871](#).

[365]

Cornell requested Loughborough to say to the church that he had received a testimony from Sister White, reproving him for his conduct, and that he accepted it, as it was the truth. The church was saved from division. It was clear to all that there was divine

timing in this unique experience. Loughborough did some checking, and wrote:

This was part of a view given to Mrs. White at Bordoville, Vermont, December 10, 1871. She began to write the part relating to this brother's case December 27, 1871, but for some reason the completion of the document was delayed until January 18, 1872, at which time it was finished and mailed from Battle Creek. It then required about nine days to get letters overland from Michigan to California....

At the time of the vision there was but a shadow of what was actually developed when the testimony arrived in San Francisco. It will be seen, from a comparison of dates, that the culmination of the case in San Francisco came after the written testimony left the former place. Our brethren in San Francisco saw at once that no person could have written to Battle Creek and communicated the intelligence to Mrs. White in time for her to write this letter, for the state of things did not then exist.—GSAM, pp. 388, 389.

Loughborough declared that he had not written a line to James or Ellen White about Cornell's growing carelessness. He was naturally curious as to the exact timing of the message. This is what his investigation uncovered:

At a very early hour on the morning of January 18, 1872, Mrs. White was awakened with the above testimony vividly impressed upon her mind. The impression was as distinct to her as though audibly spoken, "Write out immediately that testimony for California, and get it into the very next mail; it is needed." This being repeated the second time, she arose, hastily dressed, and completed the writing.

Just before breakfast she handed it to her son Willie, saying, "Take this letter to the post office, but don't put it into the drop. Hand it to the postmaster, and have

him be sure to put it into the mailbag that goes out this morning.”

[366]

He afterward said that he thought her instructions a little peculiar, but he asked no questions, and did as he was bidden, and “saw the letter go into the mailbag.”—*Ibid.*, 389.

Had the testimony been sent when she started to write it out in December, 1871, matters in San Francisco were such that it would have had little application. Had it reached the city a day later than it did, the accusations and bitter feelings would have torn the church apart. It reached its destination just at the right time. Wrote Ellen some years after this, possibly having this case particularly in mind:

I have been aroused from my sleep with a vivid sense of subjects previously presented to my mind; and I have written, at midnight, letters that have gone across the continent and, arriving at a crisis, have saved great disaster to the cause of God. This has been my work for many years.—[Testimonies for the Church, 5:671](#).

The experience related above took place in January, 1872. M. E. Cornell, in response to the testimony, took hold of himself and, with J. N. Loughborough, continued in evangelistic ministry through late winter, spring, and summer.

Tent Meetings in Woodland

Tent meetings were held in Woodland through August and September, with Cornell doing most of the preaching, although with somewhat less energy and dedication than such work called for. The lackluster meetings yielded some baptisms, however, and steps were initiated to erect a church building. The last weekend in September the meetings were brought to a close as the tent was needed for the camp meeting to open later in the week at Windsor. There James and Ellen White learned, with distress, of the poor showing in Woodland and felt impressed to take steps to save the

situation. Five years later, as he visited the site of the Windsor camp meeting, James White recalled:

The tent had been to Woodland, and it was said that a very great interest had been raised, which was lost through bad management. We had heard by letter of this great interest and expected to see a large force from Woodland; but to our surprise, we found on the Windsor campground only six from Woodland. We were moved by the Spirit of God to urge that the tent should return. But all the preachers were discouraged about the place and opposed our proposition.

[367]

We had never been to Woodland, and knew nothing of the facts in the case. But the impression was upon us that we should speak in the tent at Woodland.

We made the matter a subject of prayer, and in answer the impression came with great power that we should go to Woodland with the tent. And as we related our impressions the preachers shook their heads. This led us to visit the same place again and pray over the matter. We came away the third time fully settled, and offered to bear all the risk of such a move. Then the tent went to Woodland and the result was as follows:

Both Mrs. White and the writer spoke to large audiences with freedom and power, the interest was fully restored, and in less than three months a church of nearly fifty was raised up, and a house of worship was built and paid for, which cost about \$2,500.—[The Signs of the Times, December 6, 1877.](#)

The revived tent meetings, with James and Ellen White leading out, brought new life to the effort. Ellen White preached to nearly five hundred people November 15. There were meetings every night, and the days were filled in visiting interested persons, encouraging them to take their stand. “Their labors,” wrote Loughborough, “...told well in the favor of the cause, of deep, practical godliness and truth” ([The Review and Herald, December 3, 1872](#)).

Willie accompanied his parents to Woodland, and with them was intrigued with the fruit of the land. That area is noted for its fruit. In her diary for October 21, 1872, after writing of her personal visits with people wrestling with decisions, Ellen stated:

We rode out five miles to Brother Grayson's. We found an excellent farm of four hundred acres. He has a large vineyard and large wheat fields. Willie has been gathering grapes and figs and drying them. We have quite a quantity drying. Brother and Sister Grayson say Willie has stolen their hearts. Willie thinks much of this kind family.—[Manuscript 5, 1872](#).

[368] They stayed that night at the Grayson home. After breakfast they walked out with Willie to see his grapes, and satisfied themselves that he had worked hard at fruit drying, the few days he had been there.

The next mention of their son was in connection with his accompanying M. G. Kellogg back to the East, to enroll in Dr. R. T. Trall's Medical School, in Florence Heights, New Jersey. Kellogg had taken his medical training there and was returning for a second course extending through a few months. While at Woodland James and Ellen White had arranged for both Willie and Edson to accompany him to gain medical training ([Letter 20, 1872](#)).

Thursday was their last day in Woodland, a day Ellen White spent in visiting people interested in the message, praying with them, and encouraging them to take their stand. In the evening she spoke, closing her work with an altar call. "Quite a large number came forward," she noted in her diary, "and we united in prayer for them."—[Manuscript 5, 1872](#). The meeting lasted until half past ten. Friday morning, November 1, they were up at four, preparing to take an early train to San Francisco. They arrived in the city at noon. Loughborough and Cornell closed up the tent meeting the next Tuesday evening, and the tent was moved to San Francisco on Wednesday. Cornell was left in Woodland to pastor the flock and to lead out in the construction of a house of worship.

Tent Effort in San Francisco

Friday evening, November 8, James White opened the tent meetings to be held in that city. A good crowd attended. In early winter the weather in San Francisco is usually pleasantly warm. On November 17 they had to raise the tent wall to be comfortable. After eighteen meetings, Loughborough reported of the interest:

Brother White has preached six times, Sister White seven times, and I have spoken five times. Our congregations have been both large and deeply attentive. The preaching has been about an even mixture of close, searching, practical discourses, alternated with the theory of the truth, presented in a clear, concise, solemn, and pointed manner, spiced with exhortation, and close appeals to the consciences, with an endeavor to arouse the moral sensibilities of the people.

The preaching has told powerfully upon the people, and has swept away a vast amount of prejudice, and taken hold of many hearts. Brother White's discourse last Sunday evening, on the Sabbath in the New Testament, was especially of this character. God helped him. It told greatly upon the audience, and brought some to decide to obey the truth.—[The Review and Herald, December 3, 1872.](#)

[369]

As White preached, Loughborough thought of how James White's preaching was getting better and better and "how needful that the minister of Christ have the Spirit of God, to go with the truth to hearts, and it is the mingling of the close, practical preaching with the theoretical, that keeps the truth warm in the soul of the minister, as well as keeping the material warm he wishes to work upon."—[Ibid.](#)

A week later, with changing weather, two stoves could not maintain comfort in the tent, so the meetings were closed on Monday night, November 25. On a number of nights attendance had been close to five hundred. Several had taken their stand, and others were investigating the truths presented ([Ibid., December 24, 1872](#)). Reported Loughborough:

The close, practical preaching of Brother and Sister White has left a very favorable impression on the minds of those who heard. The church has been greatly helped by the labors of the last few weeks.—[Ibid.](#)

The Winter in California

During the winter months of December, January, and February James and Ellen White were in California, somewhat uncertain as to what the future held. In December they divided their time between San Francisco and Santa Rosa. While in San Francisco, they were trying to find their way through some difficult situations. She wrote:

The word of the Lord has come to the people of San Francisco in messages of light and salvation. If they neglect to improve the present opportunity and wait for louder calls or greater light, the light which has been given may be withdrawn and the path be left in darkness. The light which shines today upon the people and upon the church, if not cherished, will have less force tomorrow. To have better opportunities and greater light in the future we must improve the blessings of the present with willing hearts.

[370]

Those who defer their obedience till every shadow of uncertainty and every possibility of mistake is removed will never believe and obey. A belief that demands perfect [full] knowledge will never yield. Faith and demonstration are two things. Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. Faith rests not upon probability.—[Letter 22, 1872.](#)

Then, referring to their own experience, she stated, “It has been our work to obey the voice of duty even when many voices may be raised in opposition against it. It requires discernment to distinguish the voice which speaks for God. The messengers of God must obey the divine voice which sends them with a disagreeable message, even at the peril of life and if there is not one to sustain them.”—[Ibid.](#)

Moving about among the six California churches, San Francisco, Santa Rosa, Healdsburg, Petaluma, Woodland, and Bloomfield, James and Ellen White labored through January and February. They were entertained at various homes, and often did some writing for the *Review and Health Reformer*—with speaking appointments primarily on Sabbath and Sunday. They were particularly concerned for the San Francisco church, and spent three Sabbaths there. Reported Loughborough:

There is now a good state of things in San Francisco. Although it became necessary to withdraw from two or three disorderly ones there, double this number immediately united with the church. Still others are embracing the truth who will unite with them soon.

At the meeting last Sunday evening, the hall was completely filled with attentive listeners. The labors of Brother and Sister White have been a source of great profit to the San Francisco church.—[The Review and Herald, February 4, 1873.](#)

Organization of the California Conference

The California State meeting was held February 14-18, in Bloomfield, and of course the Whites were there. In his report for the *Review*, Loughborough stated:

Everything moved off with perfect harmony and good feeling, and it was the source of deepest gratitude to us all that we were favored in our deliberations and meetings with the presence of Brother and Sister White. [371]

The preaching at this conference was solemn, searching, cheering, and impressive.... During the conference there were searching testimonies given, reproving wrongs existing in some present, which brought forth in the social meetings feeling confessions and vows to do better in the future.—[Ibid., March 4, 1873](#)

During this formal meeting, with delegates present from the six churches in California, the California Conference of Seventh-

day Adventists was formed, with a membership of 238. J. N. Loughborough was elected as president; S. B. Bresee, also of Santa Rosa, secretary; and T. M. Chapman, of Petaluma, treasurer ([Ibid.](#), [March 11, 1873](#)).

Ellen White stayed on at the Judson home in Bloomfield to do some writing. In her letter to Edson and Emma, she reported that “everything has passed off well at this State conference. Things look more encouraging.”—[Letter 7, 1873](#).

Word had just been received that the General Conference session would be held in Battle Creek, opening on March 11. James, of course, would attend, but Ellen wanted to get on with her writing. She told her children:

I am anxious to get out important matter which God has shown me. I cannot feel free till I do this. If I remain behind, I can write and complete my book, I think, before summer.—[Ibid.](#)

The book was *The Spirit of Prophecy*, volume 2, on the life of Christ. The next issue of the *Review* that came to them carried this note at the close of the notice of the session:

A Special Request: We deem it of the utmost importance that Brother and Sister White attend this meeting; and we therefore invite and urge, in the strongest terms, their attendance at this session of the General Conference, if their health will permit them to do so.—[The Review and Herald, February 11, 1873](#).

Ellen White would go east with her husband.

Chapter 25—(1873) The Call for a School

[372]

Watching the pioneers of the church as they struggled to bring permanency to the cause is somewhat like watching parents teaching a child to walk, except that the former process was long and drawn out. James White, with insights—in spite of faltering health—that seemed to outdistance those of his brethren, labored constantly to inspire his associates to shoulder their tasks with the devotion, energy, and skill that had marked his own labors through the previous twenty or more years. When they dallied, he sometimes grew impatient and wrote and spoke in severe terms. Disregarding his limited physical condition, he would throw himself without reserve into meeting the current needs. Up to the beginning of 1873, he had suffered three strokes of paralysis, the first one very severe (*Ibid.*, July 8, 1873).

The president of the General Conference, George I. Butler greatly admired James White's dedication, vision, and administrative skills. He felt that for the cause to advance, it must have White's contributions. He recognized that White's powers were waning, but he was pleased when White engaged in the activities of the denomination, especially in launching and managing new enterprises. Butler demonstrated a continuing sense of the need of the light the Lord gave through Ellen White in teaching, guiding, and guarding the church. All this is reflected in the note attached to the call for the General Conference session to open in Battle Creek on March 11, which James and Ellen White in California would read, urging "in the strongest terms, their attendance at this session" (*Ibid.*, February 11, 1873). This they could not ignore.

After a five-day train trip from Oakland, the Whites were met by Ira Abbey at the station in Battle Creek, at ten-thirty Wednesday night. He took them with his sleigh to their own home for a short night's rest. Thursday and Friday they were deluged with callers and with fellow-workers who came in for consultations. Ellen spoke Sabbath morning and James in the afternoon in the meetinghouse. In the evening George Butler and S. N. Haskell came to the home,

[373]

giving Ellen an opportunity to read to them a statement she had written, and to engage in a profitable conversation ([Manuscript 5, 1873](#)). Sunday and Monday she spent writing; James was much at the *Review* office, consulting with the leading men coming in for the General Conference session. On Tuesday morning, March 11, at nine o'clock, they were at the church for the opening meeting.

The Eleventh Annual Meeting of the General Conference

Tuesday morning was devoted to the usual formalities connected with such a conference. In the afternoon James White gave the opening address, setting the tone for the meeting. He started with organization and its value:

I would first say that organization, with Seventh-day Adventists, was not entered into as a matter of choice; but it had become a necessity. And now, with our organization, however complete, we need wisdom to use it properly. I regard organization more like a fort, to use military terms, in which we may entrench ourselves for protection and self-defense, rather than as a weapon for aggressive warfare.

To speak more definitely, organization should be regarded by us as the means of uniting our forces, and fortifying ourselves against outside influences; and we should be careful never to use it in a manner to oppress, to rule, and to govern the consciences of honest men.

Our system of organization we regard as very simple, and yet as very efficient; and although we entered upon it in our feebleness, as a people, some twelve years since, not patterning after others, but seeking for that which would answer our purpose, yet in reviewing it and reexamining it, we find that it seems to be just what we want; and we have found but very little reason to change it in any particular.—[Ibid., May 20, 1873](#)

[374]

Going into more detail, he reviewed the relationship of the members to conference organizations, and dealt with the method of support under which the denomination operates:

The General Conference is the highest earthly authority that we acknowledge, designed to take the general oversight of the entire work connected with the message which we have to give to the world. Our State conferences take the oversight of the work in the several States; and they are amenable to the General Conference. Our simple church organizations, for the benefit of local assemblies, are amenable to the State conferences.

Our system of supporting the cause by means of Systematic Benevolence appears to be the best that could be devised. It bears very lightly upon the poor man, drawing only about 1 percent annually of the little which he possesses. And when this system is applied to the wealthy—when we consider that they profess to believe that the end of all things is at hand; and that they have but a little time to use their means, and when we consider that the system calls for only about one tenth of their increase—they should be the very last to complain of the system.

I know not where we can better it. We have tried it, and it works well.... Here we may see the result of the system of equality that oppresses no one, but yet gives all the privilege of doing something.

I think that Seventh-day Adventists are not half as grateful to God as they should be, not only for the simple organization which is so efficient, but for the special blessing and help of God in carrying out the work to which He has called us.—[Ibid.](#)

With this as a foundation, White launched into a presentation of the church's position in fulfilling prophecy, and then the responsibilities that devolve on the church in advocating a message far beyond the limitations of the English language. This called for publishing in other languages, and also for a school in which, among other things, to train ministers to work in the languages of Europe.

[375]

The Dire Need of a School

Having introduced the matter of a school, James declared:

Probably there is no branch of this work that suffers so much at the present time as the proper education of men and women to proclaim the third angel's message.... Now, I say, we want a school. We want a denominational school, if you please....

We want a school in which the languages, especially the spoken and written languages of the present day, can be taught, and learned by young men and women to prepare them to become printers, editors, and teachers; and if we can do no more, where our young men that are about entering the ministry, and women, too, who are to be laborers in this great work, can be instructed thoroughly in the common branches, where their minds can be disciplined to study, where, if it is not for more than three months, our young men may have the best instruction, and may, during that time, at least, learn how to study.—[Ibid.](#)

He had no misgivings about the ability of Seventh-day Adventists to provide the money for a school enterprise, noting the liberality shown in erecting the second *Review and Herald* building, which he declared oversubscribed.

The Conference at Work

Little wonder that when the conference got down to business one of the first actions read:

Resolved, That we regard it as the imperative duty of S. D. Adventists to take immediate steps for the formation of an educational society, and the establishment of a denominational school.—[Ibid.](#), [March 18, 1873](#)

And there were actions to get the enterprise under way. In the same meeting the conference took an action in regard to the health work:

Resolved, That we regard the health reform as an important part of our work, and that we learn with great pleasure of the prosperity of the Health Institute, which we believe is designed of Providence to exert a great influence, not only in healing the sick, but in imparting light and knowledge on the subject of our responsibility to regard the laws of our being.—[Ibid.](#)

[376]

Early in the session a matter close to James White's heart was brought in. The minutes read:

The question of brethren moving to Battle Creek was introduced. Brother White stated that the thing was working slowly but well. Brother Andrews spoke; Brother Butler followed. The question was referred to a committee of three, appointed by the chair.—[Ibid.](#)

Several days were devoted to the routine business of the conference, with special attention given to the Tract and Missionary Society work, the developing embryo of what was to become the personal ministries work of the church. S. N. Haskell, the father of this work, was commissioned to visit the conferences in promoting it. One of the concluding actions of the session read:

Resolved, That we express our thanks for the labors of Brother and Sister White during this conference, and that we renew our expressions of confidence in the Bible doctrine of spiritual gifts, and of our appreciation, in some degree, of the kindness and mercy of God in favoring this people with the testimonies of His Spirit to the church.—[Ibid.](#), [March 25, 1873](#)

Testimony No. 22, with its many lines of practical instruction, including education and health reform, had come from the press in late December, 1872, and was fresh in the minds of those at the conference.

The nominating committee brought in a report recommending that George I. Butler continue as General Conference president and Uriah Smith as secretary, and introduced a new name for treasurer,

[377] E. B. Gaskill, fruitage of the program to bring in businessmen of experience to assist in the work. But when it came to the SDA Publishing Association, the story was quite different. James White was unanimously elected president of the association. He declined to serve, and over the next two weeks, several meetings were held to fill the offices of leadership. Finally, on Friday, March 21, White felt he could not further stave off the matter. Ellen White reports on the meeting in her diary:

Husband seems depressed. Called another meeting at the house of prayer in the afternoon. Officers were elected, also editors. A controversy arose as to who should serve as president. The ministers seek to press my husband in, but he refuses to accept the office. I sustain him. His health has failed under the burden. He must have rest or sink under the pressure of care. Some difference in understanding the testimonies. Some think my husband cannot be free from the burdens. May God guide in wisdom.—[Manuscript 5, 1873](#).

The published report of this meeting, which White asked George I. Butler to chair, indicates that James White, J. N. Andrews, and Uriah Smith were elected editors of the *Review and Herald*. The report is silent on the matter of the presidency, but James finally gave in and agreed to continue as president of the Publishing Association ([Ibid., July 8, 1873](#)).

The Whites Remain in Battle Creek

With James White dividing his time between the interests of the Publishing Association and the initial steps in getting a denominational school going, he was held close to Battle Creek. Ellen, as usual, was deeply involved in writing testimonies and, when she could get to it, the life of Christ for *Spirit of Prophecy*, volume 2. Her diary for 1873 reveals that she also kept close to developments in Battle Creek. One matter in particular gave both of them considerable concern, the very clearly felt alienation of Uriah Smith, resident editor of the *Review and Herald*. Reporting an interview

at the Smith home on March 20, Ellen White noted in her diary: “We had an interview at Brother Smith’s. He is dissatisfied with some things in my husband’s letters; some expressions he thinks too severe.”—[Manuscript 5, 1873](#).

The next day, Sabbath, she reported that James “spoke with great freedom and power.” The diary entries for the week that followed are enlightening as to her life and activities in Battle Creek:

Sunday, March 23, 1873.

Spent some time in the office preparing matter for *Reformer*. Spoke in the evening to a full house with some freedom. Took dinner at Brother [Harmon] Lindsay’s.

[378]

Monday, March 24, 1873.

Spent the day at the office, preparing matter for the *Reformer*. We took dinner at Brother Ings’s. We advised them to remain at Battle Creek. They thought of returning to Iowa if they could not be a help in Battle Creek. We do not wish to lose their influence here. Returned to office again to continue to prepare matter for *Reformer*.

Tuesday, March 25, 1873.

Was at the office most of the day, preparing matter for the *Reformer*.

Wednesday, March 26, 1873.

It is a very stormy day. I arranged my writings. My husband sent for me to take dinner at Brother Kellogg’s. It was very cold and stormy. It looked imprudent to go out, yet I ventured. We had a pleasant visit with Brother Kellogg’s family. Had a good hygienic dinner. Borrowed a book to select piece for *Reformer*. In the afternoon was at the office, selecting pieces for my department in *Reformer*. Returned home. In evening had an earnest praying season for Sister Abbey.

Thursday, March 27, 1873.

I designed to spend the day in writing. Just as I was about to engage in my writing, Sister Comings came. I visited with her quite a while, then went to the institute with Emma for treatment. My husband came for me to ride and I did not take treatment. Rode down to the city.... Took dinner with Brother and Sister Van Horn. Had a pleasant visit with them. Returned home. Stopped at the institute a short time and returned home and engaged in writing.

Dr. Russell called in evening, before leaving for an urgent call to Wisconsin from Brother Sanborn. We had a pleasant interview with Dr. Russell. Elders Andrews and Haskell spent the evening with us. Tarried overnight.

Friday, March 28, 1873.

It is raining. My husband spent the day at the office. He brought me two letters, one from Elder Loughborough, with two letters copied that he had received from Brethren Stipp and Stockton. My husband came home with Sister Lampson. We had a pleasant visit. Sister Lampson dined with us. I have forty-eight pages completed for the Health Institute. My head is weary. Received a good letter from Will Walling. He urges us to come and stay with him in the summer and I think we shall do so.

[379]

Sabbath, March 29, 1873.

It is a blustering day. My husband attended meeting. I did not. I wished to speak to the brethren and sisters of San Francisco. I wrote sixteen pages—to Elder Loughborough, six pages; to Brother Diggins, ten pages; also wrote Brother Stockton two pages.

My husband spoke to the people with freedom. In the afternoon [I spoke]. Brethren came in after meeting. Sister Butler came to visit us. Brethren Andrews and Haskell called. I read to them the letter written to Brother Diggins. We had a season of prayer of considerable interest.—[Ibid.](#)

A Place to Write at the Publishing House

And so it was from day to day. On Monday, April 7, she had an interview with the physicians at the Health Institute and noted in her diary:

I read forty-eight pages of manuscript, testimony for the physicians and helpers. This was a severe task to me, a work I did not love.—[Manuscript 6, 1873.](#)

The Health Institute and its interests were close to Ellen White's heart. This stemmed back particularly to a time of crisis in the history of the institution mentioned in August by James White:

About four years since [i.e., ago], by bad management, the Health Institute and the *Reformer* were brought into most discouraging circumstances; so much so, that we at one time decided in our own mind that the property must be sold, and after paying heavy debts, a small percent be refunded to stockholders. The prospect was most gloomy. Mrs. White had made important statements, upon high authority, relative to the institute and its work, the fulfillment of which seemed doubtful.

But at the very time when the prospect looked the most doubtful, when we were bowed at the family altar, the Spirit of the Lord came upon us, faith revived, and with a clear presentiment of the future prosperity of the institute, we gave this testimony in the hearing of our family, while still bowed on our knees, "God will yet vindicate all that His Spirit has testified of the prosperity and usefulness of our Health Institute."—*An Earnest Appeal*, pp. 42, 43.

After mentioning specific measures taken to save the institution, including upgrading the *Health Reformer*, which would help to draw guests to fill its rooms, he stated:

We also united our efforts at the Health Institute as counselors, and often spoke to the patients in the parlor as we could steal a half hour from other pressing duties.—*Ibid.*, 43, 44.

This describes well a phase of their activities in Battle Creek following the General Conference session, but Ellen White concluded that if she were to get much writing done she must have a place of seclusion away from their home. A room was found at the *Review* office that she could use, and this was soon carpeted and fitted up nicely for her work. On Friday, April 11, Willie White—who had just completed his six months' course of studies at Dr. Trall's Hygeo-Therapeutic College at Florence Heights, New Jersey, with his brother Edson—returned home. They brought with them diplomas inscribed on sheepskin, conferring the "Degree of Doctor of Medicine," with the "rights, privileges, and immunities pertaining to the legalized practice of medicine" (DF790, W. C. White historical papers). Their parents, who had sent the two young men to the medical school, advised them that this was a good start, one that Dr. M. G. Kellogg had taken, but they should not venture into the practice of medicine without further training. They did not disregard this counsel.

James and Ellen did not intend to remain long in Battle Creek. At the time they owned two houses there, one close to the institute, mentioned as the old one on the corner, which they thought they had sold when they moved to Greenville in 1867, and the newer one built for them right after the Wright camp meeting when they were persuaded to return to Battle Creek and make their home there. On April 1, 1873, they sold their home on the corner to C. W. Comings, one of the "picked" businessmen who had moved his family to Battle Creek to assist in the work at headquarters.

[381] On Monday, April 21, as the Comingses moved in, they arranged to let the Whites temporarily have a bed in the parlor. But that evening, after attending a meeting of the literary society and a meet-

ing of the directors of the Health Institute, the Whites decided to occupy a room in the institute. The next morning, April 22, the ground was covered with four and a half inches of snow. James and Ellen White had breakfast at the Abbey home and then walked to the office. They were to have dinner at the Ginleys.

The Fourth James White Stroke of Paralysis

Ellen described what transpired:

My husband was expected to be there, but when I arrived at Brother Ginley's I was surprised to find my husband not there. Brother Ginley went to the Health Institute, expecting to find him there, but no. He went to Brother Abbey's to see if he was there. Word was returned that he was too faint to come to dinner. I then sat down with Brother Ginley's family.

I had taken about half my dinner when a messenger came with the word my husband had another shock of paralysis. I hastened to the house and found my husband's right arm partially paralyzed. We anointed with oil and then engaged in prayer for his recovery. The Lord came near by His Holy Spirit. My husband was greatly blessed. His arm was strengthened. We felt assured that by the blessing of the Lord he would recover. We moved to the institute. My husband feels cheerful and happy. He now is settled in regard to his duty to drop everything like burdens at Battle Creek and spend the summer in the Colorado Mountains.—

[Manuscript 6, 1873.](#)

The stroke, while more severe than the previous two, was not as crippling as the first one he suffered in August, 1865. The next day, although it was chilly, they rode out, and there was evidence that James was exercising his mind. He was soon able to engage in various activities, but with impaired strength, and at times with considerable suffering. It was clear now to everyone that he was working on too narrow a margin to remain in Battle Creek. James

[382] and Ellen fixed their eyes on Colorado, but it was too early in the year to go to the mountains, and there were matters in Battle Creek that they needed to care for. So they stayed on, Ellen continuing with her writing and James spending some time at the office and in committees, and both of them speaking occasionally in the church.

Things would perhaps have been much simpler had the president of the General Conference, George I. Butler, resided in Battle Creek. But his home was in Mount Pleasant, Iowa, and he visited Battle Creek only occasionally. The negative attitudes of Uriah Smith, which were to continue until mid-September and even led to his being dropped from his *Review* responsibilities ([Manuscript 7, 1873](#)), cast a dark shadow over the local Adventist community.

Planning for the School and the Institute

Tuesday, May 6, 1873, was a day of special interest. Butler was in town. Ellen White described the activities of the day:

We have a beautiful morning. We had prayers and then set about the duties of the day. The directors and trustees [of the Health Institute] ride out to the lake to consult and pray over matters. We conversed over important matters and came to good conclusions. After talking a while, we spread out our food upon the tablecloths upon the ground. We placed upon the cloth our good hygienic food and we enjoyed our food much.

We had much conversation after dinner in regard to the success of the work and the extended efforts we should make. We had a free, profitable talk and then we bowed before God and had a season of prayer.

I spent the time from morning until eleven o'clock writing. We returned from the lake. Selected cloth at Salisburys' for James—a coat. Brother Butler is here and went to the lake with us. He has come in a good time.

We have many important matters to settle in regard to the location for school buildings, and the location of the institute. We are contemplating the ground. It

is a most desirable place for buildings for school and institute.— *Ibid.*

Sunday, May 11, James was not at all well. Ellen could see that they must both have rest and concluded that every hour they remained in Battle Creek was a positive danger to his life. They decided to drive over to Potterville and camp there for a time. Ellen declared their 19-year-old horses to be as true as steel. The journey seemed to bring relief, and at noon they stopped beside the road and built a fire for their dinner. On Tuesday James suffered another light stroke, but they were able to pitch their tent in Brother Sawyer's orchard on a plank floor that he laid for them. The Sawyers did everything they could for the Whites' comfort, bringing carpet, stove, bedstead, washstand, looking glass, and chairs (*Ibid.*). But they could not get their minds off Battle Creek and the problems there, and on Friday they drove back and both were soon involved in their several tasks there. [383]

Among the accomplishments were the laying of plans for the operation of the school until permanent plans could be worked out. The *Review and Herald* would soon be in need of a third building to take care of its operations, so it was decided to erect a third building at once between the two in use, connecting them together in one combined unit. The erection of this building in the summer of 1873 opened the way for the school to continue in September with increased enrollment.

There were good days and days not so good for James White through the spring months. Thursday morning, June 5, they reached the point where they knew they must make some decisions. In her diary she wrote:

My husband had an ill turn. We had a season of prayer in our chamber. We called the brethren together and had a season of prayer for more clear understanding of duty. I felt that it was my duty to go to the Iowa camp meeting. We had two praying seasons. We finally decided to go on the morning train. We had to make hasty preparations. We had ample time to get to the cars. We waited three quarters of an hour for the western

train. My husband improved in health and spirits as he journeyed.—[Manuscript 8, 1873](#).

The Iowa camp meeting was being held close to Washington, Iowa, where they had their hideaway home. Getting away from Battle Creek brought relief. By Friday noon they were on the campground. James White spoke in the large tent Friday night, and Ellen White on Sabbath afternoon and again in the evening. In all, James preached four times and Ellen five times ([Ibid., June 24, 1873](#)).

[384] Tuesday morning, seemingly quite refreshed, James and Ellen White were on the campground early. She wrote of the meeting:

My husband addressed the people and gave important testimony in favor of the Health Institute and [Publishing] Association. I then bade them farewell with these words of warning, to watch as they returned home and not leave Jesus behind as did Joseph and Mary when they returned from Jerusalem. There was much tenderness of feeling in the congregation. We then bade them all farewell and returned to our home to rest.—[Manuscript 8, 1873](#).

A Few Weeks in Their Washington Home

They soon discovered they were much worn for their camp meeting labors. Earlier it had been announced through the *Review* that they hoped to attend the four western camp meetings ([Ibid., May 6, 1873](#)). What should they do? “We walked out in the orchard,” wrote Ellen White, “and had a season of prayer.” She added:

We feel very anxious to know our duty. We do not want to make any wrong move. We need sanctified judgment and heavenly wisdom to move in the counsel of God. We cry unto God for light and grace. We must have help from God or we perish. Our earnest cry is for the direction of God’s Holy Spirit. We dare not move in any direction without clear light.—[Manuscript 8, 1873](#).

Ellen pressed on with writing for the *Health Reformer* and *Youth's Instructor*, and got some work done on the life of Christ. Some of the chapters for this were now appearing as articles in the *Review*. James busied himself around the little farm and did some writing. Willie was with them and gave his father massage treatments. After a couple of weeks in Washington, they felt the time had come to start for Colorado. Lucinda Hall joined them, and Sunday she and Willie did most of the packing for the summer in the mountains. Monday afternoon, June 23, they took the train for Denver, Colorado.

Chapter 26—(1873) Colorado Interlude

It was seven-thirty Wednesday evening, June 25, 1873, when the party of four, James and Ellen White, Willie, and Lucinda Hall, reached Denver. They were cordially received at the Walling home. Thursday and Friday they made preparation for the summer in the Rocky Mountains. To ensure comfortable beds, they arranged to have two hair mattresses made, and bought pillows. Mr. Walling came from the mountains Sabbath afternoon and found the visiting party in the city park enjoying the Sabbath rest. After the Sabbath they started out for Golden City, in the mountains ([Manuscript 8, 1873](#)). Late Sunday afternoon they were at Walling's Mills and getting settled in the cottage that was to be their home for the summer. In a letter to Edson written on Thursday, July 3, Willie described their situation:

We are here at Walling's old mill, two miles from where he is now operating. It is a good house which he lets us have the use of. There are a parlor, dining room, kitchen, two bedrooms, and a sort of underground room, which serves as buttery and cellar below, and two bedrooms above.

We are nearly settled. Walling lends us nearly all the furniture we need. Day before yesterday we awoke in the morning to find an inch of snow on the ground and the thermometer two degrees above freezing. How is that for the first of July? ...

Father is quite well and cheerful. He is tinkering up shelves, bedsteads, et cetera, and keeps busy most all the time....

July 4. Father and I have been mending fence to-day. Expect Walling will lend us a horse as soon as the pasture fence is mended.... Guess I shall plant some gar-

den next week.—In Carrie Johnson, *I Was Canright's Secretary*, pp. 35, 36.

Before long they were in a leisurely paced routine, with reading, writing, and recreation in the beautiful setting of the mountains. They treasured copies of the *Review*, which came each week, and the monthly visits of the *Health Reformer* and the *Youth's Instructor*. Frequent letters from Battle Creek and from George Butler in Iowa kept them in touch with the activities and progress of the cause. Diary entries give us a picture of their devotional program:

Wednesday, July 16, 1873.

It is a beautiful day. We rested well during the night. We had our praying season in the family and also by ourselves upon the mountain.

Thursday, July 17, 1873.

After we had breakfast and prayers my husband and myself had a season of prayer in the valley.

Friday, July 18, 1873.

It is a beautiful morning. After breakfast and prayers with the family my husband and myself walk out and have a praying season alone in the valley.—[Manuscript 9, 1873.](#)

As they were walking in the woods Sabbath afternoon, July 12, they found some wild strawberries, the first of fresh fruit that they would enjoy. Sunday they picked a quart. From then on there was almost a daily picking of strawberries, sometimes several quarts. As these tapered off, there were raspberries in even greater abundance. This delighted the fruit lovers in a country where imported fruit was scarce and very expensive.

The Visit of Dudley and Lucretia Canright

[387] On Friday morning, July 18, Dudley and Lucretia Canright, with their 15-month-old daughter, Genevieve, were at the Black Hawk station waiting to be taken to the White home. Willie met them at the station with transportation. There was a carriage, drawn by Sandy, for the Canrights, and Walling's wagon, pulled by the two horses, Elephant and Bill, for the Canright trunks. "We were very happy to meet them," wrote Ellen White. "They have a very interesting little girl."—*Ibid.* The day was beautiful, and the Canrights were soon exploring the mountains and picking strawberries. Dudley was exhausted from diligent labor through a Minnesota winter, and he was suffering from difficulty with his throat. James White greatly admired Canright; it was a natural gesture to invite them to come to the mountains and join them in regaining their health. The two families enjoyed worshipping, hiking, horseback riding, and picnicking together. James and Ellen White and Canright were also busy in writing; all enjoyed reading, especially the denominational journals as they came fresh from the *Review* office.

The evening after the Sabbath, August 9, James White fell ill, so ill he could not sleep till after midnight. The next day it rained, and too many people were in too small a space; one was a worn-out patriarch, and another a whining toddler. Tensions developed, and irritability soon manifested itself. Canright was not known for his patience; as he later referred to the experience, he recalled:

I told the elder my mind freely. That brought us into an open rupture. Mrs. White heard it all, but said nothing.—*Seventh-day Adventism Renounced*, p. 42.

There were weaknesses in Canright's character, the knowledge of which had come to Ellen both by revelation and observation, but she had not found an opportunity to discuss the matter with him. Now seemed to be the time to talk some things over. In her diary for Sunday, August 10, she mentioned that they had some talk with Brother and Sister Canright, and Monday they had some further conversation. The diary states:

We had still further conversation with Brother and Sister Canright. They both rose up and resisted everything we said. I feel so sorry.—[Manuscript 10, 1873](#).

The experience led to a setback for James White, and he suffered a night of illness. The next day there was a need to continue the interchange. Of this Ellen White noted:

We felt it duty to have some conversation with Brother and Sister Canright. He was well stocked with unbelief, ready to pour out his complaints upon us and I think anyone who would give him an opportunity. We said some plain things to them.—[Ibid.](#)

The Canrights moved out, going to the home of a Brother Tucker. During the next few days Ellen White wrote a lengthy communication to them, opening with the words:

[388]

For some months I have felt that it was time to write to you some things which the Lord was pleased to show me in regard to you several years ago. Your cases were shown me in connection with those of others who had a work to do for themselves in order to be fitted for the work of presenting the truth.—[Testimonies for the Church, 3:304](#).

The entire communication may be read in *Testimonies*, volume 3, pages 304 to 329, under the title “To a Young Minister and His Wife.” Canright was described by Butler, who knew him well, as one who “never could bear reproof with patience, or feel composed when his way was crossed” (in Johnson, *op. cit.*, p. 34). Shortly thereafter, the Canright family was in California, and within a few months, during which the two families carried on some correspondence, confessions were made, forgiveness requested and given, and difficulties ironed out. All were soon working together building up the cause of God.

Another Trip to Middle Park

James and Ellen White were delighted with their Colorado situation and kept busy with their writing and their recreation. They

were soon considering spending the winter there, and starting to plan accordingly. They had talked some of taking another trip over the Snowy Range and spending a few weeks at Grand Lake, only a few miles from Hot Sulphur Springs, where they had camped the year before. Suddenly, Mr. Walling appeared on Sunday morning, September 14, and said he was ready to take them to the Park. "He hurried us all up," wrote Ellen White, "and we were all packed, about ready to start at eleven o'clock."—[Manuscript 11, 1873](#). The trip was much like the one before; they spent three weeks camping by Grand Lake. They returned to their mountain home Tuesday evening, October 7, just ahead of a storm of wind and rain and snow ([Manuscript 12, 1873](#)). Wrote Ellen White in her diary on Wednesday morning:

[389]

We rested well during the night. It was quite a luxury to rest upon a bed, for we had not done this for twenty-three nights. We feel very thankful that we are at home. There is a severe storm of wind, uprooting trees and even tumbling over outhouses.... Yesterday when we crossed the range it was warm as summer, but this morning we see the mountain range is covered with snow.... Mr. Walling took breakfast with us. Sister Hall went to Mrs. Laskey's for the two children of Mr. Walling, Addie and May. They are again with us.—[Ibid.](#)

Willie returned to Battle Creek to enter school. There was considerable conversation in the days that followed as to future plans. Should they go back to Battle Creek, or should they stay in Colorado through the winter, or should they go west to California? On Monday, October 20, they received a number of letters from Butler. Tuesday it began to snow, and Wednesday morning, October 22, Ellen wrote in her diary: "It is like a cold January morning. The snow lies upon the ground six inches deep."—[Ibid.](#) They spent the day writing letters—James writing at length to Butler.

James White Proposes Broad Plans for the Cause

The several months spent in Colorado had given James White an opportunity to stand back and survey the cause as a whole. As

he did so he wrote several articles for the *Review*, proposing daring and broad steps in advance. In late August, as Ellen White had completed copy for *Testimony* No. 23, which carried an extended article entitled "The Laodicean Church," James White appended a forty-seven-page statement he titled *An Earnest Appeal*, addressed to a broad group, "The General Conference Committee, the 'Picked Men' at Battle Creek, the Committees of the State Conferences, and the Officers of the Several Branches of Our Tract and Missionary Society." This separately paged statement opens:

We take up our pen to address you with assurance that the Lord has been leading out our mind to consider the present condition of our people, and the wants of the cause, such as we never felt before. In our Rocky Mountain retreat, we have taken time to review the whole ground of our position. We have surveyed the entire field of labor, and have considered our own condition before God, and that of our people....

At our early season of prayer this morning, August 20, as we retired from the family by ourselves, to especially seek the Lord, as has been our custom since we have been in the mountains, Mrs. White's feelings were with ours in the strongest assurance that the hand of the Lord had separated us from His people for a while, to improve our health, and to gather spiritual strength, and clear light as to the condition and wants of the cause.—
An Earnest Appeal, p. 1.

[390]

He mentioned first the publishing work and the need of literature in the principal languages of Northern Europe, spoken and read by many who had come to American shores. Then he laid out, in more detail, broad publishing plans:

We have recently been looking over the broad field relative to our publishing interests. We think the time has come to stereotype our standard books, pamphlets, and tracts, and at the same time take two sets of plates,

one for a branch office on the Pacific Coast, and one for the Atlantic. This would reduce the cost of our publications, and the need of capital and office room in Battle Creek.... The day is not far distant when our publications will be printed from duplicate plates, both on the Pacific and Atlantic coasts. This will greatly reduce our typesetting, and our heavy freights on publications from the interior to the east and to the west.

God is willing to do great things for His cause on the Pacific Coast.... The General Conference Committee is disposed to extend the work up the coast, to Oregon and Washington Territory. The friends of the cause on the Pacific Coast should have the cash ready to liberally help establish a branch office and health institute on their coast in 1874.

We would here state that those who may regard these suggestions as extravagant should understand that little has ever been accomplished in our cause without laying plans, and without persevering efforts to execute them.—*Ibid.*, 18, 19.

[391] He called for the responsible men in Battle Creek to move ahead quickly with the development of the school there, and for enlarging the Health Institute to accommodate three hundred guests. He pointed out that there was a need for two new power presses in the *Review* Office and more capital with which to operate. Then he made a bold proposal:

The General Conference should expend, before the close of 1874, the sum of \$20,000 in the preparation, translation, and publication of works in the German, French, Danish, and Swedish languages. And the General Conference must extend its missions to Europe, to the Pacific, and, in fact, in all directions, as far as the calls can be supplied.— *Ibid.*, 29.

Testimony No. 23, to which this appeal was attached, was in the field by mid-September and was penetrating the thinking of

Adventists. S. N. Haskell was the first to respond, in the *Review and Herald* of October 21. Butler followed. In the meantime letters had been passing back and forth between Butler and White regarding the early calling of the General Conference to implement some of these plans. From his Mount Pleasant home in Iowa, Butler wrote on October 24 an article for the *Review* he titled “*Testimony No. 23, and Bro. White’s Address,*” in which he declared:

I shall not feel satisfied unless I say a few words in regard to it. Being one of those who firmly believe these testimonies to be from God, I feel a great interest that they should be read by our people, and carefully considered.

If it is granted that God is giving us light from heaven in regard to the duties and dangers of the present hour, the importance of our considering it well cannot be overestimated.... This last warning from the Lord sets before us our peculiar dangers in the plainest light. These dangers I know exist among us. We are in the lukewarm state, brought to view in the Laodicean church of [Revelation 3](#). While we should be the most zealous church existing on the earth, or that has existed for eighteen centuries, we are mostly asleep.—[The Review and Herald, November 4, 1873](#).

Closing his remarks on the *Testimony* articles, he stated, “This testimony to the church is just the thing we need at this hour. Shall we heed it?” Then he turned to the address of James White bound into the same pamphlet. Concerning its message, he wrote:

We are in the fullest sympathy. We are not ignorant of the fact that he has laid out before us an immense amount of work. Neither do we believe mere human agencies can ever accomplish it alone.... We believe God has a special work for these last days, and that work must go to “peoples, nations, tongues, and kings.” It is worldwide.—[Ibid.](#)

[392]

Pointing out the importance of working with “some definite object in view,” he committed himself, issuing a rallying cry of “Courage in the Lord.” Butler then hastened to Battle Creek to meet with the two other members of the General Conference Committee to consider the steps to be taken.

On October 23 James White sent from Black Hawk a telegram urging that the General Conference session be scheduled for November 14 to 18 ([Manuscript 12, 1873](#)). The committee adopted those dates for the session. The *Review* of November 4 carried the notice, and on the editorial page Butler explained the hasty arrangements.

There has been considerable said in the *Review* in regard to Brother J. N. Andrews’ going to Switzerland this season to look after the wants of the cause there, to attend to the extension of missionary operations in Europe, and to qualify himself by an understanding of the French and German tongues to aid in the preparation of works in those languages.—[Ibid., November 4, 1873](#)

The matter of our denominational school must be considered immediately.—[Ibid.](#)

The interests of our Tract and Missionary Societies should also be considered.... Do we need a paper to be connected with this enterprise?—[Ibid.](#)

We especially need to consider those questions to which Brother White has called the attention of our people relative to placing the cause upon a broader basis by enlarging our institutions, establishing branches of them on the Pacific Coast, and looking after these interests generally.—[Ibid.](#)

For the Whites in Colorado, there were several days of anguish trying to decide whether to attend the session or go directly to California, taking Lucinda Hall and the two Walling children with them. They decided for California. Walling had urged them to care for the girls. The mother of the children had “pursued her course of fretting and scolding her husband,” wrote Ellen White, until she had “weaned his affections from her.” Walling insisted that they

take the children to California with them, and the mother reluctantly consented ([Manuscript 13, 1873](#)).

This decision having been made, that evening, Thursday, November 6, they took the train in Denver for Cheyenne, Wyoming, presumably to catch the overland train the next day for San Francisco. But that night, feeling impressed that they should follow another course, James went to the front of the coach to meditate and pray. Of the experience he wrote:

We felt a power turning our mind around, against our determined purpose, toward the General Conference to be holden in a few days in Battle Creek.

In our mind we debated the probabilities of another shock of paralysis which would doubtless prove fatal, and decided that we would not count our life too dear to risk all in doing the will of God. And with this consecration, we became very happy before our train reached Cheyenne.

It was then midnight, and after a few hours' sleep at the depot hotel, we laid the matter before Mrs. White, who for the first time seemed willing to risk another journey to the scene of our toils, trials, sicknesses, and sufferings. And in a few hours we were repacked, Sister Hall on her way to San Francisco to make ready for us at Santa Rosa in about ten days, as we supposed, and we ticketed and checked for Chicago. At Battle Creek we were greeted heartily, not only by our denominational friends, but by businessmen and leading citizens.—[Ibid., December 30, 1873](#)

When the twelfth annual session of the General Conference opened on Friday morning, November 14, at nine o'clock, James and Ellen White were there.

The 1873 General Conference Session

Friday morning was occupied with the organization of the conference and the appointment of committees. Following this, Butler

[394]

and White each made some remarks, thought by J. N. Andrews, editor of the *Review*, to be timely and appropriate. He noted the evident presence of the Spirit of God in an unusual measure. Since Uriah Smith's confessions and reconsecration of heart and life to the cause a few weeks before, [The precise cause of Smith's disaffection and the unfortunate consequences that brought a blight upon the cause is not revealed in available documents, but there are several inferences here and there that three factors were present: James White's letters, which he felt were unjustifiably severe; messages of counsel from Ellen White that he felt were not really called for; and open criticism of James and Ellen White, which had a baleful harvest.] the atmosphere in Battle Creek was changing. Everyone seemed to sense it, and it was to become more evident as the meetings of the session got under way.

At two o'clock Friday afternoon, James White gave what might be considered the keynote address, explaining that the conference was called early to consider such pressing matters as extending the work on the Pacific Coast, sending a missionary to Switzerland, and undertaking the establishment of a denominational school.

Sabbath services were deeply spiritual services, setting the mood for the whole session. J. N. Andrews reported:

Sabbath morning we met at nine o'clock for social worship. But Brother White was led out to speak at length words of exhortation, instruction, encouragement, and admonition. The Spirit of God especially attended them to all present.

At ten thirty Sister White spoke on the temptation of Christ. The discourse was full of instruction and of the deepest interest.

In the afternoon Brother White preached on the unity of the people of God, the perpetuity of spiritual gifts, and the sacred nature of our work. All hearts were deeply touched.

Then followed an hour of testimonies, in which the Spirit of God rested down in a very special manner. The remarks of Brother Uriah Smith cheered all hearts.

In the evening Brother Butler read an essay, a portion of which appears in this number of the *Review*, setting forth the fact that in every important work which God has committed to His people to perform, He has raised up and qualified men to lead in the accomplishment of the same, and showing the duty of the church to strengthen the hands of those upon whom such responsibilities are laid. There was perfect unanimity of opinion and of feeling in the discussion of this subject.—*Ibid.*, November 18, 1873

[395]

Butler cherished a high regard for James White and greatly admired his vision and unique leadership. As Butler's message was turned over in the hearts of the delegates, they gradually saw that he was taking the position that one man, regardless of his title, was to be recognized as the visible leader of Seventh-day Adventists, as Moses was the visible leader of the Hebrews; this, of course, pointed to James White. The perils of this philosophy were not at the moment seen, but in time they would have to be reckoned with. White was now riding the crest of the wave of popularity, and Butler was quite willing that he should.

One of the early actions of the session read: *Resolved*, That we fully endorse the position taken in the paper read by Elder Butler on leadership. And we express our firm conviction that our failure to appreciate the guiding hand of God in the selection of His instruments to lead out in this work has resulted in serious injury to the prosperity of the cause, and in spiritual loss to ourselves. And we hereby express our full purpose of heart faithfully to regard these principles, and we invite all our brethren to unite with us in this action.—*Ibid.*, November 25, 1873

Other Conference Session Actions

The session had been called on short notice, and the agenda consisted largely of the propositions and suggestions made by James

[396]

White. After the election of officers and the General Conference Committee, attention was given to the large issues. George I. Butler was reelected president, with Sydney Brownsberger to serve with him as secretary and E. B. Gaskill as treasurer. The General Conference Committee would be G. I. Butler, S. N. Haskell, and Harmon Lindsay. One action called for the Executive Committee “to take steps for the speedy publication of tracts and periodicals in other languages.” Believers were to be reminded of the importance of dress and health reforms. Other actions called for consolidating the interests of the Tract and Missionary Societies of the State conferences into a general organization and for the General Conference to prepare or have prepared “a work giving our reasons for believing the testimonies of Sister White to be the teachings of the Holy Spirit.”

While high on the list of matters calling for urgent consideration were the developing work on the Pacific Coast and the sending of a missionary to Europe, there is no record of specific actions relating to either of these. It was different with the proposed school:

The Conference Committee, having been entrusted with the matter of raising funds for a denominational school, reported through the chairman. Fifty-two thousand dollars have been pledged....

On motion, the president was authorized to appoint a committee of four to act with the Executive Committee of the conference, in the formation of an educational society preparatory to the establishment of a denominational school. The following persons were appointed: James White, Ira Abbey, J. N. Andrews, and Uriah Smith.—[Ibid.](#)

The meetings of the session were held from Friday morning, November 14, to Thursday noon, November 20, with the mornings given to business and the afternoon and evenings to spiritual interests. When the conference was over, Butler declared, “I regard it as one of the most important meetings ever held among S. D. Adventists.” He added:

The importance of any meeting does not necessarily arise from the numbers of those present or the amount of discussion and speechmaking connected with it, but, rather, upon the weighty matters decided upon, and the spirit of union and love prevailing among those in attendance.—[Ibid.](#)

Two columns of the *Review and Herald* [a half page] were devoted to minutes of the conference. Double that space on another page was given to the outpouring of hearts of church leaders testifying to the unity and good relationships among workers.

J. N. Andrews commented in his report:

The hearts of the servants of God are more closely united in the bonds of Christian love, and probably there had never been a time when such perfect unanimity of feeling and of judgment has existed as at the present time.—[Ibid.](#)

[397]

George I. Butler, writing of the work of the Spirit of God in leading to unity, declared:

Never were there such clear evidences that God's Spirit was cementing hearts which have been more or less divided. Never were the principles so plainly seen before, upon which true union must be founded. These things cause our hearts to rejoice. And we have no hesitation in saying they will cause a thrill of joy in the hearts of the true friends of the cause from Maine to California.—[Ibid.](#)

Under the title "Blessings Acknowledged," J. H. Waggoner declared:

I wish to add my cheerful testimony to that of others in regard to the blessed and heart-cheering meetings which have been held in Battle Creek. From the first, it was evident that the Lord had been preparing His people to take a more decided stand for union of heart and action in this sacred work.—[Ibid.](#)

Uriah Smith's testimony was a veiled confession, significant and reassuring. He headed it "Prepare Ye the Way of the Lord." He referred to Paul's admonitions in [1 Corinthians 1:10](#) and [Philippians 2:2](#), calling for all to "speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment" and admonishing believers to be "likeminded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind." Bringing the matter home, he said,

But that true blending of spirit and union of heart, contemplated in the texts above referred to, is what has been wanting.... This may not be the time or place to enter into particulars as to the causes, manner, or extent of the failures that have ...been made. Suffice it to say that these are in a measure, at least, seen and felt. And there is seen also the necessity of immediately taking hold to remedy the evil, and there is no lack of determination to do it.

[398]

And the progress that has been made in this direction is one of the encouraging features of our recent meetings. The work is being done ...on the basis of new principles, or principles newly seen, which will enable all to act understandingly, and which, therefore, gives cheering promise that it will be real and permanent.—
[Ibid.](#)

Butler was overjoyed as he looked back at the session, and wrote: "Things which have long caused great perplexity and discouragement seem now to be passing away.... There seems to be a clearer understanding of the causes of past difficulty than ever before, and a determination to avoid them for the future." He added:

The visit of Brother and Sister White among us has been productive of great good to the cause. Never was a visit more opportune than this. Indeed, it seemed to be a special providence of God.

In conclusion, I wish to express the profound gratitude of my heart for the goodness of God to us, and

for the clear evidence which has been given that the Guiding Hand is leading in this work. We have no cause for discouragement while this is seen in our midst. The work is onward. Let us close up the ranks, take our position on the Lord's side, and move on in our work till victory crowns our efforts.—[Ibid.](#)

A Special Ceremony

James and Ellen White stayed over in Battle Creek for the Sabbath, a day set apart for fasting and prayer. After the morning preaching service, there was an election of officers for the Battle Creek church. The record is:

Although Brother White is not expected to be a resident of this city, after a few days, for some months to come, he was, by unanimous vote, requested to assume the pastoral care of this church, and he acceded to the request.—[The Review and Herald, December 2, 1873.](#)

This is perhaps understandable in the light of the philosophy of leadership advocated by Butler a week earlier, and the unity and good feelings engendered through the week. Uriah Smith and Harmon Lindsay were chosen elders, and M. J. Cornell and O. B. Jones as deacons.

It was indeed an outstanding day in the experience of the Battle Creek church. After the election of officers a social meeting was held, and then a deeply interesting ceremony was conducted:

[399]

The church having entered into solemn covenant with the Lord and with each other to hold up the hands of those whom God has called to lead out in the work, and to stand in the forefront of the battle, and that they would faithfully regard reproof, and be true helpers in the work of God, Brother Uriah Smith made some very impressive remarks proposing that the pen, the inkstand, and the paper to which they had attached their names should be laid up together as a memorial before God.—[Ibid.](#)

Andrews reported the day's activities, stating that in the evening James White led out in the celebration of the ordinances, with some two hundred persons participating. "Brother and Sister White," he noted, "expect to leave immediately for California to spend a few months in the performance of important duties there."

En route to the West Coast James and Ellen White stopped over for a few days in Chicago to rest at one of the hotels and do some writing. In a message he penned there, James declared:

What we have witnessed of the good work of God the past six weeks we set down as good evidence that the Guiding Hand turned our course at Cheyenne, from the most desirable route to San Francisco, to the General Conference at Battle Creek....

As we look back upon the labors of the past few weeks, it is a matter of devout thanksgiving to the great Disposer of events that the cause at Battle Creek is settling upon a firmer basis, and that the minds and hearts of leading men are more firmly united in the great work than ever before.—[Ibid., December 30, 1873](#)

Uriah Smith Confessed Further

In an editorial item headed "Personal," written just as the Whites left Battle Creek for the West, Uriah Smith wrote in confession:

[400]

Many of us will ever look back upon the recent stay of Brother and Sister White with us with unfeigned pleasure. It has been a time when the Lord has signally worked. To see darkness and obstacles vanish from our path, as the mist lifts and silently clears away in the rising sunlight, has been an experience of exceeding joy, and will ever be a matter of grateful remembrance.

The laborers who have attended the meetings now take hold of their duties in the various departments of the cause with such hope and courage, and buoyancy of spirit, and inspiration for their work, as they have never felt before; for union of heart, the only basis of

all permanent prosperity and success, has been attained to a degree never before realized.—[Ibid., December 23, 1873](#)

The Butler Paper on Leadership

The seeds sown by Butler in his Saturday night presentation at the General Conference session entitled “Leadership,” introducing a concept seemingly favorably received, but hazardous, took root. Soon the full address was published in a pamphlet and distributed throughout the denomination. Over the next four or five years it was the occasion of discussion and concern. Basically, as James White later pointed out, it took the position that

One man was to be recognized as the visible leader of Seventh-day Adventists, as Moses was the visible leader of the Hebrews; and what made this a very painful subject to us was the fact that the position was taken that we should be recognized as that leader.—[Ibid., May 23, 1878](#)

When he started publishing the *Signs of the Times* in Oakland, California, in June, 1874, he devoted several editorials to the subject, opening his remarks by quoting [Matthew 23:8](#), “One is your Master, even Christ, and all ye are brethren.” He pointed out:

Jesus addressed these words to the twelve, in the hearing of the multitude. And while they were a rebuke to the scribes and Pharisees, they were also designed to impress the disciples with the great truth that should be felt in all coming time, that Christ is the only head of the church.—[The Signs of the Times, June 4, 1874.](#)

The influence of the Butler address was to be clearly seen at the next General Conference session.

[401]

Chapter 27—(1874) Progressive Steps in Evangelism in the Far West

When James and Ellen White left Battle Creek for California on December 18, 1873, he was president of the Publishing Association, editor of the *Review and Herald*, and nominally pastor of the Battle Creek church—and in his heart inseparably linked with the institutions there. He had a very special interest in the developing denominational school that was meeting temporarily in rooms in the newly constructed *Review and Herald* third building. He was able to sit in with just one class of the new term before leaving the city. Uriah Smith had been restored to the editorial staff of the *Review* and actually was managing the paper.

Across the continent at Santa Rosa in northern California, Lucinda Hall had set up housekeeping for the White family in a commodious rented home. The two nieces, Addie and May Walling, were with her. She was expecting James and Ellen White to come in late November. They finally arrived in San Francisco on Sunday evening, December 28, and were met the next day by J. N. Loughborough, president of the California Conference, now living at Woodland. Loughborough accompanied them to Santa Rosa, where he had called the officers of the California Conference to meet for a two-day council.

[402]

Isaac and Adelia Van Horn had traveled west with the Whites, and they joined the worker-group meeting in Santa Rosa. Everyone rejoiced in the reports of the victories won in Battle Creek. The whole experience brought great relief and freedom to James. Then the group broke up, the workers returning to their fields of labor. Van Horn accompanied Loughborough to Napa, where the evangelistic work carried on largely by Canright was being bound off. James and Ellen set about getting settled. Then Sabbath came, the first of the new year; Ellen spoke to the believers in Santa Rosa, and again Sunday afternoon ([Manuscript 2, 1874](#)).

A matter of early concern was transportation. For \$220 James purchased a team of small, sound horses—a mare 4 years old, and her mother, 8. They purchased a used but “nice looking” covered carriage for \$150 ([Letter 4, 1874](#)). Writing to Willie on Tuesday, January 13, Ellen reported that they were at work on “our *Reformer* articles and I have my article about ready for the *Instructor*” (*ibid.*).

Ten days later she wrote again to Willie, a letter that she addressed “My Dear Son Clarence.” Apparently in respect to Willie’s approaching manhood, the parents decided to use his middle name, thinking it would add a bit of dignity. Most of the letters addressed to him through February and March were written to “Clarence.” But as the pressure of work increased, Ellen dropped back to the familiar “Willie,” and Willie it was for the rest of his life.

In her letter of January 23, Ellen reported some inflammation in her eyes that made it impossible for her to read by candlelight. By being very careful she was able to get off her articles for the *Reformer*, *Instructor*, and the *True Missionary*. She added:

Yesterday I brought out from my boxes the article upon the temptation of Christ, and looked it over. I set Brother and Sister Van Horn to copying it for publication, so you see we have made a little progress in the direction of my next volume.—[Letter 5, 1874](#).

Edited and enlarged, the manuscript made eleven articles, published in the *Signs* and then in the *Review* in 1874 and 1875.

M. E. Cornell, since arriving in California in late 1871, pursued a hobby of gathering rock specimens. He spent a few days in the White home getting them ready to send to the Health Institute in Battle Creek. His report to the *Review* gives us another glimpse of the White home in Santa Rosa:

I spent three days very pleasantly and profitably at the home of Brother and Sister White. I was greatly encouraged by their courage, and I rejoiced to find them in such good health and spirits. I was glad also to meet Sister Van Horn and Sister Hall. It seemed almost like being back in old Michigan, to see so many of the old hands in the cause.

They all seemed to do what they could do to make this lone pilgrim feel at home with them, and they succeeded well.

I noticed that all these were workers! There is not a drone in that hive. The very height of their ambition and pleasure seemed to be in doing what they could to advance the cause of present truth. Their zeal for God made me feel that I could do a little more in the good cause. From this on, I want to feel at the close of each day that I have done what I could.—[The Review and Herald, March 10, 1874.](#)

A month earlier Loughborough, in a report to the *Review*, had written of what James and Ellen White were doing:

We esteem it a great privilege to have in our midst Brother and Sister White, who during the rainy season are vigorously prosecuting their writings, and are even now giving us good counsel and aid in the work here; and when spring opens, and they have the opportunity of speaking to our people in different places, as the providence of God may indicate, they are prepared to greatly help our people.—[Ibid., February 24, 1874](#)

Loughborough described well the situation in Santa Rosa for the first quarter of 1874. The Whites were but little in the field, and they concentrated on their writing. When the quarterly meeting [A gathering of believers from a given area for worship, exhortation, and the advancement of the cause, usually opening on a Friday afternoon and extending through Sunday, and convened once in three months.] was held in Santa Rosa over the weekend of February 6 to 8, James White threw himself heartily into the work. Writing to Willie, who was staying in the Brownsberger home in Battle Creek and attending classes, Ellen explained:

Our quarterly meeting has closed. I was unable to attend the meeting, but there was little need. Brethren Canright, Loughborough, Van Horn, and your father

were present and as the brethren had not heard Canright and Van Horn, we were anxious that they should take the time. Your father spoke twice. We had thirty at dinner, lodged eighteen and fed them straight through. The meeting passed off very pleasantly. Many things were discussed and settled. Brethren Van Horn and Canright go together to Oregon, week after next.

[404]

Brethren Loughborough and Cornell will work together here on this coast this season, and your father and I will strike in here and there, following up the labor in new places.

I do not think we will attend the eastern camp meetings this coming season. It is of no use to make child's play of coming to California and running back again.—[Letter 10, 1874](#).

In the White Home in Santa Rosa

During those months in Santa Rosa, Ellen White wrote frequently to the children in Michigan—Edson and Emma, and Willie. Of paramount concern was James's health, now greatly improved but not what it once was. Concerning this, Ellen wrote on February 7:

Your father is much stronger than he was one year ago. He is of excellent courage. He does considerable writing, takes care of two horses, harnesses and unharnesses them. He takes care of one cow, all but the milking. That Lucinda does.—[Letter 8, 1874](#).

The mail, of course, was a very important matter. The post office in Santa Rosa was located about a mile from where they lived ([Letter 13, 1874](#)). “Your father,” she wrote, “gets up in the morning before breakfast and walks down to the post office with his mail.” She added:

I accompany him, but he walks so fast I have to exert myself considerably to keep up with him. It has generally been otherwise. He could not walk with me....

Your father does much writing night after night. He sits up until midnight writing. I do not think this is a good plan.—[Letter 9, 1874](#).

[405] “We have plenty of house room,” she wrote, “and all the furniture we need. We are comfortably situated.”—[Letter 8, 1874](#). “The continuous rains have hindered us from riding out and going about as we need, to mix in with our writing.”—[Letter 9, 1874](#). Not yet acquainted with the winter months on the coast in northern California, with their rain and fog, her judgment was that Santa Rosa, Petaluma, Woodland, and San Francisco were not places for invalids. “But,” she wrote, “there are locations within thirty miles that have the reputation of being very healthy, the atmosphere light and pure.”—[Letter 8, 1874](#).

James and Ellen White had become responsible for Addie and May Walling, and found some very judicious training necessary. “The little girls are doing well,” she wrote on January 23; “May is rather delicate.”—[Letter 5, 1874](#). Four days later she wrote that she saw in them a temper and disposition of the mother, which needed to be carefully handled and corrected lest it grow upon them. She added: “We do not have much trouble with them.”—[Letter 7, 1874](#). On February 7 she reported:

Our children are both well. We think they try to do right. We tell them that if they are naughty they cannot ride out with Uncle James. May does not fret now at being crossed. She seems to be under good control.—[Letter 9, 1874](#).

Later she noted, “Addie and May are chattering like blackbirds and I can hardly keep my mind on my writing.”—[Ibid.](#)

In mid-February she mentioned in a letter to Willie:

You cannot live too plainly when you are studying so constantly. Your father and I have dropped milk, cream, butter, sugar, and meat entirely since we came to California. We are far clearer in mind and far better in body. We live very plainly. We cannot write unless we do live simply.

Your father bought meat once for May while she was sick, but not a penny have we expended in meat since. We have the most excellent fruit of all kinds.—[Letter 12, 1874](#).

It would be well to mention that caution should be exercised in observing the particular articles of diet that appeared on the White table at different times and under greatly varying circumstances. While they were in the Rocky Mountains a few months earlier, where fruit was very scarce and vegetables limited and costly, fish from the snow-fed brooks and lakes constituted an important part of their diet. By and large James and Ellen White worked on the principle of making use of the best foods available, prepared in the best manner, all within the economic structure in which they operated. [406]

In the days of which we write, James and Ellen White, having accepted health reform, were vegetarians. But this did not preclude the occasional use of some meat, especially when nonmeat articles were not easily available. Ellen White took a positive stand in Australia in 1896, and from that time onward no meat appeared on her table; this soon included fish and fowl. When considering precisely what Ellen White ate and checking to see if this accorded with the main body of her teachings, the time, place, circumstances, and foods available to her should be taken into account. The reader must keep in mind that there was no easy nor simple refrigeration. Nor were there the cereal breakfast foods or vegetable protein foods we know so well, in existence.

What Shall We Do?

Heretofore the Whites had been very active, deeply involved in the workings of the cause. In Santa Rosa the winter rains dragged on, confining them largely to the house. James and Ellen White questioned whether they were following the right course.

This thinking surfaced occasionally in letters to the children, as in a letter to Willie written February 15:

Father thinks sometimes that he had not ought to have come to California, but remained in Battle Creek.

Do you think so? You know what fears we have had in regard to his stay in Battle Creek. If all was well with Father, I would rather be in Battle Creek than in any other place, but the multiplicity of cares and burdens that devolve upon him there I think would soon use him up.—[Ibid.](#)

This same restlessness showed up in her letter to Willie five weeks later:

Father has been sick for several days with a bilious attack. Father talks sometimes of going to Colorado mountains. He thinks that Johnny [not further identified.] and you would like to come out and spend a few months. What do you think of this? ...

[407]

Sometimes Father talks of going to our place in Iowa ...and we make that our home and have you and Johnny come and spend some months with us. What do you think of this proposition? Sometimes Father talks of taking treatments at the institute at Battle Creek. What do you think of this? ...I think Father ought to be where he can work out of doors and occupy his mind.—[Letter 17, 1874.](#)

She then expressed what was on her heart:

I want very much to go to the camp meetings the coming season. Oh, how unreconciled I feel to be doing nothing of any account, when I know I have a testimony for the people! I long to be at work and say or do something that will advance the cause of God.—[Ibid.](#)

Developments that Brought Changes

Soon circumstances brought about major changes. They made a visit to the church in San Francisco over the weekend of February 21 and 22 and received a hearty welcome. Both spoke Sabbath morning and Sabbath afternoon. Sunday morning they were taken in the

Chittenden sailboat seven miles across the Bay to Oakland, where, with a team of horses, they were shown the city. “It is indeed,” wrote Ellen White, “the most beautiful place I have seen in California.” Enthusiastically she added:

The shade trees by the sidewalks are many of them a variety of evergreens, trimmed as nicely as those in the yards in San Francisco. The fragrance of these evergreen cedars, fir trees, the trees of great beauty made the air fragrant with their perfume, as the rose-scented geraniums when we pluck the leaves. Flowers were in full bloom.

We thought that this might be a very excellent place for the Health Institute and the branch offices [printing] on this coast. We think we may visit this place again soon. There is an excellent little company of Sabbath-keepers, about six in number, in this place....

We are now having the most beautiful weather.—
[Letter 16, 1874.](#)

The visit to Oakland planted some seeds in the minds of James and Ellen White.

[408]

As the weather improved they were able to get out to other churches; they made a two-week visit to Napa, where James White dedicated the newly erected house of worship.

Ellen White’s Dream of April 1, 1874

Cornell and Canright, who were studying plans for an evangelistic thrust with the California tent, were inclined to work the smaller towns.

On the night of April 1 a dream was given to Ellen White. She wrote:

I was given an impressive dream, in which was represented the instrumentality of the press in the work of giving the third angel’s message to the world.

I dreamed that several of the brethren in California were in council, considering the best plan for labor during the coming season. Some thought it wise to shun the large cities, and work in smaller places. My husband was earnestly urging that broader plans be laid, and more extended efforts be made, which would better compare with the character of our message.

Then a young man whom I had frequently seen in my dreams came into the council. He listened with deep interest to the words that were spoken, and then, speaking with deliberation and authoritative confidence, said:

“The cities and villages constitute a part of the Lord’s vineyard. They must hear the messages of warning.... You are entertaining too limited ideas of the work for this time. You are trying to plan the work so that you can embrace it in your arms. You must take broader views. Your light must not be put under a bushel or under a bed, but on a candlestick, that it may give light to all that are in the house. Your house is the world.—[3Life Sketches of Ellen G. White, 208, 209.](#)

Limited Evangelistic Plans

[409] Some three weeks later, James and Ellen White were in San Francisco, where they met Canright. They learned that he and Cornell were planning to conduct an evangelistic effort in Cloverdale, a town of two hundred inhabitants fifteen miles north of Healdsburg. James and Ellen White had Oakland in mind as the place for the summer evangelistic meetings. “Our people in Oakland,” wrote Ellen White, “were very earnest for the tent to come there, and this seemed to be altogether a better place than Cloverdale.”—[Letter 20, 1874.](#) Arrangements were made for Canright and White to meet at Healdsburg to consider plans.

When James and Ellen arrived at Healdsburg, they learned that Canright and Cornell had assembled their equipment at the Bond home near Healdsburg and had gone on to Cloverdale. Now it was

up to James and Ellen White to head off the dispatching of the tent waiting at the Bond farm. Ellen described the next few hours:

We thought best to push ahead, although it was already seven o'clock at night, and go on eight miles to see Brother Bond. We rode on until we came to the Russian River. Your cautious father dared not drive the team into the water until he thought it was perfectly safe. You can imagine our situation upon a road we were unacquainted with, and a deep, rapidly running river to ford.

Your father had no thought of backing out. He unhitched the horses from the wagon, separated them, and rode Kitty through the river while I held Bill upon the shore. We had heard (and this was, we found, correct) that this river had deep holes, over the horses' back. We thought we could cross safely, hitched the horses to the carriage, drove over the stream, and were just feeling very much gratified that we were over, then lo, stretching to the right and left before us was still a rapid running, deep, broad river.

We were in a quandary what to do. Your father and I unhitched the horses again. He mounted Kit's back while I had all that I could do to keep restless Bill from breaking away from me and following his mate. Your father crossed and recrossed the river twice to make sure the way of safety for the carriage. The water came above his boots. We marked the course he took by a mountain on the opposite side. We hitched our horses to the wagon the second time at nine o'clock at night, and passed over to the other side. The water came up to the body of the wagon. We felt to thank God and to take courage.—[Ibid.](#)

[410]

The next morning, Wednesday, April 22, at the Bond home they found the goods to be taken to Cloverdale, ordered that they be detained, and then with fresh horses went on to confer with the ministers who had gone ahead. When they reached Cloverdale, all

could see that it was the wrong place for the tent. Then they went back to Santa Rosa to counsel together to determine what the next move should be. The next weekend the quarterly meeting was to be held at Bloomfield. Leading workers would be there, and this gave promise of settling some matters.

The Bloomfield Quarterly Meeting

Friday morning, April 24, James and Ellen drove over to Bloomfield to be present at the quarterly meeting that was to open that evening. Writing to Edson and Emma early the next week, she laid out the situation:

The conference committee upon this coast was expressly notified to be here, for there was important business to be considered. There were decisions to be made, whether the people professing the truth would cooperate with us in widening and extending the work on this coast this present year. We wished to know whether they would hug the shore or launch out into the deep and let down their nets for a draught of fish in the deep waters.

The ideas of our brethren have been too narrow and the work too limited. We told them if they were not calculating to do more the present tent season than heretofore, we wished to return east and attend the camp meetings. They should not pitch their tents in the smallest places, but imitate the example of Christ. He placed Himself in the great thoroughfares of travel where people were going to and from all nations of the world, and here in a most impressive manner did He give His lessons upon important truth.—[Letter 23, 1874](#).

Coming more directly to the point, she declared:

[411] San Francisco and Oakland, Santa Clara, San Jose (which is pronounced Sanas A), are large, influential cities. If we have the truth we have a great and important work before us. The world is to be tested. The world

is to be warned, and the message of warning will be to them the savor of life unto life or of death unto death....

We are bearing the most solemn message that was ever given to the world. I have a part to act according to the light and ability God has given me. You have a part to act in letting your light shine forth to others. If you live only for yourselves, no “Well done” will await you. If I live for my own interest, no “Well done” will be spoken to me.

We intend to put the armor on, moving forward in faith, and start a paper upon this coast. We must bring up the cause and work of God before we leave the Pacific Coast. God will work for us and through us and by us. If we have the truth, as we believe without a doubt we have, there is no time to be lost. We must work to get the message before all we possibly can.—[Ibid.](#)

In another letter written the same day, Monday, April 27, she stated, “I entreated of our brethren to do something, to do it now.... Ministers have a work to do. Laymen cannot meet the accountability and be idle.”—[Letter 19b, 1874.](#)

At the Bloomfield meeting, where these matters were earnestly discussed, the theme of “doing something and doing it now” seemed to dominate.

She wrote:

We have had many seasons of earnest prayer to God for wisdom to move in God’s order. After much prayer your father expressed it as his opinion that now was the best time to start a paper on this coast, in accordance with the light the Lord had given in reference to it. We will move out cautiously. Your father’s plans are these: to start a weekly paper; to have the type set and the printing done at some city on this coast. Oakland looks to us to be the most favorable point to commence the work....

This is the work of God. We take hold of it in the name of the Lord. He will give us strength. By faith

[412]

we claim His power to help us. We feel that we cannot rest until we see the work moving forward more surely, earnestly, and upon a more elevated, broader platform than it has hitherto done on this coast.—[Ibid.](#)

The Precipitous Move to Oakland

Ellen White had called for something to be done “now.” These words were written from Bloomfield on Monday morning, April 27, following the quarterly meeting. The rapid movements in the days that followed indicated that her appeal had set the workers on fire for God. Several of the ministers hastened to Oakland to spy out the land. Tuesday, James and Ellen White were at their Santa Rosa home, awaiting a dispatch “to call us to Oakland, where our tent will be pitched.” She added, “Local option is now in strong agitation there. We will do our part by voice and vote to close the liquor saloons in that beautiful city.”—[Letter 22, 1874.](#)

Wednesday, James and Ellen White were on their way to Oakland, prepared to set up headquarters there. Thursday the tent was up in the heart of the city, and that night Cornell preached on spiritualism. There was a keen interest in the subject because of spirit manifestations in the city. James White had already set to work arranging for the publication of a paper. The Whites had rented the “Fountain Farm” four miles from the city, and Ellen White and two young men were giving the eight-room house ([Letter 19h, 1874](#)) a thorough cleaning. Friday afternoon, May 1, they moved in. Lucinda Hall and the Walling children were with them ([Letter 19f, 1874](#)).

The Fountain Farm—The Oakland Residence

A few days later Ellen White, in a letter to Willie, described their rented residence:

We are now getting settled in our new home four miles from the city. It is rural here. There was once a very good “water cure” upon this place. The large three-story house is standing desolate, shattered and dilapidated. We live in a neat square house a few rods

from this building. We have not got settled as yet, but we shall soon. This is a very pleasant place to live. There are trees and flowers; no fruit, but our neighbors have fruit in abundance, so we can purchase of them.

[413]

The Chinese have a house not far off. We buy peas of them for 3 cents a pound. Strawberries are plentiful, and there is every kind of vegetable in abundance; new potatoes for 3 cents per pound. We have the use of a new milk cow for pasturing her and giving the owner three pints of milk each day.

We have a good house and barn. Our horses were brought to us from Brother Judson's yesterday. We shall now have a spry team to take us to and from the city.—[Letter 26, 1874](#).

In an earlier letter, the first written from the Fountain Farm, she declared that she could “stand upon the piazza and look out upon the Golden Gate” ([Letter 19f, 1874](#)).

The Tent Meetings in Oakland

On Wednesday, May 6, in a letter to Uriah Smith, Ellen White described the evangelistic meetings:

The large tent is pitched and meetings have been held in it since last Thursday.... We felt that the time had come for something to be done in California.... We have seen and felt that the idea of our ministering brethren was altogether too contracted. They were for pitching the tent in small places, but shunning the large cities. I had dreams that in thus doing, they were not doing the work God would have them do....

The tent has started in Oakland. Our meetings have been excellent. Elder Cornell preached the first two nights upon spiritualism, taking advantage of an excitement in Oakland created by the work of the spirits. Chairs were moved, trunks thrown about, and night after night shrill screams were heard. In this manifestation

Satan seemed to overdo himself and really hurt his own cause. Elder Cornell's discourses took well. The tent was crowded both nights. There have been meetings every night and all day Sunday. Brother Canright has spoken several times with acceptance.—[Letter 25, 1874](#).

Ellen White was drawn into the speaking on Sunday afternoon, and addressed a good audience for an hour.

She was glad to see the work in the West gathering momentum.

Chapter 28—(1874) Publishing and Preaching in Oakland

[414]

James White had a double interest in moving to Oakland in late April. For some time he had hoped to publish a weekly paper in conjunction with public evangelism. And as Ellen White wrote to Smith, he was already deeply involved.

We think now of starting a paper in Oakland in connection with the tent. My husband thinks a weekly paper could be published with no more expense than at Battle Creek.... It is indeed a great venture to start in at Oakland. This city is indeed a paradise of beauty. The wealthy of San Francisco have made their homes here, while they attend to their business in San Francisco.—[Letter 25, 1874.](#)

In a postscript she declared, “My husband is of good courage. When he sees the work moving he feels happy. Today he is over the Bay in San Francisco.”—[Ibid.](#) “Father is getting real smart,” she wrote to Willie on May 11. “He is cheerful and of good courage. The printers are at work upon the first number of *Signs of the Times*. We feel that it is in the order of God.” And she added in words which furnish a clue to their thinking, “We wish you were here.... What would you think if we should send for you shortly?”—[Letter 26, 1874.](#)

The new journal was not to come from the press until June 4. In the meantime, most encouraging progress was being made with the tent meeting. In late May James White reported to the readers of the *Review*:

The providence of God ...has brought the California tent to this wealthy, proud city, which is the seat of the State university, theological, military, and many other schools. And while the transition [from limited to broad plans] was going on, we took the ground that

[415]

the advertising, and seizing every opportunity to arrest the attention of the people, must be proportionate to the difficulties in the way, and the importance of the subjects to be presented.

The tent meeting was therefore noticed in three papers daily, large posters, small bills to be scattered, bulletin boards, and in large letters on canvas at the side of the tent. These efforts have secured a good attendance....

The prophets of God, and the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ, talked and acted in a manner to give the impression that they, at least, thought that their work was of the greatest importance of any going on under the heavens.—[The Review and Herald, June 2, 1874](#).

Earnest labors and good publicity brought good results. Within a few days one of the Oakland dailies reported:

The tent meeting at the corner of Broadway and Thirteenth streets continues to draw large audiences, and, by special request, the managers have decided to remain at least one more week.—In [Ibid., June 2, 1874](#)

In writing to Willie at about the same time, Ellen White reported:

The tent meeting in Oakland is a success. We had good attendance Sunday [May 10]. I speak to the people every Sunday afternoon. There is great interest in Oakland among a certain class. They are steady hearers. The interest is not sensational, not flashy, but calm, steadily on the increase.—[Letter 26, 1874](#).

Two weeks later she wrote that her husband, in addition to getting out the first number of the *Signs of the Times*, was issuing a little paper almost daily. Titled *The Tent Meeting*, it advertised the lectures and contained a synopsis of the matter presented ([Letter 28, 1874](#), and [The Review and Herald, June 2, 1874](#)). She reported that “we have out the best class of society, and as yet we have no opposition. [416] The first ministers of the place came out to hear. The mayor has been several times and encourages us all he can.”—[Letter 28, 1874](#).

The Temperance Crusade and the Tent

Just at this time a keen interest was developing in Oakland to close the 135 saloons through the provisions of a recently passed local option law. The California tents (a second one was started in East Oakland) came into play in mass temperance meetings running a full week ([Manuscript 4, 1874](#)). Reported M. E. Cornell:

The women seemed to take the lead in the crusade, and for several weeks they labored under many discouragements. But finally the city mayor, several clergymen, one of the daily papers, and several of the leading citizens and businessmen came to the rescue. Having thoroughly organized, the executive committee planned for a series of mass meetings, which were held in our large and commodious tents. They worked night and day, until the whole city was roused to action. A strong healthy sentiment was created by the public speeches, and the printed documents which resulted in a glorious victory.—[The Signs of the Times, June 11, 1874](#).

When the vote of May 30 was counted, it was found that there was a majority of 253 against license. Reported Cornell:

When the result was declared, the public rejoicing knew no bounds. Church bells were rung, bonfires lighted, and a rousing mass meeting at the tent did not break up until eleven o'clock at night.—[Ibid.](#)

The public press published words of appreciation for the cooperation of the tent workers. One newspaper carried the headline “Large and Enthusiastic Gatherings of the People at the Advent Elders’ Tents on Broadway and in East Oakland” ([The Review and Herald, June 25, 1874](#)). The cooperation of the tent workers and the publicity that followed gave impetus to the evangelistic meetings, and, as James White put it, “taught the crowd the way to the tent” ([Ibid., June 2, 1874](#)).

Sabbath, May 23, Ellen White was jubilant. Morning and afternoon services had been held in the tent, and she reported to W. H.

Littlejohn in Battle Creek:

I must write you the good news. This has been one of the best Sabbaths to us. There were about sixty people present, including a most interesting company of about twenty-five who were assembled to worship God upon the Sabbath, most of them for the first time. A few observed last Sabbath.—[Letter 28, 1874.](#)

A social meeting was held Sabbath afternoon. Ellen White wrote:

We had many testimonies from those who were keeping the Sabbath for the first time. Quite a number spoke who had never opened their lips in public before.—[Ibid.](#)

A climax was reached on Sunday afternoon, June 14, when fifteen hundred to two thousand people gathered at Lake Merritt in Oakland. From an embankment above the water and from boats on the lake, they witnessed the baptism of twenty-three candidates, the firstfruits of the Oakland tent meetings. D. M. Canright administered the rite, but at the beginning James White addressed the crowd for a few minutes on the law of God and baptism. Canright reported that “all listened with the greatest respect and manifest interest. Not the least disturbance occurred from beginning to end.”—[The Review and Herald, July 7, 1874.](#)

The First Issue of the Signs of the Times

The idea of a weekly paper published on the Pacific Coast had been conceived by James White while he was in the Rocky Mountains in the summer of 1873. He had made the proposal in an article in the *Review*, and at the General Conference session in November. Now in Oakland, in connection with the evangelistic meetings, he moved ahead in starting the journal. He did so on his own responsibility, not waiting for formal committee authorization or promise of sound financial support. He worked through May in getting the first copy of *Signs of the Times* edited, set in type, and printed. It

appeared on June 4, 1874. The eight-page sheet was large, the same size as the *Review and Herald*. The objectives of the editor were twofold. It was to be an evangelistic newspaper, and it was to be a means of communication among the Seventh-day Adventist churches west of the Great Plains.

The whole of the first page was given to a James White article on the state of the churches and the world. The four columns of page 2, and one on page 3, presented an article on the millennium. Page 3 contained a lengthy statement of the fundamental principles of Seventh-day Adventist belief. The editorial on page 4, titled “The Reasons Why,” was self-explanatory. Then he included three columns on the question of leadership. An E. G. White item on Christian recreation followed, and the next three pages carried articles on a number of subjects. The issue closed with a full column advertising Seventh-day Adventist publications.

[418]

The “terms,” characteristic of James White, read:

Two dollars a year to those who choose to pay a subscription price, and free to all others as far as the paper is sustained by the donations of the liberal friends of the cause.—[The Signs of the Times, June 4, 1874.](#)

He sent twenty-five copies to the *Review and Herald* Office, and Uriah Smith immediately handed them out to the office hands. White was delighted to learn that by the next morning “thirty-one subscribers were obtained right on our old battlefield, in hearing of the groaning of the press of the *Review and Herald*.”—[The Review and Herald, June 30, 1874.](#)

The Struggle to Maintain the New Journal

As noted earlier, the first issue of *Signs of the Times* was edited and published by James White on his initiative alone. Now that the journal was under way, there were the questions as to how it would be managed and supported. And it was not the paper alone that James White envisioned. If the project was to succeed, and if the church in the West was to have inexpensive literature for its use, it must have a publishing house at its command.

Writing in Oakland on May 23, 1874, Ellen White mentioned broad developments to come in California. “There will be a printing office established here; also a health institute established here.”—[Letter 29, 1874](#). A little later she wrote:

[419]

In my last vision I was shown that we should have a part to act in California in extending and confirming the work already commenced. I was shown that missionary labor must be put forth in California, Australia, Oregon, and other territories far more extensively than our people have imagined, or ever contemplated and planned.—[3Life Sketches of Ellen G. White, 209](#).

The publishing enterprise must have both the moral and financial support of the constituency east of the Plains. How could the needed support be gained? James White could not leave the newly started journal unattended. Some years later Ellen White recounted the experience:

An Angel Points East Over the Rocky Mountains

How we wrestled! How we prayed with earnest desire for the Lord to open ways whereby we could advance the work in California, for we saw the ideas of the workers were narrow and restricted. The Lord heard our petitions and answered our prayers.

While [we were] bowed before God in prayer in an upper chamber, the blessing of the Lord came upon us in such a manner that duty was made plain. It was as if an audible voice said, “Go [east] to the churches and solicit money from those whom I have made stewards of means.” Some bore testimony on that occasion that they saw an angel of God, clothed in brightness, pointing across the Rocky Mountains.—[Manuscript 62, 1895](#).

In another account she identified one man who saw the angel:

We held a meeting in an upper room of a house in Oakland, while prayer was wont to be made. We knelt

down to pray, and while we were praying, the Spirit of God like a tidal wave filled the room, and it seemed that an angel was pointing across the Rocky Mountains to churches in this [the eastern] part of America.

Brother [John I.] Tay, who is now sleeping in Jesus, rose from his knees, his face as white as death, and said, "I saw an angel pointing across the Rocky Mountains."—[The General Conference Bulletin, 1901, 84.](#)

I waited for my husband's consent, and when, after a most solemn, humble seeking of God, again His presence seemed so evidently in our midst, my husband wept aloud and said, "Ellen, you must go. I dare not withstand the Lord. You must go. But what shall I do without you?" We wept freely. I dared not wait, fearing in his feeble state of health he would relent.—[Manuscript 62, 1895.](#)

[420]

The decision made for Ellen to go east, the preparations for the trip across the continent were very hasty and brief:

All that there was cooked were a few gems. [See appendix B.] I put these in a paper box, the horses were harnessed, and I was on my way for the cars. My husband said, "If I had not given my consent, I would now say it is inconsistent. I cannot have you go. I cannot be left with these terrible responsibilities."

I had never traveled alone, but I took this long journey of eight days alone, and attended the camp meetings in the States alone until Willie White met me at Wisconsin and accompanied me.

On that journey I set forth our situation, and money was raised at every meeting. I told them that California would return their loan sometime in the future, for I had been shown that prosperity would attend the work done there, that there were many souls that would be added to the church, and we should see the salvation of God.—[Ibid.](#)

Starting on such short notice, she could not secure a berth in the sleeping car, so she had to make the trip in the chair car. This made it necessary for her to change trains both in the day and in the night. The handling of the baggage, checking it here and there, was a new experience to her.

Success from the Start

[421] The first stop was at the camp meeting being held in Newton, Iowa. Word had been sent ahead, and she was met at the station and taken to the campground. On Monday afternoon, the day before the meeting closed, she was given a good hearing. Pledges for the publishing work in the West already had been made, in response to George Butler's presentation of the needs of the situation in California. But in response to Ellen White's recital of the circumstances, and her appeal, the total pledged was increased from \$2,000 to \$3,050.

From one camp meeting to another she went, telling her story and appealing for support for the struggling but promising work in California. Those attending the camp meetings had been disappointed to learn that James and Ellen White would not be with them, but they were overjoyed when Ellen arrived on the grounds, and of course she was pressed in for full service in the speaking schedules. She thrived on it. Writing to James from the Wisconsin camp meeting, where Willie joined her as her traveling companion, she mentioned how she and her message were received:

There is no hard spirit to resist my testimony, and all manifest so much thankfulness that God had sent me to them. I never felt a greater necessity of God's working with our efforts. We have no time to rest, no time to yield to temptation. We must work while the day lasts.—[Letter 34, 1874](#).

Back in Battle Creek

After attending four camp meetings in the Midwest, Ellen White went on to Battle Creek, arriving on July 3. She took the Sabbath

morning service, July 4, and her report of the progress of the cause in California cheered the audience. The next issue of the *Review* promised that she would be attending the eastern camp meetings, beginning in August.

On Tuesday night she attended a temperance meeting in the Methodist church. When called upon to speak, she made a brief statement of the experience in Oakland and the manner in which the evangelistic tents in Oakland were employed in holding mass temperance meetings. Writing to James of the experience, she told of how twice there was great cheering ([Letter 68, 1874](#)). She learned that in Battle Creek the time for the temperance meetings had been changed from Friday evenings to Thursday to accommodate the Adventists, but that there was little response from the church members. Of this she wrote:

I think our people are in danger of being too narrow and not broad and generous and courteous as they must be if they would do good. I intend to speak on temperance soon. Some of the people in the city are quite urgent that I should.—[Letter 68, 1874](#).

[422]

The next Tuesday, July 14, responding to an invitation of the temperance forces, she spoke in the park, for it was thought no church in the city would hold the crowd. Of this meeting, she reported on July 15 in a letter to her husband:

Our last night's effort was a success. Thank the Lord, to His name alone shall be the glory. A nice stand was fitted up, an organ placed on it, and the citizens' choir was from the city. They conducted this branch of the work; good singing. Mr. Hollowell opened the meeting by prayer. He made an excellent prayer. He prayed in a most fervent manner for the servant of the Lord who was to address them. I could say "Amen" to every word.

There was singing again. Mr. Peavey, chairman of the meeting, then arose and made some very appropriate remarks; stated that he was pleased to see the interest

manifested in our part of the town and for the general turnout of the citizens of Battle Creek. He then spoke in regard to Mrs. White, that the appointment was given out without her knowledge or obtaining her consent....

I then arose and thanked the chairman for his courteous remarks in regard to our people and for his kind and generous apology for me. I told them I would do the best I could under the circumstances. I had been so hoarse I could not well speak and there had been a dryness in my throat and disposition to cough, but it was all gone in three minutes.

They say my voice was clear and rang out all over the park clear as a bell. Hattie Golden told her mother she heard me distinctly part of the time away up to their house. The wind took the words to her. There were from five hundred to a thousand out. I had to speak slowly but distinctly, and with some earnestness. Peavey was as pleased as he possibly could be. He told Brother Gaskill it was a complete success, more than met his most sanguine expectations.—[Letter 43, 1874](#).

[423] She mentioned that during her address she turned to Willie, who had accompanied her on the stand, and asked what time it was. “Nearly ten o’clock,” he said. Two or three around him commented: “What did you say that for? I wanted to hear her continue her remarks.” She added:

I think that we shall have a good attendance of citizens from Battle Creek at the camp meeting. I hope you will be here. You could speak with great clearness and acceptance in regard to temperance.—[Ibid.](#)

As Ellen White brought this letter to her husband to a close she wrote, “I am glad you are feeling better. I so desire that you may have a clear and cheerful mind to do the will of God. A great work is before us that others cannot do. Our experience is of value to this cause.”—[Ibid.](#) There was a hint in these words that James and Ellen White had been passing through some tense times. Other letters

written in early July make more direct reference to such problems, not in their marriage but in their understanding of their individual responsibilities: James White, called of God to be an apostle, a church leader; and Ellen White, called of God to bear His message to the church—a prophet.

From almost the beginning of her ministry there had been a very close relationship between the two, and at the same time a clear understanding that each had a distinctive mission. In the case of Ellen White's work, no influence except that of God could be brought to bear on it. Indeed, to be the husband of God's prophet was no easy or ordinary responsibility. This was especially so when the husband was a forceful leader, devising, planning, and executing the functions imposed on him. As it was, neither took a subservient place.

[424]

Chapter 29—(1874) The Prophet-Apostle Relationship

While James and Ellen White were struggling in Oakland to start the *Signs of the Times*, the *Review and Herald* ran a five-part series of articles titled “Visions and Prophecy—Have They Been Manifested Among Seventh-day Adventists?” These were written by the president of the General Conference, George I. Butler, and set forth a well-thought-out and Scripture-supported line of presentation. [The entire series in facsimile form is found in *The Witness of the Pioneers*, currently available at the adventist book centers. Articles 4 and 5 of the series may be found as filler in the *Ellen G. White present truth and review and herald articles*, Vol. 1, pp. 120, 138, 156, 169, 186, 189, 211, and 212.] The first appeared in the issue of May 12, 1874, and opened:

Perhaps there is nothing in this age of the world that excites greater prejudice than the claim that visions and miraculous manifestations of God’s Spirit are to be witnessed in our time.—[The Review and Herald, May 12, 1874.](#)

[425]

After devoting three articles to the Biblical backgrounds and accounts of manifestations of the prophetic gift, Butler in the fourth article introduced Ellen White and her work and demonstrated how she was one on whom the mantle of the gift of prophecy was laid. From firsthand knowledge he wrote of the visions, which he described, and then of her ministry, with which he was personally acquainted. Strong evidence of the integrity of the gift as seen in her experience included the fulfillment of predictions, the knowledge of secret things opened to her, and how her work stood the tests of the claims of the prophet as set forth in the Bible, especially the one Christ gave, “By their fruits ye shall know them.” He discussed the relation of her writings to the Scriptures.

In his closing articles Butler observed:

We have tested them as a people for nearly a quarter of a century, and we find we prosper spiritually when we heed them, and suffer a great loss when we neglect them. We have found their guidance to be our safety. They never have led us into fanaticism in a single instance, but they have ever rebuked fanatical and unreasonable men. They everywhere direct us to the Scriptures as the great source of true instruction, and to the example of Jesus Christ as the true pattern. They never claim to be given to take the place of the Bible, but simply to be a manifestation of one of those spiritual gifts set in the church by its divine Lord; and as such, should have their proper weight.—*Ibid.*, [June 9, 1874](#)

At no other time was such space given in the *Review* to this matter so vital to the church. Butler was 39 years of age; Ellen White was 46.

James White Declares His Relation to the Visions and the Testimonies

On January 1, 1873, when the Whites first set up housekeeping in California, at Santa Rosa, James had been led to write out his attitudes toward the visions and his relation to them. This statement was published in a sixteen-page pamphlet titled “A Solemn Appeal to the Ministry and the People.” Having had time for self-appraisal and contemplation, he sensed that he himself had come short in what his relationship should have been to the visions and the testimonies. He wrote:

I find that my wrongs have grown out of not being suitably affected by what God has shown my wife, especially what she has been shown of *my* dangers and wrongs.—DF 716, “[A Solemn Appeal to the Ministry and the People,](#)” p. 4.

After commenting on the seriousness of neglecting messages “directly from heaven in reproof, warning, and instruction,” he stated his situation:

[426] I have never doubted the visions of Mrs. White. If a trial or temptation had for a moment come over my mind, as I did not, and could not, understand all, I at once fell back upon the vast amount of clear evidence in their favor, and there rested until all was made clear. But this statement applies more particularly to the first ten years of my experience relative to the visions, when many things were shown of the future history of the cause which time alone could explain. For the past ten years the visions have especially pointed out present duty, and all has appeared plain.

I have clearly seen the position and importance of the testimonies in the work of the third message, and have prized them highly, and have designed ever to conform to their teachings. But I have not given them that reflection and attention I should. I have not read them over and over in order to keep their teachings fresh in my mind, as I should.

I have seen so much to do, and so many responsibilities have been put upon me by my brethren, that I have hurried along without giving the testimonies proper attention, and have excused myself on the ground of want of time. This I see has been wrong. I repent before God of this neglect.— *Ibid.*, 5, 6.

He continued to expand the point of his relationship to the visions in the setting of several specific points:

But that which has constituted the bitterness of my cup of repentance has been the consciousness that I have not always been suitably affected by reproofs of my wrongs, and warnings given to save me from future efforts, that I might be preserved to accomplish the greatest possible amount of good. As I look back over the past I see that God has been dealing very kindly with me, and would have led me in a way to have saved

me from many bitter things in my life, if I had been suitably affected by His reproofs and warnings through the visions. The things which have borne particularly upon my mind are as follows:

1. From the time of my first acquaintance with the one whom God has chosen to speak through to His erring people up to the time of the last vision, I have been cautioned from time to time of my danger of speaking, while under the pressure of a sense of the wrongs of others, in an unguarded manner, and using words that would not have the best effect on those I reproved.

[427]

The Lord knowing the trials through which I was to pass, would prepare my mind to guard against the dangers to which I would be exposed. And had I been suitably impressed with His warnings, my usefulness would not have been marred from time to time by Satan's taking advantage of words that were not best selected.— [Ibid.](#), 6.

James referred to the unique nature of what he was called upon to do as the husband of the messenger of the Lord:

Mine has been a peculiar work. It was my duty to stand by the side of Mrs. White in her work of delivering the reproofs of the Lord. Neither of us could swerve a hair's breadth from the plain facts in the case. And because I have sustained her in her reproofing work and could not be warped from the truth, unsanctified and rebellious ones, made still more persistent by the power of the devil, have seized upon some of my strong, and not the best selected, expressions, and have raised the cry of "harshness," "unchristian spirit," and the like.— [Ibid.](#), 6, 7.

He protested that he had "ever cherished a tender love and regard" for his brothers and sisters in the faith, but recognized that it would have been very helpful if he had more faithfully heeded the warnings and counsels in governing all his words.

2. I have been warned to trust in God, and let Him fight my battles and vindicate my cause, and not suffer my mind to dwell upon the course of those who had injured me. But in my “peculiar trials” I have lost sight of such blessed admonitions, and have dwelt upon the wrongs of others greatly to my injury. My courage, faith, and health have suffered on the account.— [Ibid.](#), 8.

He had observed the baleful effect on others who had failed to heed the counsels given by God through His servant, and he hoped such would not be his fate. At the time he wrote this statement of confession he was temporarily removed from carrying responsibilities because of ill health. He made his third point:

[428]

3. During the past eighteen years, the Lord has from time to time given me cautions, through the visions of Mrs. White, to preserve my health and strength as far as possible for future labor; for we had an especial work to do, and it was the will of God that we should have a reserve of strength for important future labor. Had I heeded these warnings as I should, I would have been able to stand against the temptations to overwork pressed upon me by my brethren, and a love to labor while seeing so much to do. And now, as the consequence, just as the field is opening as never before, and there is so much very important work to be done, I have found myself for a few weeks past unable to do anything. And my cry has been, from December 20-26 [1872], and still is, that God will raise me up once more and put His word within me, that I may have a part in the closing triumphs of the last message.— [Ibid.](#), 8, 9.

Forgiven and Accepted

Finally, as he pondered these matters he went to the barn, feeling that all he could do was to submit himself to God and “fall into the hands of Christ” and in agony plead his case with God. He declared:

It was then that I had a view of how terrible was the sin of those who profess to believe that God speaks to them through vision, yet from heedlessness receive no lasting impression when reproved, but go on as before, making no changes in those things wherein they are reproved. I felt that such a course was a fearful insult to the Holy Ghost, and that I was in a degree guilty of this sin.— [Ibid.](#), 9.

White described the very meaningful and personal experience he had had, of forgiveness and acceptance with God:

I have been able to make the full surrender of all to God, and as I have confessed my sins to God and those with me, and united with them in prayer for pardon, and restoration to peace of mind, faith, hope, and physical strength and health, the Spirit of God has come upon us in a wonderful degree. At one time, while we were knelt in prayer [in the Loughborough home in Santa Rosa], and Mrs. White took my arm and bade me rise and go free, as I arose, the Holy Ghost came upon us in such a measure that we both fell to the floor.

[429]

I now feel sure that God has forgiven my sins, so far as I have seen them, and confessed them in the spirit of true repentance. My sins do not longer separate me from God. And as I have made a determined effort to draw nigh to God, He has come very nigh to me. That terrible weight of discouragement and gloom that has been upon me much of the time for the past two years is gone from me, and hope, courage, peace, and joy have taken its place.— [Ibid.](#)

Our seasons of prayer in Brother Loughborough's family, but especially when Mrs. White and I pray by ourselves, are very precious. Sometimes the Holy Spirit fills the place, and we are made to feel the presence of God as we have not witnessed for a long time.... We see a great work to be done, and we believe that God will raise us up to bear some part in it.— [Ibid.](#), 11, 12.

The Lord did raise him up, and he was again engaged in important positions in the cause of God. The insights into his own experience marked by the shortcomings he mentioned led him to think of his fellow ministers, some no less guilty of the neglect of the light God had given, and then of the church members generally. He was led to reach out beyond his own experience. In the closing pages of the little pamphlet, he gave full meaning to the title he had chosen, “A Solemn Appeal to the Ministry and the People.” He hoped to warn others to take care as to how they related to the visions and the testimonies.

This recital provides helpful insights into some phases of James White’s life and work. He confessed to his “love of labor while seeing so much to do” (*Ibid.*, 8), but he easily forgot the effects on his body and mind of four paralytic strokes. How well this described his repeated experiences of zeal and overwork, followed by depression and suspicion of those about him. Soon after this confession he started publishing the *Signs of the Times*, with the attendant problems and pressures—and history repeated itself in discouragement, despondency, and gloom.

Ellen White, writing to W. H. Littlejohn in November, 1874, in reference to her husband’s experience stated:

[430] It is the crowding in of so many things, one upon another, that taxes the mind and brings on sleeplessness and indigestion, and then the way looks blue and discouraging.—[Letter 61, 1874](#).

The Picture in the Summer of 1874

This was the experience of James White for a time in the summer of 1874. As burdens multiplied and problems pertaining to the new publication crowded in, discouragement and gloom overtook him, leading him to be suspicious and to lay blame on others for situations that either did not exist or that he had created. This emotional problem was perhaps at its worse when in early June, Ellen White, in response to the clear leading of the Lord, started out alone to attend camp meetings to raise money to relieve the pressing financial situation. At this moment James White, recognizing the divine leading, declared, “Ellen, you must go.... But what shall I do without

you?”—[Manuscript 62, 1895](#). He recognized clearly the reason for her venturing forth without him.

Prior to this there were slight hints of situations that may have caused friction. Ellen wrote to Willie on May 15:

Gladly would we attend the camp meetings east if we could feel that the Lord sends us. If it were duty I would go alone, but this is questionable. Father, I fear, would not do as well if I should leave him. We ought to labor unitedly together.... Our influence has been needed here at this particular time in Oakland.—[Letter 27, 1874](#).

After the *Signs* was started and Ellen was visiting the camp meetings, she wrote to James from Wisconsin on June 21:

I have no doubts in regard to my duty. I have had a spirit of freedom. All are very attentive to my wants and seem to think it is a privilege to do all they can for us.... Dear husband, I believe that God is at work. It is a special and important time.... I never felt greater necessity of God’s working with our efforts. We have no time to rest, no time to yield to temptation. We must work while the day lasts.—[Letter 34, 1874](#).

Then, referring directly to James himself, whom she now knew was depressed and discouraged, she wrote:

I hope that you will receive special help of God. Do not afflict your soul in looking at the things which are seen. Do not allow your mind to dwell upon unpleasant things. “Whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; ...think on these things” ([Philippians 4:8](#)).

[431]

We may be miserable or we may be at peace with God and be happy. We have no need to afflict and distress our souls over many things. In [our] doing this our usefulness is lessened one third. The enemy knows how to manage to dishearten and discourage

by presenting before us sad pictures which we should not allow our eyes to rest upon, for it only makes us miserable and does no soul a particle of good. Every particle of selfishness must be separated from us and we must have the spirit of Christ. I mean to trust in God.

I feel sorry for you and feel deep sympathy for you in your affliction. I mean to help you what I can, but don't let the enemy make you think only of my deficiencies which are, you think, so apparent, for in trying to fix me over, you may destroy my usefulness, my freedom, and bring me into a position of restraint, or embarrassment, that will unfit me for the work of God.—[Ibid.](#)

James's communications to Ellen at this time are not on file, but Ellen's daily letters and cards to him suggest that James felt he should have more influence over her work as the messenger of God. Ellen ever guarded that point lest any person, no matter who he might be, should have influence over her messages. Well she understood the normal relationship that should exist between husbands and wives. This is reflected in a letter she wrote some years earlier to Mary Loughborough:

We women must remember that God has placed us subject to the husband. He is the head and our judgment and views and reasonings must agree with his if possible. If not, the preference in God's Word is given to the husband where it is not a matter of conscience. We must yield to the head.—[Letter 5, 1861.](#)

[432] Ellen White was pleased to defer to her husband in the homelife, in social situations, in travel, and in recreation, and to tenderly care for him in periods of illness. But there could be no compromise in letting him influence her special work and the messages she bore at Heaven's bidding. In addition to the letter written to her husband on June 21, 1874, quoted above, we get a glimpse of the conflict of interest between her prophetic mission and her loyalty to her husband in three letters written between July 2 and 10, 1874. They demonstrate the attempts of the great adversary to hinder the cause of

God. The conflict was not in their marriage, as is shown by frequent expressions of affection, but in keeping their special God-appointed interests separate.

The Three Sensitive Letters, July 2, 8, and 10

On the way from the Wisconsin camp meeting to Battle Creek, Ellen White stopped off at their Washington, Iowa, home for a few hours. From there she wrote to her husband, opening her heart.

Washington, Iowa, July 2, 1874

My dear Husband,

We are now in our Washington home. It looks pleasant here, as it always does, and it surely is attractive. I should love to live here if it were the will of the Lord, but we are only pilgrims and strangers and I do not think we can have any certain home in this world....

Our field is the world. God has honored you with the precious and important work of starting the publication of truth upon the Atlantic Coast. Twenty-six years later He has honored you again with the trust of publication of the truth upon the Pacific Coast. Your way may not always seem clear to you, but God will lead you if you take on no extra anxiety. "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world" were the words of our Saviour just before He left the world for heaven, to plead in our behalf before His heavenly Father.

We are justified to walk by sight as long as we can, but when we can no longer see the way clearly, then we need to put our hand in our heavenly Father's and let Him lead. There are emergencies in the life of all in which we can neither follow sight nor trust to memory or experience. All we can do is simply to trust and wait. We shall honor God to trust Him because He is our heavenly Father....

I have attended four camp meetings and have tried to do my utmost for the good of souls. I have had but little thought of self, but have worked in any spot I could to do

good to others. I have not forgotten you upon the Pacific Coast. We have all prayed earnestly for you. We so long to see you elevated above the trials which have had such a depressing influence upon your life, to discourage and poison the happiness of your life. God has given you a good intellect—I might say a giant intellect. Satan does not mean that your life shall close in honor and victory. The cause of God cannot spare you without experiencing a great loss.—[Letter 38, 1874](#).

Putting the Finger on the Basic Cause

Then, coming more directly to the basic cause of the problems, she wrote:

When you are free from dark and gloomy, discouraging feelings, no one can speak or write words that will sway so powerful an influence as yourself, and gladness, hope, and courage are put into all hearts. But when you feel depressed, and write and talk under the cloud, no shadow can be darker than the one you cast. In this matter Satan is striving for the mastery.

You blame others for your state of mind. Just as long as you do this, just so long will enough arise to keep you in this state of turmoil and darkness. The course which others pursue will not excuse you from trusting in God and hoping and believing in His power to hold you up.

You must not accuse me of causing the trials of your life, because in this you deceive your own soul. It is your brooding over troubles, magnifying them, and making them real which has caused the sadness of your life. Am I to blame for this?

I must be free from the censures you have felt free to express to me. But if I have to bear them, I shall try to do it without retaliation. I never mean to make you sad. Your life is very precious to me and to the cause of God. And it is not so much that I am afflicted with your

distrust and suspicions of me that troubles me, but that you let it afflict you. It wears upon your health, and I am unable to remove the cause because it does not exist in reality.

[434]

I am trying to seek strength and grace from God to serve Him, irrespective of the circumstances. He has given me great light for His people, and I must be free to follow the leadings of the Spirit of God and go at His bidding, relying upon the light and sense of duty I feel, and leave you the same privilege. When we can work the best together we will do so. If God says it is for His glory we work apart occasionally, we will do that. But God is willing to show me my work and my duty, and I shall look to Him in faith and trust Him fully to lead me.

I do not have a feeling of resentment in my heart against you, but the Lord helping me, I will not allow anything to come between you and me. I will not be depressed; neither will I allow feelings of guilt and distress to destroy my usefulness when I know that I have tried to do my duty to the best of my knowledge in the fear of God. The help from God and special freedom in speaking to the people for the last four weeks have been a great strength to me, and while I cling firmly to God, He will cling to me.

Battle Creek,

July 3, 1874.

Dear Husband,

Arrived here this afternoon. Our brethren are expecting you and are greatly rejoiced at the prospect of your coming to Battle Creek....

I received no letter from you here. Brother Smith received a card from you saying you anticipated being at the eastern camp meetings. I shall be very glad to see you. May God give you clear light and much grace to know your duty and to do it.

In much love to each member of the family, especially to yourself.

Your Ellen.

[Ibid.](#)

A Second Candid Letter

[435] In the next letter on file, begun five days later and finished on the sixth, Ellen White spoke of the blessings of God in her work at the camp meetings. She wrote under the dateline of Battle Creek, July 8, 1874:

I feel more and more every day that I have no time to lose. I must bear my testimony to others and work earnestly to get before others the light which God has given me. I do not feel that I am my own, but bought with a price. The claims God has upon me I feel deeply, and I mean to answer them as far as possible. I will not allow feelings of sadness and depression to destroy my usefulness.

I do not forget you. I feel deeply sorry that you have things in your mind just as they are in regard to me. I can say I know you view things in a perverted light. I have in the past felt so depressed and saddened with the thought that it might always be so, that life has seemed a burden. But I don't feel so now. Whatever you may feel and whatever thoughts you may have shall not swerve me from believing and trusting in God.

Things seem an unexplainable mystery—that you cannot find rest and peace unless you succeed in bringing me into positions I cannot see and cannot possibly submit to be placed in. I see no consistency or generosity in this, only a feeling prompted by selfishness in persistently dwelling upon things that tend to alienate our hearts rather than unite them.

I long for perfect union, but I cannot purchase it at the expense of my conscience; but if you feel that God is

leading you in dwelling upon the things you have dwelt upon in your letters, I will try to feel all right toward you. Of course I cannot feel that thorough satisfaction and confidence that you are being led of the Lord. I can but feel that the enemy is making you miserable by keeping your mind upon matters that are of no profit, but only an injury.

I want you to be happy. Your health and life depend upon your being happy and cheerful. No matter what course others pursue, this need not have such all-controlling power over your mind. Just as long as you will let the wrongs or supposed wrongs of others depress and dishearten you, you will have enough of this business to attend to.—[Letter 40, 1874](#).

This was a soul-stirring letter in which she attempted to direct her husband's attention to the real issues, the attempts of the great adversary to hinder the precious work in which they were both engaged. She continued: [436]

Satan sees your weakness in this respect, and he will make every effort to attack you just where he has succeeded so often. He means to worry out your life upon these points. God wants you to live, and to keep your mind free, that He may make you a channel of light and communicate His light through you to others. Satan knows that you can be a great encouragement to the people of God.

Satan knows all he has to do is to work upon the minds of some who are not living in the light, and get your mind exercised in regard to them, and then his object is gained. I have been shown that very many pages have been written, dwelling upon the inconsistency of others and filled with your discouragements while Satan was exulting because your pen was not tracing lines that God could sanction and bless, and cause to react upon you in great and precious blessings, giving you sweet and precious peace which passeth knowledge.

God has given you a pen which should never be used to discourage and dishearten His people. Light, precious light, from His presence He will let beam upon you to be imparted to others, if you will only resist the temptations of the devil to write and talk out your feelings of trial, your temptations, and your discouragements. You might have written volumes upon subjects of present truth which would be immortalized by saving souls, while your time and pen have been employed in scattering clouds of darkness because you happened to feel dark. God could not and did not bless you in this work, and you were sinking yourself lower and lower while you were giving utterance to feelings and impressions which were the temptations of the enemy.

God wants you to live. I want you to live and I want that our last days shall be our very best days. My heart is sad many times, yes, every time I think of you. How can I be otherwise?—*Ibid.*

She could take no pleasure in recreation while James was so burdened and troubled in mind. She mentioned this point:

[437]

This morning at three o'clock, I called Brother and Sister Gaskill and Willie to go out about five miles to pick cherries. I remain alone till afternoon, when they will return. I have no desire to go on any pleasure excursion without you. I do not care to go anywhere only where duty seems to call; but I do not mean that Satan shall succeed in destroying my usefulness because I know that my husband has so erroneous a view of me.

I have work enough to do in writing and in visiting those who are sick and afflicted, who are in sorrow and distress. I have a testimony also to bear to God's people, and I shall go forward clinging to the hand of my dear Saviour, for He is exceedingly precious to me.

I shall not walk alone or in darkness. I have perfect confidence in God, for I have had my trust and faith greatly strengthened upon this journey. If we have to

walk apart the rest of the way, do let us not seek to pull each other down. I do believe it is best for our labors to be disconnected and we each lean upon God for ourselves. I am writing some every day, doing all I can.

In much love, I remain,

Your Ellen.

Letter 40, 1874.

Another Straightforward Letter

In a third letter, written Friday, July 10, the day after finishing the long letter quoted above, Ellen White again touched on their relationships:

Battle Creek, Michigan,

July 10, 1874.

Dear Husband,

It is one week ago today since I came to Battle Creek. I have not much that is interesting to write, for I have confined myself [because of the excessive heat] quite closely to my chamber....

If you could come east and let all the difficulties and perplexities of the past entirely alone, we might unite our efforts and great good might be done here and at the camp meetings. But I think if your mind is so constituted that it will dwell upon things that are unpleasant, it would be better for the cause and better for you to remain where you are. If your testimony could be borne upon the precious truth and the advancement of the cause and you could advise in regard to tracts and various matters in connection with the work, your efforts would be blessed of God. But if you are coming to discourage and weaken yourself and me by censure and suspicion and jealousy, I fear we should do great injury to the cause of God.

[438]

I long to see you and would be so glad to bury the past as I know God would have us, without making reference to it, and to take hold in faith and courage with you to do our duty and work to help the people of God; but I must be left free to follow the convictions of my own conscience. I will not blame or censure you, and I cannot have you take the life and soul out of me by your blaming and censuring me. May the Lord bless, heal, and lead you is my daily prayer. I must be free in God. He wants me to be free and not suffering under a load of depressing discouragements that unfit me for any position.—[Letter 40a, 1874](#).

James White's Potential

Ellen White recognized that her husband was passing through a crisis in which Satan, if he could, would overwhelm him. In an effort to buoy him up, on Sabbath, July 11, she wrote of what could be ahead for them:

I would be glad to see you. I hear nothing from you except a few lines on postal cards. I try to send off a letter each day. I hope you receive them all....

I hope you are well. God wants you to live and be a blessing to His people. I want you to live, and my prayer is daily going up to God for you that you may be blessed with health and with courage. God will strengthen you to fill your place in the cause and work of God if you will commit yourself and all your cares to Him. God has given you great and precious light for His people and He designs that light shall shine forth to them....

You stand in high repute here among all of any consequence. Nothing would give them greater joy than to see you. They would be very glad to meet you at the camp meeting, and I wish you could be here to attend the eastern camp meetings....

With your experience and your knowledge and quick foresight you may be a very great help to the cause of

God. I want you to live till the work closes up. I want you to be a polished instrument in the hands of God to accomplish much good and yourself see the dear Redeemer coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory....

I feel a great desire to see you and to mingle my prayers with yours. The Lord is good. Praise His holy name. I have felt great comfort and assurance in prayer this morning.... Let us pray each day in faith, not only for health, but to be imbued with the Spirit of God that we may do the work committed to our trust to His acceptance. This is what I live for. I have no other ambition. I feel my heart go out in great love and tenderness to you.—[Letter 41, 1874](#).

In the closing paragraph she gave James every assurance of her love, devotion, and loyalty:

I have the highest estimate of your ability, and with the power of God to work with your efforts you can do a great and efficient work. God can mend the broken and worn machinery and make it of essential use to do His work still. Only believe, only be cheerful, only be of good courage. Let the disagreeables go. Turn from these things which cause sadness and which dishearten you. I will ever be true to you and I want you to have no suspicion or distrust of me that I would say or do the least thing to hurt you or lessen the confidence of your brethren in you. Never, never will I do this. I will sustain and help you all I can.

In love,

Your Ellen.

[Ibid.](#)

While James White had been critical of Ellen's attitudes, his love for her was deep, and he was solicitous of her comfort and welfare

as she continued her ministry in the East. On July 5 he wrote to Willie, who was with his mother in Battle Creek:

[440]

I was very glad to learn that you were with your mother. Take the tenderest care of your dear mother. And if she wishes to attend the eastern camp meetings, please go with her. Get a tent that will suit you; get everything good in the shape of satchels, blankets, portable chair for Mother, and do not consent to her economical ideas, leading you to pinch along.—JW to WCW, July 5, 1874.

The James White Letters Take on a Positive Tone

The three letters quoted above in which Ellen White opened her distressed heart to James explained the only position she could take and endeavored to help him to be rational and understanding. The first, her penetrating, yet loving, letter written on July 2 from Washington, Iowa, and finished in Battle Creek on July 3, touched James's heart and helped him to see matters in their true light. Evidence of this is found in his letter to G. I. Butler, written from Oakland on July 13, which shows a marked change in his attitudes. Something significant had taken place. His word to Butler:

I want to counsel with you, Haskell, and others, and lay plans to extend the *Reformer*, and *Signs*, and talk over many other important things. The Spirit of God is moving upon me. Our brethren are not aware of how much the Lord is doing for us. Brother George, this begins to look like the coming of Christ pretty soon. My light has been the progress of the message....

Any amount of wars, earthquakes, floods, hurricanes, pestilences, et cetera, would not quicken my faith in the coming of Christ. The third message must do its work. Prophecy relative to the message and the action of the two-horned beast must be fulfilled. My eye has been there for years. And as things have moved heavily, I have felt sad. But, Brother George, God is beginning

to do great things for us. And I have a little hope and faith that His blessed long arm will reach the pioneers in this cause that are almost wrecked, and touch them with His gracious finger, and restore them to His favors and to their positions in the work....

Oh, my soul, what emotions well up in thee as I trace these lines, and my hand shakes, and my sight is blinded with weeping. I must, I shall see the desire of my poor heart in the complete restoration of these. It is time to put away our folly, our baby whimsy, and come nigh the mighty God of Jacob. I have wonderful seasons of prayer nowadays.—JW to G. I. Butler, July 13, 1874.

[441]

His letters to Ellen had taken on a tone she could not overlook. On Monday, July 13, in her letter to James, she wrote of the change in the tone of his letters:

Dear Husband,

After my last six pages to you [written July 10] had gone to the office, I received your letters directed to myself and Willie and at the same time one from Edson—all good, cheering letters.—[Letter 42, 1874.](#)

Two days later she wrote again, telling of the temperance meeting held in the park and again expressing her hope that James might be at the Michigan camp meeting. In this she stated:

I received your good letter today, containing one to be handed to Brother Lindsay. I feel very thankful for your last, more cheerful letters. I pray earnestly that God will spare your life and give you strength to do the work He would have you do....

I am glad you are feeling better. I so desire that you may have a clear and cheerful mind to do the will of God. A great work is before us that others cannot do. Our experience is of value to this cause.—[Letter 43, 1874.](#)

In her Friday, July 17, letter, she wrote:

We received your card last night in which you speak of having the General Conference united with the camp meeting. This may be done.... I think the appointment will go out in this next *Review*. So we shall look for and depend on your coming.... I rejoice to hear that you are in good health. Willie is well....

I have no special news to write you, except I greatly desire to see your face and look forward to the time with great pleasure.... Have good courage in the Lord. Let us be cheerful and happy. I peruse your *Signs* with great interest. It is good, good, good.

Your Ellen.

[Letter 44, 1874.](#)

[442] As she wrote the next Thursday, July 23, she assured James, “All will be rejoiced to see you here, and none more than your Ellen.... We are now expecting that you may be on your way.” She added:

Since writing the above, Harmon Lindsay has brought in a long communication, remailed from Brother Butler. It is good. You view matters, I believe, correctly. May God help you and strengthen you to take your position in this work and in the cause and unfalteringly press your way onward looking to God for help. He will help. I believe it without a doubt.—[Letter 47, 1874.](#)

James White Arrives in Battle Creek

The Michigan camp meeting, during which the General Conference session would be held, would open on Thursday, August 6, and the word was that James White would arrive a little after midnight on Tuesday, the fourth. Although usually retiring early, Ellen, of course remained up to greet him. She busied herself in writing to Edson and Emma, whom James had called to Oakland to help with the new paper. While she was writing, her eyes grew heavy and she dozed off. On hearing a familiar voice, she awakened with a start,

to greet her beloved husband, James. He had very likely walked the few blocks from the station to their home.

How she rejoiced that at long last they could be together again and unite their lives and their labor. There had been tensions for a time. We have quoted quite fully her letters to him written through a nine-day period, that the reader might have the full story. Writing from California five months later, she declared:

We are of the best of courage. My husband will not let anything depress him. We have been harmoniously working with the armor on since we left Battle Creek for California.—[Letter 16, 1875](#).

A Relapse During the Ensuing Years

It would be satisfying to the biographer if he could report that during the ensuing years of James White's life there was no recurrence of depression accompanied by suspicions, ill-advised statements, and accusations. We have noted his repeated paralytic strokes and their debilitating influence on his life, which, it seems, laid the foundation for erratic movements and fluctuating attitudes. In spite of the disheartening experiences marked by discouragement, distrust, and accusation that occasionally took place, his talents, dedication, and experience were such that God continued to use him mightily at a time when the church was in great need of his contributions. In 1876, there was a repetition of the experience of 1874. James and Ellen White were residing in their Oakland, California, home, close to the Pacific Press. She was diligently writing on the life of Christ; James was president of the General Conference and at the same time was much involved in the developing interests of the newly established publishing house. He was called east to attend a special session of the General Conference and oversee the proposed enlargement of the Health Institute. He wanted her to accompany him and to remain in the East to attend the coming camp meetings. Blessed with the good help of Mary Clough as a literary assistant, Ellen did not want to leave her writing, and he went on without her. Their letters (she wrote every day) indicated that there were some

[443]

tensions, each certain they were in the line of duty, although acting somewhat independently. Her letter of April 20, 1876, reads in part:

You are happy and never so free. Thank the Lord for this.... I am happy and free and I thank the Lord for this. You are in the line of duty. God blesses you. I am in the line of my duty and God blesses me. It may never be as well as now for me to write.... Should I leave now to go east, I should go on your light, not on mine.—[Letter 11, 1876](#).

The interchange of letters over the next few weeks indicate that there had been a growing tendency on the part of James to dominate Ellen's program, something that in earlier years he had studiously avoided. In a letter dated May 12, referring to what he had termed her independence, she wrote to him:

[444]

In regard to my independence, I have had no more than I should have in the matter under the circumstances. I do not receive your views or interpretation of my feelings on this matter. I understand myself much better than you understand me.—[Letter 25, 1876](#).

She hoped to bring moderation into his growing dictatorial stance. In one letter James expressed himself in unrestrained terms:

I shall use the good old head God gave me until He reveals that I am wrong. Your head won't fit my shoulders. Keep it where it belongs, and I will try to honor God in using my own. I shall be glad to hear from you, but don't waste your precious time and strength in lecturing me on matters of mere opinions.—[Letter 66, 1876](#).

During this tense period in which James was attempting to dominate Ellen's program, an effort that, considering her special work, was very distressing to her, she wrote three letters to Lucinda Hall. Making it clear that she could not submit to James's opinions of her duty, she reached out for human sympathy.

On May 16, she wrote to James:

It grieves me that I have said or written anything to grieve you. Forgive me and I will be cautious not to start any subject to annoy and distress you. We are living in a most solemn time and we cannot afford to have in our old age differences to separate our feelings. I may not view all things as you do, but I do not think it would be my place or duty to try to make you see as I see and feel as I feel. Wherein I have done this, I am sorry.

I want a humble heart, a meek and quiet spirit. Wherein my feelings have been permitted to arise in any instance, it was wrong. Jesus said, “Learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.”

I wish that self should be hid in Jesus. I wish self to be crucified. I do not claim infallibility, or even perfection of Christian character. I am not free from mistakes and errors in my life. Had I followed my Saviour more closely, I should not have to mourn so much my unlikeness to His dear image.

Time is short, very short. Life is uncertain. We know not when our probation may close. If we walk humbly before God, He will let us end our labors with joy. No more shall a line be traced by me or expression made in my letter to distress you. Again, I say, forgive me, every word or act that has grieved you.—[Letter 27, 1876](#).

[445]

In her letters she had indicated that she would remain in California and continue her writing on the life of Christ, unless the Lord indicated to her otherwise. Such an omen must have come to her, for ten days later she was at James White’s side at the Kansas camp meeting, the first one of the season. They worked through the summer together, sharing the burden of fourteen camp meetings. The writing she had hoped to finish in California in the spring of 1876 was finished in Battle Creek in December. James, however, did not forget the injustice to Ellen, and in the late summer of 1877 it was much on his mind. She wrote of this to Willie:

His great trouble is battling with depression of spirits. He seems to feel that he has wronged me very much. He goes back to the letters he wrote me when he was in California, and you and I attended the camp meetings. He feels that he has committed a great sin that the Lord can hardly forgive.—[Letter 13, 1877](#).

She added, “My work is to comfort him and to pray for him; to speak cheerful, loving words to him and soothe him.” Regardless of James’s somewhat fluctuating attitudes, Ellen moved forward with her work, uninfluenced by human associates.

Before the close of this review, one more point deserves notice. Four years later, on May 24, 1881, at a time when D. M. Canright was recovering from a period of discouragement and lapse in his ministry and faith, James White wrote him a letter in which he made some incautious remarks. Among these was his opinion that “Elders Butler and Haskell have had an influence over her that I hope to see broken. It has nearly ruined her.” But his opinion held at that moment did not change the fact that Ellen White remained uninfluenced in her work as God’s messenger.

Chapter 30—(1874) James White Again in the Saddle

[446]

The Michigan camp meeting was scheduled to open in Battle Creek on Thursday, August 6, and continue to Tuesday, August 17. It had been decided that the thirteenth annual General Conference session would be held on the campground in connection with the camp meeting. The official notice called for the session to open Monday morning, August 10. The session and the camp meeting would share time from day to day.

Uriah Smith reported that there were ninety-one tents on the ground, with between twelve and thirteen hundred believers occupying them. As to the services he reported:

During the eleven days of the meeting twenty-five discourses were given, six by Brother White, five each by Brethren Butler and Andrews, and Sister White, three by Brother Haskell, and one by Brother Rogers, delegate from the S. D. Baptists. The word was spoken with great power and clearness. Especially was the speaking of Brother White thus characterized throughout.

Never, we believe, did he make better points, or present the great truths of this message with more clearness and force. The involuntary response of many hearts was Thank God for the freedom He gives His servant, and the physical strength that is granted for the ardent labors into which his truth-inspired soul is constantly leading him.

The same may be said of Sister White, Brother Butler, and others. The Lord signally helped His servants.—[The Review and Herald, August 18, 1874.](#)

Of course, James White brought an encouraging report of the work on the Pacific Coast. He told of his

[447]

commencing to publish *Signs of the Times*, and of his hope for a publishing house to be established soon in the West. It was his hope to return shortly, with the full endorsement of the General Conference and the promise of support for what was being done there.

An Unexpected and Significant Turn in Affairs

The nominating committee brought in its report on Thursday. Considering the now generally accepted views on leadership, expressed at the last session by G. I. Butler, it was no surprise that James White's name should head the list, calling for him to be president of the General Conference. Further recommendations were that Uriah Smith should serve as secretary and Harmon Lindsay as treasurer. For the General Conference Committee, the nominations called for James White, George I. Butler, and S. N. Haskell. The report was heartily accepted. It certainly turned the plans of James and Ellen White around, for now Battle Creek would be their base of operations.

Resolutions passed were few and well considered, the first reading:

Resolved That we hail with joy the cheering reports of the progress of the work on the Pacific Coast, and approve the action of Elder James White in establishing a much-needed paper in the interests of the present truth in that section of our country, and

Whereas, The cause west of the Rocky Mountains is new, and its friends comparatively few, and Brother White should not be left to bear the burden of conducting an office there on his own financial responsibility, therefore

Resolved, That we recommend to the trustees of the SDA Publishing Association to authorize Elder George I. Butler to act in behalf of the board at the California State conference to be held in connection with their annual camp meeting, October, 1874, in conferring with that conference relative to the establishment of a branch

office of publication, on the Pacific Coast.—*Ibid.*, August 25, 1874

Actions were taken in support of the tract enterprise and calling for drawing its interests together into a general organization to be known as the General Conference Tract and Missionary Society of Seventh-day Adventists. Guidelines were set forth in the form of a constitution. There was an action of renewed consecration, and one relating to the thrust that would shortly be made in missionary endeavor in sending J. N. Andrews to Europe as soon as practicable.

[448]

Facing Large Responsibilities

There was no place Ellen White would rather be than in Battle Creek. Their home on the corner had been rented to E. B. Gaskill, who had served as General Conference treasurer, and it was soon made available to them. Relieved—theoretically, at least—of responsibilities in California, James White turned his attention to the general interests of the work of the church as a whole and to the institutions in Battle Creek, particularly the developments in the denominational school.

In his editorial in the *Review* that carried the report of the General Conference session, he presented his reactions to the sudden changes and challenges the activities that meeting brought about. “Never were we so fully impressed,” he wrote, “with the fact that the responsibilities of a worldwide mission were pressing upon our people, as during the religious services and the business sessions at the recent Michigan camp meeting.”—*Ibid.*

He wrote of the publication of literature in other languages; of the need of workers to enter new fields, at home and overseas; and then of the change in the plans for his work:

We have felt, and still feel, the deepest interest for the cause on the Pacific. But it will not do to calculate upon a millennium to establish the cause there. Our wealthy men and women on the Pacific Coast must help out with their means, cautiously urge new gifts into the field, and give the cause a chance to grow upon the Pacific as it has in other parts.

[449]

Failing health and discouragements had led us to withdraw from the general cause to confine our labors to the Pacific Coast. But we find ourselves since the Battle Creek camp meeting with our former plans completely changed; and we now resign all to the will of God, and the choice of His dear people. For several years we have been refusing responsibilities, especially such as would make it necessary for us to have our headquarters at Battle Creek.

But the marked indications of Providence, in harmony with the wish of our people, assembled in the name of the Lord, with His spirit upon them, have led us to yield to be a servant wherever may be their choice.—[Ibid.](#)

Then turning more particularly to the interests in California with which he had been so closely linked, he explained:

The General Conference has approved of what steps we have taken in establishing the press upon the Pacific, and take the responsibilities as well as the liabilities off our hands. They send Elder Butler to the California camp meeting to counsel with that conference as to the proper steps to be taken to advance the cause on the Pacific. His practical gift being new will be enjoyed by all with the deepest interest, as well as with the greatest profit.

We shall ever cherish the tenderest regards for our dear people on the Pacific Coast; and when it shall please God, we shall be happy to meet them, and labor for their prosperity. But for the present we must heed the calls of those who have greater claims upon us.—[Ibid.](#)

As he was now leading out in both the interests of the Publishing Association and the General Conference, he suggested:

If our friends west of the Plains will support a weekly paper, our Committee on Publications and the

editors of the *Review and Herald* can greatly aid in the management of it, and in furnishing matter for it.—[Ibid.](#)

The Eastern Camp Meetings

The eastern camp meetings were scheduled to open in Vermont on August 20, and run till September 28 in Indiana. It had been James White's hope, and that of the believers in the several States, that both he and his wife could attend. But the duties in Battle Creek were too pressing; therefore Ellen White, accompanied by Lucinda Hall, started out with the second eastern meeting, at South Lancaster. [450] From there she wrote James on Friday, August 28:

We arrived here this morning, all safe, considerably tired. The elders were looking anxiously for us both; were much disappointed in not seeing you. They say there was great disappointment upon the Vermont campground among all, but the Lord helped Brethren Haskell and Butler and they had an excellent meeting; but this did not cure the disappointment of the outsiders. There was a great turnout, expecting Elder White and wife from California would be there....

Brother Butler has this forenoon cautioned the people to let me rest and not exhaust me with much visiting. While he was speaking, I lay down and rested and slept some. Shall be upon the stand to speak in a few moments....

My heart is fixed, trusting in God. I shall wait upon the Lord. I shall cry to Him in faith for His help and His power, and I believe we shall see of His salvation. God will be our helper.—[Letter 49, 1874.](#)

The next camp meeting was in Maine; this gave Ellen an opportunity to visit three of her sisters. Elizabeth, her twin sister, joined her in the Maine meeting. "Her sympathies are with us," Ellen wrote, "yet she takes no open stand. She accompanied me in the desk and sat [on the platform] with me till I had got through speaking." She commented further:

We had an excellent meeting in Maine. About two thousand people were out on Sunday. I never heard Brother Andrews do as well as he did in Maine. He leaves for Europe next week. Our prayers are that God may go with him.—[Letter 50b, 1874](#).

Writing to James from Kirkville, New York, on September 10, she said: “I feel so sorry that you have had a burden-bearing time. Every time you thought you might go with me to the meetings I felt greatly pleased, but I did not dare urge you.” He was unable to get to the New York meeting. ([Letter 51, 1874](#)).

California and the Publishing Interests

[451] Quite naturally both James and Ellen White watched for news of the steps being taken in regard to the *Signs* and the possibility of establishing a publishing house in the West. When Ellen had left Oakland in June to visit the East and raise much-needed money for the new enterprises, James called for the assistance of Edson, who in Battle Creek had gained some knowledge of the printing business, to come west to help him there. Edson went and applied himself well. When James, after publishing five numbers, left for the General Conference on July 29, he left Edson to get out the paper, on a reduced schedule. Loughborough gave editorial counsel and help. One number was issued in August and one in September. Things were almost at a standstill until the California camp meeting to be held in early October. There was talk of possibly publishing the *Signs* in Battle Creek, but when Butler got onto the campground at Yountville, he found a strong current running in favor of publishing in California and of establishing a publishing institution there. He reported from Yountville on Thursday, October 8:

We have had under consideration the establishment of the press here, and the acceptance of the offer made by Brother White and the General Conference. The brethren here felt a great interest that the paper should not leave this coast. As soon as I came onto the ground, they began to talk about it. Some questioned as to

means, et cetera, and there seemed to be some doubt in the minds of a few.

But this morning in our session of conference, after the matter was fully presented and explained, the feelings of the brethren were expressed. The conference unanimously voted to assume the responsibility of the matter, and the congregation as a whole voted for it with much good feeling. They have since entrusted the matter of publishing the paper to the State conference committee until the legal association is formed. We shall soon raise pledges on the paper, and I shall greatly mistake the feelings of this people if there is not a very liberal subscription raised.—[The Review and Herald, October 20, 1874.](#)

Butler's report in the next issue of the *Review* told the triumphant story. He had hoped for pledges of \$10,000, but the California brethren went far beyond that.

Sunday morning was the time chosen to raise means. The conference had decided to assume the responsibility of the paper. Now it was to be shown what they meant and how much real interest they had. The wants of the cause were set before them about as usual at our camp meetings, and though some were impatient for us to get through, they were so anxious to put down their pledges, we took about the usual time to give the facts concerning the progress of the work and the responsibilities resting upon the people here.

We were all greatly and happily surprised to see the readiness of the people to pledge of their means for the establishment of the paper. Over \$19,300 were pledged to be paid by a year from next January [January, 1876] for the paper, with the understanding that an association should be formed as soon as the place could be fixed for it to be located, with shares similar to the one at Battle Creek.... There were two who pledged \$1,000 each, twelve who pledged \$500 each, and fifty-one who

[452]

signed \$100 each, besides those who signed sums between.—[Ibid.](#), [October 27, 1874](#)

Butler had read to the conference an address by James White that he carried with him, in which White urged the California brethren to do their duty. White offered a donation of \$6,000 from the eastern brethren for the purchase of a steam press and all the material complete and sufficient to print the *Signs of the Times*. Delegates were quick to take steps to hold the publishing interest on the West Coast ([The Signs of the Times, October 22, 1874](#)). There was disappointment that James White would not be there to directly carry the responsibilities, but Butler assured them that White had been called to greater responsibilities in Battle Creek:

We are confident of this, however, that “as a mother cannot forget her child,” so Brother White will not forget the *Signs* over which he has thought, planned, and prayed, both in the mountains of Colorado and California. He has not bid us goodbye forever in taking other and greater responsibilities, but he leaves the assurance that he will help us with his counsel, influence, and pen.—[Ibid.](#)

[453] It was thought for a brief time that the paper should be moved to Woodland, California, to the printing office of William Saunders, a firm believer. One number (October 22) carried a Woodland dateline, but was actually printed in Oakland. Saunders did not have a power press and could not work for the standard Adventist top pay of \$12 per week. Under the supervision of the California Conference committee—or rather, for the most part, of J. N. Loughborough—issues came from the press in Oakland at irregular intervals until February, 1875.

When the Yountville camp meeting was over, the large tent was taken to San Francisco, where well-advertised meetings were begun in mid-October, with Canright, Loughborough, and Butler leading out. These meetings, yielding a fairly good harvest, continued until near the close of December ([The Review and Herald, December 17, 1874](#)).

While the California camp meeting was being held, James and Ellen White attended the camp meeting at Lapeer, Michigan. This served the northeastern part of that State. Between four and five hundred Sabbathkeepers occupied thirty-one church tents. James and Ellen each spoke four times. On Sunday three thousand persons crowded in to hear James in the morning and his wife in the afternoon. This closed the 1874 camp meeting season.

Concern for the Most Effective Work in California

As they watched reports of developments in California through October, James and Ellen White had wavered as to just the course they should take. For a time they felt they must hurry west to help with the work there. Ellen White was deeply concerned that as the workers might relax, rare opportunities that were opening to spread the message would be missed. To Butler, working with the tent meeting in San Francisco, she wrote:

Do not forget that pulpit labor must be followed by private effort. Brother Loughborough ought not to bend his mind to much writing now while this effort is being made. The greatest success attends those who come in as close relation as possible with those with whom they labor, gain their sympathy and confidence, visit at their homes; those who appear interested, pray with them and for them. In this way only will the direction be followed to go out in the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in.

It is this fireside effort, this home work, that is attended with signal success. Try it, brethren, in the ministry. Some of our ministers do not love this kind of labor. They shun it. There is a cross attached to such personal efforts, but this is the labor the people must have if they embrace unpopular truth. In this close contact with souls who are in darkness, our light may shine more effectually, directly in the darkness, and they will see by our deportment, our conversation, our solemn

[454]

yet cheerful courteous manners, that the grace of God is with us, that the peace of heaven is brought into their homes. They will be charmed with the truth, which is attended with such blessed results.—[Letter 55, 1874](#).

The Winter—Michigan or California?

The steps taken at the General Conference session in August thrusting James White into the position of leadership brought, as we have seen, an unexpected and complete turn in their affairs. The outgoing General Conference treasurer, to whom they had rented their home in Battle Creek, vacated it, and they moved in immediately. But they were somewhat uncertain concerning the immediate future. Ellen White felt very comfortable living in Battle Creek, but their hearts were in California. On November 16 she wrote to Edson:

This is a very important post. Here is the great heart of the work, and every pulsation of this heart is felt throughout the body. If the heart is unsound, if it is unhealthy, the entire system—or every member—must be affected. Satan aims his attacks directly where there is vital interest. It is highly important that the fort here is kept, that there be faithful sentinels here. We would so much rejoice to spend the winter in California and escape the cold winter before us if we remain in Michigan....

We did not settle our house for weeks (it is partially settled now).... We knew we were needed here. Our people here set right about the work of arrangements to bind us to the work here and to them as fast as possible. They furnished the nice large room in the [*Review*] office above the counting room with every convenience—sofa, sofa chairs, editor's chair, bureau, washstand, and your mother a very nice sofa chair. In other respects they have been very attentive to our wants in settling our house. We are now quite well settled and feel that we can spend our winter here if Father does not work too hard and get down.—[Letter 63, 1874](#).

For a time they had thought that they might be called to California almost immediately to get the publishing interests well established. But no word came, and they settled back to spend the winter in Michigan. As she closed her letter, she reported:

We now make arrangements to stay. Our potatoes for all winter are in the cellar; our apples are in the cellar, also our squashes and some canned fruit—a limited supply. Carpets are down, goods moved. Everything is now prepared to spend the winter... We shall labor here in the fear of God as best we can, and we will pray and have faith for those who are engaged in the work in California.—[Ibid.](#)

The Pressing Need for a Well-Trained Ministry

One deep concern shared by James and Ellen White was for a well-qualified ministry. A large part of the working forces in the field were self-trained, strongly dedicated men who, having reached a good degree of proficiency through diligent study and the blessing of God, had been pressed into public ministry. Stephen N. Haskell and Dudley M. Canright may be cited as examples. Canright, the oldest son in a southern Michigan farm family, had listened favorably to the preaching of the third angel's message at a tent meeting. He secured and devoured Adventist books, studied his Bible day and night, and soon longed to convert others to his newfound faith. His first convert was his own mother.

At about the age of 21, Canright felt the call to the ministry. He went to Battle Creek and sought out James White and spent an hour with him. White related the incident:

I said to him, "Do not content yourself with being a small preacher, but be somebody, or die trying. Do not go out to be a pet, but go out into the field, with the weight of the work upon you, with steady principles, and stand your ground."

The last thing I did, was to present him with one of our English Bibles, and a pair of charts, saying as I

did so, "Here, Dudley, take these, and go out and try it. When you become satisfied that you have made a mistake, bring them back."

The next May, at the conference, I met him, and asked him, "What about those charts and the Bible?"

He replied, "Brother White, you have lost them."

Thank God! I would like to lose more in the same way. We raised means to purchase a library for Brother Canright and Brother Van Horn. And said I to them, "When you study, study with all your might, and when you visit, visit with all your might, and exercise briskly. Whatever you do, do it with all your might."—[The Review and Herald, May 20, 1873](#) (see also Carrie Johnson, *I Was Canright's Secretary*, pp. 12-14).

James and Ellen White watched with interest as the walls for a denominational college building rose to a height of three stories in the summer and fall of 1874. Dedication was to be Monday, January 4, 1875.

Planning for a Biblical Institute

Between the closing of classes for the fall term and the dedication of the new buildings, there would be a three-week period. What a unique opportunity, reasoned James White, to call the ministers of the denomination together for a training period. The *Review* of September 29, 1874, carried his proposal. He headed it "Biblical Institute."

It is proposed to hold in Battle Creek, Michigan, ...about the middle of December next, a series of exercises to be conducted by Elders White, Smith, and others, which the name above given will probably describe it as well as any.

The work proposed to be done is to give instruction theoretical and practical in regard to the presentation of the present truth before the people, as teachers' institutes give instruction in regard to the theory and practice of teaching.

The object to be accomplished is to aid our preachers in a better preparation for the work of publicly presenting the truth, and to instruct such as may be desirous of at once engaging in that work, who know not how to spend a long time in preparing. The exercises will consist of, say, two lectures each day, with reviews and examinations; and the time employed will be about three weeks.—[Ibid., September 29, 1874](#)

[457]

He called upon those interested, old or young, to send in word as to their interest. The response was enthusiastic, and two weeks later he announced the dates—from December 15 until the opening of the new school building, January 4, 1875. “The attendance,” he commented, “will doubtless be large.”—[Ibid., October 13, 1874](#). In a back-page note in the *Review* he could joyfully inform the readers:

The work is moving everywhere. We have work for five winters that we would like to do in the very next. We are able to accomplish thrice the amount of labor at present that we have been able to do at any time during the past three years. And Mrs. White comes from the excessive labors of the past season with better health, and courage, than at any time in her life. God is good. He helps those who are willing to wear out, and lets those have their way who choose to rust out.—[Ibid., November 3, 1874](#)

150 Attend the Institute

The Biblical institute opened on Tuesday evening, December 15, according to plan, with about 150 in attendance, and the promise of “abundant success.” James White gave the Sabbath morning address on the nineteenth, employing a “large, painted chart of the ‘Way of Life,’ showing the harmony of the two Testaments, and pointing out the presence of Christ in all the Bible, and that His work is not confined to the present dispensation” ([Ibid., December 22, 1874](#)). The presentation was well received, and the chart was reduced to a steel engraving that in the years to come had wide distribution. [The

concept of such a pictorial design was that of M. G. Kellogg. Over a period of several years the pictorial representation was improved. Copies in color are available from the Ellen G. White Estate.] J. H. Waggoner reported on the Sabbath afternoon meeting:

[458]

Sister White made one of her most powerful appeals, directed especially to the ministers and those who expect to engage in the ministry, but applicable to all. At the close, there was a call made to come forward for prayers, but it was in vain to carry out the design of giving place to those who desired to seek a closer walk with God. The whole house was moved. It was a solemn time.—
[Ibid., December 22, 1874](#)

One of the men attending from Ohio, O. T. Noble, gave a report, in which he stated:

The first thing I will speak of is how we were received. A committee previously chosen held themselves in readiness to wait upon every newcomer and conduct him to a home with some one of the families composing the Battle Creek church; and judging from my own experience and what I have heard from others, we feel justified in saying that we fare sumptuously.... So far, the lectures have been conducted by Brethren J. White and U. Smith. The able and patient manner in which they handle the subjects, and answer the many curious, ingenious, and intricate questions submitted to them in writing, and orally, will certainly give them a large place in our confidence and in our hearts.

The time devoted to lectures, including that used in asking and answering questions, is from 9:00 to 11:00 A.M., from 2:00 to 4:00, and 6:00 to 8:00 P.M., giving us plenty to do.

I cannot close this article without a few words about the preaching, all of which thus far has been done by Brother and Sister White. I wish to say that whatever opinion people may form by reading, I venture the assertion that no fine-minded person can listen to either of

them and not feel assured that God is with them. Sister White's style and language is altogether solemn and impressive, and sways a congregation beyond description, and in a direction always heavenward. Brother White's language, manner, and style are inspiring, and well calculated to lift us up.—[Ibid., January 8, 1875](#)

The experiment of calling the ministers together for intensive Bible study was eminently successful, and it initiated a program that continued for several years.

Chapter 31—(1875) Leading in Significant Advances

James and Ellen White had delayed their return to California for the winter months until after the Biblical institute and the dedication of Battle Creek College. The institute would close on Sunday night, January 3, and the college dedication was scheduled for Monday, January 4. But as they approached the time, a cloud hung over their cherished plans. Ellen White was very ill with influenza. W. C. White tells the story:

After three or four days of the usual run of the disease, we expected her to recover, but she did not improve. Rather she grew worse, and the sanitarium physicians feared that she was in danger of pneumonia. They urged that she be brought without delay to the sanitarium for treatment.... Father was distressed at the thought of her not being able to bear her testimony before the members of the Bible institute, the Battle Creek church, and the many visiting brethren who had gathered to witness the dedication of the college....

I shall never forget the solemnity of the occasion. Mother had been brought down from her sickroom into the parlor. She was seated in a large armchair, warmly wrapped in blankets. Uriah Smith and J. H. Waggoner had come up from the *Review* office with Father, to unite with him in prayer, and four members of our family were also permitted to be present.

Elder Waggoner prayed. Elder Smith followed in prayer, and then Father prayed. It seemed that heaven was very near to us. Then Mother undertook to pray, and in a hoarse, labored voice, she uttered two or three sentences of petition.

Suddenly her voice broke clear and musical, and we heard the ringing shout, "Glory to God!" We all looked up, and saw that she was in vision. Her hands were folded across her breast. Her eyes were directed intently upward, and her lips were closed. There was no breathing, although the heart continued its action.

As she looked intently upward, an expression of anxiety came into her face. She threw aside her blankets, and, stepping forward, walked back and forth in the room. Wringing her hands, she moaned, "Dark! Dark! All dark! So dark!" Then after a few moments' silence, she exclaimed with emphasis, and a brightening of her countenance, "A light! A little light! More light! Much light!"—[Ibid., February 10, 1938](#)

In his narration W. C. White explained concerning this exclamation:

This we understood afterward, when she told us that the world was presented to her as enshrouded in the mists and fog of error, of superstition, of false tradition, and of worldliness. Then as she looked intently and with distress upon this scene, she saw little lights glimmering through the darkness. These lights increased in power. They burned brighter, and they were lifted higher and higher. Each one lighted other lights, which also burned brightly, until the whole world was lighted.

Following her exclamatory remarks regarding the lights, she sat down in her chair. After a few minutes, she drew three long, deep breaths, and then resumed her natural breathing. Her eyes rested upon the company that had been assembled for prayer. Father, knowing that after a vision everything looked strange to her, knelt by her side, and spoke in her ear, saying, "Ellen, you have been in vision."

"Yes," she said, her voice sounding far away, as though she were speaking to someone in another room.

"Were you shown many things?" Father asked.

“Yes,” she replied.

“Would you like to tell us about them now?” he asked.

“Not now” was her response. So the company was dismissed, and she went back to her room.—[Ibid.](#)

[461]

W. C. White continued his account of the vision:

Father then hastened down to the *Review* office to meet the brethren who were coming in from the East and the West to attend the dedication. About sundown he came up from the office, walking through the snow, for it had been snowing quite heavily during the afternoon. Entering the house, he threw off his overcoat in the kitchen, and hastened up to Mother’s room. There, after a few words of inquiry about the experience of the afternoon, he said, “Ellen, there is to be an important meeting in the church this evening. Do you wish to attend?”

“Certainly,” she answered. So she dressed for the meeting, and with Father, walked down through the snow to the church.—[Ibid.](#)

Waggoner, who had been one who prayed that afternoon for Ellen White’s healing, reported in the January 8 issue of the *Review*:

The closing exercises on Sunday evening, January 3, were of unusual interest. A recapitulation of subjects canvassed was presented by Brother Smith. At this point Sister White entered the house. She had been very sick for several days, and all had resigned their hope of hearing her again before their departure.

But the Lord, in answer to prayer, visited her in mercy and in power, and to the great joy of all present she was enabled to give a powerful exhortation and cheering testimony. Brother White followed with a stirring appeal which went to the hearts of the large assembly.—[Ibid., January 8, 1875](#)

Whether Ellen White related the vision Sunday night or at one of the special meetings held the next few evenings at the church is not clear. W. C. White describes, as a preface to her telling of the vision, her appeal for all to take broader views of the work:

In Mrs. White's rehearsal of her vision regarding the growth of the work, which was given her on January 3, 1875, not only did she speak of seeing companies of believers who were waiting for the gospel messenger, but she also told her hearers that the time was not far distant when we should send ministers to many foreign lands, that God would bless their labors, and that there would be in many places a work of publishing the present truth.

[462]

She said that in the vision, she had seen printing presses running in many foreign lands, printing periodicals, tracts, and books containing truths regarding the sacredness of the Sabbath, and the soon coming of Jesus.

At this point, Father interrupted and said, "Ellen, can you tell us the names of those countries?" She hesitated a moment, and then said, "No, I do not know the names. The picture of the places and of the printing presses is very clear, and if I should ever see them, I would recognize them. But I did not hear the names of the places. Oh, yes, I remember one; the angel said, 'Australia.'"—*Ibid.*, February 17, 1938 (see also [The General Conference Bulletin, 1909, 92, 93](#)).

A decade later, while visiting Europe, she recognized the presses in the publishing house in Switzerland as shown to her in this 1875 vision; the same can be said of the presses she saw in Australia still later.

This was the last vision given to Ellen White accompanied by physical phenomena concerning which we have detailed information and published lines of instruction attesting to it. J. N. Loughborough, who in 1884 was at the Oregon camp meeting, testified that a vision accompanied by the phenomena was given to her there, but we

have no details about the circumstances. At the General Conference session of 1893 he stated:

I have seen Sister White in vision about fifty times. The first time was about forty years ago.... Her last open vision was in 1884, on the campground at Portland, Oregon.—[Ibid., 1893, 19, 20.](#)

Many Subjects Revealed in the Vision of January 3

There is good reason to believe that much of the counsel published in *Testimony* No. 25, which came from the press in early February, 1875, was revealed to Ellen White in the vision of January 3. The first article, on the importance of the work, opens: “January 3, 1875, I was shown many things relative to the great and important interests at Battle Creek.”—[Testimonies for the Church, 3:468.](#) Other articles are keyed to this vision, as are a number of articles in *Testimonies*, volume 4.

[463]

Plans to Return to the Pacific Coast

[The Review and Herald, January 8, 1875,](#) carried on its back page a note from James White in which he said:

We leave for the Pacific Coast in a week or two, to avoid the remains of winter and a Michigan spring, to counsel with the brethren in California relating to publishing and other matters, to speak to our people as the way may open, and write for our periodicals.

God has raised us up to health again, and we solemnly covenant with Him not to abuse it under the cares and labors of a printing establishment in Michigan, California, or anywhere else. We hope to visit all our conferences and home missions during the present year, in company with Mrs. White. We take time for rest, reflection, prayer, and preparation to speak and to write, and design for the future to undertake less, and do better what we attempt to do.—[Ibid., January 8, 1875.](#)

During the frantic days that followed for the Whites in getting off to the West—they did not leave Battle Creek until Wednesday, January 27—they got *Testimonies* 24 and 25 through the press, each containing nearly two hundred pages. These testimonies fill the last one third of *Testimonies*, volume 3, pages 339-575. Included is the eighteen-page article titled “Leadership,” written sometime in 1874 in response to the George I. Butler presentation at the General Conference session of 1873.

Differing Views on the Philosophy of Leadership

Butler’s position, which was very favorably received at the time it was given (see p. 400), was later summed up by James White in this way:

A mistaken view was taken of this question, inso-much that the position was taken that one man was to be recognized as the visible leader of Seventh-day Adventists, as Moses was the visible leader of the Hebrews.—[Ibid.](#), [May 23, 1878](#).

Of course, there was no hiding the point that he was referring to James White as that leader. An action passed at the conference session when Butler made this presentation called for it to be published in a pamphlet and circulated widely. This was done in the late spring of 1874. Beginning in June, James White chose to publish in the *Signs of the Times* a series of three editorials refuting Butler’s position on leadership. He opened his remarks by quoting [Matthew 23:8](#): “One is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren.” White pointed out:

[464]

Jesus addressed these words to the twelve, in the hearing of the multitude. And while they were a rebuke to the scribes and Pharisees, they were also designed to impress the disciples with the great truth, that should be felt in all coming time, that Christ is the only head of the church.—[The Signs of the Times, June 4, 1874](#).

Later, back in Battle Creek, White, as editor of the *Review and Herald*, published a condensation of his *Signs* editorials in the issue of December 1, 1874. Uriah Smith, managing editor, put in an interesting note that read:

The leading editorial, on leadership, in substance, was written by Brother White, in California, immediately after the publication of the tract upon the subject, which was approved by the General Conference. Hence, it is an expression of his views relative to the teachings of the Scriptures upon the subject, unbiased by the opinions and feelings of anyone, then or now. He now designs to give his views more fully, in tract form, when he proposes to apply the subject to the brief history of our cause, with which he has been connected from the first.—[The Review and Herald, December 1, 1874.](#)

Ellen White did not agree with the Butler position, yet she dreaded seeing two church leaders in conflict. On November 11 she had written to W. H. Littlejohn, who was agitating the matter:

In regard to leadership, we do not think, Brother Littlejohn, that you have the right understanding of this matter. The sentiments you have advanced in your letters to me are in some particulars directly contrary to the light God has given me during the last thirty years. I am about to print another testimony [Nos. 25, 26], and there are many things I consider of the greatest importance in the matter to be published. Some of these very things in regard to order in the church and the wants of its members are brought out very clearly, but it is impossible to write out or to speak in so short a time upon all these matters that which would meet the difficulties in your mind. We would not, in order to cure one evil, make a more greater difficulty to manage....

[465]

I see no one who has been in any special danger through believing or accepting Brother Butler's view of the matter. I may not and you may not understand his

position correctly. We have sent for Brother Butler. He will be here soon.

My husband could not see that Brother Butler's position was wholly correct, and he has written out his views which I believe to be sound.... In regard to leadership, we want no special reaction to take place upon that subject. We see dangers that you may not see. We think in a very short time there will be a correct position taken on this question.—[Letter 61, 1874](#).

Very shortly after this—just when is not precisely known—Ellen White wrote to Butler what might be considered an essay on the whole question. She included this in *Testimony* No. 25 under the heading “Leadership.” Its eighteen pages are found today in *Testimonies*, volume 3, pages 492-509. Early on she stated the crux of the matter:

Your principles in regard to leadership are right, but you do not make the right application of them. If you should let the power of the church, the voice and judgment of the General Conference, stand in the place you have given my husband, there could then be no fault found with your position. But you greatly err in giving to one man's mind and judgment that authority and influence which God has invested in His church in the judgment and voice of the General Conference.

When this power which God has placed in the church is accredited to one man, and he is invested with the authority to be judgment for other minds, then the true Bible order is changed. Satan's efforts upon such a man's mind will be most subtle and sometimes overpowering, because through this mind he thinks he can affect many others. Your position on leadership is correct, if you give to the highest organized authority in the church what you have given to one man. God never designed that His work should bear the stamp of one man's mind and one man's judgment.—[Testimonies for the Church, 3:493](#).

The sixteen pages that follow are replete with counsels for everyone called to a position of leadership. The following four gems are found on page 497:

Man can make his circumstance, but circumstances should never make the man.

Long delays tire the angels.

It is even more excusable to make a wrong decision sometimes than to be continually in a wavering position.

I have been shown that the most signal victories and the most fearful defeats have been on the turn of minutes.

This testimony provided basic counsel that charted a safe course in denominational administration. At the close of the pamphlet by Ellen White, James White repeated a major portion of his *Review* article of December 1, 1874, and added:

The foregoing is taken from a discourse upon the subject of leadership which appeared in several numbers of the *Signs of the Times*, and later in the *Advent Review*. It was written only a few weeks after the essay referred to by Mrs. White was published, at a time when the writer knew not but that he was the only person who rejected the leading ideas of the essay, especially that part of it which applied the subject to himself. Let the following statements be carefully considered:

1. I have never professed to be a leader in any other sense than that which makes all of Christ's ministers leaders.

2. At the very commencement of the work, when organization was impossible, it was necessary that someone should lead out until those appointed by an organized body could act officially. I doubt not but God called me to this work.

3. In my labors with Mrs. White in correcting errors, exposing wrongs, and establishing order in the church, it was my duty to stand firm with her. And because I

could not be induced to yield to the demands of error, but stood firmly for the right, I was charged with being stubborn, and having a desire to rule.—*Testimony* No. 25, pp. 190, 191.

[467]

He added other points, suggesting it might have been better when the church was being organized if he had refused to continue to act “a more prominent part” than those associated with him in office. He expressed his gratitude that the matter was now fully settled in his own mind, and he affirmed the concept that “the General Conference is the highest authority God has on earth.”—*Ibid.*, 192.

In an editorial in [The Review and Herald, May 23, 1878](#), White had occasion to review the whole experience. He reiterated his basic position:

We have but one leader, which is Christ, and the entire brotherhood of the ministry, while they should counsel with each other out of due respect for the judgment of each other, should nevertheless look to our great leader as their unerring guide.

Our long experience in the general, successful management of matters pertaining to the cause gave our people confidence in us, and has had a tendency to lead them to look to us and lean upon our judgment too much. This experience we gained by anxious study and earnest prayer. Our brethren can obtain it in the same way. They should have looked to God more and gained individual experience.

For the wrong, God has in wisdom removed us [by severe illness] from them for a time, and we fear the removal will be final unless they learn to look to God for themselves. We do not object to counseling with our brethren, if it can be taken as simply the opinion of one who is frail and liable to err, but when it comes to this that brethren demand of us our opinion, and add that they shall do just what we say, we shall withhold our opinion.... A servant of the church and a counselor with the brethren. James White.—[Ibid.](#), [May 23, 1878](#).

Finally, Off to California

[468] Having seen *Testimonies* 24 and 25 through the press, the first published since the autumn of 1873, James and Ellen White, accompanied by Mary Kelsey and J. H. Waggoner, left for California on Wednesday, January 27, 1875. They would assist in the soon-to-be-established publishing house. They arrived in Oakland on the evening of February 2. Loughborough, who welcomed them, noted that James and Ellen had returned “in good health and with their usual zeal.” He was particularly pleased to observe that God had wonderfully sustained James, and his health was improved ([The Signs of the Times, February 11, 1875](#)). The couple threw themselves wholeheartedly into the work with the churches in Oakland and San Francisco and into the development of the publishing work on the Pacific Coast.

White announced plans, present and for the future:

We have come to this State by the request of the California Conference of S. D. Adventists to counsel with our leading men relative to the location of the *Signs* office, the institution of a publishing association here, and the best method of conducting a publishing house. We design to write for the *Signs*, and speak to the people as the way may open.

But the time of our stay upon this coast at this time cannot be more than three months, provided we attend our camp meetings in the several States, closing up with California on our return to the State next fall.—[Ibid., February 25, 1875](#)

A special session of the California Conference was quickly arranged for February 12, and at that meeting consideration was given to the location of the proposed publishing house. Delegates brought suggestions of several potential sites. On D. M. Canright’s motion, Ellen White was invited to give her views as to location and other matters. “She did, stating that her mind was in favor of either San Francisco or Oakland, from the fact that they were situated on the great highway of travel and commerce.”—[Ibid.](#)

The record is that “there was a general agreement that Oakland was the best point at which to establish permanently our printing office for this coast.” On the motion of William Saunders, the conference unanimously voted:

That Oakland be selected by this conference as the point of location for the printing establishment.—[Ibid.](#)

After three months in California, James and Ellen White returned to the East. In an editorial statement written on April 28, James summed up their accomplishments: [469]

Tomorrow we take the overland train for Chicago, accompanied by Mrs. White. We design to return to our Oakland, California home, before the cold of another eastern winter. And as we are about to leave this desirable field of labor for the present, we take a hasty glance at the past three months.

We reached Oakland from the East, February 2, 1875, very much rested by our six days’ journey, and were ready for immediate active service. We were very happy to find in Oakland and San Francisco two active and well-united churches of about seventy-five members each. In our younger days Mrs. White always attended the same services with us, at which we would take turns in speaking; but the situation of things in the two cities seemed to demand that we should divide our efforts, so that we have generally occupied both stands, alternating, when not laboring in other churches.

We have both labored at Petaluma, Napa, and Santa Clara, and Mrs. White, with our son, W. C. White, has spent one week with the church at Woodland....

Besides speaking, we have had the general care of the *Signs* office, and have written considerable for our papers. Add to this the labors of the principal duties which called us to this coast last winter, to assist in forming a publishing association and locating and putting up a publishing house—and one can see at a glance

how our time could be well employed.—[Ibid.](#), [April 29, 1875](#).

Then he turned to some of the details of accomplishments. At the same time he expressed concern over the financial situation. While more than \$19,000 had been pledged at the camp meeting in Yountville the previous fall, which was to be paid by the close of 1875, only a few had paid their pledges. As a result, cash was in short supply.

[470]

The Pacific Seventh-day Adventist Publishing Association is complete, a body corporate, according to the laws of the State of California, that can sue and be sued, and its officers entered upon their duties with flattering prospects. The site, eighty feet front by one hundred feet deep, on the west side of Castro, between Eleventh and Twelfth, is purchased and paid for. Part of the lumber for the publishing house is on the ground, and Brother O. B. Jones commences to build about the middle of May. He would be very glad to employ every good carpenter among our people in the State if means could be furnished immediately to purchase all the material and push the job to a speedy completion....

Having seen this enterprise in good working condition, we leave the work of building and of managing the affairs of the association in able hands, and make a tour east to attend to more urgent and arduous labors.—[Ibid.](#)

White challenged the believers in California:

Our plans have been to return to the California camp meeting, and assist in an effort with the big tent in San Francisco during the months of October and November, and advertise largely from our own press in Oakland.

It will require great promptness on the part of the friends in California to carry forward all these plans, so dependent one upon another. A failure of any one might affect the whole, so that we might not see duty

to leave important meetings in Ohio, Indiana, Missouri, and Kansas to return in early fall.—[Ibid.](#)

His interest in the California enterprise led him to make a gift of \$1,000 to the newly formed publishing association, and he promised to advance another \$1,000 without interest until the poorer brethren could pay their pledges.

Back in the East for the Camp meetings

Soon after arriving in Battle Creek, to attend camp meetings, James White declared his general plan for working:

We hope to be able to attend all the camp meetings the coming season with Mrs. White. We shall come to our brethren, not to do the work, but to help them do it in the name and strength of the Lord. We have neither strength nor disposition to labor as we have done. It is important to be in season. We have many suggestions to make, and we think it important at this early date to call the attention of the preachers of the several conferences to the fact that if duty calls them from important labor to the camp meeting, it calls them to labor at these meetings and not depend on those from abroad to do all the work.—[The Review and Herald, April 8, 1875.](#)

[471]

Two weeks later, in a back-page *Review* note concerning their labors, he related their plans and made a significant comment:

We are anxious to meet with our people in the several conferences, if but for a few days at each camp meeting.... Our object at all these meetings shall be to preach the word faithfully, pray with and for the brethren, counsel with them as to the best means to advance the cause, and labor generally for love and union to continue with the Lord's people.

We are very grateful that we were not suffered to be pressed into the leadership delusion, on the one hand, nor left to lose our interest in the cause on the other. We

are anxious to help all who need help. We have never claimed higher honors than to be a servant of the church, and to counsel with our brethren.—[Ibid., April 22, 1875](#)

After spending much of May in Battle Creek, James and Ellen White started out to attend the first camp meeting of the season, in Newton, Iowa. Those who met them here and there reported that they were enjoying good health. Joseph Clarke at Bowling Green, Ohio, where they stopped en route to Iowa, declared:

Brother White has improved greatly in bodily and mental health within the past year. He says he has increased his weight twenty-five pounds by the practice of continued cheerfulness and courage in God, and by ignoring Satan's dark schemes to dishearten and discourage him.—[Ibid., June 10, 1875](#)

The Iowa Camp Meeting

In a three-column statement, James White reported that at the Iowa camp meeting there were thirty family tents besides the large tent and covered wagons. Uriah Smith was on the grounds, and the burden of preaching was carried largely by the three. Some two thousand attended the meetings on Sunday. On Wednesday, June 2, the *Newton Free Press* gave good space to reporting the meetings.

[472] We include excerpts from the lengthy report of W. S. Benham, editor and publisher:

The Seventh-day Adventists of Iowa, and Nebraska, both States being included in one conference, held their annual conference and camp meeting at Evans' Grove, just southwest of Newton, commencing last Thursday and closing on Tuesday. This is the second year of the conference and camp meeting at this place, and its central location and pleasant remembrances may make this the place for its permanent establishment.

The grounds were admirably arranged, the great pavilion located on the east side, with a semicircle enclosing over two acres, upon which ample seats were

spread before the platform, while in the adjacent timber the teams were hitched and fed, a well dug on purpose, furnishing the requisite amount of water for all.

It is proper to state right here that no orders were given in regard to deportment on the grounds, no guards or sentinels placed on duty, and that from the opening to the close there was not an attempt at disorder or a symptom of rowdyism manifested. The people who came together for the camp meeting attended strictly to business, and the spectators at all the meetings showed that respect which was due to them as strangers and fellow-citizens....

Of the elders in attendance and taking an active part in conducting the exercises we may appropriately mention James White, U. Smith, Ellen G. White, R. M. Kilgore, Henry Nicola, C. L. Boyd, C. A. Washburn, J. T. Mitchell, and Harvey Morrison.

Elder White has made the subject of his present discourses his life study, and its propagation his lifework. He is the associate of Elders Smith and Andrews in publishing the *Review and Herald*, *Voice of Truth*, and *Signs of the Times*.

Mrs. White is a preacher of great ability and force, much called for as a speaker at the camp meetings of the denomination all over the Union, and a large share of her time is given to this work.

Elder Smith is pleasant in appearance, an earnest advocate of his doctrine, and preaches with good effect.

[473]

The tents are being struck as we go to press, and directly those attending the meeting will return to their respective homes, firmer, and stronger after this season of instruction and mutual pledges to each other of faithfulness to the faith. The meeting has been in all respects a success.—In [The Signs of the Times, June 24, 1875](#).

James and Ellen White continued with the camp meetings in the Midwest as planned—Illinois; Wisconsin, where two meetings were

held; and Minnesota—and then returned to Battle Creek for the July break. From there White reported:

Five camp meetings have been held the present year with the very best results. We think our brethren in each of the several States where they have been held will agree with the statement that they have been the very best camp meetings they have ever enjoyed. We can plainly discern the fact that each year our people are standing on higher ground, and that the yearly additions to our numbers are persons of greater moral value and influence than formerly....

We here notice with the greatest pleasure the tender care with which our wants were supplied upon the several campgrounds of Iowa, Illinois, Minnesota, and Wisconsin.... After a few weeks of that rest which change gives, we take up the eastern camp meetings....

Probably Mrs. White has never been able to hold the attention and move the hearts of the people as now. Brother Smith is getting the camp meeting armor on. He adds to his ever clear manner of presenting the truth of God a force and earnestness which make him eminently useful at these great annual gatherings of our people. And God be thanked that He gives the writer great freedom in his words, and makes him very happy in speaking words of good cheer to all fellow-pilgrims.—[The Review and Herald, July 15, 1875.](#)

Uriah Smith's Firsthand Observation

[474] Uriah Smith had made the rounds of the western camp meetings with James and Ellen White, closing with the gathering in Sparta, Wisconsin, on July 6. He was deeply impressed with the significance of their ministry. Reporting that convocation, he wrote:

And now we shall be pardoned for adding to these lines a note of a personal nature. It has been a pleasure as well as a privilege to us to attend these meetings in

company with Brother and Sister White. In all our long association with them, it has never chanced to be our lot to thus be with them in such a series of consecutive meetings from State to State. Hence, well as we have heretofore been acquainted with their labors, in a general way, we have never been in a position to realize so fully as now, nor so fully prepared as now to testify to, the value of their labors, and the benefit of their counsel to the different conferences and the cause at large.

God has given them a testimony for the people, both without and within the church; and His providence has so ordered that they have had an experience in this work from the very beginning, nearly the whole of their public labors being identified with it, and all their interest centering in it. Hence they are prepared, as from the nature of the case no others can be, to give counsel in regard to the different enterprises, and to at least assist in devising ways and means for the further advancement of this cause.

We have been happy to see their testimony received and prized as it was entitled to be. In this the brethren have done well. They have thereby in many instances been relieved from embarrassing perplexities and discouragements. And so long as the evidence presents the same showing that it presents today, we can but believe that he is recreant to the best interests of this cause who refuses to cooperate with them, and stay up their hands, in a work to which their whole life has been and is so unselfishly devoted, and to which their whole past record, and their present labors, show them both to have been, and to be, so undeviatingly true.—[Ibid.](#)

[475]

Chapter 32—(1875) Finishing a Successful Year

During the month of July, between the time of camp meetings in the Midwest and those to be held in the East, James and Ellen White were in Battle Creek with many things to care for and much writing to be done. In general they were enjoying good health. Ellen wrote to Willie in Oakland about their living arrangements:

We sleep in the [*Review*] office and are well arranged. We can be retired now as we please. If only Lucinda [Hall] were here we would prepare our own meals. We go here and there and everywhere. But thus far we have fared well enough.—[Letter 25, 1875](#).

To Edson and Emma she wrote, “We are both in very good health and cheerful in the Lord. We try to do all the labor we can and leave the results with God.... The Lord does indeed go with us and strengthens us for our labor.”—[Letter 23, 1875](#). Writing to Willie early in the morning of July 13, she reported:

Last Friday I spoke at four o’clock at the Health Institute. My subject was the training of children. They have the best set of patients there now that they have ever had. In the evening of Friday, we went to Potterville to rest. But these rests do not amount to much in my case. It was no rest for me. I spoke Sabbath.

[476]

I wrote much of the day, Sunday. I wrote thirty-five pages. Gave your father a pack [a hydrotherapy treatment]. Walked out with him. Had a long talk and praying season in the beech grove. Your father then helped Robert Sawyer. He worked like a young man. Has been a little stiff since.

After my thirty-five pages were written, I picked raspberries. Brother and Sister Carman found us at it in the field and said they came for us to go home with

them. So we went. Next morning rode to cars and came to Battle Creek. Took dinner at the institute.—[Letter 24, 1875](#).

Her afternoon was spent in the dentist's chair and the evening in a committee meeting. Some of the businessmen called to Battle Creek to care for the business interests of the cause were proving less than true to duty. She bore a close testimony to Harmon Lindsay, pointing out pride, jealousy, and injured dignity. The result:

Harmon arose and said he accepted every word Sister White had said. He had done wrong. He laid down his feeling then and there. But yet I do not see that the bottom is reached. Harmon will have to feel deeper than he has yet done before he can harmonize with the Spirit of God.—[Ibid.](#)

The next day, in her letter to Willie, now in Oakland, she again referred to such problems:

I have been writing about thirty pages for Brother and Sister Gaskill in connection with the Health Institute. Many things need righting up. May God help us to faithfully discharge our duty. I look with anxious, longing heart to the Pacific Coast. I long to be with you.—[Ibid.](#)

The next Sabbath, July 17, an aged couple were baptized in the Kalamazoo River at the usual baptizing place, not far from the church. Ellen White wrote:

We had a beautiful scene at baptism. Sabbath morning, Deacon Young and his wife were baptized. They went into the water like two heroes, perfectly calm, and they came out of the water with their countenances illuminated with the light of heaven. Uriah, Green, and Mack were at the waterside and they said when your father was praying, the Spirit and power of God came

down upon the people and pervaded the congregation assembled.

Your father spoke in the morning and he and those who were to officiate with the candidates retired to prepare while I addressed the people about fifteen minutes.

Word came to me at noon that if there would be preaching, Mrs. Green and Mack would remain to the afternoon service. I consented to speak and felt much freedom in speaking.—[Letter 25, 1875](#).

Sunday afternoon, July 18, at the request of Dr. John Kellogg, newly come to the Health Institute, she spoke in the nearby grove on health reform to a sizable and attentive audience. She spoke again, by request, on Tuesday afternoon, July 20. Thursday, July 22, found James and Ellen White at Goghuac Lake for an afternoon with the patients of the institute. At an appropriate time, James White addressed the group for about forty minutes ([Letter 26, 1875](#)).

They watched closely the reports from California as to progress in the erection of the publishing house there. In a few days James would be off to New York to purchase a cylinder press and printing equipment for the new office. Adventists east of the Plains had raised nearly \$8,000 to equip the new plant.

The Fourteenth Annual Session of the General Conference

The eastern camp meetings opened with the Michigan camp meeting in Battle Creek, August 10-17. The General Conference session and the regular annual anniversary meetings of the three Battle Creek institutions were also held during that week. James and Ellen White were present, of course, to listen and to participate. Reports showed the “present standing” of the cause to be:

Church members	8,022
Ministers	69
Churches	339

Licentiates	76
Systematic Benevolence Fund pledged by the churches	\$32,618

—[The Review and Herald, August 26, 1875.](#)

The business was quite routine and was handled with dispatch. There were resolutions recognizing the school and its contributions; on health reform, recognizing the benefits of following its principles and calling for greater energy in the promulgation of its truths; and on the work on the Pacific Coast, urging strong support in the development of the Pacific SDA Publishing Association. [478]

An action was taken calling for marked advance in Europe and in other parts of the world:

Resolved, That we recommend the Executive Committee to take immediate steps to establish a printing office in Europe, to issue periodicals and publications in the French and German languages, and also to enter the openings presenting themselves in Great Britain, France, Germany, Holland, Italy, Hungary, Africa, and Australia.—[Ibid.](#)

Butler introduced a resolution to rescind the one taken in 1873 relating to his presentation on the question of leadership. James White then made some explanatory remarks, setting forth “the principles of leadership which, according to the Scriptures, must hold in the church of Christ.” The following resolution was unanimously adopted:

Whereas, Further examination has shown that some of the sentiments contained in said tract were incorrect; therefore

Resolved, That the tract referred to be placed in the hands of a committee (said committee to be appointed by this conference) to be so revised as to correspond with the better understanding which now exists on the subject of leadership.—[Ibid.](#)

The committee appointed for this task was made up of Uriah Smith, S. Brownsberger, and J. H. Kellogg.

The following persons were elected: For president, James White; secretary, Uriah Smith; and treasurer, Miss Freddie House. Named to the General Conference Committee were James White, J. N. Loughborough, and J. N. Andrews.

In his *Review and Herald* report of the General Conference session and the Michigan camp meeting, Smith stated:

[479]

A greater amount of business was transacted during the seven days of this meeting than during the fourteen days of the meeting of 1874; and yet there was a fair proportion of time to devote to religious services, which were not without their interest and good results.

The happy disposal of so much business was due to the energy and tact of Brother White, who took hold to lift in every direction, and whose executive ability, when his way is clear from any serious hindrances and drawbacks, is equal to the occasion.—[Ibid.](#)

The Remaining Eastern Camp Meetings

On the train bound for the Vermont camp meeting, scheduled to open on August 19, White took his pencil and wrote wearily:

The Battle Creek camp meeting is passed. Many circumstances were unfavorable; but the Lord helped, and results are good. The influence of this meeting will be lasting.... The pleasant reflections of what God has wrought the past two weeks, and the triumphant hope of reward in the future, make us very happy.—[Ibid.](#)

After Vermont, they attended camp meetings in Maine and New York, and then they had to hurry to California.

At the meeting in Maine, Ellen White again had the opportunity to visit her sisters. Of this she wrote:

We went to Maine to visit my sister Harriet, who is dying with consumption. We went the route which

was new to us which passed through Gorham, where my twin sister [Elizabeth] lives. We called on my sister Mary Foss and got her and her daughter Ellen and my niece Mary Clough to go to the camp meeting with us. They were very much interested in the meeting.—[Letter 35, 1875](#).

From there they traveled to Rome, New York, for meetings that would run from September 9 to 14. They had promised to be in California for the camp meeting there September 23 to 30, if the publishing house was ready and a house of worship built in San Francisco. Meeting the challenge, the California members successfully completed the publishing house in Oakland, and O. B. Jones, the builder, was busy at work on a church building in San Francisco on Laguna Street. This meant that the New York camp meeting was the last they could attend in the East.

[480]

The New York Camp Meeting

The New York camp was pitched about two miles north of the city of Rome in a beautiful, level, beech and maple grove, skirted by a quick-flowing stream. Two large tents were surrounded by thirty-four family tents arranged in a square. Smith reported:

Brother and Sister White were present.... They, and others who spoke, enjoyed a good degree of freedom in the presentation of the truth, and the Word was listened to with eagerness and was cordially received by the people.... On Sunday, the attendance was large, estimated at about three thousand.—[The Review and Herald, September 23, 1875](#).

Ellen White was one of the Sunday speakers. That night an impressive dream was given to her, of which she wrote:

I dreamed that a young man of noble appearance came into the room where I was, immediately after I had been speaking. This same person has appeared before

me in important dreams to instruct me from time to time during the past twenty-six years.

Said he, You have called the attention of the people to important subjects, which, to a large number, are strange and new. To some they are intensely interesting. The laborers in word and doctrine have done what they could in presenting the truth, which has raised inquiry in minds and awakened an interest. But unless there is a more thorough effort made to fasten these impressions upon minds, your efforts now made will prove nearly fruitless. Satan has many attractions ready to divert the mind; and the cares of this life, and the deceitfulness of riches all combine to choke the seed of truth sown in the heart, and in most cases it bears no fruit.—[Ibid.](#), [November 4, 1875](#)

The angel pointed out that the preaching would be enhanced by the wide use of appropriate reading matter. He called for tracts on important points of truth to be handed out freely, declaring that this would result in a “hundredfold return to the treasury.” He added:

[481]

The press is a powerful means to move the minds and hearts of the people. And the men of this world seize the press, and make the most of every opportunity to get poisonous literature before the people. If men, under the influence of the spirit of the world, and of Satan, are earnest to circulate books, tracts, and papers of a corrupting nature, you should be more earnest to get reading matter of an elevating and saving character before the people.—[Ibid.](#)

A Call for Colporteur Ministry Evangelism

Then the angel called attention to a fruitful line of endeavor that Seventh-day Adventists had up to this time not employed:

God has placed at the command of His people advantages in the press, which, combined with other agencies, will be successful in extending the knowledge of the

truth. Tracts, papers, and books, as the case demands, should be circulated in all the cities and villages in the land. Here is missionary work for all.

There should be men trained for this branch of the work who will be missionaries, and will circulate publications. They should be men of good address, who will not repulse others or be repulsed. This is a work to which men would be warranted to give their whole time and energies as the occasion demands.

Those who distribute tracts gratuitously should take other publications to sell to all who will purchase them. Persevering efforts will result in great good.... God has committed to His people great light. This is not for them to selfishly enjoy alone, but to let its rays shine forth to others who are in darkness of error.—*Ibid.* (see also 3LS, p. 217).

In a few days the Whites would be leaving for California, so it was not until they were back in their Oakland home that Ellen found opportunity to write out this far-reaching instruction, which was to set in motion the colporteur ministry of the church.

Unexpected Revival in Battle Creek

From Rome, New York, James and Ellen White hastened back to Battle Creek, intending to be in California for the opening of the camp meeting on Thursday, September 23. They arrived in Battle Creek September 14, and expected to leave several days later for the West. They really had about two weeks' business to attend to in the short time they expected to be there.

[482]

In the evening they met with the church, concerned with its spiritual condition. In that meeting and the one on the following night, such an interest developed that James and Ellen delayed their departure and continued their work with the church. Smith described the developments.

For the benefit of the young, some of whom were falling into the snare of the devil, the effort was especially directed.... The Spirit of God was present to

help. The hearts of the young were powerfully wrought upon. Many who had never made a profession, and for some of whom but little hope could be entertained, so wayward were the tendencies they manifested, made a move. The servants of the Lord were led out in exhortations as powerful and labors as earnest as any we have ever heard or witnessed. It was a visitation of the Spirit such as any people are rarely blessed with.

Meetings were held Thursday evening, Friday morning, the evening commencing the Sabbath, Sabbath morning, forenoon, and afternoon. At the conclusion of the afternoon service, twenty-three were baptized by Brother White in the Kalamazoo, which has witnessed so many scenes of this kind, yet none so remarkable as this. With but few exceptions, the ages of those baptized ranged from 12 to 17. This was an astonishing result to reach in so short a time. Yet we believe a genuine commencement of the work has been made, which may be cultivated to permanent and most happy results.—*Ibid.*, [September 30, 1875](#)

Hastening to the West Coast

The unexpected delay in Battle Creek until after the Sabbath, September 18, meant that James and Ellen would miss the opening of the California meeting on Thursday, September 23. But they were happy to be on their way. After leaving Chicago Sunday morning, James reached for a pencil and wrote of their experience during the previous few days:

[483] To say that we are weary only faintly expresses our physical condition in this respect. In addition to eight meetings of great labor from Tuesday evening to Sabbath P.M., closing with the baptism of twenty-three, every spare moment was occupied with important business pressed forward in a rush, packing trunks, valises, and baskets, for nearly a week's journey, giving ourselves but four and five hours' sleep each night. As we write, wife sleeps. God bless her, and give strength for the labors of the future.—*Ibid.*, [September 23, 1875](#)

He hastily added:

But we are not weary of the work. We are filled with hope, courage, and faith, and design to extend our labors, and what influence the Lord gives us, as never before. God has been giving us strength, light, and freedom, and our peace is like an ever-flowing river. Our adorable Redeemer lives; and He reigns graciously in the hearts of His dear, trusting people.—[Ibid.](#)

The believers in California were, of course, disappointed that the Whites were delayed, but they went forward with their camp meeting as scheduled. It was held north of San Francisco Bay at Fairfax, in Marin County. They found themselves in comfortable and convenient circumstances, occupying the Fairfax picnic grounds controlled by the North Pacific Coast Railroad Company. A stream of water ran through the grounds, and there was a good well. And of course there was ample room for all the tents.

As James and Ellen pulled into Oakland Friday afternoon, Willie met them at the station and took them to their home. James described the homecoming:

After an absence of five months we reached Oakland in the evening of the twenty-fourth ult., and lodged at our good home that night on Eleventh Street, near Castro. The carpenters had but commenced this house when we left last April. The next object that called our attention was our office building on the same block, commenced some weeks after we left, and brought very nearly to completion more than a month since.—[The Signs of the Times, October 7, 1875.](#)

Sabbath morning they crossed the Bay and arrived at the campground at 11:20 A.M. James White went immediately to the stand and addressed an eagerly waiting audience. Ellen, according to the usual procedure, spoke Sabbath afternoon. Both participated in other meetings, laboring especially for the children and youth ([The Review and Herald, October 14, 1875](#)). Several mornings during

[484]

the week were given to the business of the California Conference. Officers elected for the conference were: president, J. N. Loughborough; secretary, William Saunders; and treasurer, W. C. White. Two of the resolutions voted by the conference read:

Resolved, That we fully endorse all the steps that have thus far been taken in locating and establishing the publishing house in Oakland.

Resolved, That we hereby express our gratitude to God, and to our brethren east of the Rocky Mountains, for their noble liberality in furnishing us with two power presses, a steam engine, and the necessary equipment for a first-class publishing house.... And we renew our pledge to be faithful to the trust conferred upon us in this important field, to endeavor to spread the present truth to the people, nations, and tongues of the earth.

Another significant action taken was:

Resolved, That we recognize the voice that for twenty-five years has been calling to Seventh-day Adventists through the testimonies to the church as a voice from heaven; and that it is our duty to heed it in all its teachings, whether it encourage, admonish, or reprove us.—[The Signs of the Times, October 7, 1875](#).

The California Publishing House

Naturally, James and Ellen White were eager to get back to their new home in Oakland and to the publishing house now in operation, stocked with the machinery and supplies purchased by James White in New York City and sent by train to Oakland. In an article published in both the *Signs of the Times* and the *Review and Herald*, titled “How We Found Things,” he gave a glowing report:

The appearance of this building from the outside is fine. The arrangement inside from the basement to the attic is admirable. The room in the basement is valuable. The several rooms of the two stories of the building are

next to perfection in arrangement and conveniences. And there are four valuable finished rooms in the attic. In the rear of the main building and separated from it the distance of eleven feet is the brick engine house.

And all will cost less than first calculated, and are much better than first expected, owing principally to the ability and faithfulness of Brother O. B. Jones, who took successful charge of our three printing houses, and our college building, at Battle Creek, Michigan.—[Ibid.](#)

As soon as the plastering was finished in the publishing house, Jones went to San Francisco to erect the meetinghouse on Laguna Street. It was planned that when he returned to Oakland he would give attention to building tables, desks, shelves, drawers, et cetera.

The publishing plant was managed by the two White sons, Edson and William, assisted by “advisers and helpers who had a lively interest in the work.” Wrote James:

We found the Cottrell and Babcock, first-class, four-roller, air-spring, drum-cylinder printing press, and the Universal job press in the new building in complete running order, driven by the New York safety engine from Babcock and Wilcox. Only six weeks before these were doing good printing on the Pacific Coast they were lying at the freight warehouse across the continent in New York City waiting for shipment.—[Ibid.](#)

He reported that friends of the cause in California were meeting their pledges and it was his hope that by New Year’s enough would have come in to pay for both the office building and the building site. He added:

Our eastern brethren have come nobly up to the work of raising means to furnish the Oakland office with presses, engine, types, binders’ machinery, et cetera. We have already two presses, engine, paper cutter and book trimmer, standing press, and types and material sufficient to print the *Signs*. These are all paid for at a cost,

[486]

including transportation and setting up, of \$6,500, and there are eastern funds on hand to purchase more material, and more pledged by our liberal eastern people to make the *Signs* office a complete book and job printing office where as good work may be done as anywhere on the continent.—*Ibid.*

The San Francisco Tent Meeting

According to plans laid early in the year, as soon as the camp meeting in Fairfax was over the big tent was moved to San Francisco and pitched on McAllister Street, between Gough and Octavia, not far from where the new church was under construction on Laguna Street. Extensive newspaper advertising was employed to draw the crowd, and the newly established press in Oakland gave good support in printing thousands of advertising bills and frequent issues of a four-page sheet titled “The Tent Meeting.” Each contained choice reading matter on the subjects introduced in the tent meetings and also a piece of appropriate music. These were eagerly sought after and preserved.

The meetings began in early October. The preaching was done by Waggoner, Loughborough, and James White. Ellen White came in on Sabbath and Sundays (*Ibid.*, [October 21, 1875](#), and *Ibid.*, [November 11, 1875](#)). The Sabbath question was introduced the second week in November. Ellen reported on November 10 that half a dozen people had decided to keep the seventh day. They had attended the meeting in the tent Sabbath morning, October 9, and bore their testimony ([Letter 36, 1875](#)). Meetings continued in the tent through November. When the house of worship could be occupied in December, the meetings were moved to that location. Weekends, after speaking in the tent Sunday afternoons, Ellen White took the ferry to Oakland and spoke Sunday evenings in the hall.

A Dedicated Working Force in the Oakland Office

James White had started to publish the *Signs of the Times* in June, 1874, under forbidding circumstances. He wrote of it:

Our small office was in little, dingy, rented rooms, and the press work was done on the press of another, at quite a distance, at high prices, demanding considerable cash, patience, and hard work in moving heavy forms and paper on a wheelbarrow. Under these circumstances we looked forward with no small degree of interest to the time when we should have a good building and office complete at our command.—[The Signs of the Times, October 21, 1875.](#)

[487]

It was only by sacrifice and hard effort that the program was now coming to success. Those who labored in the new, pleasant quarters did so with the same spirit of dedication and sacrifice as marked the publishing work in the beginning days. White wrote of this in November:

While common laborers and common carpenters of our brethren in California have received from 20 to 35 cents an hour for their labors on and about the building, our friends, competent to edit the *Signs*, and keep the books of the association, have labored for half of one year for the mere sums of from 7 to 11 cents an hour...

We have sent for Mrs. White's niece [Mary Clough] to come from the East to assist in this work. We pay her fare to California, and a salary besides, to do the very work these would do [in assisting Ellen White in her preparation of books] could they be released from the office.

A brother wrote to this office that he would like Sister Driscall's place. But could he live on a salary of 9 cents an hour? Our California friends generally are ignorant of how matters stand.—[Ibid., November 11, 1875](#)

The Angel's Special Message for James White

It was not until getting settled in Oakland and during the San Francisco tent meeting that Ellen White, on October 20, found

opportunity to write out the account of the remarkable dream given to her Sunday night, September 12, on the campground at Rome, New York. The instruction of the angel who appeared to her as a noble, well-dressed young man, pertained first to the publishing and circulation of the message and the development of a colporteur ministry, as noted earlier.

Following this, the angel spoke of the work of James White:

[488]

Your husband and yourself can do much in the preparation of publications. You have a better knowledge of the wants of the people than many others. God has brought you in close connection with Himself, and has given you an experience in this work which He has not given to many others.

He has connected you with this powerful agency—the publishing department. Others cannot take your place in this, and do the work God has appointed you to do. Satan has been making special efforts to discourage your husband by controlling the minds of some who ought to be helpers. They have cherished temptations. They have been murmurers, and have been jealous without cause.

God will not leave nor forsake His servant while he clings by faith to His wisdom and strength. He has upheld him through the ministration of angels that excel in strength. His strength has not come from natural causes, but from God.

He will be beset with the enemy on the right hand and on the left. Satan will lead the minds of some to be distrustful of his motives, and to murmur against his plans while he is following the leadings of the Spirit of God. In God he must trust, for He is the source of his strength. The enemy, through agents, will harass and vex his patience, for the infirmities of human nature are upon him, and he is not infallible. But if he clings in humble confidence to God, and walks softly before Him, God will be to him a present help in every emergency.—

[The Review and Herald, November 4, 1875.](#)

The angel touched on a number of important points:

Your husband must not be discouraged in his efforts to encourage men to become workers, and responsible for important work. Every man whom God will accept, Satan will attack. If they disconnect from heaven, and imperil the cause, their failures will not be set to his account or to yours, but to the perversity of the nature of the murmuring ones, which they would not understand and overcome.

These men whom God has tried to use to do His work, and who have failed, and brought great burdens upon those who are unselfish and true, have hindered and discouraged more than all the good they have done. And yet this should not hinder the purpose of God in having this growing work, with its burden of cares, divided into different branches, and laid upon men who should do their part, and lift the burdens when they ought to be lifted. These men must be willing to be instructed, and then God can fit them and sanctify them, and impart to them sanctified judgment, that what they undertake they can carry forward in His name.

[489]

Your husband must be humble and trustful, and walk carefully and tremblingly before God, for the ground whereon he treadeth is holy. God has strengthened him for great emergencies. He has given him strength, and light, and power like a running stream. This is not of himself, but of God. He has an inexhaustible fountain to draw from. He must not forget that he is mortal, and subject to temptations and weariness. His mind should have periods of rest, which will result in great good to himself as well as to the cause of God which he represents. He can with a mind invigorated do a greater amount, with greater perfection, than he can accomplish by steady labor and constant effort with a wearied mind.—*Ibid.*

The angel continued with commendations and counsel for J. N. Andrews and S. N. Haskell. Ellen White recorded the close of the solemn message with the angel's admonition: "God will have His servants connect closely with Him that they may have the mind of Christ."

The Call for a Day of Fasting and Prayer

As the year 1876 approached, the General Conference Committee called for Sabbath, January 1, to be observed as "a day of humiliation, fasting, and prayer," to be observed as such "by all our churches and the scattered brethren and sisters throughout the length and breadth of our land." The committee promised to publish in pamphlet form an address to be read in connection with the services of that day ([Ibid., December 16, 1875](#)). It would be a day of special devotions and reconsecration to God.

Looking Ahead

As James White looked ahead, it was with courage. His heart was in the publishing of the *Signs of the Times*. Addressing the readers of the journal, he declared:

[490] With the new year the *Signs* starts in to make its weekly visits to its patrons, and to all who may become such during the year. Its prospects of success are cheering....

We commence the series of articles setting forth the reasons of our faith and hope in this number, with the article on another page upon the millennium. These articles will continue in proper order quite through the year. Sketches of the life of Mrs. White will also continue, and will be very important to those who should know the facts of her remarkable experience.

And we shall very soon commence a series of articles under the caption "The Matter Reversed, or Christ in the Old Testament and the Sabbath in the New." We design to thoroughly ventilate the question.—[The Signs of the Times, January 6, 1876.](#)

As White was editor of both the *Signs of the Times* and the *Review and Herald*, both journals had been replete with his editorials and articles through 1875. Ellen had made large contributions also: fourteen major articles in the *Review* and twenty-nine in the *Signs*. Both James and Ellen were enjoying good health and seemed to be at the apex of vigor and vitality. The new year held great promise.

Appendix A

Relation to Church Fellowship

By Francis M. Wilcox [F. M. Wilcox was editor of the *Review and Herald* and might be considered a “church statesman.” He was one of the five men appointed by Ellen White as trustees to care for her writings.] As we consider the subject of spiritual gifts and their manifestation in the Church, the question naturally arises, should faith in this doctrine be made a test of church fellowship?

Those seeking membership in the Church should be carefully instructed in all the truths of the gospel. They should know, first of all, that Christ is their saviour and that their sins have been washed away in the blood shed on Calvary. They should be taught that the test of faith and love is found in obedience to the divine requirements, but that the law of God can be expressed in the life only as it is written in the heart by the operation of the Spirit in the new covenant relationship. They should be instructed in the evidences of Christ’s soon coming, and in the prophecies pointing out last-day world conditions and the special work to be done in the preparation of a people to stand in the day of the Lord.

Candidates for church membership should be taught to realize that they are not their own, but Christ’s, and therefore they should honor him in their bodies, his temples, by wearing proper attire, and providing such food and drink as make for strength and not for drunkenness; and that their lives and property should be placed upon the altar of sacrificial service for others as the Spirit shall indicate. They should be instructed in church organization and polity, in the historical development of this movement, in the doctrine of spiritual gifts, and especially the gift of the Spirit of Prophecy, which
[492] heaven has used so largely in fostering the work of this movement.

Particularly should they be taught that these gifts answer to the word of prophecy in their manifestation in the Remnant Church.

Inasmuch as the labors of Mrs. E. G. White have entered so largely into the development of the second advent movement, candidates for church membership should be made acquainted with the divine ministry to which she was called, and the influence of her labors and writings through the years. Opportunity should be afforded them to read her published books. When this instruction has been given candidates, but little question ever will be raised as to faith in the doctrine of spiritual gifts being made a test of Church Fellowship.

If, as the result of this investigation, the one contemplating church membership arrives at settled convictions in opposition to this doctrine, he naturally will not wish to unite his interests with a church that holds it as a part of its religious faith. In any event he should be encouraged to wait until he has had time and opportunity for more mature study of the question.

If, on the other hand, while in full sympathy with his adventist brethren regarding their faith and objectives and their church polity and organization, he still feels doubts over the doctrine of spiritual gifts and their exercise in the Church, but has no opposition to the fullest and freest exercise of faith in these gifts on the part of his brethren, and to the free use of the instruction which has come to the Church from the gift of prophecy, he need not necessarily be excluded from church membership.

Elder J. N. Andrews records the attitude of the Church on this matter in these words:

In the reception of members into our churches, we desire on this subject to know two things: (1) that they believe the Bible doctrine of spiritual gifts; (2) that they will candidly acquaint themselves with the visions of Sister White, which have ever held so prominent place in this work. We believe that every person standing thus and carrying out this purpose will be guided in the way of truth and righteousness. And those who occupy the ground are never denied all the time they desire to decide

in this matter.—[The Review and Herald, February 15, 1870.](#)

[493]

Spiritual Gift and Church Membership

[Under this subheading Wilcox draws in the E. G. White statements on the point written in 1862 and quoted in chapter 2 of this volume, pages 25-27, closing with the following E. G. White counsel.]

Some of our brethren have had long experience in the truth, and have for years been acquainted with me and with the influence of the visions. They have tested the truthfulness of these testimonies, and asserted their belief in them. They have felt the powerful influence of the spirit of God resting upon them to witness to the truthfulness of the visions. If such, when reproved through vision, rise up against them, and work secretly to injure our influence, they should be faithfully dealt with, for their influence is endangering those who lack experience.—[Testimonies for the Church, 1:382, 383.](#)

The Testimony of Early Leaders

In full harmony with the above are statements made by leading workers through the years, of which we give two here. James White testifies:

They [Seventh-day Adventists] believe in the perpetuity of spiritual gifts. They believe that the spirit of prophecy has rested upon Mrs. White, and that she is called to do a special work at this time, among this people. They do not, however, make a belief in this work a test of Christian fellowship. But, after men and women have had evidence that the work is of God, and then join hands with those who fight against it, our people claim the right to separate from such, that they may enjoy their sentiments in peace and quiet.—[The Review and Herald, June 13, 1871.](#)

On this point, Elder J. N. Andrews writes:

We therefore do not test the world in any manner by these gifts. Nor do we, in our intercourse with other religious bodies who are striving to walk in the fear of God, in any way make these a test of Christian character. Upon none of these persons do we urge these manifestations of the spirit of God, nor test them by their teaching.

There is such a thing, however, as men having in the providence of God an opportunity to become acquainted with the special work of the spirit of God, so that they shall acknowledge that their light is clear, convincing, and satisfactory. To such persons, we consider the gifts of the spirit ...clearly a test. Not only has God spoken, but they have had opportunity to ascertain that fact, and to know it for themselves. In all such cases, spiritual gifts are manifestly a test that cannot be disregarded except at the peril of eternal ruin.—[Ibid., February 15, 1870](#)

[494]

Disfellowshipping Members

Should the Church disfellowship one who does not have faith in the work of Mrs. E. G. White?

This question is closely related to the preceding one, and the same principle applies. In the practice of the Church it has not been customary to disfellowship one because he did not recognize the doctrine of spiritual gifts in the Church, particularly the gift of prophecy as represented in the work of Mrs. White. However, if one should develop unbelief, and begin to oppose the position held by the Church on the subject of spiritual gifts, the Church has considered it necessary to labor for such members the same as they would in the cases of those who opposed any other doctrine held by the Church. They have justly become subjects for labor, not because of their lack of faith in the spirit of prophecy, but because of their spirit of opposition to a cherished faith held by the Church.

Appendix B

Recipe for “gems”

From *Health, or How to Live*, no. 1, pp. 32-34. Gems: Into cold water stir graham flour sufficient to make a batter about the same consistency as that used for ordinary griddle cakes. Bake in a *Hot* oven, in the cast-iron bread [gem] pans. [Much like muffin pans, only of cast iron. They come with different shaped cups, some shallow and broad, up to three inches, and some deep.] The pans should be heated before putting in the batter.

Note: This makes delicious bread. No definite rule as to the proportions of flour and water can be given, owing to the difference in the absorbing properties of various kinds of flour. If too thin, the cakes will be hollow; if too thick, not so light. A little experience will enable any person to approximate the right proportions with sufficient exactness. The flour should be stirred into the water very slowly, in the same manner as in making mush. If hard water is used, they are apt to be slightly tough. A small quantity of sweet milk will remedy this defect.

Cornmeal gems: Stir slowly into one quart of new milk, cornmeal sufficient to make a thin batter. Bake in a hot oven in the bread [gem] pans.

Fine-flour gems: Gems made of fine flour in the same manner as of graham, the batter being rather stiffer, however, say about like ordinary bread sponge, and baked in the bread [gem] pans, are as light, and far sweeter, than any soda biscuit, and by all who have tasted them are pronounced excellent.

Appendix C

[496]

Two Meals a Day

As Ellen White related in the late summer of 1864 her experience in adopting health reform, she stated:

We use fruits and vegetables liberally. I have lived for eight months upon two meals a day. I have applied myself to writing the most of the time for above a year. For eight months have been confined closely to writing. My brain has been constantly taxed, and I have had but little exercise. Yet my health has never been better than for the past six months.—[Spiritual Gifts, 4a:153, 154](#).

In succeeding years she often referred to her experience in subsisting on two meals, and she advised others to adopt the practice in such statements as the following:

Some eat three meals a day, when two would be more conducive to physical and spiritual health.—[Testimonies for the Church, 4:416, 417](#).

The practice of eating but two meals a day is generally found a benefit to health; yet under some circumstances persons may require a third meal. This should, however, if taken at all, be very light, and of food most easily digested. “Crackers”—the english biscuit—or zwieback, and fruit, or cereal coffee, are the foods best suited for the evening meal.—[The Ministry of Healing, 321](#).

In most cases two meals a day are preferable to three. Supper, when taken at an early hour, interferes with the digestion of the previous meal. When taken later, it is not itself digested before bedtime. Thus the stomach fails of securing proper rest. The sleep is disturbed, the

brain and nerves are wearied, the appetite for breakfast is impaired, the whole system is unrefreshed, and is unready for the day's duties.—[Education, 205](#).

[497]

When the students combine physical and mental taxation, so largely as they do at this school (avondale), the objection to the third meal is to a great extent removed. Then no one needs to feel abused. Those who conscientiously eat only two meals need not change in this at all....

If those who only eat two meals have the idea that they must eat enough at the second meal to answer for the third meal also, they will injure their digestive organs. Let the students have the third meal, prepared without vegetables, but with simple, wholesome food, such as fruit and bread.—[Letter 141, 1899](#) (See also CDF, p. 178).

I eat only two meals a day. But I do not think that the number of meals should be made a test. If there are those who are better in health when eating three meals, it is their privilege to have three. I choose two meals. For thirty-five years I have practiced the two-meal system.—[Letter 30, 1903](#) (See also CDF, p. 178).

W. C. White Comments

In 1930, W. C. White made the following observations:

You will observe as you read those statements [concerning two meals a day] that they are given as advice, not as commands. I find among Seventh-day Adventists a willingness to listen to this advice and to put it into practice where it is most helpful....

There are very many of our people who are following the two-meal system with great benefit and especially those who live under circumstances where they can have a late breakfast and a dinner in the middle of the afternoon. But most of our people who are engaged

in employments where they must eat an early breakfast and a twelve o'clock dinner find it is for the benefit of their health to eat three light meals rather than two heavy ones. For children, the three light meals are much better than the two heavy meals....

As my children were growing up, we undertook to follow the two-meal system, but finding we could not time the meals as they ought to be timed, we adopted the plan of giving a light lunch at night. On this program they have grown up healthy and hearty. Their grandmother, sister E. G. White, knew of the plan we were following with our children and did not reprove us for it. I remember distinctly what Sister White used to say when the counsels in her writings were being enforced in an inappropriate way. She said, "time and circumstances must always be taken into account."—DF535, W. C. White to R. W. Barnhurst, May 12, 1930.

[498]

For other E. G. White statements on the two-meal plan she followed, see [Counsels on Diet and Foods, 173-178](#).